
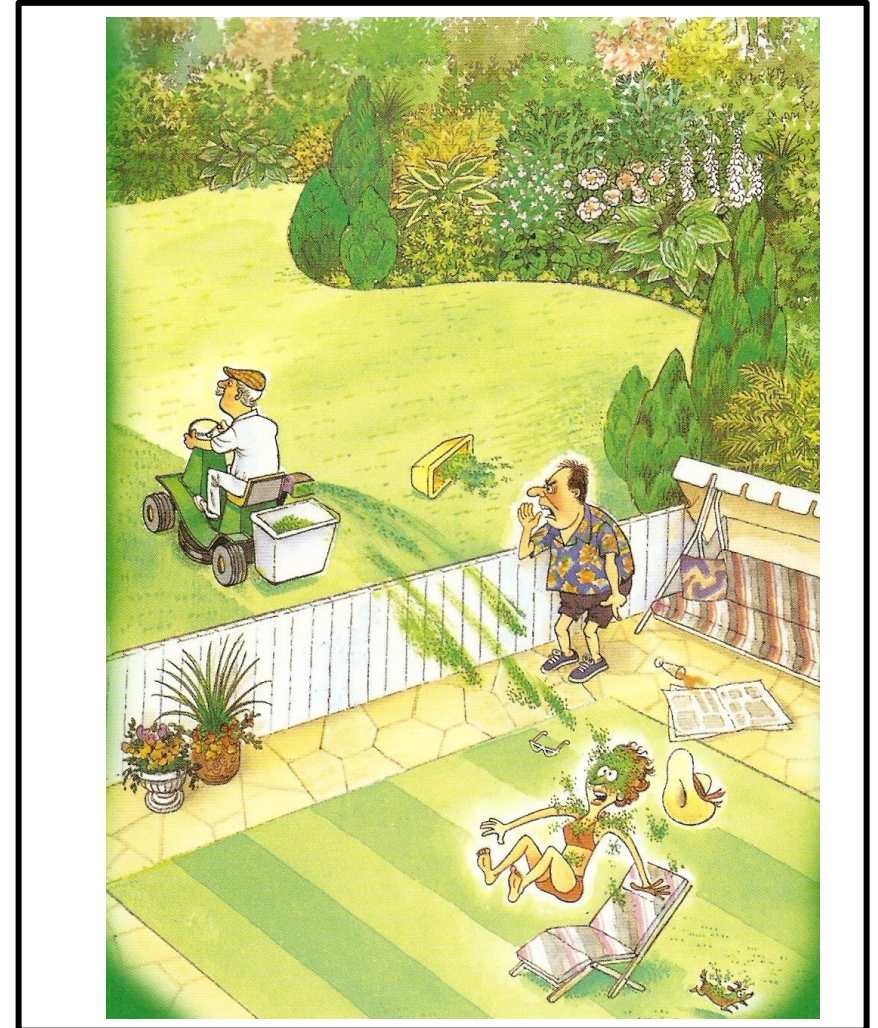


# Ash Parish Garden Club

[www.ashparishgardenclub.org.uk](http://www.ashparishgardenclub.org.uk)

 ash parish garden club



Monthly Newsletter July 2020

**ASH PARISH GARDEN CLUB OFFICERS**

<b><u>OFFICE</u></b>	<b><u>OFFICERS</u></b>	<b><u>TEL NO</u></b>
Chairman	Mr J Poole "MEADCOTT" Badshot Lea Rd	01252 319621
Secretary	Mrs. B Ames 97 Longacre, Ash	01252 686303
Treasurer	Mr. Ian Chant 18 Glenmount Road, Mytchett	01252 544195
Show Secretary	Mrs. B Winton 2 Elm Hill, Normandy	01252 333756
Social Secretary	Mrs. H Chant 18 Glenmount Road, Mytchett	01252 544195
Victoria Hall Rep	Mr. Brian Perry 9 Drake Avenue Mytchett	01252 542341
Mag Editor	Mr. Brian Perry 9 Drake Avenue Mytchett	01252 542341
Prog Secretary	Mrs P Slack 16 Firacre Road, Ash Vale	01252 311210

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**EDITORS NOTES**

Brian –Stories to [ernestperry33@gmail.com](mailto:ernestperry33@gmail.com) hard copy to Chris

## R.H.S. LONDON AND WISLEY

We are affiliated to the RHS who's benefits include competitive insurance cover, free gardening advice, a free group visit to an RHS garden, (54 members to visit Wisley *club trip in Summer*) access to medals (*Banksian medal*) and show stationery and a free monthly copy of The Garden magazine (*see Brenda Winton if you wish to view*).

Our membership number is 10564709.

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## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

<b>SUMMER SHOW</b>	<b>CANCELLED</b>
Gardeners World Live	<b>CANCELLED</b>
RHS Tatton Park	<b>CANCELLED</b>
RHS Hampton Court	9 - 15 Sep
<b>AUTUMN SHOW</b>	12 Sep
RHS Malvern (autumn)	26 - 27 Sep

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## POETS CORNER

### *Wisteria: Tuscan*

It has come, it has come again,  
This lost blue world  
That I have not seen for seven years,  
And now there is no other earth beside it.  
O what I have missed, these seven eyeless summers,  
For this is a blue world shut into itself,  
This trellis of wisteria, this blue fire falling;  
Its leaves drop flame to every quarter of the winds,  
But I lived seven years away and came not to it,  
And now the flowers are sevenfold, their honey tongues  
Loll like a million bells that quiver and don't ring,  
Though the air all trembles and vibrates with them.  
Then, as now, their blueness was alive  
With quick spangled comedies, quick turncoat rain,  
That fell by the trellis and was dyed in that colour;  
There was never such a heaping; such a deep piled fullness,  
For the flowers lie on the pergola, like snow divas  
From some whirling cataclysm thrown and turn!  
Let us sit in this cage of fire and think of it!  
Why is no poetry so full as this,  
But this is mortal with but a breath of life;  
Nothing lives outside it, if you keep within,

You have seven days, and a table and a chair;  
What else can you wish, you are no prisoner?  
Why ever move away from here, there's nothing  
But keep in this cage of fire and live within it,  
Be the salamander in this house of flame;  
Look from the windows, see the world on fire.  
But now comes the aftermath, the hollow empty  
For this blue flower faded at the bat-winged dues  
It faded and went out into a lifeless nothing;  
Not even did the scent stay in this worse than death.  
*SACHEVERELL SITWELL (1897-1988)*

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## **THIS MONTHS RECIPE**

### **Whole orange & ginger cake with mascarpone frosting**

PREPARE 30 minutes + cooling

COOK 1 hour 10 minutes SERVES 12

#### **You will need**

2 x 150g oranges, halved, leaving the skin on  
150g unsalted butter, plus a little for greasing  
200g Gluten Free Plain White Flour  
100g pack ground almonds  
tsp bicarbonate of soda  
1 tbsp ground ginger, plus a pinch to decorate  
1 tsp ground cinnamon  
Pinch of salt  
200g dark brown muscovado sugar  
100g golden syrup  
100ml semi-skimmed milk  
3 Medium Free Range Eggs, beaten  
8 pieces stem ginger from a jar, half finely chopped, half thinly sliced, keep the syrup  
500g tub mascarpone  
150g orange curd, plus 2 tbsp

#### **To do**

Put the oranges cut side up into a medium pan, and add their own depth of cold water. Cover and simmer for 45 minutes, until completely tender. Drain, then blitz to a smooth puree using a stick blender or food processor. You should have 250g puree.

Preheat the oven to 180°C, gas mark 4. Grease 2 x 20cm deep tins and line the bases with parchment. Combine the flour, almonds, bicarbonate of soda, spices and salt in a large bowl and whisk to combine. Melt 150g butter with the sugar and golden syrup until the sugar dissolves.

Tip the orange puree, butter mixture, milk, eggs and chopped ginger into the flour mix, then whisk until combined. Divide between the tins then bake for 25 minutes, until golden and a skewer inserted into the middle of the cakes comes out clean. Cool in the tins for half an hour, then turn onto a wire rack lined with parchment and leave to cool completely.

Beat the mascarpone with 150g orange curd and 2 tbsp of the ginger syrup until creamy. Using a palette knife, sandwich the cakes with 1/3 of the frosting, then cover with the remainder. To decorate, first stick rounds of ginger around the base of the cake. Sprinkle the top edge of the cake with a little ground ginger. Loosen 2 tbsp more curd with 2 tsp ginger syrup and drizzle it over the cake.

#### Cook's tip

This is best eaten at room temperature the same day. Alternatively, keep chilled then return to room temperature before serving.

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## **GARDENING CALENDAR JULY**

July is a time of vigorous growth and flowering – and for the gardener, this is the time for properly managing all that growth.

### **Weed, feed and dead-head**

Continue vigilant weed control. Up the feeding: seasonal patio displays and baskets will do well with a weekly dose of liquid tomato fertiliser.

Dead-head bedding plants to encourage more flowers; cut back delphiniums and geraniums after the first flowers to encourage a second flowering, then feed with Blood, Fish and Bone. Tie in vigorous climbers firmly to their supports.

### **Water**

July often brings the hottest summer weather, so up the water for the plants that need it. Bedding plants, leafy vegetables, seedlings and new plantings are most prone to drying out. Ideally, water your plants early in the morning or in the evening; avoid watering during the hottest part of the day.

### **Protect**

Some pests thrive in hot summer conditions, so check susceptible plants – such as roses – for blackspot, mildew and rust, which can be rife right now.

### **Maintain water features**

Water features will need care, too: use a rake to thin out any overgrown oxygenating plants and algae from ponds. Top up ponds in hot weather, ideally with water-butt water.

**Don't mow**

If it's dry, stop mowing the lawn, or, if possible, raise the height of cut. Brown patches in hot spells are inevitable but the lawn will quickly recover, so there's no need to water.

**Paint**

Dry summer weather is good for your garden outbuildings and fencing: paint wooden sheds, fences, arches and arbours now.

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**HORTICULTURAL AIDE MEMOIRE****Control lily beetles**

Of all plant pests, the lily beetle is one of the easiest to control. The adult is slender and scarlet and enjoys the daylight hours sunbathing on lily leaves. It is thus very easy to spot. Approach it with a degree of nonchalance and you can easily nab one. It's simple enough to crush with the thumbnail, although others may know of more elegant means of despatch. You'll soon get your eye in and your heart will harden to the task. If not, you can ignore them and watch the progress of the resulting shredded foliage covered in brown slime.

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**PARSLEY, SAGE, ROSEMARY AND THYME**

At this time of year, the early-morning dog walk around the garden is slower than usual. Every few steps, I stop to rub the aromatic leaves of summer. My wife says I'm already thinking about lunch before eating breakfast and she may have a point. I blame the dog: if I didn't have to walk him, I'd not be stopping to enjoy the height of the herb season.

Among more familiar soft leaves —basil, coriander—and woodier perennials such as thyme and rosemary, I grow a swathe of less-common herbs that are peaking now, each chosen for looks and scents as good as their flavours.

Despite its position far from the garden gate, anise hyssop (*Agastache foeniculurri*) is the one that usually draws my eye at this time of year. Its purple bottle-brush flowers sit 28in or so above the soil, catching the breeze as well as the eye and

keeping the | bees happy through summer. The leaves are an elegant impersonation of mint and nettle, in a cool | shade of steely green, with a scent and flavour that's a fresh, sweet | blend of mint and aniseed.

Hardy and perennial, anise hyssop grows easily from seed undercover, can be direct sown from May and a young plants are often available online, too. It dies back in winter, reappearing as the soil temperature rises in spring. It self-sows, | which I love, but this is easily avoided by cutting off the flowers before they go over; they, and the leaves, are superb in Pimm's, a in fruit salads or with shellfish.

This year, I've grown shiso also known as perilla just behind the anise hyssop. It comes in purple and vivid green varieties that set off almost any other green plant.

Related to basil and mint, shiso has hints of both in flavour and fragrance, but it is soft cumin that dominates, making it a fantastic herb to add to salsas or dips, to enjoy with aubergines, in pasta sauces and strewn through leafy salads. Cook very briefly, if at all, to get the best of its flavour. Start shiso off indoors in spring or sow direct even now—the sunnier the position, the better. Pinching out the growing tips—they are superb in salads or tempura-battered and deep fried—encourages a bushier plant, or you can allow it to grow tall and flower.

There are a few lesser-known woody herbs that draw my fingers on that dog walk, including orange thyme (every bit as good as lemon thyme) and the criminally under-appreciated summer savory (*Satureja hortensis*). The plant looks like something of a cross between thyme and rosemary, with a wonderful, resinous, piney peppery flavour and scent that pairs beautifully with broad and runner beans, as well as most meats.

I tend to grow it near the broad beans as a companion plant, as seems to deter black fly. Despite its woody appearance, summer savory is an annual that's easy grown from seed and happiest in a sunny, well-drained spot.

A few containers dot the path lemon verbena, a few mints an a great number of scented pelargoniums—also called scented geraniums—which, despite m initial reservations about the 1970s window-box appear and have become utterly indispensable.

Their leaves carry a soft yet intense scent and flavour in wide range of possibilities, including lemon, orange, pine hazelnut and many others. Rose scented {*Pelargonium cap taturri*) is the most common, its aroma and taste as close to Turkish Delight as you'll find,

I use the leaves to make syrups for everything from drizzling over cakes to cocktails and grow them in pots, as, although they are perennial, they're tender an best brought undercover for winter.

Stevia {Stevia rebaudiana} is perhaps the only herb I grow that offers little or no scent; it is there entirely for its flavour. As a plant, it is unremarkable in almost every way, except the incredible sweetness of its leaves; The merest sliver of leaf pinch between your fingers will fill your mouth with intense sweetness.

Fresh or dried leaves of stevia sweeten sour fruit and drinks beautifully (try a little with mint in tea or a mojito), offering sweetness without calories or a spike in blood sugar. Stevia grows to about 24in, producing small, pretty white flowers in late summer. It is a perennial, but highly sensitive to the cold, so you'll need to bring it undercover—together with you and the dog—for winter.

*Mark Diacono*

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## BEEBOMBS

### Bringing the Bees Back

Found these on a visit to The Packhouse in Tongham. (they have reopened with CV19 restrictions)

Your Beebombs will return 21 sq ft of the 97% of wildflower habitat Britain has lost since WW2

Your Beebombs contain 18 species of wildflowers, native to Britain and confirmed by the RHS as 'Perfect for Pollinators'

Yarrow	Common Knapweed
Wild Carrot	Lady's Bedstraw
Rough Hawkbit	Oxeye Daisy
Ribwort Plantain	Cowslip
Self Heal	Corn Marigold
Yellow Rattle	Common Sorrel
Salad Burnet	White Campion
Red Campion	Common Poppy
Cornflower	Corn Chamomile

No gardening, tilling or digging is required. Beebombs don't need to be planted or tended. Just throw your Beebombs onto cleared ground, water liberally, keeping the seeds damp, and await your wildflowers. Wildflowers are hardy but a little slower to grow than many imported flowers. Some of the annuals should bloom in the first year, the perennials may take 2 years.

You can read more about each species on our website ■

**[www.beebombs.com/our-seeds](http://www.beebombs.com/our-seeds)**

**How to Beebomb**

**[www.Beebombs.com](http://www.Beebombs.com)**

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**LOCKDOWN ODE.**

“This lockdown is getting old and frankly I’ve had enough.  
I’ve decided the matter over a cup of coffee with the kitchen sink and we both agree that the experience has been draining.  
I didn’t mention anything to the washing machine as she puts the wrong spin on everything.  
Same as the fridge. He only gives cold comfort.  
I asked the lamp, but she couldn’t shed any light on the situation.  
The vacuum cleaner was rather rude and told me to suck it.  
The threshold was no better, it suggested I got over it.  
The carpet advised me to sweep my feelings under the rug.  
But the fan was more upbeat and thought that the crisis would soon blow over.  
The toilet looked a bit flushed and didn’t offer an opinion.  
The wall didn’t say a word either, just gave me a blank stare.  
The door knob was more forthcoming - told me to get a firm grip on the situation and move on.  
The front door declared I was unhinged and so the curtains told me to .... you’ve guessed it.... pull myself together.  
Then the chair told me to table it and the table remarked that I didn’t have a leg to stand on.  
When I told the table to break a leg, the mirror said that my comment reflected poorly on my thinking.  
However, in the end, the iron straightened things out.  
She said everything will be fine..., no situation is too pressing for long anyway!!”