



# Batisford & District Gardening Club

August 2016 Edition 39

## Grow for Victory!

Another successful fete and flower show with a 1940's theme.

On July 2nd the Batisford and District Gardening Club's 9th Show, in conjunction with Combs Fete, was once again very well supported by BDGC members and local residents.

Entry numbers were down a little on last year's record, mainly because of the poor weather reducing entries in the vegetable section, but the 565 entries provided a colourful and interesting display both inside and outside the main marquee for the Fete visitors. Creative interpretations of the Flower Arranging classes were especially good this year. Our thanks go to everyone that entered, and also to all our organisers, helpers, supporters and the judges who generously give their time.



The Combs Fete had a 1940's theme this year and the Gardening Club followed that theme with a "Dig for Victory" display and some members dressed in modern-day replica Land Army outfits. Mrs Daphne Scarff went one better and found (and wore) her original Land Army clothing. With generally fine weather and lots of Fete activities to enjoy a good day was had by all.

Daphne Baldry



## 2016 BDGC Show Trophy winners

BDGC Trophy (most weight potatoes from one tuber) - Michael Warren; Webb Cup for vegetables - Michael Warren; Win and Bob Rolfe Cup for fruit - Steve Thompson; B.C.LF.R. Community Council Challenge Cup - Helen Ashley; Portway Cup for flowers - Mike Warren; B.C.LF.R. Community Cup - jointly Nigel Johnstone, Clive Harris, Bill Baldry; BDGC Salver for Flower Arranging - Anna Robinson; BDHC Craft Cup - Daphne Baldry; Edna Green Challenge Trophy for cookery - Jenny Forbes; BDGC Treasurer's Cup for photography - Daphne Baldry; BDGC Children's Cup - Rhys Watson; BDGC Junior Cup - Olly Chaplin; BDHS Miscellaneous Cup - Barbara Claridge. The BARCLIF 2012 Jubilee Trophy for most points overall was won by Daphne Baldry



### A village tradition

Despite the temperamental weather, the combined flower show and fete was a great success, and all those involved in organizing it should be congratulated and thanked for all their hard work. The marquee was a riot of colour and despite the vegetable entries being a bit thin on the ground (excuse the pun), there were a great number of entries. I found judging the flower arranging section very difficult this year as the standard was very high, as the couple of photos will show. Every year, following the show, Bill states IF we have a show next year. No IF about it Bill, it's now become a Combs Village tradition, as you and your team, have made it such a successful event.

Best Wishes

Jackie Collins



# Speakers & Trips

## 20th June 2016 - Visit to see Mike and Lois Warren's garden in Ipswich.

The morning of our planned visit was very wet, and there was another downpour at teatime, leading to fears that the gardens might be awash. However, the evening turned out fine and bright and the gardens were awash, but with colour, scent and interest not rain.



Behind the high, ornately sculptured Thuja plicata hedge, the front garden is a maze of small areas, narrow paths and a riot of plants large and small. Also small were the colourful but destructive, rosemary beetles that Mike spent some time picking out from the lavender. Even the best gardeners are obviously plagued sometimes like the rest of us.

In contrast to the front garden, which abuts the very busy main road, we found the back garden a quiet and comfortable place to enjoy Mike and Lois's hospitality. Yet more enviable pots, arches, greenhouse and veggie plot, and their accompanying plants, were there to be enjoyed and discussed. Many thanks to Mike and Lois for sharing it with us and for donating the money collected on the evening to club funds.



## 4<sup>th</sup> July – Alan Seager: “Queen Bee”

After a fascinating talk last year, Alan Seager, chairman of the Suffolk Beekeeper's Association, returned by popular demand to tell us about the life of a Queen Bee in a honey bee colony.

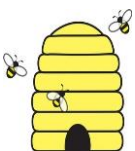
With good humour, Alan compared the queen bee to our own queen in that she is waited on by other bees with her sole job being that of laying eggs to maintain the colony – as many as 2000 a day! Some will be unfertilised male eggs, others female fertilised eggs – the difference being determined by the queen sensing very small differences in the size of the cells that have been prepared for her.

Everything in the hive is very precise, such as queen bees always taking 16 days from egg laying to hatching whilst the workers take 21 days. Alan gave the very attentive audience much more detail than I can include here but all delivered in a very smooth style so the hour and half talk passed very quickly.

Honey bees face many dangers in their short lives from human activities, but another great threat is currently just across the English Channel. The Asian hornet has spread across Europe and the fear is that it will soon reach these shores with potentially disastrous consequences.

Many of those present took the opportunity to buy some Suffolk honey while they still can.

Bill



**Bee Folklore** - Bees have been used as a kind of love test: there was a custom in Central Europe of Brides to be walking their partner past a beehive or nest to test the future faithfulness of their husband to be - if they were stung it was curtains for the marriage idea...

## Visit to East Ruston Old Vicarage Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> July 2016

The day started clear and bright, and we were all in good spirits as the coach started out on the journey to East Ruston. However, that was not to last and long before we reached Norwich the rain had started to fall.

Our first stop was the Taverham Nursery Centre. While some of us took the opportunity for a scone and a cup of tea, others hit the shops. As we left it was raining with a vengeance. Most made a quick dash for the coach, but some of the more enthusiastic shoppers had to queue in the rain to load their purchases onto the coach.

Things could only get better, and as we arrived at East Ruston the sun was starting to appear. We all spilled off the coach and quickly dispersed into the gardens. Some passed on the chance to buy a guide book, but quickly changed their minds as they got lost in the vast expanse of the Old Vicarage estate.

It soon became apparent that the creators of this masterpiece, Alan Gray and Graham Robeson, had served up something for everybody. The Woodland Garden alone could have occupied most of the visit.



The Desert Wash, designed to resemble parts of Arizona, was intriguing and unusual. The Mediterranean Garden overflowed with a wide range of exotic plants. For the more traditional gardener, there was the Rose Garden; and the Cornfield wildflower meadow, redolent of times past. And of course, the Tea Rooms with a tempting array of delicious cakes.

Much too soon, it was time to make our way back. All of us determined to come back another day to discover those parts we had surely missed. Or just to enjoy again these wonderful gardens. A verdant oasis in the midst of a vast agricultural plain.

Our thanks to Jim and Sandra Henson for organising a most rewarding and enjoyable visit.

Ian Clark

## 16<sup>th</sup> May – Visit to the gardens of Judith & Steve Thompson and Jenny and Colin Grainger

Many thanks to Judith & Steve and Jenny & Colin for opening up their beautiful and imaginative gardens. There was much to look at and admire and a few new faces to meet such as Bramble, pictured left.





# Gardening and Bats



**On first appearances gardening and bats might not seem to have much of a connection. However, several species of British bat, such as the common pipistrelle, live happily in close proximity to people and your garden can therefore provide an important foraging resource for them.**

## **So what can you do to make your garden more attractive to bats?**

All bat species in the UK eat insects and as flying uses a lot of energy they need to eat a lot – a pipistrelle can eat 3,000 small flies, midges and mosquitoes in one night! So the key to making your garden more bat friendly is to attract a wide variety of insects by having a range of different plants which flower throughout the year. A good mix of native annual and perennial plants with different colours, fragrances and flower shapes will attract a myriad of invertebrates which in turn will provide a continuous supply of food for bats.

Adding a pond or wet area to your garden is also another good way of increasing the number of insects available, with pond plants providing another important nectar source. Also many of the small flies, which form an important part of the diet of UK bats, have aquatic larvae so a pond provides a place for these grow. Just avoid stocking your pond with fish, they will Hoover up all the larvae meaning less food for bats!



Including bat boxes on trees in your garden, or even on your house, can also help the local bat population by providing them with places to roost. Bats will exploit a wide range of roosting opportunities, however in areas where roosting features are more limited bat boxes can provide an important resource. Boxes should be positioned in sheltered, sunny locations away from lighting and should be as high up as possible (at least 4m to 5m off the ground). Bats are constantly exploring their surroundings, however it can take several years for them to move in so don't be disappointed if they don't take up residence straight away!

With a few simple measures gardens can provide a fantastic place for bats, both for feeding and roosting, and can therefore help enhance their populations in built up areas.

For more information on bats in Suffolk and help attracting them to your garden visit the websites of the Suffolk Bat Group ([www.suffolkwildlifetrust.org/suffolkbatgroup](http://www.suffolkwildlifetrust.org/suffolkbatgroup)) and the Bat Conservation Trust ([http://www.bats.org.uk/pages/encouraging\\_bats.html](http://www.bats.org.uk/pages/encouraging_bats.html)).

James Meyer  
Suffolk Bat Group



## HONEY CAKE

### Ingredients

250g clear honey, plus 2 tbsp extra to glaze

225 unsalted butter

100g dark muscovado sugar

3 large eggs

300g elf raising flour



Preheat the oven to fan 140C/ conventional 160C/gas 3. Butter and line a 20cm round loosebottomed cake tin. Cut the butter into pieces and drop into a medium pan with the honey and sugar. Melt slowly over a low heat. When the mixture looks quite liquid, increase the heat under the pan and boil for about one minute. Leave to cool for 15-20 minutes, to prevent the eggs cooking when they are mixed in.

Beat the eggs into the melted honey mixture using a wooden spoon. Sift the flour into a large bowl and pour in the egg and honey mixture, beating until you have a smooth, quite runny batter.

Pour the mixture into the tin and bake for 50 minutes-1 hour until the cake is well-risen, golden brown and springs back when pressed. A skewer pushed into the centre of the cake should come out clean.

Turn the cake out on a wire rack. Warm 2 tbsp honey in a small pan and brush over the top of the cake to give a sticky glaze, then leave to cool. Keeps for 4-5 days wrapped, in an



## Poet's Corner



### The Glory of the Garden by Rudyard Kipling

Our England is a garden that is full of stately views,  
Of borders, beds and shrubberies and lawns and avenues,  
With statues on the terraces and peacocks strutting by;  
But the Glory of the Garden lies in more than meets the eye.  
For where the old thick laurels grow, along the thin red wall,  
You'll find the tool- and potting-sheds which are the heart of all  
The cold-frames and the hot-houses, the dung-pits and the tanks,  
The rollers, carts, and drain-pipes, with the barrows and the planks.

And there you'll see the gardeners, the men and 'prentice boys  
Told off to do as they are bid and do it without noise ;  
For, except when seeds are planted and we shout to scare the birds,  
The Glory of the Garden it abideth not in words.  
And some can pot begonias and some can bud a rose,  
And some are hardly fit to trust with anything that grows ;  
But they can roll and trim the lawns and sift the sand and loam,  
For the Glory of the Garden occupieth all who come.

Our England is a garden, and such gardens are not made  
By singing:- " Oh, how beautiful," and sitting in the shade  
While better men than we go out and start their working lives  
At grubbing weeds from gravel-paths with broken dinner-knives.  
There's not a pair of legs so thin, there's not a head so thick,  
There's not a hand so weak and white, nor yet a heart so sick  
But it can find some needful job that's crying to be done,  
For the Glory of the Garden glorifieth every one.

Then seek your job with thankfulness and work till further orders,  
If it's only netting strawberries or killing slugs on borders;  
And when your back stops aching and your hands begin to harden,  
You will find yourself a partner In the Glory of the Garden.  
Oh, Adam was a gardener, and God who made him sees  
That half a proper gardener's work is done upon his knees,  
So when your work is finished, you can wash your hands and pray  
For the Glory of the Garden that it may not pass away!

And the Glory of the Garden it shall never pass away!



## From Battsford to Beyond!

The pots of flowers from the Punch Bowl Inn, maintained by BDGC members, made it onto the launch pad of the Battsford moon rocket in the Stowmarket Carnival on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2016. The float looked brilliant, congratulations to all those involved.

Bill

### Bulb Advice

Ever wondered what to do with the Amaryllis bulb, given to you for Xmas, and has finished flowering indoors?

Don't discard it if, like me, you don't usually have any success in getting it to bloom next time. Plant it in the garden, in a sunny spot with its neck just proud of the soil, as mentioned in the July RHS magazine.

So this I did at the end of June and it grew amazingly quickly into this, with four heads to bloom.

Sandra Henson



### NGS Open Garden Sun 14 Aug (11-5)

**River Cottage**, Lower Rd, Lavenham, Sudbury CO10 9QJ.

Mr and Mrs Geoff Heald, 07747 827605, [geoff@artmarketing.co.uk](mailto:geoff@artmarketing.co.uk).

A tranquil plantsman's garden, with newly created woodland. £4, chd free. Home-made teas.

### Garden Check List – Late Summer

- Prepare soil for a new border or lawn.
- Plant early spring flowering bulbs.
- Take semi-ripe cuttings of shrubs.
- Deadhead flowering plants to promote new blooms.
- Cut back herbaceous plants after flowering for a second burst of foliage and flowers.
- Prune rambling roses as soon as they have flowered.
- Prune established climbers and deciduous shrubs that flower on the previous year's growth.
- Trim evergreen and conifer hedges in late summer.

### Quiz Answers – May Issue

1. Daffodil
2. Grape hyacinth
3. Sunflower
4. Love lies bleeding
5. Iris
6. Lilac
7. Passion Flower
8. Foxglove

## A Rare Find



### Much to our surprise we had 4 Bee Orchids growing in our back lawn this year.

The name came about as it looks similar to the female Bee, as well as having the same scent. This attracts the male Bee, who attempts to mate with it, thus pollinating it. Bee Orchids are also able to self pollinate. They are legally protected, so don't pick them. Mostly they only flower once in their lifetime. The seeds germinate in Spring and can take as long as 6yrs to flower. Growing 10-15cm tall they can have as many as 10 flowers on a stem and as they flower the leaves die off. As we do not use chemicals on our back lawn this will have encouraged them to grow here.

Sandra Henson

## Future Events

**Sunday 14th August** - Club BBQ from 3.00pm at The Blenheims, Bildeston Road, Combs IP14 2LA courtesy of Paul and Ruth Hansord. Free for members, £3 guests - bring your own drinks, glasses and vegetarian options if required.

**Monday 5th September** - Maggie Thorpe - Plant Heritage - details as in last newsletter.

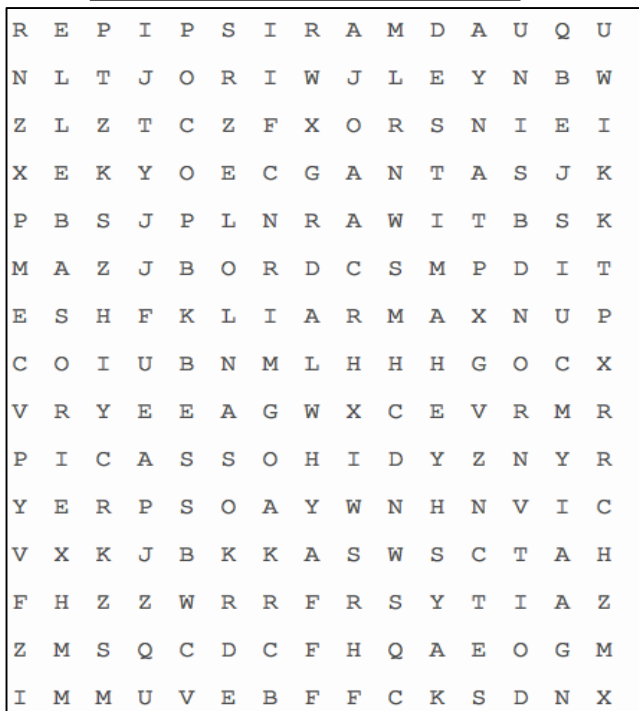
**Sunday 11th September** - Battsford Garage Trail from 10.00am. BDGC plant stall at the Punch Bowl. Offers of plants and produce for stall will be gratefully received. Contact Bill 01449 672168

**Monday 3rd October** - AGM with illustrated talk by Paul and Ruth Hansord on their South Tanzanian safari. Free drinks and nibbles. Come along and share your thoughts on another successful year and look forward to the year ahead.

**Monday 7th November** - Alan Shipp - "Hyacinths: The spring kaleidoscope flower". Alan's resume: He started growing hyacinths on a commercial scale in 1985 becoming the designated National Collection Holder in 1993. The collection now holds approx 235 varieties, by far the Worlds largest collection. Mr Shipp is a member of the RHS Bulb Committee and is referred to by the RHS as Mr Hyacinth.

**Monday 5th December** - Quiz with Maestro George Bethell setting the questions again. A great fun evening with free food (bring your own drinks). Start time 7.00 pm.

## SPUD WORDSEARCH



Can you find the potatoes below?

ANYA	CHARLOTTE
ESTIMA	KING EDWARD
MARISPIPER	NADINE
OSPREY	PICASSO
ROSABELLE	SASSY
WINSTON	YUKON GOD



*Spud trivia – Many C18th French peasants believed potatoes caused leprosy and refused to eat them!*