
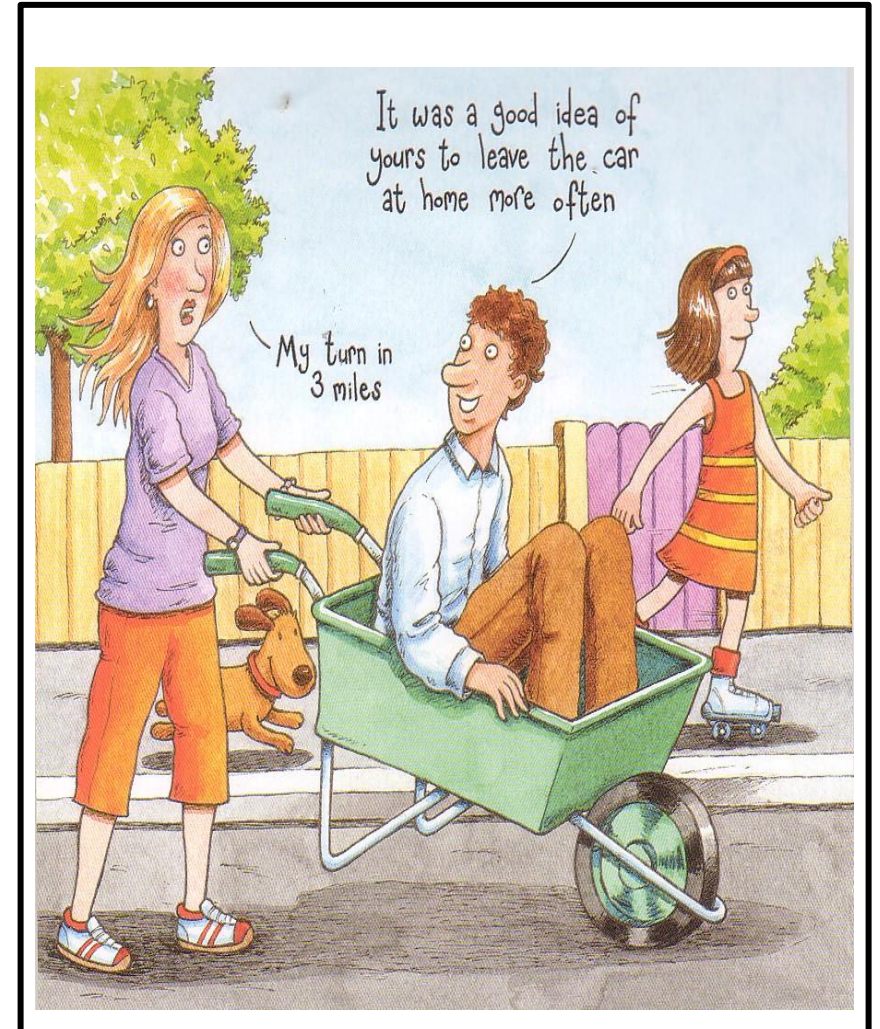


Ash Parish Garden Club

www.ashparishgardenclub.org.uk

 ash parish garden club



Monthly Newsletter Aug 2020

ASH PARISH GARDEN CLUB OFFICERS

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EDITORS NOTES

Brian –Stories to 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.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

RHS Hampton Court	9 - 15 Sep
AUTUMN SHOW	12 Sep
RHS Malvern (autumn)	26 - 27 Sep

POETS CORNER

My Garden

A garden is a lovesome thing, God wot!
Rose plot,
Fringed pool,
Fern'd grot -
The veriest school
Of peace; and yet the fool
Contentends that God is not —
Not God! in gardens! when the eve is cool?
Nay, but I have a sign;
'Tis very sure God walks in mine.

T.E. BROWN (1830-1897)

THIS MONTHS RECIPE

Date, orange & raspberry spelt loaf cake

Serves 10 Prepare 15 minutes Cook 55 minutes

You will need

Sunflower oil, for greasing

165g pack pitted dates

3 tbsp clear honey, plus a drizzle to serve

3 Large Eggs
100g half fat creme frache, plus extra to serve
Finely grated zest and 4 tbsp juice from
1 large orange
150g ground almonds
100g Organic Spelt Flour
1.5 tsp baking powder
0.5 tsp bicarbonate of soda
2 tsp ground mixed spice
75g raspberries, plus more to serve

To do

Preheat the oven to 180° C, gas mark 4
Grease and line a 900g loaf tin with baking parchment or a tin liner.
Boil the kettle.
Put the dates, honey and 5 tbsp freshly boiled water into a food processor
Process for about 1 minute until creamy and smooth.
Scrape the sides of the bowl a few times with a spatula as you go.
Add the eggs, creme frache, orange zest and juice (if your orange doesn't give enough juice, top up with water) and pulse again to combine.
Mix the almonds, flour, baking powder, bicarb, mixed spice and tsp salt,
Sift into the processor bowl. Pulse to a smooth, loose batter.
Scrape it into the tin, then scatter with the raspberries and press them in just a little.

GARDENING CALENDAR AUGUST

August is the first harvest month; it is also the time to begin tidying up your garden as the early-summer-growing plants begin to finish flowering and collapse.

Harvest

Now is the time to pick sweet corn, tomatoes, peas, beans, marrows, pumpkins, artichokes and glasshouse crops such as chillies and aubergines. Push straw or old tiles under ripening squash and pumpkins to stop rotting on the soil surface.

Protect

Tie in tall late-summer perennials to stop them flopping over.

Prune

Lavender and rosemary will have finished flowering by now, so lightly trim them gently shear the new soft growth, but don't cut into the older brown wood. Likewise,

trim off foliage from strawberries once they've finished fruiting. In the middle of the month stop outdoor tomatoes by pinching out the uppermost terminal shoot.

Water

Water in dry spells, from a water butt or by re-using lightly used bathwater.

Mow

Mow the lawn at least once a week. Raise the blades if the weather is hot and dry to stop the sward turning brown.

Pick pumpkins this month as well as tomatoes, artichokes and glasshouse crops such as chillies and aubergines

YEAR OF THE RUCLBECKIA

We should all celebrate this striking plant, says Peter Seabrook

NINETY different cultivars of rudbeckia were planted for the FleuroSelect Year of the Rudbeckia trial at the RHS Hyde Hall Garden last June (there will be a duplicate planting at Harlow Carr). Who would have thought there were that many? This includes a number of new introductions. -

I had already seen some of them in the Rudbeckia Enchanted Series, bred by Charles Valin and planned for a Thompson & Morgan Chelsea Flower Show 2020 launch. When the Chelsea show was cancelled, some of the show plants were carried forward to help clad my 50th Anniversary Sun pyramid display at RHS Hyde Hall.

Enchanting they certainly are; very free-flowering doubles in five eye-: catching colours, with lime green

R. 'Enchanted Forest* a particular beauty. Each and every plant has the same flower colour and plant habit, because they are vegetatively propagated by micropropagation.

It will be interesting to see how they measure up against all the others, mostly seed-raised and therefore they often having some variation from plant to plant These Enchanteds will face some I stiff competition from FleuroSelect Gold Medal 2020 winner Rudbeckia hirta 'Amarillo Gold', bred by the famous German breeder Benary.

This is another super garden plant, with a green central disc and golden inner ray petals radiating out to yellow tips. Benary has quite a record in the FleuroSelect

Gold Medal stakes, with its R. 'Prairie Sun' (yellow with a green eye) and shorter to 18in/45cm R. 'Maya'(the first fully double with yellow flowers) both winning Gold.

Rudbeckia - commonly known as black-eyed Susan and coneflower - are tough survivors. R.'Denver Dais/ was so called for the Mile-High City's 150th Anniversary in 2013. It is so dry there that half the 16in (40cm) of rainfall evaporates before it hits the soil!

BODNANT GARDEN

Since it was published in 1911, Frances Hodgson Burnett's novel *The Secret Garden* has enchanted generations of children and adults alike and has been a rich source for film producers. This spring the latest adaptation is set to breathe fresh life into the tale, and the Trust's Bodnant Garden in Conwy has an important role to play.

The *Secret Garden* tells the story of recently orphaned Mary Lennox (Dixie Egerickx), who is sent from colonial India to live with her uncle (Colin Firth) at the isolated Misselthwaite Manor on the Yorkshire moors. Unloved and neglected, Mary struggles to settle into her new life. After she asks her uncle for a 'bit of earth' to grow seeds in, she stumbles across a locked door to a neglected garden. As she starts to restore the garden, helped by her friend Dickon and her cousin Colin, who is unable to walk due to a spinal condition, both the children and the garden begin to blossom.

Bodnant Garden is tucked away in the foothills of Snowdonia. It was the vision of Victorian scientist Henry Pochin who, together with his descendants, created a landscape of buzzing meadows, woodland

glades, water gardens and exotic flowers collected by 19th-century plant-hunters.

Bodnant's relatively remote setting means this is the first time it has been chosen as a film location, but it proved to be well worth the journey for *The Secret Garden* production team. 'It's easy to end up filming everything near the M25, but for this production we were determined to go out and explore some of Britain's hidden gems,' explains the film's producer Rosie Alison. 'We fell in love with Bodnant for its idyllic valley and running stream surrounded by flowers. We didn't see anything else to equal it.'

As this production is set just after the Second World War, the film-makers eschewed the Edwardian walled garden of the novel. Instead they used a range of locations across Britain, including Bodnant, to give the garden a sense of vastness and variety. 'We wanted to create a boundless space that reflects the richness of Mary's imagination,' says Rosie. 'Once she's inside the garden you never see the walls, so it almost feels like she's entered another world.'

Merlin Townsend, a senior gardener at Bodnant, and his team were on hand during filming to help the crew and ensure the garden was properly looked after. For one of the scenes they constructed a temporary dam across part of the River Hiraethlyn to create depth for the children to go swimming, removing it as soon as the three days of filming were completed. 'There were a few shots where we had to raise the tree canopy slightly by pruning the lower branches, but nothing major,' says Merlin. 'Looking after the garden was our main priority, and the film crew were very respectful of that. Funds from the film are going back into garden conservation work, including our project to renovate the Victorian East Garden.'

The crew were particularly keen to feature Bodnant's famous Laburnum Arch, which bursts into a cascade of yellow blooms for around two weeks in late May. 'We were all on "laburnum watch" so we could let the film-makers know as soon as it started to flower,' says Merlin.

Bodnant isn't the only Trust place you might recognise. At Fountains Abbey in North Yorkshire the crew transformed part of the Abbey ruins into a sunken temple covered with vines, constructing temporary pools to cover the ground with water, and the kitchens of Osterley Park in Middlesex stood in for Misselthwaite Manor's kitchen. For Colin Firth, who plays Mary's uncle, working outdoors was a restorative experience. 'Filming in magical environments like these is wonderfully peaceful,' he says. 'It's a reminder of how dependent we are on nature, and vice versa.' 'Being surrounded by nature is far more sensory than being in a studio,' adds Dixie Egerickx, who plays Mary. 'When you can hear the birdsong and smell the flowers, it's much easier to believe that you're actually in the story you're telling.'

SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL

With urban and suburban gardens getting smaller all the time, many of us may not have as much space in our gardens as we would like. Or, you may be fortunate enough to have an expansive garden, but want to create smaller border areas that draw the eye. Either way, a smaller space doesn't have to mean less impact. With some smart planning and good plant choices, small garden spaces can give every bit as much pleasure as rolling acres.

Planning Smaller Borders

When creating attractive small borders, the key is to choose the right size plants that create the illusion of more space. Spaces look bigger when the eye is drawn upwards. Paradoxically, this means one of the most important elements in a smaller space is trees.

There are a number of trees that are ideal for smaller plots. The important thing is to add height without blocking out the sun so tall, slim trees ('fastigate') or small to mid-sized trees with light foliage cover are a good choice.

Amelanchier lamarckii is a great option. This small, attractive tree is smothered in white blossom in spring with red-purple berries following in June and glorious autumn foliage. *Cornus kousa* 'Miss Satomi' is another superb tree for fiery autumn foliage shades, with dusky pink bracts in summer. Another recommended smaller tree, *Malus* 'Evereste', is one of the best flowering crab apples. It offers an upright habit and good-sized fruits you can use to make jams and jellies.

Linking Height with Shrubs

If you are planting trees, you need to link the height back down to your borders. This is where shrubs come in, creating structure around which the colourful perennials can flourish and excite.

Camellias can be a good choice as a structural shrub. The glossy dark green foliage is a great background for colourful perennials in the spring and summer, bursting into flower in the winter months. *Acer palmatum* varieties are staples of the smaller space. Slow-growing and easily managed, they can easily be kept as large shrubs to around 8-10 feet in height. Some varieties have a more upright habit while some, such as *Acer* p. 'Dissectum' and *Acer* p. 'Crimson Queen' have a more weeping growth and will form attractive mounded shrubs. Roses also work so well with perennials and there are a huge number of varieties that are great for smaller spaces. Choose modern English varieties, such as those bred by David Austin Roses, rather than the older Hybrid Tea types and you will discover far greater disease and pest resistance.

Vertical Illusion

Finally, the key to increasing the apparent space of the garden is to keep the eye interested vertically. You need a range of heights in your perennial planting or it will look flat. This does require a good depth of flower border - ideally three feet or more - to work with. If this means only having borders down one side of the garden, why not? In a small garden, consider whether you need a lawn at all. You could design deep borders for planting with paved or natural pathways through to the rear.

With perennial planting, place taller perennials to the rear (*agapanthus*, *digitalis*, *Verbena bonariensis*), mid-size further forwards (*astrantia*, *dahlia*, *paeonies*) and low-growing ones at the front (*bergenia*, *dianthus*, *heuchera*). There are far too many great perennials to list, but find a selection of recommended ones for smaller spaces.

Clever Colour

In a smaller space, it works best to have a theme for an area. This could be a single colour, or combination such as fiery red/ orange/yellow. Contrasting colours can work well together too - white, purple and yellow is a vibrant combination that works well while blue and orange can be striking if done well.

Alternatively, you might choose just a handful of plants, but plant multiples of each to fill the space. Purple Geranium 'Rozanne' and Campanula Catherina with white and purple alliums popping up in early spring and white and purple agapanthus replacing them in the summer could be a real statement and keeps an area simple but impactful.

If you have a small space, it is no barrier to creating a beautiful, living environment. However, trying to fit every plant you like into a small space can end up looking muddled and messy, so take some time to plan your plot and you will be richly rewarded.

Find out more about what you can do with your small space online.