

WESTFIELD HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

June 2026 Newsletter

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Your committee:- Chair:- Dave Miles, also Membership Secretary, Event Organiser & Newsletter Editor

Secretary :- Linda Baker, also Treasurer

Membership Secretary :- Jackie Fellows

Committee members:- Eileen Hurton, Plants - Juni Parkhurst, Seeds - Patricia Oakland and Malcolm Shirley

Dear Members,

Visit to Dave and Dawn's Garden.

Dawn and Dave will open their garden to our members on **Tuesday 16th June 2:00 to 4:00pm** at 102 Westfield Lane, St Leonards on Sea TN37 7NQ. Refreshments will be available. Parking in the drive, if full you can park close by in Baldslow Down. Please let me know if you would like to come so we can ensure we have enough cake. Email westfieldhorticulturalsociety@gmail.com or daveatwhs@gmail.com or phone 07455 944849.

The weather predicted is **FULL SUN** all day and 22 degrees, please let us know if you are coming.

BOOK YOUR PLACE:- We are holding a cream tea at Westfield Bowls Pavilion on Wednesday 1st July 2:30 for 3:00pm. Cost to members is free and £3:50 for guests. We are limited to 40 spaces, so early reservation is advisable. Please reserve your place by contacting our email address westfieldhorticulturalsociety@gmail.com or daveatwhs@gmail.com or 07455 94484

Here are a few suggestions of what we could be doing in the garden during JULY

Keep on top of watering for thirsty crops like celery and celeriac, which should be watered daily. It will help to make channels along the row which allows water to seep down to the roots. Sinking pots at the base of individual plants also helps direct water to their roots. Leafy heavy croppers such as beans, courgettes, tomatoes and peas all need plenty of water to support their growth. Some fruits will be swelling fast now, so make sure pumpkins, squash and cucumbers get plenty of water too.

Measure a dose of liquid tomato feed to your watering can once a week to promote your tomatoes flowering and fruit production. The same feed also improves the productivity of fruiting crops such as aubergines, cucumbers, melons and peppers. The formulation supplies a high dose of potassium which supports the production of flowers and fruit. Mid-season, crops can also be given a boost with a granular fertilizer sprinkled around the base of the plants and watered in.

Top up your bird baths and garden ponds. Check bird baths every day as the shallow water evaporates really quickly this time of the year. It's fine to use mains water if the water butts are empty. Change the water every few days to keep it clean and help prevent spread of disease plus remove leaves and other debris. You can also use a small scrubbing brush to remove any algae. Pond water may need doing a few times through the summer.

To keep sweet peas flowering for as long as possible you must keep picking them. They quickly go to seed as the weather warms up, and drought also increases the rate of seeding, so they must be kept watered too. If you want sweet peas to stay at their best, pick every bloom every 8-10 days. In practice this means a weekly pick-through, and as you do, remove any seed pods that appear.

Investigate your new potato crop to see if they are ready to eat. They take about 12 weeks from planting to harvest and should be in flower by the time they are dug up.

House Plant of the Month if the Fittonia



Fittonia (or nerve plant or mosaic plant) is a genus of evergreen perennial flowering plants in the acanthus ('bear's britches') family, Acanthaceae. The genus is native to tropical and subtropical forested areas in northern and western South America, mainly Perú. The main feature of the species is its lush, green foliage, streaked with veins of white to deep pink, depending on cultivar; this veining earns the plant its common name of 'Nerve-Plant', as the "network" of vessels appears to resemble the layout of a nervous system. The plants also possess a short fuzz on their stems, like other acanthus family genera. Small buds may appear after a time where the stem splits into leaves.

With a spreading growth habit making it ideal as a shaded garden groundcover, Fittonia can easily be propagated by taking cuttings or by pruning the growing tips. These fresh clippings will regrow roots simply by placing the cut ends in a vessel of water in a bright, albeit indirectly lit location. Optionally, this method of "water-propagation" may be avoided altogether, as most cuttings may be placed directly into moist substrate, such as sphagnum moss, perlite, coconut (coco) fibre, well-aerated soil. As most plant species will do after being pruned, the trimmed section(s) of the mother plant will be triggered to grow new leaves in a matter of weeks.

The flowers are rather small, appearing on angular-sided bloom spikes, with a white to off-white colour. Fittonia are best kept in a moist area with mild, indirect but bright sunlight, or under screening outdoors in appropriate climates. They thrive in ambient temperatures above 55°C. Notoriously thirsty plants. The plants respond especially well to "bottom watering", or by submerging a potted specimen in a tray of water instead of pouring water from above. This has the added benefit of keeping the leaves free of water droplets or splashed dirt, which could both lead to fungal infections, such as powdery mildew.

The RHS monthly magazine 'The Garden' has a monthly Horty quiz consisting of nine questions. Questions 1 to 3 are for the new gardeners amongst us, questions 4 to 6 are for the more experienced and questions 7 to 9 are for the experienced gardeners.

Answers to the May quiz are:- Question **1** - Roses. Question **2** - Pruning.
Question **3** - Many ladybirds are predatory, feeding on aphids and scale insects.
Question **4** - Viburnum. Question **5** - Grow in or on water.
Question **6** - Serpentine layering. Question **7** - In habitats with limited water such as deserts.
Question **8** - Grasses. Question **9** - Underdeveloped, reduced in size and often not functional.

This month's questions are:-

Question 1 What is the common name of the herbaceous plant 'Digitalis purpurea'?

Question 2 Why are newly planted trees and shrubs more vulnerable in their first summer compared with established ones?

Question 3 What type of roses have cultivars named 'New Dawn'_{RHS} 'Compassion'_{RHS} & 'Aloha'_{RHS}

Question 4 Why should you remove side shoots from cordon tomatoes?

Question 5 Why might some plants wilt temporarily in the heat even when the soil is moist?

Question 6 What genus has types known as 'tree', 'intersectional' and 'herbaceous'?

Question 7 Which species of lavender do the cultivars 'Arabian Knight', 'Grosso' and 'Hidcote Giant'_{RHS} belong to?

Question 8 What physiological change causes many deciduous shrubs to harden new growth during the summer?

Question 9 What does it mean if a plant is described as hygroscopic?

Answers will be in the JULY Newsletter

Advice Corner:- This month's questions for our Gardening Wizard

Question 1 : How can I remove duckweed from my pond?

Answer : There are no chemical controls for duckweed, but regular removal with a net will help.

Duckweed doesn't like competing with other plants so try adding more ornamental plants to your pond such as water lilies. You could also add more fish to your pond as fish eat duckweed

Question 2 : Why has my spotted laurel developed black patches on the leaves and shoots?

Answer : Spotted laurel (aucuba) can suffer when it experiences water logging as it may do during a wet winter like last winter. Look at improving the position it's planted in. Ideally move it somewhere with better drainage or plant on a raised mound. Alternatively try to improve the soil by mulching around the plant. You can also encourage the plant to produce fresh new leaves by feeding it

PLEASE STILL KEEP YOUR QUESTIONS COMING IN.

WHS members can receive a 10% discount applicable to plants only from the following nurseries on showing a valid membership card:-

Ed's Nursery, Cripps Corner Road, Staplecross TN32 5QA 01580 830701

Oak Cottage Plants.

Carol and Steve have moved all the plants from their previous nursery at Kent Street on the A21 to their garden at Oak Cottage. They are busy renovating their garden now and will welcome visitors going to see what they are doing, and plants are still available to purchase. Please contact them on 01424 754666 to make arrangements. (Checkout their Facebook page [#OakCottagePlants](#) [#Gardening](#) [#NurseryLife](#) [#CustomerService](#))

Rotherview Nursery, Three Oaks, Ivy House Lane, Hastings TN35 4NP 01424 756228

(Checkout their Facebook page [rotherview nursery](#))

The Old Rose Nursery, Quickbourne Lane, (off Beales Lane) Northiam, TN31 6QY 01797 252680.

WEB site www.theoldrosenursery.co.uk **Open 10:00am to 4:00 pm Tuesday to Saturday** (Closed Sunday and Monday)

As our society is affiliated to the RHS we have been issued with a 50% RHS Garden Entry discount card for use by our members on a one-off entry to any RHS garden (Bridgewater, Harlow Carr, Hyde Hall, Rosemoor and Wisley) except for flower shows and Glow illuminations events. If you would like to use the card, please contact our secretary Linda Baker via our email address westfieldhorticulturalsociety@gmail.com

RHS Partner Gardens. There are 17 being reachable in Kent and Sussex. Full list can be found in the January Newsletter

Every month I will include details of one or two gardens. This month its Merriments, Hurst Green.

Merriments Garden in East Sussex is a vibrant four-acre haven celebrated for its rich seasonal colour and imaginative planting schemes. Designed with artistic flair, the garden unfolds as a series of interlinked spaces, each with its own character, from sweeping herbaceous borders to the structured elegance of a medicinal garden. Every path invites exploration, leading visitors past ponds, secluded seating areas, and thoughtfully composed vistas that showcase the best of English garden design.

What makes Merriments truly special is its year-round appeal. Spring bursts with bulbs and fresh greenery, summer dazzles in fiery reds, oranges, and purples, and autumn softens into golden tones with ornamental grasses and late perennials. Even in winter, the garden's structure and textures create a serene, sculptural beauty. More than a visual feast, Merriments demonstrates how colour, texture, and form can transform spaces. With an on-site café serving homemade meals, it's the perfect destination for those seeking inspiration, tranquillity, or simply a delightful day out immersed in horticultural creativity.

Sunday 28th June: Merriments Garden Open Day. Complimentary entry to all from 09:30 - 16:30. Normal admission is £8. Open daily. 10:00am to 5:00pm

Future Events

Tuesday 16th June	Open Garden at Dave and Dawn's. 2:00pm to 4:00pm
Wednesday 1st July	Cream Tea. Westfield Bowls Club 2:00pm
Tuesday 25th August	Open Garden Susan Fletcher (WHS Member)
Saturday 5th September	Autumn show 2:30pm to 4:30pm at the Westfield Community Hall
Tuesday 27th October	Talk by Graham Blunt from Plant Base UK. 2:00pm at Westfield Bowls Club
Saturday 14th November	Beetle Drive 7:00pm. Westfield Community Hall
Thursday 3rd December	Seasonal Lunch 1:00pm at the New Inn Westfield

Sedlescombe & District Garden Society talks;

We are invited to attend at Sedlescombe Village Hall free of charge. Please have your WHS membership card.

Tuesday 29th September Ian Currie – Subject - Weatherman Gales, Greenhouses and global Warming At 2:00pm

Sedlescombe and District Garden Society are planning a coach visit on Wednesday 12th August to Great Comp Gardens nr Sevenoaks. Contact sdgs.secretary@hotmail.co.uk for details.

2027 WHS Events

Saturday 13th February	Valentines Quiz at the Community Centre Starting at 7:00pm
Saturday 20th March	Spring show 2:30pm to 4:30pm at the Westfield Community Hall
Saturday 11th September	Autumn show 2:30pm to 4:30pm at the Westfield Community Hall