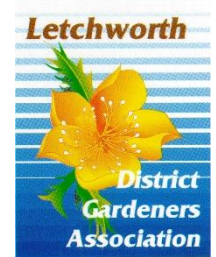


GLEANINGS FROM THE COMPOST HEAP

LITE

SPRING 2024



SUMMER EVENTS

Thursday 23rd May at 7:30pm



One week later than usual, Sue Mitchell will give a presentation entitled 'Enraptured with Raptors', involving some real-life birds of prey.

Letchworth Golf Club, Letchworth Lane, Letchworth, SG6 3NQ.

Wednesday 5th June from 10am

Coffee Morning at Tapps Tea Rooms, Wallington Road, Baldock, SG7 6RS.

Friday 14th June from 2:30pm

Tea and cake afternoon at Dimples Coffee Lounge, Willian Way, Letchworth, SG6 2HJ. There is no need to book, just come along.

Thursday 20th June at 7:30pm

'No Work Gardening!' with Bob Flowerdew at Central Methodist Church, Letchworth.



Bob is a prolific writer, broadcaster, and organic gardener. His witty yet informative talk pokes fun at commonly accepted gardening advice and pours vitriol over the heads of foolish garden experts who proffer it.

Everyone welcome, tickets are £15 each. Please contact Jane on 01462 635745, email meetings@ldga.org.uk or buy them at meetings or at the Trading Store.

Sunday 30th June 11am – 5pm

Letchworth Open Gardens.

Over 20 gardens will be open, including many belonging to our members. Entry is £9 in advance or £10 on the day.



Wednesday 3rd July from 10am

Coffee Morning at Tapps Tea Rooms.

Sunday 7th July from 1pm

LDGA Stall at Willian Fair.

Monday 8th July 2-5pm

Own-transport outing to Gotha Gardens, near Ashwell, with tour, tea, and cake.

Started in 1990, the gardens now include a topiary garden, a rose garden, a woodland garden and tea lawn with cottage garden beds.

Members £14; non-members £16. To book or to get more information, please contact Jane on 01462 635745, email outings@ldga.org.uk or come to see us at meetings or at the Trading Store.

Saturday 13th July 2pm – 4:30pm

LDGA Summer Show at Free Church Hall, Gernon Road, Letchworth, SG6 1NX.

Thursday 18th July at 6:30pm

LDGA members' picnic at the store garden.



Members are invited to join us for a picnic on our garden near the Trading Store. We will bring the food, you bring your own drink and a garden chair to sit on. Booking essential, email meetings@ldga.org.uk

Wednesday 7th August from 10am

Coffee Morning at Tapps Tea Rooms.

Thursday 15th August at 7:30pm



'Great Gardens of Great Britain' with Andrew Babicz.

From Sissinghurst to Kew and from Levens Hall to Harlow Carr, find out why these gardens are "Great".

Letchworth Golf Club,
Letchworth Lane,
Letchworth,
SG6 3NQ.

Friday 23rd August from 2:30pm

Tea and cake afternoon at Dimples Coffee Lounge, Willian Way, Letchworth, SG6 2HJ.

PLANT STALLS

If you are taking cuttings, divisions or potting up self-sown seedlings this spring, please could you spare a few for us as well? We are planning to have a couple of plant stalls in early July so will need a good variety of things to sell. Drop them in at the Trading Store or email enquiries@ldga.org.uk



SUMMER SHOW



It's just over two months away, so it's time to start thinking about your entries for the Summer Show on 13th July. New classes for 2024 include: a jar of jam made from your early season fruits, and a flower arrangement to celebrate 'Sixty Summer Shows'.

If you are out and about, here's a quick reminder of the photography themes:

- The number 60
- A study in black and white
- An orchid

Please be aware that exhibit staging will finish at 11:15am, a quarter of an hour earlier than previous shows. So, get in early, it always takes longer than you think to set-up.

If you're not exhibiting, just come along for a look round and a slice of home-made cake. If anyone is willing to make a cake for the afternoon refreshments, please let us know by emailing shows@ldga.org.uk



MAY FLOWERS WORD SEARCH

P	Y	L	L	M	T	W	E	O	S	M	U	I	L	L	A
K	S	W	V	A	U	U	H	T	M	H	P	K	P	X	A
P	E	L	E	G	B	R	L	L	I	E	C	K	I	U	K
F	S	S	L	I	X	U	Q	I	O	D	V	A	V	I	X
W	O	P	B	E	S	G	R	N	P	D	L	J	L	S	W
I	R	K	G	U	B	E	I	N	P	S	B	D	P	I	C
S	B	S	Z	H	T	E	I	U	U	O	Z	R	R	F	L
T	H	L	K	J	S	T	U	S	I	M	P	H	L	X	G
E	Y	A	Y	C	I	X	E	L	N	N	T	P	E	I	X
R	T	J	W	Y	O	O	Q	R	B	A	Q	T	I	J	F
I	S	T	D	T	Z	T	L	A	C	A	P	Z	B	E	F
A	E	Y	U	H	H	R	S	S	U	U	M	Z	B	S	S
H	N	Y	X	J	J	O	X	C	H	G	P	K	M	N	I
U	O	P	F	L	K	O	R	U	O	Q	O	S	G	H	V
R	H	N	V	G	A	E	S	N	S	G	V	Z	P	S	Z
W	A	L	L	N	O	R	D	N	E	D	O	D	O	H	R

- LILAC ▪ POPPIES ▪ BLUEBELLS
- ROSES ▪ PANSIES ▪ LABURNUM
- TULIPS ▪ ALLIUMS ▪ HAWTHORN
- STOCKS ▪ HONESTY ▪ BUTTERCUPS
- PEONIES ▪ WISTERIA ▪ RHODODENDRON

Find these May flowering plants hidden in the grid: they can be backwards, forwards, up, down or diagonal.

RHODODENDRONS

One of the plants most synonymous with May-flowering is the rhododendron. Love them or hate them, this is their time of year.



Here are some rhododendron facts.

Rhododendron is a very large genus of woody plants in the family Ericaceae; hence it's liking for more acidic soils.



The smallest species can be in the form of low-growing ground cover as short as 10cm (4") in height, and the largest can be trees 30m (100') tall.

The common and generic name comes from Ancient Greek rhódon for rose, as in red or rose-colored, and déndron for tree.

It is the state flower of Washington and West Virginia in the United States and the national flower of Nepal.

Since it was introduced to the British Isles in the late 18th century the common rhododendron (*R. ponticum*) has become an invasive species, forming impenetrable thickets in which virtually nothing else grows.

WEATHER WATCH



Very much like the Scottish band, the last few months have been WET WET WET, officially catagorised as unsettled, wet and dull. April, with the exception of a 3 day false start to spring around 12th, has been cool with over-night frosts almost to the end of the month. This has meant a slow start to spring and the gardening season.

Storms continued to move in, in January we had Isha, quickly followed by Jocelyn and then in early April we had storm Kathleen, the 11th named storm of the 2023-24 season. This rare spring storm made it the joint most stormy season since naming began in 2015.

TRADING STORE

For the first time anyone can remember we sold all our seed potatoes within the first few weeks of re-opening the store. It has been suggested that the unprecedented demand was a knock-on from the closure of Wilko. So, apologies if you missed out. It does mean however, that we have had a good start to the season with sales up by about 15% compared to this time last year.

Although peat containing compost is now available again at many local retailers, the majority of our composts are still peat free. This includes the 4 multipurpose composts, Heart of Eden, Durstons Organic Multipurpose, New Horizon and Melcourt Multipurpose. We firmly believe this is the right approach, thanks to all members that are with us on that. Please let us know how you are getting on with them. Email trading@ldga.org.uk



Other peat free offerings include Durstons peat free grow bags for planting out your tomatoes and peat free John Innes number 3. Coming soon we have peat free John Innes Seed and Durstons Multipurpose with added John Innes.

Thanks again to all members for your support at the store.

MEMBERSHIP

We'll soon be reviewing our membership database. If you would like continued membership but haven't renewed this year, email membership@ldga.org.uk or come to see us at meetings or at the Trading Store. If we haven't heard from you by the end of May, we will assume that you no longer wish to be a member.

COMPETITION RESULTS

Thank you to everyone who entered the winter Compost Heap competition. The first correct entry drawn was from Patricia Madden of Letchworth who won the £15 Trading Store vouchers. The answer was: BOB FLOWERDEW.

AND FINALLY...

Late season opening at the Trading Store starts on 1st July. From then on, we will be closed on Wednesday afternoons and Sunday opening times will be 9am to 12noon.

Contact us

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We are always eager to hear from our readers & Association members. Please write to: editor@ldga.org.uk

For all LDGA information, including events, store opening times and much more, visit: www.ldga.org.uk

Promoting horticulture since 1906