
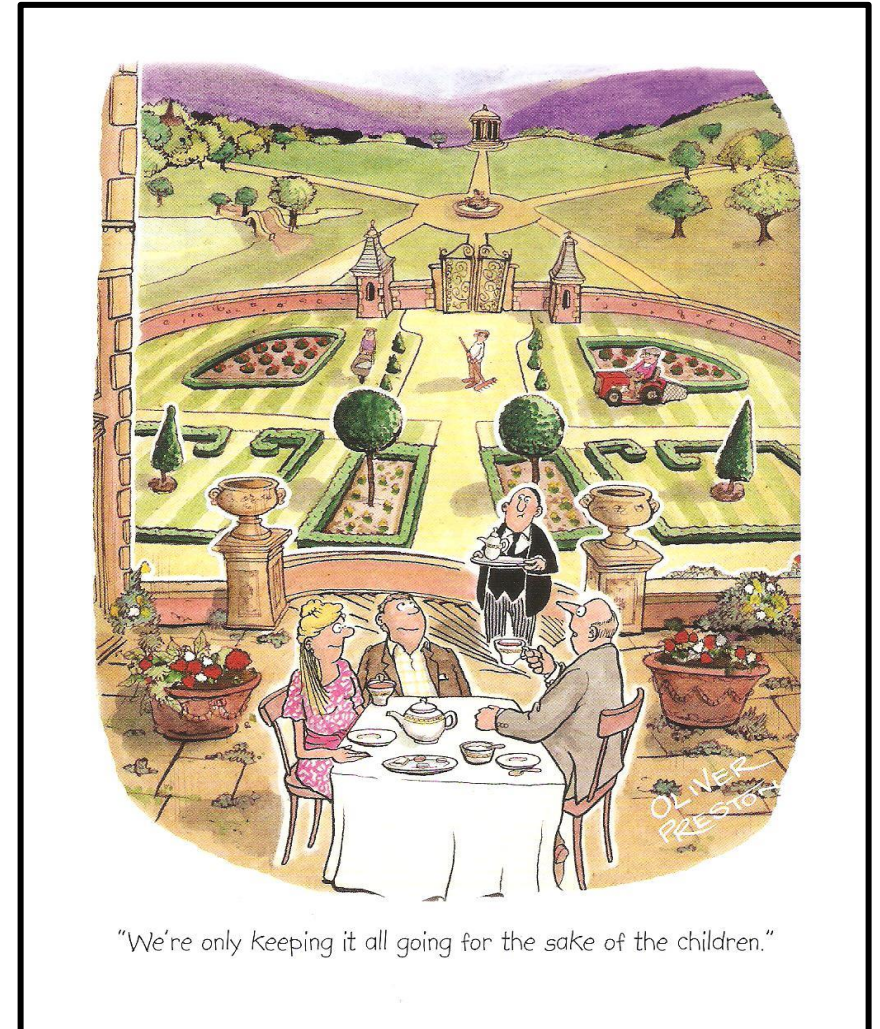


Ash Parish Garden Club

www.ashparishgardenclub.org.uk

 ash parish garden club



Monthly Newsletter Sept 2021

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

AUTUMN SHOW	11 Sept
RHS Chelsea	21 - 26 Sep

COMING UP ROSES

DAVID WHEELER

Don't lament the passing of June and July's cavalcade of roses. Many will continue flowering all summer and into autumn.

I've been chatting to Michael Marriott. Until his retirement last year, he was David Austin's head rosarian. A multi-tasker, he wrote descriptive and historical paragraphs for the firm's catalogues about the nursery's world-famous English Roses and the many long-established classics raised by a host of nurserymen in other temperate regions over the past several centuries.

Alongside his deskbound nursery duties over a 35-year spell at Albrighton near Wolverhampton as Austin's all-purpose expert, Marriott also found time to design rose gardens in this country and abroad and to lecture worldwide about roses. Nearer home, with panache and oracular skills, he dispensed much-valued hands-on information about the cultivation of roses to visitors welcomed at the nursery and its display gardens.

I asked the oracle to suggest roses for August and late-summer flowers. He began with three Austin-bred English Roses, to which I've added notes cribbed from their catalogues. Lady of Shalott is highly disease-resistant and one of the firm's most robust creations, with chalice-shaped blooms bearing petals of salmon-pink upper sides which contrast with a golden-yellow reverse.

Mortimer Sackler, a 'rather unusual climber', produces 12ft stems, sporting fragrant, medium-sized, semi-double flowers of a soft blush colour. The lovely Desdemona ('best for flowering, best for fragrance') has peachy pink buds that open

to beautiful pinkish-hued, white blooms with in-curved petals which throw an arresting interplay of light and shadow.

Two bushy, ground-covering roses from German breeder Kordes, with names anticipating the oncoming game season, are Grouse, well-endowed with a profusion of blush-pink single flowers, and similar-looking (but white) Partridge - both new to me but placed high on my wants list, now I've learned about their extended and versatile strut. Try them on a low wall, where their lax-bloom-laden stems will tumble prettily to the ground.

A personal favourite, and one I've grown for many years, also appears on Michael's list: *Rosa virginiana*. This American 'wild' or 'prairie' species is sought less for its conservative midsummer flowering (akin to that of our native dog rose, *R canina*) than for its spectacular fiery foliage, set further aglow by clusters of glossy ruby hips, as colder nights approach. Easy from cuttings, too.

American Pillar - yes, also from that side of the pond and treasured since its first appearance in 1909 - is a determined rambler (rosarian Peter Beales slights it as 'almost coarse') which will in two seasons cover a high fence or pergola or climb athletically into nearby trees. Its bright reddish-pink flowers pale to deep pink as they age but continue abundantly in large trusses.

My final Marriott selection is a musk rose, *R moschata* 'Princesse de Nassau', thought to be of unknown origin and parentage but probably grown by aficionados since the 19th century. With flowers of a 'yellowish-straw' colour and smelling 'very sweet', it's said to have been 'rediscovered' by the late Graham Stuart Thomas, who sent budwood to Peter Beales in 1982 - Beales vouches for its hardiness after its surviving the severe winter of 1984/5. You can see it for yourself at GST's supreme collection of roses within two adjoining walled gardens at Mottisfont Abbey in Hampshire.

And I too will head to Mottisfont this month, and to Austin's rosy acres in September, for there's no substitute for assessing these roses in real life, however good the myriad rose books and catalogues.

GARDENING CALENDAR SEPTEMBER

September can be a time of relative peace for the ornamental gardener: generally, there is less to do during this month than other months, apart from collecting seeds from summer-flowering plants.

Maintain water features

For gardens with water features, now is the time to cover ponds with netting to prevent water-logging during leaf fall in the autumn.

Harvest

In a kitchen garden, now is the time to enjoy the rewards of your hard work and pick your vegetables and fruit; remember to dig up any remaining potatoes, otherwise they will be destroyed by slugs.

Protect

Cover any tender salad leaves with bird netting, and pick late-fruiting raspberries and blackberries.

POETS CORNER

Forget-Me-Nots

When to the flowers so beautiful
The Father gave a name,
Back came a little blue-eyed one,
All timidly it came.
And standing at its Father's feet,
And gazing in His face,
It said in low and trembling tone,
'Dear God, the name thou gavest me,
Alas! I have forgot.'
Kindly the Father looked Him down,
And said, 'Forget-me-not.'
ANONYMOUS (19th century)

THIS MONTHS RECIPE

Banana and Walnut loaf

If you have overripe bananas in the fruit bowl then don't bin them - just whizz up this delicious moist loaf cake instead. It will keep for up to 5 days wrapped in greaseproof paper or foil and stored in an airtight tin.

Makes 10 Slices

Ready in 1 hour 45 minutes, plus cooling time

You will need

175g unsalted butter, softened
175g light soft brown sugar
225g self-raising flour
2 tsp ground mixed spice
Half tsp baking powder
3 medium eggs
75g walnut halves, roughly chopped
2 large ripe bananas, peeled and mashed with 2 tsp lemon juice
Icing sugar, to dust

To do

Preheat the oven to 170C, Fan 150C, Gas 3.

Grease and line the base and the two long sides of a 900g loaf tin with baking paper.

Place the butter, sugar, flour, spice, baking powder and eggs in a large bowl and beat with an electric whisk until thoroughly combined

This will take about 4-5 minutes.

Fold in the walnuts and mashed bananas.

Spoon the mixture into the prepared tin and level the surface.

Bake for 1hour -1 hour 15 minutes until risen and golden and a skewer inserted into the centre of the cake comes out clean.

Leave to cool in the tin for 10 minutes then turn out onto a cooling rack and cool completely.

Dust thickly with icing sugar.

ROSE CARE.***When to plant.***

The Best time to plant bare-root roses is from October to March, providing the soil is workable and free from frost. Containerised roses can be planted all year round.

Soil Preparation.

If roses have previously been growing in the area to be planted, to avoid 'Rose Sickness' occurring, the soil from the planting hole must be exchanged with some from elsewhere in the garden.

Alternatively plant the rose in a large biodegradable pot or box to allow it to become established before it roots out into the surrounding soil.

You can also use 'Rootgrow'. This is a product containing a mycorrhiza fungi which works in union with the Roses' root system.

Ensure the ground is thoroughly dug over and incorporate plenty of well rotted manure or organic material.

Growing Roses in Containers.

Roses are heavy feeders and need a good root run for successful growing in containers. Choose a container of at least 30-40 cm diameter and depth, with a multi-purpose compost of your choice.

For best results water regularly during the summer and liquid feed. Also remember to spray once every 2-3 weeks to keep them free from pests and diseases. Pruning is exactly the same as normal garden roses.

Planting Roses.

Dig a hole large enough to take all the root, then break up the bottom of the hole with a fork. Place the roots in the hole and cut back any that would otherwise need to be folded around.

Replace the soil, firming it down with your heel as you go to avoid any air pockets and ensure that the union of the branches and its roots is at or just above soil level when planted.

Ensure the rose is well watered in and water generously until the plant is established.

Pruning

Large flowered Hybrid Tea and cluster flowered Floribunda roses.

Prime these back to 2ft in mid-November to avoid wind rock and then in mid-March to about 6 inches above ground level. Remove any very old woody stumps if present and also any spindly growth. To ensure plenty of flower throughout the summer, cut back the shoots that have flowered by one third.

Ground Cover Roses.

These need very little pruning except the removal of any very old and dead wood and a light shearing to keep them tidy and within bounds in mid-March.

Rambling Roses.

These need very little pruning except the removal of old and dead wood in mid-March. Should they outgrow their planting area, cut ~~" them back and thin out accordingly.

New English shrub & repeat flowering shrub roses.

Prune in mid-March to ensure plenty of large flowers throughout the summer. Remove all dead, old and spindly growth and shorten the stronger shoots by one half to one third. In addition, throughout the summer remove dead flower heads by cutting the shoots back by one third as this will encourage more flower production.

Summer flowering shrub roses.

These flower on the previous season's growth and so need no pruning except to cut out very old or dead wood.

Climbing roses.

In the first two or three years, cut the main shoots back in mid-March to produce a framework with side shoots. Once this framework has been achieved then prune side shoots that have flowered in the previous season to about 3 buds

Feeding

After pruning in mid-March, feed with a proprietary rose food and mulch with a layer of well rotted manure or organic material. Feed with rose food again after the first flowering. Regular liquid feeding during the summer will help keep your roses healthy and promote increased flowering

Watering.

In long diy periods, flowering can be improved by regular watering. Otherwise watering is unnecessary except after planting.

Spraying

Spray with Rose Clear Ultra at fortnightly intervals from early May to September to help keep your roses healthy and disease free. Good hygiene will also be gained by raking up and composting all the dead leaves in December/early January. This will help eradicate any over-wintering fungal spores.

SAVE YOUR SUMMER SEEDS***Karen Murphy***

It's your garden's heyday now, as months of hard work come to fruition. It's exciting and heart-warming to see it all come together. All around, summer flowers bloom brightly in their flush of youth. Dahlias bring drama with aplomb, while airy perennials enjoy garden prime time - and there's still so much more to come. A few early birds, however, whose day in the sun has long passed, have faded to buff, their old flowers morphing into stately seed heads. Alliums, aquilegia, honesty, foxgloves, red campion and nigella age gracefully at the sidelines.

A nice thing to do, at this point in high summer, is to literally take stock of your plants, saving seed from some of your favourites to create next year's beautiful garden. Did your foxgloves do well this year? Is that creamy-yellow calendula the perfect colour for your plot? Well, part of the joy of gardening is planning ahead so be sure to snip off some seed heads and tuck them away for the joyous day when you can get them out and start sowing again.

There's more to seed saving than meets the eye. Not only is it a fun and simple and cheap, cheerful way to propagate, it's lovely to connect with your garden in an all-natural way, from seed to plant and back to seed again. It's satisfying, too, when your efforts are rewarded each year, raising your own garden from scratch with a bounty of flowers or produce. Not many things these days give you such a real, grounded connection to the earth around you. It's a link to the past, a way of preserving old favourite, heritage varieties disappearing from popular use. With new varieties coming out all the time it's important we keep the old lines open. Seed saving also links you to the future, inspiring you to get excited about things to come.

More prosaically, it's sensible to save seed from your garden as you know these plants work

for you in your conditions. And, frankly, how much more local can you get? So, it's time to get started. Have paper envelopes handy for collection - the larger of the seed heads or flower spikes can be put whole into a big bag for sorting later. Wait until your chosen seed heads are fully ripe, brown and crispy before you begin gathering. After collection, sort them on a table covered in sheets of white paper, which will help you to see the seed - often so tiny as to be dust-like. Sort the 'wheat from the chaff', and funnel your dry, clean seed into a well-labelled envelope, popping it into a cool, dry place until you need it.

Once started you'll not want to stop! Carry on your seed saving right into late summer, autumn and winter to be sure you preserve the full range of plants.

LOVE THOSE BUGS!

Aphids and other garden foes often make us reach for pesticides. Instead, a wildlife rethink could be in order, says Clare Wilson

AS MOST of the UK recovers from a frigid April and a soggy May, its gardens are starting to perk up. That means so are caterpillars, aphids such as greenflies, and other plant-feeding invertebrates generally seen as the gardener's foes.

A common reaction to seeing prized plants covered with bugs is to reach for the pesticide spray. But we should temper that instinct, says Andrew Salisbury, principal

entomologist at the UK Royal Horticultural Society. Many invertebrate species in the UK and elsewhere are in decline, and gardens can be a haven - the UK's home gardens collectively add up to an area larger than the country's official nature reserves.

You might think there is no shortage of aphids, but they are food for bigger insects, such as ladybirds, lacewings and wasps, not to mention blue tits. While gardens are a much understudied ecological resource, some work suggests they can support hundreds of invertebrate species, including at least two insects in decline in the UK: two-spot ladybirds and, in the south, stag beetles.

Most synthetic pesticides kill aphids' insect predators too - and aphids tend to bounce back faster than their predators, requiring repeated spraying. If you must spray, try to use organic, soap-based products, which tend to be less harmful to predators - though they aren't completely non-toxic, says Salisbury. He doesn't advise home-made soap solutions as they haven't been tested for their effects on plants or wildlife.

There are other ways you can encourage invertebrates into your garden, according to a four-year study by Salisbury and his team. These include denser planting (although spiders love bare spots between plants) and choosing British species. The researchers compared how many invertebrates could be supported by three types of typical garden planting scheme: native British plants, "near-native" plants (defined as those from the same genus found in the northern hemisphere) and exotics, or those from the southern hemisphere.

Native plants were the best at supporting ground and foliage-dwelling invertebrates, but the difference wasn't that big. For example, eighteen exotic plants supported the same number of bugs as seventeen near-native and fourteen native plants of the same size.

The exception was for pollinating insects, such as honeybees, wild bees and hoverflies. These appreciated the exotic flower beds in late summer and autumn, when they had more blooms. As a result, the team recommends that UK gardeners focus on native plants with some exotics mixed in to extend the flowering season.

But Salisbury's main message is that, as far as possible, gardeners should relax about nibbled foliage, aim for a profusion of varied plant species and let the wildlife share their space. "It's not a garden, it's a living ecosystem," he says.