



July 2020: Special Edition 15

Dear Members,

We all love plants and gardening in one way or another.....but is there anyone out there who also loves web designing or setting up websites (or have a family member who is proficient at this, or know someone who is)? If so, please get in touch as we are looking to make some changes to our website and would welcome some expert advice and assistance!

If you were interested in the article in Edition 13 on Clevedon Violets, more information is available in a booklet which you can find on Clevedon's "Festival in the Cloud" available via www.discoverclevedon.co.uk – thanks Peter for highlighting this.

If you have anything to share, photos of your gardens, cartoons or one-liners (thanks John!), or Did You Know? facts, please send them to me. kateawilkinson@hotmail.co.uk.

Happy gardening!

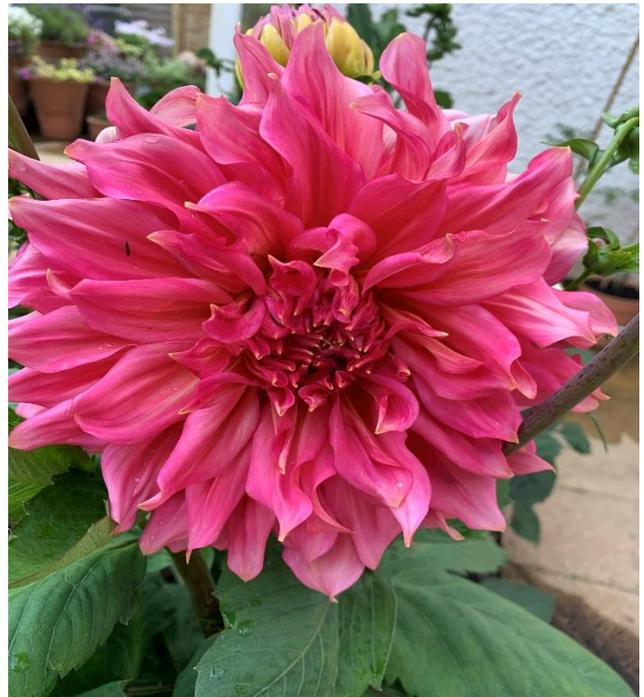
Kate Anthony Wilkinson (Chair)

MEMBERS GARDENS



Wonderful red currants from Mary's garden – which she says made some lovely jelly!

Marisa has been growing some superb Dahlias – hope to see her exhibits at the Flower Show next year!



Seeing such lovely photos of LA Dahlias, I feel that we need some Dahlia Plant facts this week to give us more inspiration for growing these amazing showy blooms.



PLANT FACTS: DAHLIAS

Although they have been grown in Europe for well over two hundred years, Dahlias are thought to originate in Mexico and are that country's national flower. Dahlias are believed to have been named by 18th-century Spanish botanist Abbé Cavanille in honor of Andreas Dahl, a Swedish scientist and environmentalist.

Dahlia florets are often mistakenly called petals, even by horticulturists, but in fact every floret is a flower in its own right. Dahlias are part of the Asteraceae family, also known as the Daisy, Aster or Composite family. The name Asteraceae refers to the flowers' appearance, which resembles a star surrounded by rays.

Tips on growing Dahlias:

1. Make sure you carefully pick your dahlia tubers, choosing fat, healthy-looking tubers from a reputable supplier.
2. Wait until any risk of frost has passed before planting. Dahlias like to be planted in full sun and rich soil.
3. Once established, make sure you keep your plants well watered. Start feeding your dahlias once a month and deadhead them regularly.
4. Before the first frost carefully dig out your tubers, gently clean off any excess soil and then store them in a box of dry sand or sawdust in a dry place where the temperature will remain above 5 degrees.



There has been much debate over the classification of Dahlias. In 1904, there were officially only five types: cactus, pompom, single, show and fancy. More recently, many more types have appeared and from 2010 Dahlias have been split into fourteen groups.



You can now have ball dahlias, pompom dahlias, cactus dahlias, single flowered dahlias, anemone flowered and double orchid dahlias.



Dahlias come in a huge variety of colours and like most unscented flowers they use their vibrant blooms to attract pollinating insects. Dahlias can be found in almost every colour except blue.

The Aztecs grew Dahlia tubers as a food crop but attempts to introduce them to the European diet didn't succeed. Not sure I would fancy trying one!

Dahlias come all sizes – from a dainty diameter of 2cm to show-stopping varieties known as 'dinner plate' dahlias, which can grow up to 25cm in diameter.

To keep your cut Dahlias looking their best for as long as possible, place your vase in a cool shady spot. Trim the stems regularly and change the water every couple of days. Always use the flower food provided or substitute with a teaspoon of sugar, two to three drops of bleach and a dessertspoon of vinegar.



In the language of flowers, also known as florigraphy, Dahlias represent "dignity" and

"my gratitude exceeds your care". So, they are a great choice for thank you gifts.

Thanks to the real Flower Company for facts and photos.

LAST WEEK'S QUIZ:

Answers – Flora Symbolism

1. True Love – Red
2. Desire & Passion – Orange
3. Love at first sight – Lavender
4. Grace – Pink
5. Purity, innocence, virtue – white
6. Gratitude – Dark pink
7. Unconscious beauty – Burgundy
8. Mystery, attaining the impossible – Blue

QUIZ TIME: NATIONAL FLOWERS

Many countries have a national flower. Match the 10 national flowers with their respective country.

- | | | |
|-------------|-----------------------|----------|
| 1. Lavender | 2. Lily of the Valley | 3. Tulip |
| 4. Protea | 5. Edelweiss | 6. Lotus |
| 7. Thistle | 8. Red Poppy | 9. Iris |
| 10. Dahlia | | |

1	Austria	
2	Mexico	
3	Belgium	
4	India	
5	France	
6	Finland	
7	Holland	
8	Portugal	
9	Scotland	
10	South Africa	



Horticultural Philosophy

Are allotment owners prone to losing the plot?

My husbands a pessimist; he sees the world though woes-coloured glasses.

Thanks John!

DID YOU KNOW ...?

Cardboard toilet rolls or kitchen paper roll tubes cut in half make great plant pots for seeds. Make snips around the bottom 2cm long and then fold in the tabs to create a base. Fill with compost and plant your seeds. When the seedlings are ready to pot on you can just plant the whole cardboard tube as it will disintegrate and compost down in the new pot.

Cut old tights into strips to make plant ties – the soft flexible nature of the fabric will protect new shoots as they grow.

Collect fallen leaves when they are wet and store in a bin bag for 2 years. The result is a nutritious leaf mulch that can be used around the garden.

An old pointed potato peeler does a good job of digging out weeds from the lawn.

Restore old leather shoes by rubbing with a slice of raw potato or a drop of vegetable oil and then polish off (humm...let me know if this one works!).

10 of the best plants for pots

According to award-winning garden designer Chris Beardshaw these are his best container plants – do you agree? Mine will always be a glossy red geranium (or two)!

1. Cosmos – annual cosmos bring instant cheer to the garden with their airy, feathery stems and large open flowers.
2. Alpines – pots enable you to create the conditions liked by alpines and a pot raises their height for attention.
3. Mint – definitely needs a pot to contain its spread!
4. Hostas – having them in pots deters the slugs and snails (my snails can climb mountains!).
5. Scented Pelargoniums – growing them in pots means you can move them around to enjoy the smell and then bring them in for winter.
6. Sedum – ideal in troughs together with saxifrage.
7. Agapanthus – the bulbs love to be congested so are an ideal candidate for containers.
8. Lavender – can withstand dry spells so works well in a pot (photo below).
9. Box (Boxus) – can withstand being grown in containers very happily.
10. Echium – they don't survive outdoors over-winter so a pot allows them to be brought in.

