

WELDFIELD HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

May 2025 Newsletter

Email westfieldhorticulturalsociety@gmail.com

Website www.westfieldhorticulturalsociety.co.uk

Your committee:- Chair:- Dave Miles, also Membership Secretary, Event Organiser & Newsletter Editor
Secretary :- Linda Baker, also Treasurer :- Show Secretary Tonia Munns

Committee members:- Eileen Hurton, Plants - Juni Parkhurst, Seeds - Maria Wells - Malcolm Shirley

Dear members,

BOOK YOUR PLACE:- We are holding a cream tea at Westfield Bowls Pavilion on Wednesday 2nd July 2:30 for 3:00pm. Cost to members is £3.00 and £5.00 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 Dave on daveatwhs@gmail.com or 07455 944849

Visit to Sarah Raven's Garden.



Dawn and I (Dave Miles) visited Sarah Raven's Garden in Brightling, Robertsbridge on Thursday 1st May, which was a very hot and cloudless day. Five of our members also attended and in our catchup we had the opportunity to have refreshments. The gardens were not as colourful as one would expect as in June/July or when the dahlias are out in August and September. Even so there was still plenty of colour from the last of the tulips and narcissus Sunlight Sensation were still in full bloom. There were many other features of interest such as wisteria and a yellow banksiae



Last September Dawn and I went to see the dahlia displays at Sarah's Garden which were stunning so we will be returning this year on Friday 29th August in the afternoon 1:00 to 4:00pm. If you are interested in joining us, I would suggest booking sooner than later as there is a maximum number that are allowed in the garden.

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

Plant hostas in a shady border. They do best in humus-rich, moisture-retentive soil. Make a hole, water the base, then fork in garden compost. Soak the root ball before planting, then take out of the pot, loosen the roots and plant in firmly. Water it in and protect from slugs by using organic slug pellets, garlic spray and regular handpicking. It might flower this summer but if you remove the flowers, the plant will produce a bigger display next year.

Keep trailing cordon tomatoes up their canes or strings. Support the main stem by wrapping it around the string anchored below and above the plant. With canes, pull the stem in and tie it in every 30cm as it grows. Side shoots appearing in the angle between the stem and leaf should be pinched out to keep the single stem cleanly growing up. Be careful to keep the growing tip intact, but if you pinch it out by mistake, tie in the dominant side shoot to take over.

Turn the compost heap to move the cool material on the outside into the middle to heat it all up. The heap gets hottest in the centre as the bacteria get to work, but once rotted it cools down again. It will still decompose slowly as worms and beetles move the debris around but turning the outside into the centre injects new energy into the composting process. Once turned, water the heap, cover it with a layer of insulating fabric or cardboard, then let the bacteria do the rest of the work.

Deadhead pelargoniums weekly. Hold the flower stem down by the base where it will snap away clearly. Early deadheading allows the plant to use more energy to buildup the shoot structure for a bigger flowering plant. Pelargoniums respond well to deadheading and will throw up more flowers within days. They can be kept in flower well into autumn. Compost the old flowerheads and stems and enjoy the scented foliage as you work.

Prune wisteria after flowering by cutting back straggly shoots, those that extend out from where the flowers have gone over. They need to be cut back to five or six buds, so count up from the point where they started growing this year and snip them off neatly above a bud. This pruning back controls this summer's growth and encourages flower buds for next year. The plant will continue to grow this summer and will need pruning again in winter to control its shape and tidy up the plant.

Inspect roses and prick off leaves that are yellowing or have black and brown spots. This is the fungal disease blackspot, which weakens the plant and, if you allow the leaves to drop to the ground, will reinfect every year. Hygiene is key to reducing damage, so put leaves in the municipal green waste collection, where composting temperatures kill the spores.

Identify this Shub from this picture: April's shrub was Elaeagnus, also known as Oleaster or Silverberry.



Plant of the month is the Wisteria



Wisterias climb by twining their [stems](#) around any available support. [W. floribunda](#) (Japanese wisteria) twines clockwise when viewed from above, while [W. sinensis](#) (Chinese wisteria) twines counterclockwise. This is an aid in identifying the two most common species of wisteria. They can climb as high as 20 m (66 ft) above the ground and spread out 10 m (33 ft) laterally. The world's largest known wisteria is the [Sierra Madre Wisteria](#) in [Sierra Madre, California](#), measuring more than 1 acre (0.40 ha) in size and weighing 250 tons. Planted in 1894, it is of the 'Chinese lavender' variety. The [leaves](#) are alternate, 15 to 35 cm long, [pinnate](#), with 9 to 19 leaflets.

The [flowers](#) have drooping [racemes](#) that vary in length from species to species.

[W. frutescens](#) (American wisteria) has the shortest racemes, 5–7 centimetres (2.0–2.8 in). [W. floribunda](#) (Japanese wisteria) has the longest racemes, 90 centimetres (35 in) in some [varieties](#) and 120 centimetres (47 in) or 200 centimetres (79 in)

OPEN GARDENS The idea was discussed at committee that some members may like to open their gardens to other members of the society. To start the ball rolling Dawn and I will open our garden to our members on Tuesday 29th July 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, contact details at end of newsletter. If too many wish to come on this date we will arrange a further date. Dave Miles.

Would you be happy to open your garden to members in June or maybe August? Please let us know.

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

Question 1 : Why did my daffodils come up blind.

Answer : It could be many reasons for example:-

- They are grown in a dry place or there is a drought, the daffs may die down prematurely resulting in the bulb failing to form a flower bud due to the lack of food reserves.
- Leaves removed or knotted together; this again prevents the bulb building up food reserves, leaves should be left alone to die back naturally.
- Allowing seed capsules to form after flowering which means the energy is diverted from the process of bulb rebuilding. Always dead head daffs.
- Poor nutrition, in poor soil bulbs will rapidly decline so add compost to enrich the soil.
- If plants are not planted deep enough or planted after November.
- Overcrowded, too many bulbs planted too close together or groups need splitting up after growing in same place for years.
- Pest and diseases

Question 2 : How can I grow better flowers so I can enter them into shows.

Answer : a. By Providing the right conditions for the plant to grow and produce splendid blooms.

Do this by growing plants where they can receive at least six hours of sunlight, improve soil by adding compost or

rotted manure. This enriches the soil with nutrients which plants need to grow well. Water plants deeply less frequently so roots grow deeper and become more resilient and stronger growing plants.

- b. Feed plants with a balance fertiliser that contains nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium.
- c. Feed regularly during the growing season.
- d. Prune if needed to encourage new growth and dead head to prevent energy being used to produce seed instead of more flowers.
- e. Right plant in right place. For example, planting dahlias in boggy soil you know they will rot and die so read up and learn about what conditions plants need before planting.
- f. Lastly mulching around plants as this helps retain soil moisture suppress weeds and improve soil temperature which helps contribute to healthier plants and more flowers to enter our shows.

PLEASE STILL KEEP YOUR QUESTIONS COMING IN

VE Day 80th Exhibition at the Community Centre 4/5th May

We were delighted to have been asked by the WCA to provide a display table for their VE Day 80 exhibition in the Community Hall over the Bank Holiday weekend. Grateful thanks to Jackie Fellows for her wonderful efforts in producing a 'Dig for Victory' garden. Many people commented on it and praised all the fine details from the era, including the children asleep in the Anderson Shelter, with their chamber pots under their beds. Thankfully, they were only filled with apple juice! Many thanks also to Nicky Briscall for her pretty decorative contributions, and to both ladies for giving up their time, they did our society proud. Linda Baker

I would like to add that Linda was brilliant in organising our contribution for the society. Dave Miles



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.

(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 Opening hours are Tuesday to Saturday 10:00am to 4:00pm

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

We have a full coach to Wisley on Thursday 11th September. Please advise if you would like to add your name to the waiting list. We will be leaving Moor Lane, Westfield at 9:00am and hope to return by 6:00pm, Cost is £22 for members and £25 for guests. Please reserve your place by contacting our email address westfieldhorticulturalsociety@gmail.com or Dave on daveatwhs@gmail.com or 07455 944849

Sedlescombe and District Garden Society have organised a visit to RHS Hyde Hall on the 13th August. Cost is £30 a head. Please contact Jenny Mitchell to book a place, email sdgs.secretary@hotmail.com

FUTURE EVENTS:

Wednesday July 2nd	Cream Tea at the Bowls Club Pavilion 2:30 for 3:00pm (Bookable event)
Tuesday 29th July	Open Garden at Dawn & Daves 2:00 to 4:00pm (Bookable event)
Friday 29th August	Self-drive visit to Sarah Raven's Garden 1:00 to 4:00pm
Thursday 11th September	Visit to Wisley (Please note date change, in Schedule and Handbook its 4 th September)
Saturday 20th September	Autumn Show 2:30pm to 4:30pm at the Westfield Community Centre.
Wednesday 22nd October	Fergus Garrett Talk "On Designing with plants the Great Dixter way" 2:00pm at the Bowls Club Pavilion (Bookable event)
Saturday 8th November	Beetle Drive at the Westfield Community Centre starting at 7:00pm
Tuesday 2nd December	Seasonal Lunch at the New Inn, Westfield.

2026

Saturday 14th February	Valentines Quiz at the Church Hall Start at 7:00pm
Saturday 8th March	2024/5 AGM at the Church Hall 11:00am
Saturday 11th April	Spring Show 2:30pm to 4:30pm at the Westfield Community Centre.
Saturday 5th September	Autumn Show 2:30 pm to 4:40pm at the Westfield Community Centre

For more information on any of the above please contact Dave Miles on daveatwhs@gmail.com or 07455 944849