

WESTFIELD HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

JULY 2026 NEWSLETTER

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Your committee:- Chair:- Dave Miles, also 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 Susan Fletchers Garden.](#)

Susan will open her garden to our members on **Tuesday 25th August 2:00 to 4:00pm.** Refreshments will be available. Please let us know if you would like to come and we will then give you directions to her address which is near Three Oaks, there will be plenty of parking available. Email westfieldhorticulturalsociety@gmail.com or daveatwhs@gmail.com or phone 07455 944849.

Visit to Dave and Dawns Garden.



23 Members had an enjoyable Tuesday (16th June) afternoon looking around the garden, in the paddock(field) and through the woods to the boundary. Plenty of tea and cake disappeared and lots of conversation took place.

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

Summer is an easy time to spot dead branches as leafing stems are clothed in healthy green leaves. It's good practice to remove dead stems in shrubs as it opens them up to allow light to reach leaves and helps to maintain a good air flow. It can also help reduce pest and disease problems, and you'll end up with a better shaped shrub. Dead wood can be a great habitat for wildlife, so if you do cut out

branches, try creating a dead hedge, by piling them up in a corner of your garden. It'll become a haven for insects and maybe a hedgehog if you're lucky.

Buddleias produce their flowers at the terminal ends of branches. Now is a good time to deadhead them and at the same time neaten the shrub. Deadheading will often encourage more blooms through the rest of the summer and prevent your bush self-seeding. Prune back stems to a pair of leaves. You can remove up to a quarter of the length, if needed, but trim it lightly and cut back to new flower buds if you want the blooms to keep coming. Buddleias tend to get bashed around by the wind, so giving the plant an overall prune will help to prevent it blowing over and dying because of windrock.

Make sure your house plants don't dry out if you are going away on holiday. Many can simply be watered where they are and left with no issue for several days. But leafy house plants such as ferns fare much better grouped together in a bath. Then give the plants a gentle shower to raise the humidity around them. Bathrooms usually have stippled windows that provide indirect light, which is ideal too. For extended trips, soak a towel underneath them for longer lasting moisture and humidity.

Potato blight often infects potato leaves. Resistant varieties stay healthy for a bit longer but can still succumb to this fungal disease. A brownish-black leaf tip or specky spots on a healthy plant can rapidly spread and devastate the foliage. Even if you remove the leaves at these first signs, you can rarely stop its spread. So cut the plants down to the ground and bin rather than compost them. The tubers will stop growing, but they're often sizable and the disease rarely affects them. Harvest in a few weeks or straightaway in damp weather to avoid slug damage.

House Plant of the Month is the Rubber Plant



Rubber plants, also known as *Ficus elastica*, are popular indoor plants due to their large, glossy leaves and upright growth. They thrive in bright indirect light and require careful watering to prevent overwatering.

Here are some key care tips for rubber plants in houseplants:

Light: Provide bright, indirect light for 6 -8 hours each day. Avoid harsh afternoon sun to prevent leaf damage.

Watering: Water when the top 2 inches of soil are dry. Use lukewarm water and avoid shocking the roots.

Soil: Use a well-draining potting mix, preferably a 'ficus' compost.

Fertilizing: Feed monthly during the growing season with a diluted, balanced fertilizer.

Pruning: Prune to shape and encourage branching. Wear gloves to avoid sap irritation.

Propagation: Use stem cuttings or air layering for propagation.

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** - Foxglove. Question **2** - Undeveloped root systems can't access deeper moisture and dry out quickly. Question **3** - Climbing roses. Question **4** - To transfer energy into fruit production. Question **5** - Transpiration exceeds the plant's ability to move water upwards fast enough, causing temporary wilting. Question **6** - Peony (Paeonia) Question **7** - Lavandula x intermedia. Question **8** - Lignification – cell walls thicken and become more woody. Question **9** - The plant readily absorbs moisture from the air.

This month's questions are:-

- Question 1 What popular genus of plants includes the species rugosa, Gallica and Glauca?
- Question 2 When growing potatoes what is the process called of mounding soil around the stems?
- Question 3 Why is the question to answer 2 needed when growing potatoes?
- Question 4 What genus of plants includes cultivars ‘Purrsian Blue RHS, ‘Walkers Low’ RHS, and ‘Six Hills Giant’ RHS ?
- Question 5 Soils are made up of minerals, water, living organisms and what two other components?
- Question 6 In soil science what term describes water remaining in the soil after gravitational water has drained off?
- Question 7 ‘Gainsborough’ RHS, ‘Pink Domino’ RHS and ‘Christo’s Yellow Lighting’ RHS are all cultivars of which herbaceous perennial?
- Question 8 What is the name given to a yellow or brown expanded mineral added to composts to create a free-draining but moisture-retentive medium?
- Question 9 What would be the characteristic of a flower described as convolute?

Answers will be in the AUGUST Newsletter

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

Question 1 : Last year my gladioli produced leaves but no flowers.

Answer : The most likely reason is that the corms were too small. It's always best to buy the largest corms you can find even if they are more expensive. Gladioli sometimes don't flower because they have been given a high nitrogen feed, which encourages leaves instead of flowers. Also, on very poor dry soil corms can fail to thrive and bloom well

Question 2 : Why did my clematis Montana suddenly collapse and ooze smelly slime from the stems.

Answer : This is a bacterial infection called slime flux.

Surface bacteria enter the stem through wounds or frost damage. Prune immediately to a healthy node below the infected stems. Remove all damaged plant material, but do not compost it. With luck the plant will recover and regrow.

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

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 Note: All old newsletters can be found on our web site.

Every month I will include details of one or two gardens. This month its Riverhill Himalayan Gardens, Nr Tonbridge.

At Riverhill there are over 12 acres of historic gardens to explore, punctuated with contemporary sculpture, as well as woodland paths, breathtaking views and plenty of benches for quiet contemplative moments. Expect the unexpected as you wander from the manicured perfection of the undulating terraces of the famous Walled Garden, with frothy fountains, to the wild Jungle, fragrant Rose Walk, Wood Garden and spectacular Edwardian Rock Garden, carpeted with ferns.

Future Events

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 6th March AGM 11:00 am at the Church Hall. To be followed by Soup and a Roll

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