

East Reading Horticultural Society

NEWSLETTER

February 2021

Trading shed: Sat, Sun, Mon (Tue if Mon is a bank holiday) 09:30 to 11:00.
Wed evenings - April and May only - 18:30 to 19:30. Mobile number: 0738 463 2903.

Note: Shed helpers are not all young, big, and strong so, if you need to get heavy items, please try to bring someone with you to help you with the lifting.

Web: www.erhs.org.uk

Facebook Group: "East Reading Horticultural Society"

Editor: Tel: 07794 233361, Email: ERHS@hotmail.co.uk

{Get your newsletter early (and in colour): ask to be added to the ERHS email list.}



1. PROGRAMME EVENTS



ERHS events

We will continue to issue the monthly newsletter and will use it to tell you when we feel it is safe to resume events.

Tuesday 16th February:

Our 80th Annual General meeting is postponed.
See notes from our chairman overleaf.

2. TRADING MATTERS



Seed potatoes are now available. All varieties are in 2.5 kg bags. {The shed is closed but deliveries can be arranged - see chairman's notes overleaf.}

Earlies:

Arran pilot, Foremost, Pentland Javelin..... £2.30
Homeguard, Winston £2.55

2nd Earlies:

Maris peer, Wilja, British Queen..... £2.30
Kestrel..... £2.55

Salad:

Charlotte £2.30
International kidney, Pink Fir Apple, Nicola
..... £2.55

Main crop:

Cara, Desiree, King Edward, Maris piper, Picasso ... £2.30
Majestic £2.55

Also available:

Onion sets:

Red Baron, Turbo 75p for 100g
Stuttgarter 70p for 100g

And Shallots:

Golden Gourmet 80p for 100g

Note: Masks must be worn when in the trading shed.

3. MISCELLANEA

Next Committee Meeting:

None scheduled but the committee held a Zoom meeting on 25th January to help keep in touch and to decide about possible events.

Shed stewards and assistants this month.

None arranged due to the current lockdown.

Suttons Seed Orders

When you are notified that your seed orders have arrived, please collect them from
Roger Howard at
36 Fairview Avenue, Earley, RG6 1HE

{If members still wish to order seeds, please contact Roger directly. His phone number is on your membership card.}

Urgent need for a new Treasurer

Jeff Gardner has been our treasurer now for 26 years. He hoped to stand down at the 2020 AGM but, when we had no offers to take over, he agreed to continue for a limited time. We, therefore, need to find someone else to look after our finances.

We hope that a member, possibly with a financial background, might consider taking on this important role, or might know someone they could recommend to the society. So, if you can help, please call Jeff on (0118) 987 3453. He will be happy to explain what the job entails.

A new horticultural business - Roots Plants

A member, whose sons have set up this new business, selling plants online, would appreciate it if you could take the time to visit their Facebook page and "like" the page, using the following link:

<https://www.facebook.com/rootsplantsUK/>

They are also hoping to start up a number of community projects, and share the stories of keen gardeners, when safe to do so. If this is something that would interest you, please feel free to email alex@rootsplants.co.uk and he would be more than happy to talk to you about it.

A Byline from Penny Lounds

Please express thanks for the work of Roger Howard who has a huge volume of seeds to process and will have uplifted the society's sales. This also applies to Trevor Wilson, of course.

Horticultural Talks link

eventbrite.co.uk is a useful website for those of us wanting to gain more horticultural knowledge. Topics are varied and usually relate to the up-and-coming growing season. The good news is that many are FREE!

(Thanks to Ann Leslie for this contribution - (Ed.)

Notes from our Chairman, John Peacock

Potatoes, compost and fertilisers.

Members are encouraged to contact Trevor Wilson using trevorerhs@gmail.com to place your orders. Trevor is happy to collect and deliver your order. Please make your cheque payable to ERHS or have the exact cash (and remember to pay Trevor a 50p delivery charge.)

Annual General Meeting

Our AGM has had to be postponed. Later, we hope to organise the AGM using Zoom*. This will mean that those of you with a camera on your computer can 'attend' and you will receive an invitation to 'join' the meeting. More details to follow.

Covid

This dreadful virus continues to overshadow all our lives and we know how important it is to stay safe and follow all the government guidelines. Even though some of the membership has been vaccinated and others will be quite soon, we must continue to be vigilant until a time arrives when we can feel safe to meet again. Therefore, for the time being, the ERHS committee sends its very good wishes to every member and their families.

* If you would like to be invited to join the Zoom AGM, it would help us to know how many might do so, so we can ensure we will have a quorum - 20 members. Please email us at erhs@hotmail.co.uk. I will keep a list, which will be used only to send you the meeting link, when we organise it. (Ed.)

Things to do this month



General

Get hold of a box with dividers, and file your seed packets by the month they need to be sown in. You will be glad of this effort in the weeks to come. Check your tools are sound and your garden machinery is working. Give your tools and equipment the once over and apply a little TLC to anything that needs it.

Pruning and tidying

Prune wisteria now, cutting back summer side-shoots to 2 or 3 buds.

Prune summer-flowering clematis towards the end of the month before active growth begins.

Cut back the old foliage from ornamental grasses before growth begins. Clip them to within a few centimetres of the ground.

In the vegetable garden

Start chitting early potatoes - stand them on end in a module tray or egg box and place them in a bright, cool, frost-free place.

Prepare vegetable seed beds by removing all weeds and forking in plenty of compost. Cover prepared soil with sheets of black plastic to keep it drier and warmer in preparation for spring planting.

Remove yellowing leaves from brassicas, including Brussels sprouts, to prevent brassica downy mildew and grey mould from spreading.

In the fruit garden

Prune raspberry canes. It's your last chance to cut autumn-fruiting raspberry canes to the ground to stimulate new canes to fruit in the autumn. Cut the tips of summer-fruiting raspberry canes, that have grown beyond the top of their supports, just above a bud

Prune blackcurrant bushes, gooseberries and redcurrants to maintain a productive framework.

Mulch fruit trees with well-rotted manure or garden compost, taking care not to mound mulch up around the trunk.

Winter prune apple and pear trees while they're still dormant. This is your last chance to do so.

Force rhubarb plants for an early crop.

Cover outdoor strawberries with cloches to encourage an earlier crop.

Top dress fruit bushes with a slow-release, potassium-rich fertiliser to feed plants for the forthcoming season.

Other jobs about the garden

Trim deciduous hedges before the birds start nesting.

Cut back vines such as ivy, Virginia creeper and Boston ivy to help keep windows, gutters and roof tiles clear.

Wash empty pots by scrubbing them with hot water and a mild detergent. Rinse them well afterwards.

Keep feeding the birds. The weather is still cold this month so hang fat balls and keep bird feeders topped up.

Our web site has been updated

Not before time, you might say!

EVENTS have been blanked due to Covid-19.

NEWSLETTERS have been added up to January '21.

MISC documents: The Shed price list has been updated to the end of 2020.

Have a look and, if you spot any errors or see something you think could be improved, please email me on erhs@hotmail.co.uk (Ed.)

4. WANTED/FOR SALE/FREE

Members' advertisements are free of charge. Just telephone or email the editor (see newsletter heading.) [The copy deadline for the next newsletter is Wednesday 24th February.](#)

Nothing received this month.

Unless otherwise stated, where items are free, a donation to the Air Ambulance (when you next visit the trading shed) would be appreciated.