

WESTFIELD HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

July 2025 Newsletter

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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,

[Visit to Dave and Dawn's Garden.](#)

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 this newsletter. If too many wish to come on this date we will arrange a further date. Dave Miles.

WISLEY, if you have booked a place and not yet paid it would be appreciated if you could now make payment as soon as possible either by BACS Sort code 23-05-80 A/c no. 55312362, cash or cheque in an envelope posted in postbox at Archers or to me Dave Miles, 102 Westfield Lane, St Leonards on Sea, TN37 7NQ.

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

[A Visit to Jackie Fellows Garden.](#)



11 of us paid a planned visit to Jackie Fellows Garden in Chapel Lane, Westfield on Thursday 26th June in the afternoon and soon after arriving the sun came out from around the clouds allowing us to have a pleasant afternoon in the garden.

We started the afternoon with tea, cupcakes, shortbread biscuits and lemon drizzle cake that Jackie made WHICH was absolutely delicious, Jackie said it was the best she has ever made. There was plenty of general conversation, some about horticulture before we went on a tour of her garden.

We started at the long boarder, which was full of various plants, too many to name. Amongst the planting and around the garden were numerous garden ornaments of various kinds that included the lady in the bath, a full-size cow, a dog made from wellington boots, (which Jackie made herself) Chimney pots and many more.

There was a very interesting vegetable and fruit garden with a polytunnel with tomatoes and numerous potted plants. A big feature at the end of the garden was a Shepherds Hut that anyone would be proud to have.

A bed of Statice caught our eye, unfortunately not yet in flower. Statice is grown for its colourful papery-petalled blooms that make excellent cut flowers both fresh and dried. Statice can flower perennially bringing vibrant colour to a garden year after year; a must for the garden next year.

Cream Tea

30 members and guests enjoyed a Cream Tea at Westfield Bowls Club Pavilion on 2nd July, being a cooler day than the previous two that were around 30 degrees. With tea, plenty of scones and lashings of jam and cream everyone enjoyed the occasion which gave members ample opportunity to have a good chat. To add to the event we included a free raffle. It's thanks to Linda Baker who organised the event and made scones along with Jackie Fellows and Nicky Briscall who baked as well. Also thanks go to the Bowling club for allowing us to use their facilities.

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

Deadhead flowers past their best and keep cutting stems to use for indoor displays. The more flowers you cut now, the more they will produce into the Autumn. Dahlias work well in vases, but don't cut any still in bud as they will not open once removed. Water dahlias frequently in hot weather, directing the water at the roots of the plant to avoid waste. Soak them well once a week, rather than little and often.

Harvest your cherry tomatoes little and often. The smaller varieties of tomato ripen very fast and are so much taster than when they are fully ripened, so wait for them to reach the perfect colour, then pick them individually. Picking when they are so ripe makes them vulnerable to damage so don't place them on top of each other. Keep tying in the growth at the top of the plant if you can, as this is where more trusses will form. Feed your plants with a liquid fertilizer once a week to keep them strong and encourage continued fruit set along the higher trusses as the growing season comes to an end.

Biennials such as foxgloves, sown in trays earlier in summer, are ready to be moved to individual pots once they have started to develop a good root system. Gently turn the tray on its side to loosen the plants, then pot them into 8cm or 10cm pots of multi-purpose compost. Water the plants well and grow them on in a sheltered corner for a few weeks as they put on more roots, then plant them out towards the end of the next month in a semi-shaded spot.

Look out for caterpillars of butterflies, moths and other insects, such as sawflies, feeding in the garden. Tolerate them, if you can as they are an important part of the garden's biodiversity and a source of food for the birds. Caterpillars often rely on one particular food so can decimate some plants, particularly food crops such as brassicas, so pick them off where they're not welcome and use butterfly netting to protect crops in the vegetable patch. It will stop the adults laying eggs in the first place.

Prune wisteria to keep it in check. Trim back the whippy shoots that have grown after the flowers have finished. Cut these stems back to about five or six leaves. The old flower stems can be pruned out too, to tidy the plant. Then look for and trim back any shoots that are starting to twine up into the structure of the plant, around nearby drainpipes or into guttering. This midsummer pruning will encourage the formation of more flower buds for next year and reduce the vigour of this exuberant climbing plant.

Advice Corner:- There were no questions this month for our Gardening Wizard, so I have given the Wizard the month of.

Please let us have any questions you want answered on anything related to gardening or horticultural in general.

Identify this Flower from this picture: June's shrub was Weigela



Plant of the month is Crocosmia Lucifer



Crocosmia is a **perennial flower that grows tall pigment-rich blooms in the summer**. Crocosmia is native to the grasslands of southern and eastern Africa, ranging from South Africa to Sudan. It grows best in somewhat drier climates with less humidity, full sun, and well-draining, slightly acidic soil. Crocosmia are summer blooming bulbs with sword-like foliage and brightly-coloured flowers on wiry, arching stems. The buds open one-by-one from the bottom up and the tubular flowers are magnets for insects.

NEW FEATURE

Gardening humour, fun stories and anything to make one giggle.

Lawn Care

Talking to a friend recently they mentioned an experience their father had with his lawn (we will call him Clive).

Clive had a lawn that needed some attention even though it was in a reasonable condition. He was advised by friends to get a lawn improver from his local garden centre as it would do the trick in bringing his lawn to something to be proud of.

A few days after applying the lawn improver the grass was not looking as good as before applying the improver, he decided it may be a good idea to water the lawn which he thought would help the improver work. The lawn started to turn brown after a few more days and Clive was puzzled, the lawn should have been greener and not turning brown. He decided to visit the garden centre and spoke to the person in the advice area. After discussing his situation with a garden centre assistant he was horrified to learn that he had not purchased a lawn improver, but a strong lawn weed killer which he had applied liberally and was the cause of his lawn dying. Clive obviously was not happy with it but he did kind of see the funny side of his costly mistake.

The moral of this story is one should always read the label to ensure what is purchased will do what you want it to do.

Phone advice

Having a rabbit warren in our field which is partly covered in various weeds and a lot of stingers needs to be strimmed as not flat enough to be mowed. A few weeks ago the area needed strimming so I set about the task, having completed three quarters my foot caught the side of uneven ground and I proceeded to fall over pushing the strimmer away from me as a safety measure. I ended up sitting on a lot of cut nettles, unfortunately I was wearing shorts and tee shirt which meant it was impossible to attempt getting to my feet without seriously being stung.

Luckily my phone was in my pocket, so I called Dawn and asked her to bring something to cover the ground around me. She arrived with a few empty compost bags laughing at my predicament, using the bags placed around me to get to my feet without being stung. When Dawn reached me, she said, 'Smile you are on candid camera' and laughed.

Moral of this story is one should always have one's phone with them while working alone just in case something happens, and you need help of some sort. Dave Miles

NO NAMES WILL BE MENTIONED OR PUBLISHED UNLESS AGREED

THE EGG SHELL

In the quest for a thriving garden, many gardeners overlook a humble yet powerful ally: the eggshell. Often discarded as kitchen waste, eggshells are packed with nutrients and benefits that can transform your garden into a flourishing oasis. Instead of tossing them into the bin, consider hanging them in your garden to unlock their potential.

The Nutritional benefits of Eggshells for Plants. Eggshells are primarily composed of calcium carbonate, which is crucial for plant growth. Calcium helps build strong cell walls, ensuring that plants can withstand environmental stressors. A single eggshell contains approximately 2.2 grams of calcium, which can be slowly released into the soil as the shell breaks down. In addition to calcium, eggshells contain small amounts of other essential nutrients like magnesium and phosphorus. These nutrients support various plant functions, from photosynthesis to root development. By incorporating eggshells into your garden, you provide a steady supply of these vital nutrients, promoting healthier and more robust plants.

How Eggshells Improve Soil Structure. Eggshells contribute to improving soil structure by enhancing aeration and drainage. When crushed and mixed into the soil, they create small air pockets that allow roots to breathe and water to flow more freely. This is particularly beneficial in heavy clay soils, which tend to compact and restrict root growth. Furthermore, the gradual decomposition of eggshells adds organic matter to the soil, improving its overall texture and fertility. This process helps create a balanced environment where beneficial microbes can thrive, further enhancing soil health and plant growth.

Using Eggshells as a Natural Pest Deterrent. Eggshells can be an effective natural pest deterrent, especially against soft-bodied pests like slugs and snails. The sharp edges of crushed eggshells act as a physical barrier, deterring these pests from crossing into your garden beds. Simply scatter a layer of crushed eggshells around the base of vulnerable plants to protect them. By using eggshells as a natural pest control method, you reduce the need for chemical pesticides, promoting a healthier garden ecosystem.

Eggshells as a Source of Calcium for your Garden. Calcium is an essential nutrient that plays a vital role in plant development. It is particularly important for preventing blossom end rot in tomatoes, peppers, and other fruiting plants. By adding eggshells to your garden, you provide a natural and sustainable source of calcium. To maximise the calcium benefits, crush the eggshells into fine powder using a mortar and pestle or a coffee grinder before adding them to the soil. This increases the surface area and speeds up the release of calcium, ensuring that your plants receive the nutrients they need in a timely manner.

The Role of Eggshells in Composting. Eggshells are an excellent addition to your compost heap, contributing valuable nutrients and helping to balance the carbon-to-nitrogen ratio. When composted, eggshells break down slowly, releasing calcium and other minerals into the compost. To incorporate eggshells into your compost, rinse them thoroughly to remove any egg residue and crush them into small pieces. This accelerates the decomposition process and ensures that the nutrients are readily available for your garden when the compost is applied.

Creative Ways to Hang Eggshells in Your Garden. Hanging eggshells in your garden can be functional and decorative. One popular method is to create a string of eggshells by threading them onto a piece of twine or wire. This can be hung around garden beds or draped over trellises to deter pests and provide a steady release of nutrients. Another creative approach is to use eggshell halves as small planters for seedlings. Simply fill the eggshell with soil and plant a seed inside. Once the seedling is ready to be transplanted, the entire eggshell can be planted in the ground where it will decompose and enrich the soil.

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

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

OPEN GARDENS in Icklesham Broad Street House Garden, Broad Street Icklesham will be open at 10:00 am until 4:00pm on Saturday 26th July as well as three other gardens all in aid of St Michael's hospice. There will be refreshments as well as a plant stall.

Visit to Elaine and Malcolm Shirley's Garden.

Elaine and Malcolm will open their garden to our members on **Thursday 21st August, 2:00 to 4:00pm** at 'Moorside', [Near. 'Moorsholm Farm'], King Wood Hill [A28], Cackle Street, Brede, (How to find Moorside in our August newsletter) Refreshments will be available. **Please let us know if you would like to visit by emailing our address or contact me on daveatwhs@gmail.com or 07455 944849** Early booking is essential to avoid disappointment.

Visit to Sarah Ravens Garden.

Dawn and I (Dave) have booked an afternoon (1:00 to 4:00pm) visit to Sarah Ravens Garden at Perch Hill Farm, Willingford Lane, Brightling, Robertsbridge TN32 5HP for **Friday 29th August**. The cost is £17.50 per person. If anyone would like to join us, please book your own tickets, or if you are unable to book your own tickets and would like a lift from Westfield, please contact me. If you intend to join us, please let me know and we can arrange to meet up for Tea/coffee at some time and possibly swap stories on what we have seen or that hold our interest.

FUTURE EVENTS:

Tuesday 29th July	Open Garden at Dawn & Daves 2:00 to 4.00pm (Bookable event)
Thursday 21st August	Open Garden at Elaine & Malcolm's 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 (Bookable event)
Tuesday 2nd December	Seasonal Lunch at the New Inn, Westfield. (Bookable event)
2026	
Saturday 14th February	Valentines Quiz at the Church Hall Start at 7:00pm (Bookable event)
Saturday 7th 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 4:30pm at the Westfield Community Centre

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