
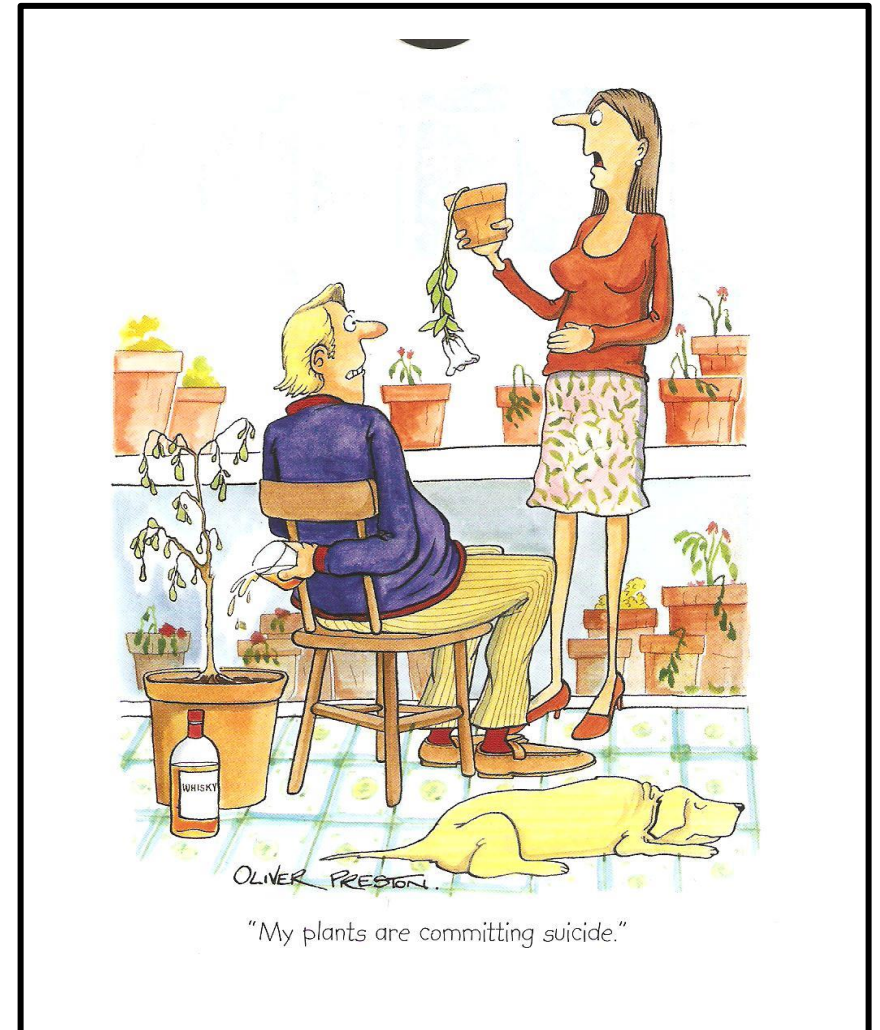


Ash Parish Garden Club

www.ashparishgardenclub.org.uk

 ash parish garden club



Monthly Newsletter Jan 2021

ASH PARISH GARDEN CLUB OFFICERS

<u>OFFICE</u>	<u>OFFICERS</u>	<u>TEL NO</u>
Chairman	Mr J Poole "MEADCOTT" Badshot Lea Rd	01252 319621
Secretary	Mrs. B Ames 97 Longacre, Ash	01252 686303
Treasurer	Mr. Ian Chant 54 Aldershot Road, Church Crookham	07850498544
Show Secretary	Mrs. B Winton 2 Elm Hill, Normandy	01252 333756
Social Secretary	Mrs. H Chant 54 Aldershot Road, Church Crookham	07754888994
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 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

SPRING SHOW	TBA
PLANT SALE	TBA
RHS Malvern (spring)	6 - 9 May
RHS Chelsea	18 - 22 May
SUMMER SHOW	TBA
RHS Hampton Court	6 - 11 July
RHS Tatton Park	21 - 25 July
AUTUMN SHOW	TBA

POETS CORNER**A poem for our times-**

I'm normally a social girl
I love to meet my mates
But lately with the virus here
We can't go out the gates

You see we are the "oldies" now
We need to stay inside
If they haven't seen us for a while
They'll think we've upped and died

They'll never know the things we did
Before we got this old
There wasn't any Facebook
So not everything was told

We may seem sweet old ladies
Who could never be uncouth
But we grew up in the 60s-
If you only knew the truth!

There was sex and drugs and rock 'n roll

The pill and mini skirts
We smoked, we drank, we partied
And were quite outrageous flirts

Then we settled down, got married
And turned into someone's mum,
Somebody's wife, then nana,
Who on earth did we become?

We didn't mind the change of pace
Because our lives were full
But to bury us before we're dead
Is like a red rag to a bull!

So here you find me stuck inside
For 4 weeks, maybe more
I finally found myself again
Then I had to close the door!

It didn't really bother me
I'd while away the hour
I'd bake for all the family
But I've got no flaming flour!

Now Netflix is just wonderful
I like a gutsy thriller
I'm swooning over Idris
Or some random sexy killer.

At least I've got a stash of booze
For when I'm being idle
There's wine and whiskey, even gin
If I'm feeling suicidal

So lets all drink to lockdown
To recovery and health
And hope this awful virus
Doesn't decimate our wealth.

We'll all get through the crisis
And be back to join our mates
Just hoping I'm not far too wide
To fit through the flaming gates (Ann & John Poole)

One with Nature

The garden at twilight, so vivid,
Alive, vibrant, outer worldly.
Three-dimensional, the garden talks to me,
Returning love.

Trees towering above limestone cliffs,
Dark against the sky.
Ancient yews rooted in water,
Profoundly still and peaceful.

Reflections of my Being,
Every plant stands proud.
Ruby leaves glowing,
We silently converse.

Enhanced state of mind;
Listening, touching, smelling.
Frogs croaking, water trickles by,
At last - one with nature.

(Alan Clements. Cascades Gardens at full moon Summer Solstice 20th June 2019)

GARDENING CALENDAR JANUARY

January may seem like the dead of winter, but there is a lot to be done in your garden during this month.

Plants

Your plants will need protection and maintenance during this time of year. Brush snow from evergreens and conifers to stop the branches from bowing, breaking or splaying out under the sheer weight. If wet weather conditions have made ornamental grasses and other perennials fall flat, start cutting these back to give them a fresh start.

Protect

After plenty of rain, mulch beds and borders with leaf mould, manure, compost or shredded bark – a layer of around five to 10cm is ideal. Check protective fleece and straw is covering still-tender plants such as tree ferns.

Feed

Feed new plantings in late January with slow-release fertiliser such as Blood, Fish and Bone, and water, but leave the application of faster-acting organic fertilisers such as Growmore until the beginning of March.

Wildlife also will benefit from your help at the beginning of the year. Start putting food and water in your garden for hungry and thirsty birds. To stop ponds and bird baths freezing over, leave a tennis ball to bob on top of the water.

Tidy

January is also an appropriate time for tidying your garden and maintaining and repairing your garden furniture and decking. Recycle cut trees by shredding them for mulch or compost. Repair and stain or paint fences, pergolas and wooden furniture if weather conditions permit. Scrub slippery garden decking and paving with hot soapy water; Patio Cleaner is useful for dirtier surfaces. Ventilate greenhouses and conservatories on hot sunny days, and wash the glass of the greenhouse to let in more light.

Be sure to put out feed for birds throughout the winter months

NO 2020 YEAR END RESULTS BECAUSE OF CV19

THIS MONTHS RECIPE

Get a shroom (combined article & recipe)

Mushrooms are high in protein, nearly impossible to overcook and the main ingredient for the original ketchup, writes Sam Wong

ALTHOUGH mushrooms come in many shapes and sizes, the most commonly eaten types in Europe are one species, *Agaricus bisporus*. We know them as button mushrooms and chestnut mushrooms when they are young and portobello mushrooms when they are fully grown.

Most of the organism is made up of an underground network of thin fibres called hyphae. The part we eat is the fruiting body, which emerges above the soil and releases spores into the air. The more highly prized types of mushroom, such as chanterelles, morels and porcini, grow in symbiosis with trees, so they are harder to cultivate and are usually harvested from the wild. Many mushrooms produce poisons to protect themselves from being eaten by animals. As such, foraging for them isn't recommended without expert knowledge.

Mushrooms are 80 to 90 per cent water. Their cell walls contain chitin, a quite different polymer to the cellulose of plant cell walls, which accounts for their strange texture. Chitin is remarkably heat-stable, which is why it is practically impossible to overcook mushrooms - they remain firm yet tender even after prolonged cooking.

They are also higher in protein than most plant foods and contain more glutamate, the chemical responsible for the savoury umami taste. The distinctive aroma of mushrooms comes partly from octenol, an alcohol molecule with eight carbon atoms. It is made by enzymes when the tissue is damaged, which happens most in the gills (the ribs beneath the cap). This is why closed cup mushrooms are less flavoursome than types such as portobello.

Although ketchup is today associated with tomatoes, it first became popular in Britain and the US as a mushroom-based sauce in the 18th century. In historical recipes, the mixture is strained to produce a thin liquid akin to soy sauce that packs a similar umami punch. I prefer to puree the mixture, making a thick sauce more like the ketchup we are familiar with.

What you need for mushroom ketchup

Slice the fresh mushrooms or break them up by hand.

In a large bowl, mix them with the sea salt, squeezing and bruising them with your hands.

Cover and leave for 24 hours.

Soak the dried porcini mushrooms in 200 millilitres of hot water for 30 minutes.

Saute the onion with a pinch of bicarbonate of soda so it softens and browns more quickly.

Once starting to brown, add the garlic and cook for 2 minutes.

Then add the fresh and rehydrated mushrooms along with any liquid in the bowls, being careful to leave any grit behind.

Add the spices and simmer for 45 minutes, adding water if it starts to become dry.

Blend the mixture with the vinegar, sugar and olive oil until smooth. Taste and add more salt, sugar or vinegar as needed.

What you need

400g fresh mushrooms

of different types

1tbsp sea salt flakes

20g dried porcini mushrooms

1 onion, finely chopped

Pinch of bicarbonate of soda

3 cloves garlic, finely chopped

Pinch of allspice
Pinch of nutmeg
Black pepper
100ml cider vinegar
2tbsp brown sugar
2tbsp olive oil

I'M GROWING ONIONS FOR SEED

Last year I may have the best crop of seed I've ever seen!

Over the years I've tried many ways of producing my own selection of large exhibition onion seed, with the intention always of maintaining the quality of the stock through uniformity, shape, size and vigour. It does pay to have a minimum of six bulbs planted up for seed in order to maintain the vigour.

I usually pick the best-shaped onions and simply sit them on top of some M3 compost with added slow-release fertiliser in a 10 litre pot. I'll do this anytime during winter and once potted up I initially give very little water to prevent any rotting or disease getting at them.

Another way I've tried is to harvest the bulbs when they're smaller and of even shape, thoroughly drying them out and potting up in a similar way. The idea being that there's less flesh to rot and remove. I've also tried removing the outer layer of skins from the onion so that the root plate is exposed so when planted up there's less danger of rotting.

No matter how you do it, you need good pollination to make sure you have a good set on the bulbs. Once the flowers are open I go around all the heads every day with a fine cosmetic brush, which moves the pollen around the flowers. I try to do this around noon.

This year I've had really good heads that appear to be setting very well and should produce some really good quality seed. I grew the onions in pots using Canna Coco Professional fibre and fed with Canna Coco A and B. In all my years of growing onions for seed production, I've never had such powerful stalks on the flower heads. They were so big that I couldn't get my hand around them! Once the seed start to appear through the seed case I shall place some paper bags over them Justin case some seeds naturally drop off. ■ Why not follow me on Twitter throughout the season as I grow vegetables for show displays – @medwynsof angles.