



## May 2020: Special Edition 8

Dear Members,

I hope that everyone is keeping well and safe and adapting to the new social distancing regime. We are so lucky to have gardens and countryside around us, being able to look out and see green hills and trees. You may also have been enjoying the Chelsea Flower Show alternative on the TV.

Thank you for your lovely garden pictures. We also have another quiz (thanks Mary!) some new plant facts and ideas. Contributions please to [kateawilkinson@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:kateawilkinson@hotmail.co.uk)

Enjoy your gardens, pots and terraces!

**Kate Anthony Wilkinson** (Chair)

## MEMBERS GARDENS



Some lovely photos from Val and Cliff's garden – pink bluebells, camellia, cherry tree and a pot of violas and daisies. They even have Long Ashton strawberries (only missing the cream!).





Deryll has some wonderful Aquilegia (aka Granny Bonnets) in her garden.



## WATER WELL

Sustainability includes good water conservation; something to remember after one of the driest Aprils for many years. Water butts or water collection kits can soon collect a good store of rain water, which is much preferred by plants to chemical treated tap water. Established plants grown in the ground perform and can cope with dry periods if their roots prospect deep into the soil. Young and newly planted ones, those grown in pots and many edibles do require a regular drink.



How to Water: Light sprinkling which only wets the surface is rather a waste of time. This draws the plants roots to the surface

[www.lahortsoc.co.uk](http://www.lahortsoc.co.uk)

discouraging good deep root development. Scratch the surface of soil as it may be dry on top but good and moist an inch or so below. Soak the area around the plant so that all its roots can benefit. Stand pots in saucers to prevent water draining away and place them out of the midday sun so they do not dry out as quickly.

Where to Water: Be effective and water where its most needed rather than randomly. Concentrate on pots and containers which are free draining so may need watering even if it has rained, seedling plants and anything newly planted that is trying to establish a root system that could dry out and lead to a stressed plant. If it was been warm and windy, pots dry out very quickly. Leafy vegetables and moisture-loving edibles such as beans, peas, tomatoes and plants in the process of developing soft fruit also need good levels of moisture in the soil.

When to water: Water early in the morning or in the evening when the water will not evaporate in the heat of the day. Avoid wetting delicate or young leave in direct sunlight as they may scorch.

Lawns: Don't worry about lawns; they can be neglected during dry spells rather than using tap water. The grass may go a bit yellow, but it will not die and will green up quickly after some rain. To retain moisture do not cut the grass so short or leave some or your clippings on top.

## ONLINE GARDENS

With no Chelsea Flower Show this year, the BBC have been giving us virtual tours of the gardens of some of the presenters. You can see the gardens of newsreader Sophie Raworth (SW London) and gardener Joe Swift



(Hackney, East London). If you missed them, try catch up on I-Player. You can also go behind the scenes at nurseries and get insider information – see [www.rhs.org.uk](http://www.rhs.org.uk).

Closed to the public, some of the country's top gardens are also available to enjoy on line. A selection below:

Arundel Castle Gardens - A formidable Normal castle in 40 acres of landscaped grounds with a walled garden set in the shadows of the gothic cathedral. With more than 80,000 bulbs, the gardens have a wonderful tulip festival. Log on to enjoy the spectacle with regular updated video footage ([www.tulipfestival.co.uk](http://www.tulipfestival.co.uk)).



Cambridge University Botanic Garden: Based in the heart of the city, the 40-acre garden has a wonderful collection of plants. Each week, Sally Petitt films a walk around the gardens while pointing out some of its seasonal highlights ([www.botanic.cam.ac.uk](http://www.botanic.cam.ac.uk)).

Exbury Gardens: Renowned for its amazing collection of rhododendrons and azaleas spread over 200-acres. Staff regularly post videos on its Twitter, Facebook and Instagram feeds, including drone footage of the garden's famous azalea bowl ([www.exbury.co.uk](http://www.exbury.co.uk)).



National Garden Scheme: Although the 3,700 private gardens which are usually opened for charity across England and Wales are closed (for the first time in the Scheme's 93 year history), many garden owners have filmed tours of their gardens for others to enjoy on the charity's website ([www.ngs.org.uk](http://www.ngs.org.uk)).

Similar tours are available of Scotland Garden Scheme gardens including Shephard House in East Lothian and Parkvilla, a Victorian garden in Aberdeenshire ([www.scotlandshardens.org](http://www.scotlandshardens.org)).



## HERBS

Rosemary – Use sprigs to flavour meat or finely chop in marinates. Also, rather good in gin and tonic!

Mint – Pop into summer drinks (lovely with Pimm's) or add to baby potato salad. I like to add mint to homemade lamb burgers. Add to strawberries for a tang.

Thyme – Perfect with lamb, white fish and Mediterranean chicken.



## QUIZ TIME : TV Gardeners enter the Flower Show

Five well known TV gardeners entered the Long Ashton Flower Show. Each gardener entered a different class, wore a different lucky colour and was placed in a different position by the judges.

When you discover a positive piece of information put a large dot in the appropriate square in the logic puzzle grid.

Put an X in the grid when you discover a piece of negative information. Cross refer all your information until you can complete the logic puzzle grid.

Use the information below to complete the logic puzzle grid and then fill in the table of results below the grid.

### Logic Puzzle Grid

	Pink	Purple	Green	Red	Yellow	Onion	Pear	Dahlia	Cider	Crochet	First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth
Carol Klein															
Monty Don															
Chris Beardshaw															
Charlie Dimmock															
Rachel de Thame															
First															
Second															
Third															
Fourth															
Fifth															
Onion															
Pear															
Dahlia															
Cider															
Crochet															



## Table of Results

Gardener	Coloured Top	Show Class	Placed
Carol Klein			
Monty Don			
Chris Beardshaw			
Charlie Dimmock			
Rachel de Thame			

- 1 Charlie Dimmock didn't wear the pink top, nor was she placed third.
- 2 One of the male gardeners finished in fifth place. This was not Monty Don who took part in the onion class.
- 3 Carol Klein competed in the crochet class and wore a green top
- 4 The person wearing the purple top was placed by the judges one place higher than the female gardener who entered the dahlia class, who in turn was placed one place ahead of Rachel de Thame who competed in the cider class.
- 5 The pear class was entered by the gardener in the red top.

## LAST WEEK'S QUIZ – IT'S A WAR OUT THERE IN THE GARDEN!

### ANSWERS

#### Good Guys

BROWN	CENTIPEDE
DAMSEL	FLY
DRAGON	FLY
GROUND	BEETLE
HOVER	FLY
LACE	WING
LADY	BIRD
PARASITIC	WASP

#### Bad Guys

BLACK	FLY
GALL	MITE
LEAF	MINER
LILY	BEETLE
SCALE	INSECT
VINE	WEEVIL
WINTER	MOTH
WOOLLY	APHID



## PLANT FACTS: RHODODENDRONS and AZALEAS

Everyone knows and loves the spectacular *RHODODENDRONS*; some species flowering as early as March, others not until July, with May and June being the most usual months. There are well over 500 species (with thousands of named varieties and cultivars) the bulk of which were discovered originally by the great plant “hunters” of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, mostly in China, Tibet and Burma.

Unfortunately most are acid-loving, so they do not grow at all well when planted in local Long Ashton limey soils. For this reason, they are often grown in raised beds or in large containers, planted in an ericaceous compost - do not water with local tap water which is very hard and limey.



Of all the species, *R. Yakushimanum* (above) is one of the most attractive. The young shoots are silvery, the flowers deep pink in bud fading to apple-blossom pink and then to white before they drop. *Britannia* is red, slow growing and compact. *Pink Pearl* is good but will eventually become tall and bare at the base, *Elizabeth* is small and excellent for containers. There are many others.

Keep them near the house when in flower and at their best. At other times, move the tub away to a shady corner, protected from the summer sunshine.



Exbury Gardens (see earlier item) is a great place to see Rhododendrons.

Azaleas are botanically classified as Rhododendrons and are often found with Rhododendrons in catalogues. They too are ericaceous and hate lime in both soil and water so are often grown in containers or raised beds containing ericaceous compost. It is not sufficient to dig a planting hole and fill it with compost as water will drain into it bringing lime from elsewhere.

There are several kinds of deciduous Azaleas, the hardiest being the *Mollis Group*, flowering in May and up to 4 ft tall. The *Ghent Azaleas* are slightly taller at 5 ft and flower in May/June. The *Knaphill Group* also flower in May/June but have a larger colour range and better autumn foliage than the *Ghents*. The *Exbury Hybrids* are the finest of all the Azaleas producing extra-large flowers in vivid colours. There are some dwarf evergreen varieties which are the best for rock gardens as they are very slow growing; these are also known as *Japanese Azaleas*.

Thanks to Chris Young for Plant Facts.