



Gnosall Allotments & Garden Association Newsletter

Issue 19

Feb 2014

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EMERGENCY INFORMATION FOR THE ALLOTMENTS

Should anyone experience an accident the post code to use when calling for an ambulance / emergency services is ST20 0EZ and the NGR : SJ 82733 20660; members should note for your record.

NEW COMMITTEE MEMBER

Welcome to Susan Stevens, a garden member who joined GAGA's committee this month (February).

Susan has lived in Gnosall for 4 years, and has two children currently at University. Her "interests" include cooking and gardening, the latter involving growing vegetables, fruit and flowers in Containers.



SHED OPENING & GOODS

Shed opening will be on all Sundays and some of Saturdays commencing with our opening end Feb until the end of September, first opening 10.00 to 12.00 am on Sunday March 2nd. A detailed schedule of opening will be available on our web site and notice boards.

Our Shed goods are heavily discounted and are a proven value for money purchase.

Sample of goods available

Item Description	Unit Qty	Item Description	Unit Qty
COMPOST			
Multipurpose Compost	60 ltr	Bird netting 6 m wide	
Standard Grow bags	4 plant	Fleece - 3 mtr. Wide	
Ericaceous compost	70 ltr	Ultra fine insect mesh 3 m wide	
Multigrow peat free compost	70 ltr	Round pots 4" & 5"	
John Innes Seed	30 ltr	Hanging basket liners 12" & 14"	
John Innes No 2	30 ltr	OTHER CHEMICALS	
Mini-chip bark	80 ltr	Weedol	Sachet
FERTILISERS	5 ltr	Fungicide	6 Sachets
Vermiculite	3 Kg	Doff Slug killer pellets	450g
Fish, Blood, Bone	3 Kg	Cabbage collars	30 pack
Growmore	3 Kg	Potato bags	per 3
Potato	3 Kg	Phostrogen	40 can
Rose	3 Kg	Tomorite	1 litre
Spring & Summer Lawn			
Lawn-weed, Feed, Moss Kill	3 Kg	Fish, Blood, Bone	25 Kg
Super Phosphate	3 Kg	Growmore	25 Kg
Sulphate of Potash	3 Kg	Potato	25 Kg
Sulphate of Ammonia	3 Kg	Rose	25 Kg
Epsom Salts	3 Kg	Spring & Summer Lawn	25 Kg
Dolomite Lime	3 Kg	Lawn-weed, Feed, Moss Kill	25 Kg
Pelleted Chicken	4Kg	Super Phosphate	25 Kg
SUNDRIES			
Green Twine	Per each	Sulphate of Potash	25 Kg
Polypropylene twine 280 m	Per each	Sulphate of Ammonia	25 Kg
Canes 5, 6 & 8ft	5 ft each	Epsom Salts	25 Kg
Plastic Labels	x50	Dolomite Lime	25 Kg
		Pelleted Chicken	20 Kg

Those members with current £1 Shed Vouchers – these are still valid to use until end of March.

For those members who need to where to find us the adjacent illustration (care of Google Earth) should help.



SEED & POTATO SEED ORDERS

All DT Brown seed orders have been delivered but there 5 members awaiting their DT Brown non seed orders. Any queries please contact the Seed Secretary Ray Woodward on

Codnor Seed Potatoes are due to be delivered to us later this month. Following packing into nets members who have already placed orders will have their orders delivered to them.

For members who did not pre-order their seed potatoes there will be a selection of Seed Potatoes for sale on the first GGA Shed opening , scheduled for Sunday morning March 2nd.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

GAGA are holding an interesting gardening event for which all proceeds will go to the MacMillan Cancer Support's registered Charity 261017.

**WE ARE
MACMILLAN.
CANCER SUPPORT**

The gardener's theme is "The ABC of Vegetables for the Kitchen".



We have booked a national expert to be our Speaker for the evening, Ray Bassett.

Ray is a member and Judge of the National Vegetable Society, he locally lives in Holton. He has exhibited at RHS and other major national gardening shows, securing many first and second place prizes and circa 150 trophies.

Ray Bassett is one of the most sought after Speakers at Gardening clubs within the local region due his reputation of being very informative and enjoyable to listen too.

Date: Wednesday, March 26th 2014 at 7.30pm prompt.

Place: The Grosvenor Centre, High Street, Gnosall.

Tickets: £5.00 per head (including Tea / Coffee and Biscuits)

Tickets are available from the end February at the

- Gnosall Post Office, and**
- Gnosall Allotments and Gardens Shed.**
- Or contact 01785 824211 or 822348**

Questions for the Speaker in advance will be given priority, so please ask your ticket seller for a "question form" and hand it back to them, with your question by Friday 21st March 2014 latest. Other questions can be submitted on the night.

For a rewarding evening for all those that attend please make a note in your diary!

We look forward to seeing on the night.

GARDENING TIPS

Source www.gardenerstips.co.uk

Useful reminders for February

General

In the UK it is still too cold to start most seeds and plants. Leave those tempting seedlings in the garden centres and wait until at least the end of the month to sow broad beans, early peas, leeks and sweet peas.

On a fine February morning you can improve your garden with a spring clean. Cut down old annuals that you left in place for the seed heads, edge the lawn if it looks forlorn, and tidy up loose leaves.

Treat paths that have moss and algae built up and repair any raised or misplace paving stones.

Spread well-rotted manure or compost on the top of your vegetable patch and around hungry shrubs like roses.

Review seed and plant catalogues and decide what you want to grow and where. If you are going to give each plant enough space you do not need as many plants as you expect so buy fewer good quality seeds and stock.

Keep feeding the birds; they will soon have young to feed

Advanced Tips

If you left your soil turned over in large clumps for the frost to break them down to a fine tilth, and then wait a bit longer as February can have some terrific frosts.

With a heated propagator you can start fuchsia cuttings with a bit of bottom heat.

Remember all the early plants you start now will need space and protection from frost for quite a while yet. I always grow more than I can protect.

Look after your quality tools. Give them a clean and sharpen before they are pressed into really active service. Prepare an oily sand plunge pit so you can quickly oil and clean them in busy period.

Prune and reshape fruit trees but not stone fruit which need to wait until summer.

Check over and do any preventative maintenance jobs now so you can concentrate your efforts on growing show stopping plants later on.

Garden Tasks

Finish Planting trees and shrubs. The earlier trees and shrubs can be planted the better.

Prepare Soil. If the soil is not frozen it is a good time to prepare the soil through digging where necessary.

Finish Pruning of Roses or other shrubs

Towards the end of February, you can start dahlia tubers and similar tubers such Gloxina and Begonias indoors.

The Vegetable Garden

Sow early crops under glass. Early vegetables can include mustard, cress, parsnips, broad beans and lettuce.

Towards end of the month you can start thinning out seedlings

Prune autumn fruiting Raspberries. Autumn producing raspberries want to be cut back to 6 inches as they fruit on new growth

For those members who are contemplating re-design of a patio and selecting suitable plants do have a look at the Sunday Times articles "Part 3 Problem Gardens" at www.thesundaytimes.co.uk/home .

Useful reminders for March

Garden Tasks

Lift and divide large clumps of herbaceous plants. Remove the old woody stalks and add them to the compost.

Plant and display your containers and baskets in sheltered areas now. Try a combination of pansies, heather, grape hyacinth and narcissus.

Plant new lily-of-the-valley pips. Mulch well with compost to protect against unforeseen cold spells.

Plant dahlia tubers that have been stored over the winter. Continue to take cuttings.

Start fertilizing house plants as soon as there are more hours of daylight than darkness.

When buying house plants avoid plant with roots coming out of drainage holes; as well as large plants in small pots, or small plants in large pots.

Some plants can now be set out during the day. If it is mild you can leave them out.

Fertilize the soil around the base of lilacs and primroses in late February or early March.

Half-hardy annuals must be planted densely. Raise plenty of plants by sowing seeds in February or March. Sow summer blooming annuals in late March.

The Vegetable Garden

Dig vegetable plots, if not completed. Use well decomposed garden compost.

Sow onion, carrot, beets, broccoli, peas, radishes, spinach and broad bean seeds approximately a foot apart. Plant shorter vegetables south of taller ones to reduce shade problems.

Now is the time to set out your perennial vegetables such as horse - radish, asparagus and artichokes.

Plant early potato crops a foot apart. In colder areas it is best to wait another three or four weeks.

Sow celery seeds in greenhouses.

Plant young cauliflower approximately 2 feet apart. Make sure the soil is firm around the roots.

Lawns and ground cover

Get ready for regular mowing. Your lawn will grow more rapidly in spring. Set the mower blades high for the first cutting; gradually reducing height with each mow.

Add compost into ground covers and feed lightly with a complete fertilizer to encourage the rooting of runner stems. Brush and scatter worm casts.

Dethatch edge and weed as needed. Check edges for repair where soil has fallen against the lawn.

Clip back established ground covers to encourage dense growth.

Rake up bare spots to expose the soil for reseeding.

Compost and Prevent Weeds naturally:

Save your lawn - clippings, eggshell and other soft materials.

Add it to a compost heap where it will decompose and can be used as soil or mulch around plants. This also prevents weed growth and provides food for your plants.

If you must use chemicals for pests and weeds in the lawn; do not use those lawn clippings in the compost afterwards.

CONTAINER GROWING TIPS

Rewarding vegetable crops

Source <http://apps.rhs.org.uk/advice/Profile.aspx?pid=527>

Beetroot: sow in March at 10cm (4in) spacing. The young leaves can be used as 'spinach'. Follow these with quick growing crops of late summer salads. See AGM beetroot

Broad beans: sow from February at 20cm (8in) spacing. The tops can be pinched out to reduce blackfly attacks and also for use as 'greens'. The broad beans can be followed in June or July with beetroot for late summer crops. See AGM beans and peas

Carrots: sow Nantes or Amsterdam cultivars from February for June harvesting. Thin seedlings to 8cm (3in) between plants. Cover the containers with fleece from April onwards to exclude carrot fly. After the carrots, sow French beans to gather in September. See AGM carrots

Herbs: parsley, for example, can be sown in March for harvesting from June; coriander is also an attractive and popular crop. Basil is another great herb for pots. Repeat crops can be sown for late summer harvest

Lettuces: mini lettuces such as 'Little Gem' and 'Tom Thumb', spaced at 15cm (6in), can be sown from January for June harvesting. Follow the lettuces with leeks for winter harvesting. See AGM lettuces

Peas: sow 'mange-tout' cultivars with edible pods from March; plant them out at 15cm (6in) spacing; harvest in June and follow with salad leaves for late summer. See AGM beans and peas

Potatoes: plant early cultivars from March with one tuber for every 30cm of pot diameter. See AGM potatoes

Salad leaves: sow from February aiming for 5cm (2in) between plants. Rocket, coriander, lettuce, chicory and spinach are tasty choices. Harvest by pinching off the top few salad leaves, leaving a stump to re-sprout for follow-on crops

Salad onions: sow from February with 3cm (1 1/4in) between plants. Pull them up when they get big enough. By July, you should be able to re-sow with finger carrots for bunches of baby carrots in October. See AGM onions

Spinach: sow from February aiming for 10cm (4in) between plants. Spinach quickly runs to seed, so follow it with courgettes in June for late summer fruits. See AGM spinach

SEASONAL RECIPE

Nigella's Beetroot & Ginger Chutney

Source: www.bbc.co.uk/food/recipes/beetrootandgingerchutney_90622



Ingredients

500g/1lb 2oz fresh beetroot, peeled, finely chopped

1kg/2lb 2oz cooking apples, peeled, quartered, cored, roughly chopped

275g/10oz red onion, finely chopped

2.5cm/1in piece fresh ginger, peeled, grated

75g/2 1/2oz crystallised stem ginger, finely chopped

350g/12oz soft light brown sugar

2 tsp Maldon salt or 1 tsp table salt

1 tsp ground allspice

750ml/1 pint 7fl oz. red wine vinegar

Preparation method

1. Place the beetroot, apple and red onion into a large pan.
2. Add the fresh ginger, crystallised ginger, brown sugar, salt and ground allspice.
3. Add the vinegar and stir to mix well.
4. Bring to the boil, then turn down the heat and simmer for approximately one hour, stirring every now and again, until the beetroot pieces are tender.
5. Spoon into sterilised jars and seal. Keep refrigerated and use within four weeks.

Storage

You will need 6 x 250ml/9oz sealable jars, with vinegar-proof lids, such as Kilner jars or re-usable pickle jars

G.A.G.A. COMMITTEE MEMBERS (and plot numbers)

Ray Finney	32	Chairman	Frank Insull	10
Lynn Whittick	29/30	Secretary	Bob Colman	J
Susan Howlett	A	Treasurer	Simon Whittick	29/30
Tony Barrow	L		Ray Woodward.	11
Phil Barnes	55		Ann Newman	12D
Susan Stevens	(Gardner)			

All Committee members are keen to help all members and keep you informed on what is happening. If you have any questions, or want information, please do contact us.