

Buckingham

Garden Centre



'Passionate about gardening'

NEWSLETTER



Lilium superbum

COME & JOIN US AT EVENLEY WOOD GARDEN - LILY & ROSE FESTIVAL



'Charlotte'



'Geoff Hamilton'



'Peace'

**LATE MAY /
JUNE
2015 ISSUE**

**WHAT'S
INSIDE**

How To Get The Best From Your Summer Garden, 10 Plants You Cannot Do Without, International Year Of The Soil, Spanish Slugs Invasion, Top Tasks for Late May & June, New Root Grow products and much more

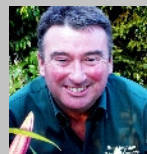
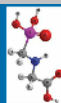
Well, who would have thought it! One of the warmest and sunniest Aprils on record, a relatively good Easter and our gardens are looking glorious. As we enter late spring we've got to be cautious with tender plants but, with the garden looking so good, I suspect we're on the right track for a bumper season.

No doubt many of you will have read about the major health concerns surrounding the weedkiller Glyphosate. According to *The Lancet Oncology Journal*, one of the leading and most respected medical journals, it suggests that there is now sufficient evidence that Glyphosate and four other pesticides are probably carcinogenic to humans and animals, and as a result they have been reclassified as carcinogens. Glyphosate is the chemical name (active ingredient) for the product but it is the well-known brand of Roundup which you will often come across on the shelves of garden centres and DIY stores.

To help our customers make an informed choice when it comes to using Glyphosate we have produced a small leaflet available in the Plant Office and at the Customer Service Desk. We'll provide some alternative herbicides options as well as few weed control tips to help manage those unwanted guests!

Happy and productive gardening folks!

GLYPHOSATE



Chris

TIME TO ENJOY YOUR GARDEN

Come June and you really want to put away those secateurs and start actually enjoying your garden! You know to take a look at what there is to enjoy, be it sights, sounds or scents, so when summer is here let's embrace it, says Chris Day!

There was a time when the nearest thing to a garden chair was a canvas and wood structure. Although the traditional deckchair has never gone out of fashion, we've plenty of great furniture ideas available as modern garden furniture uses the best materials (for a price) to give comfort as well as being attractive to look at. A leisurely stroll around our garden furniture display you'll see a great choice featuring the likes of the Alexander Rose and Kettler Rextia range of furniture. You can create a classic look to your outside space with the new range from Ascalon design of rustic metal benches and sets including the Gustav bench (£129), Heritage Rocking Seat (£135) Heritage Cream Bistro Set (£119, pictured right), Soho Bistro Set (£99) and the Heritage Curved Bench (£149). Cushions are also available as an extra. If you are looking for a chic Tea For Two, Kettler produce Caffè Napoli set (shown below), perfect for the patio, deck or terrace. This set is minimal in design but still has a contemporary feel (steel mesh). In addition to the 2 folding chairs there is a 60cm round folding table (£159) to complete the set.



Wooden garden seats of the natural hardwood variety can make splendid practical garden features, perhaps incorporated into a pergola or arbour. Planted with sweet swelling honeysuckles or climbing roses you have a perfect retreat – all the year round. A place to sit back and have a good read of your

favorite author perhaps!



Family gardens would gain from the traditional rustic-look picnic style – a long table with attached bench-like seating - this being not only practical but extremely hardwearing. For the flexibility of a table and separate benches, check out our Alexander Rose Farmers Set (in pine, shown left), priced at £499 which features two 6ft benches. Your outdoor space will also benefit from a barbecue. We Brits are a hardy bunch – we'll have a BBQ whatever the weather – nothing beats cooking a meal in the garden and

tasting food in the fresh air!

But it's not just the cooking, is it? It's an opportunity for the whole family to take part, be it the ceremonial lighting of the BBQ (can be quite a chore with more conventional charcoal burners) or just the sitting back and letting the chef get on with it while you get started on your favourite bottle of wine!

So, you want a new barbecue, but you're fed up with the palaver of getting the thing to cook anything larger than a cocktail sausage. Well, the days of half-finished Frankfurters and burnt burgers appears to be over.

BBQ experts Weber have all bases covered whether charcoal or gas models. Most of the gas models are based on a trolley design with some models featuring extra burners and other useful refinements. Like most things, you pay your money and you take your choice.

Accessorising your BBQ is simple with Weber products too and this year the must-have extra is the rotisserie for the Weber Q gas range. We are stocking three of the rotisseries this season. You probably know the practise of roasting food on a spit dates back



hundreds of years and it's a really effective and delicious way to cook. So, what are you waiting for? The overriding benefit of this method of cooking is the self-basting effect which is created by the slowly rotating movement that allows the fats and juices of the meats to evenly work through the meat, pork, chicken, turkey and game you are preparing. Succulent and delicious food on a BBQ, well why not we say! Giant leaps have been made in recent years in the area of outdoor lighting. A decade ago it was all about low voltage and its flexible "add-on" system, however now it's the solar technology that tends to provide the convenience as well as the price. The advancement in LED light bulbs and improved battery technology means much better lighting effects can be achieved.

Your kitted patio or decked area needs to look good as well as being a practical work space, so don't forget to embellish your favourite planters, troughs and baskets with some stunning seasonal colour and wonderful fragrance.

Whether you opt for bountiful mixed displays of flowers (bold pelargoniums, hydrangea, dahlias, agapanthus) and foliage (such as Heuchera) or set the tone with colour themed displays, there's a wide range of plants to consider.



Annual climbers such as Sweet Peas or heavenly fragrant Jasmine (both *Jasminum officinale*, the white flowered summer form and *Trachelospermum jasminoides*, the evergreen Star Jasmine), Climbing Roses and Honeysuckles will provide welcome perfume and you can add the likes of Ten Week Stocks, Nicotiana and sweet scented Surfinia Petunias for further fragrance power. In the evening, as dusk falls, illuminate your garden with a variety of solar lights and position strategically Citronella candles to help deter the annoying midges and mosquitoes from spoiling your evening.

NEW MONTY DON SERIES AND ALAN RETURNS ON ITV



Monty Don is set to take a step back in time for a new series exploring 400 years of Britain's green-fingered heritage.

The Gardeners' World presenter will host the programme for the BBC called *The Secret History Of The British Garden*, which will look at how trends have changed and have been affected by politics, war, religion, archaeology, medicine and Britain's evolving tastes in food, design, sculpture and fashion. In four hour-long episodes, TV personality Monty will

work his way through gardening styles from the 17th, 18th, 19th and 20th centuries. The first episode will see Monty visit the last surviving garden from the 1600s, Levens Hall in the Lake District. The series will air on BBC Two later this year.

ITV1's *Love Your Garden* will return for a fifth series, presented by Alan Titchmarsh with David Domoney, from June to August. The programme's aim is simple; to celebrate "unsung heroes" with a garden makeover.

OFFERS AND UPDATES FROM AROUND THE STORE



There's plenty to mention this month... In the **FOOD HALL** Cottage Delight BBQ sauces 2 for £5 (normally £2.99 each), a perfect partner if you are planning a barbeque. The varieties on offer are Thai Sweet Chilli, Balsamic & Madeira and Sweet & Spicy Oriental barbeque Sauce.

Cottage Delight also have a great Dipping sauce/cracker offer. Buy any dip from Red Chilli Salsa, Hot Red Pepper and Garlic, Smokey BBQ and any dipping cracker from Olive Oil, Garlic, Hot Pepper, Cheese and

Rosemary - £3.50 (normally £4.48 when bought together). Offer subject to availability.

In the **SHOP** do take time to check out our range of indoor wall clocks in a great range of designs and styles. If you like Royal Worcester then we have a delightful range of Wrendale designs featuring some lovely animals on fine bone China mugs.



If you are planning to set your Tomato and salad crops in cropping bags we have a special offer on J. A. Bower's Grow bags - 3 for £6, normally £2.39 each. On offer too is the new J A Bower's Masterblend Compost, £6.99 each or 3 for £15.

If you are planning some summer propagation (seed sowing and taking a few cuttings) or growing crops undercover then the Gardman 4 Tier Mini Greenhouse maybe the answer. Made of robust steel and polypropylene construction with no tools are required, it's good value at £24.99, plus you receive a free fleece cover too!



In the **RESTAURANT** refreshing Twinings Teas – Mango & Strawberry, Nettle and Blackcurrant Burst are on offer for just £1.30 per pot. Offer ends on the 30th June or whilst stocks last.

On the PLANT AREA we have a wonderful selection and display of Japanese Maples, including large specimens as well as unusual named varieties. We also have a great offer on our 3-litre Acers, including the varieties 'Garnet', 'Bloodgood' and 'Dissectum' at £19.99 each or any two for £25 (instore only). A reminder of our simply amazing 3 for £8 deal on 1-litre herbaceous perennials. We have a fantastic range to choose from Alcea (hollyhocks, pictured right) to Veronicas! Perennials always offer great value as they increase in size and put out a better show each year.



LOOK OUT - THE SPANISH SLUGS ARE HERE!

There's no getting away from the fact – we gardeners do like to battle with slugs and snails. This spring, despite the dry April and the relatively short cold snap in January, slug populations are set to rocket and this year we've another contender to deal with – the Spanish slug. It is believed these voracious slugs were brought in on salad imports and these can lay twice as many eggs as its native counterpart. It does, however, feed on other slugs, excrement (nice!) and dead animals as well as our plants! The Spanish slug has another trick up its sleeve – it can tolerate and breed in hotter and drier climates! It's also a bit of a bully because as the numbers of Spanish slugs rise so they push out other slug and snail species to dominate the area. So, what does this mean for us gardeners? Well, prevention is often better than cure so removing possible habitats for slugs is a good starting point in the garden. Vulnerable plants like Hostas grown in pots benefit from a copper tape wrapped around the rim of the pot. If you are plagued by huge numbers of slugs then opting for the natural control



method using parasitic nematodes would be a good course of action. These microscopic worms feed and multiply inside the slug.

Agralan is the specialist company for natural pest control for gardeners and full details on their range can be found at the Garden Centre. You need to treat the soil between now and October and a second application may be advisable 6-8 weeks later. A word of warning if you keep poultry,



don't use certain nematodes as this can cause major health issues to the birds.

A good all-round slug and snail deterrent product well worth mentioning is Vitax Slug Gone. This is a pelleted biodegradable slug deterrent created from waste wool which should keep slugs away as they don't like touching wool. The product is Soil Association Approved and also provides slow release nutrients for the plants it protects too. For dog and cat owners, Slug Gone is pet-friendly too! Look out for instore offers on your next visit to us.



TOP TASKS FOR LATE MAY / JUNE

BULBS Lift and divide clumps of Snowdrops and Bluebells once the leaves (in the green) start to yellow. There is still time to plant Dahlia tubers directly into the soil where you want them to flower. Prepare the soil by working in some compost and Blood, Fish & Bone fertiliser into the area. Set the tuber just below soil level and keep the plant well watered until you see the young shoots forming. Do provide some slug control and stake taller growing varieties if necessary.



PRUNE spring-flowering shrubs such as Honeysuckle 'Winter Beauty' and Forsythia after flowering has finished. The same pruning rule applies to Clematis Montana varieties. These flower on wood produced this summer, so cutting plants back directly after flowering not only keeps the plants in shape it also encourages plenty of new flowering wood. Don't forget to balance growth after pruning by applying a fertiliser such as Vitax Q4. Do this in May and again in July to encourage flowering wood for next spring.



GIVE your evergreen hedges a trim now whilst they are in active growth. Box, Privet and Yew can be trimmed twice each year during the growing season. However, before you proceed do check for any nesting birds. If spotted, wait until the birds have flown their nest before trimming the hedge line. The second prune, if required, is usually carried out in August or September. You can help stimulate new growth by foliar feeding trimmed hedges using Maxicrop Seaweed Extract. You can apply it through a sprayer or apply on low hedges through a fine rose on a watering can.

CROPS Put netting around your Strawberry plants, Raspberry canes and other soft fruit bushes to prevent birds from eating your crop. Pinch out side shoots from your cordon-trained Tomato plants on a regular basis. Bushy or trailing tomato plants do not require any pruning. Earth up your Potatoes now. If you're using potato cropping bags just top up the bag with more compost.

FRUIT Keep any new fruit trees and soft fruit bushes well watered in hot weather. Remove any blossom or fruits during the first year to focus the plant's energy on root growth. Thin out the clusters of fruit on your mature fruit trees at the end of the month. This will produce bigger and better quality fruits. You can start to prune Apricot, Cherry, Damson, Gage, Plum and Nectarine trees now. Summer pruning (from late May-August) avoids infection with the fungal disease 'silver leaf'.



HARDEN OFF your half-hardy bedding plants by leaving them outside for the day and bringing them under cover at night. Do this for 7-10 days before planting out into beds, containers and hanging baskets. You can start to feed your container plants with a fertiliser such as Phostrogen and continue every two to four weeks throughout the summer. Alternatively use a slow-release fertiliser such as Osmocote.

SOW Beetroot, Salad Rocket, Lettuce such as 'Lollo Rosso', Runner and French Beans, another sowing of broad beans such as the variety 'Stereo' and small round rooted Carrots such as 'Paris Market' (available from Kings Seeds). Now is a good time to forward plan your winter crops, consider sowing Purple Sprouting Broccoli, Kale and Brussels Sprouts as space becomes available. The key to a well-planned vegetable plot is continuity, so short rows of fast-developing crops such as Lettuce, Radish, Spring Onions and Beetroot, will reap delicious rewards. Once the risk of frost has passed it is safe to plant out all your summer bedding plants into borders, containers and hanging baskets. Tender vegetable plants such as Tomatoes, Courgettes and Sweetcorn can also be planted outside now.



CHECK out the latest range of Grafted Vegetable plants as a change to normal seed-raised varieties. Grafted veggies are said to be more vigorous, have better disease resistance and produce a more reliable crop. (Did you know that 95% of all supermarket grown tomato crops are now grown on grafted rootstocks?) Tomato varieties include 'Shirley', 'Sungold' and 'Supersweet'. Grafted Aubergine 'Bonica', Cucumbers ('Derby' and 'Baby Rocky') and Chilli Peppers ('Big Devil' and 'Maccabi') are also available. 1-litre pots, £3.99 each.

THE ORGANIC DEBATE: INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF SOILS

In an article in our November/December Newsletter last year we reported that organic crops are up to 69% higher in the number of key antioxidants than conventionally grown crops. To grow crops organically one of the important factors is to keep your soil in the best condition possible as this will give you healthy strong growing crops without the use of artificial fertilisers or insecticides.

Garden Organic, whose chief aim is to encourage and teach people how to garden organically are heavily promoting 2015 as The International Year of Soils. They are keen to spread the message that garden compost and green manures, used as part of an organic growing regime, can ensure soils remain healthy and fertile. It is not a new message but one that is vital to tell to a new generation of growers.

Green Manures really matter. A green manure is a plant grown to improve the soil and many of them are able to fix nitrogen from the air, providing fertiliser for free. They are not new as it is believed the Romans used them, but with the invention of nitrogen fertiliser the skills for growing them are being lost.

However, making nitrogen fertiliser uses large amounts of fossil fuels, so they are not a sustainable option for producing food crops in the long term. Garden Organic has spent more than 50 years researching the best green manures so that sustainable soils can be built for the future.

Being a charity all their work depends on funding and they are at the moment trying to raise money in order to produce a Soil Information Pack which will be available on line or in a printed format for growing groups, volunteers and gardeners around the country. With this they propose to enhance the roll of Ryton



Organic Gardens by telling the story of why healthy soils are so important.

I am sure we will be hearing more about this work, but in the meantime the plant team of Buckingham Garden Centre will happily give advice on compost making or growing green manures in order to improve your vegetable garden or allotment. Once you are growing your vegetable and fruit organically your produce will not only be better for you, but we are sure that they will also taste better!



WHAT'S ON IN JUNE & JULY

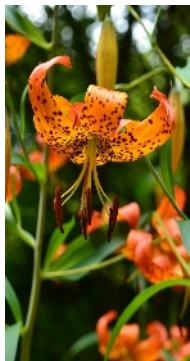
EVERY SUNDAY Stock up on your fresh fruit, vegetables and fresh eggs as Aston Clinton-based L. W. Smith join us between 10am-4pm.

JUNE If you have ever fancied having a sneak-peek around a proper commercial nursery then this is a rare chance indeed! We still have a few places available for our visit to a behind-the-scenes visit to Bransford Webbs, a large commercial nursery, and then off to one of the UK's top garden centre destinations, Webbs of Wychbold on **Tuesday 9th June**.

Our Wednesday talk on **10th June** will be on 'The Heritage Seed Library: Collecting and Saving Varieties' by Neil Munro (pictured right). This informative talk will look at why the Heritage Seed Library was formed, how it works and how the varieties eventually become available to the home gardener. There are many interesting varieties held at the Library and many of them have rather fascinating stories. Our Talks season resumes in September. Usual venue in the Talks Room within the Restaurant from 4:30pm with the talk lasting approximately 60 minutes with time for questions. To book, please contact the Customer Service Desk, but there may be seats available on the day. Entry is free to Garden Centre Discount Card Holders, £3 for non-members. Our Talks programme will resume again in September and continue through until November.



On **Tuesday 16th June**, Hidcote Manor & Kiftsgate Manor is our next garden visit destination. For all our Garden Visits please contact our Customer Service Desk for further details and to book a place.



On **Saturday 20th June**, between 10am-5pm, Evenley Wood Garden is hosting its annual Lily & Rose Festival. Summer in Evenley Wood Garden brings splashes of colour provided by summer bulbs and lilies together with many shrub and climbing roses that impress the visitors' eye every year. To celebrate newly planted rose cultivars, the Garden organises its Lily & Rose Festival. A collection of British-bred roses donated by Robert Mattock comprises of commercial varieties as well as rarely grown forms too! The message from the organisers is simple - don't forget your secateurs as there will be practical demonstrations on pruning! There will also be two talks on roses and lilies planned to take place during the afternoon. The event will feature a Plant Fair and a small market, including a range of traditional British products. Buckingham Garden Centre will be at

the event and will be bringing along a range of woodland shade-loving plants, Japanese Maples, Lilies and of course Roses. Children's activities are also planned, so do come along – keen gardeners, horticulturists and artists to embrace the day at Evenley Wood Garden. Normal admission charges apply.

Garden visiting this summer? There's a gem of a one-third of an acre town garden on the old castle walls by the Parish Church in the Buckingham conservation area. Hill House garden (located on Castle Street, Buckingham MK18 1BS), is open by appointment only this year from May to September by owners Léonie and Peter Thorogood. It's a fantastic garden with plenty of interesting plants featuring areas in shade as well as open full sunny borders and is well worth a visit. Visitors welcome by arrangement with home-made teas available on request. Admission is £3. Contact details: 07860714758 or leonie@pjtassociates.com

JULY ADVANCE NOTICES: We still have a few places available for our visit to Barnsdale Gardens near Rutland Water on **Wednesday 1st July**. At the end of month, 31st July we're visiting the Royal Horticultural Gardens at Hyde Hall in Essex. We've chosen this date as there is also a summer flower show running at the same time, so extra value from the admission price! Details of all our garden visits can be found at the Customer Service Desk.



Saturday 4th July Help support PACE Charity with their 25th Anniversary Yorkshire Three Peak Challenge. Details at

www.thepacecentre.org/Groups/252436/Yorkshire_Three_Peaks.aspx

Saturday 18th July Come along and support PACE at their 25th Anniversary Garden Party at The Manor House, Towersey, near Thame. The Garden Centre's Plants Team will have a plant stall at this Event, so do come along and enjoy the fun and support the day in the splendid grounds of The Manor House.

www.thepacecentre.org/Groups/211059/PACE_Event_Diary.aspx

GARDEN AND SHOW VISITS LATER IN THE YEAR

We are visiting the famous Shrewsbury Flower Show on **Friday 14th August**. Set in the wonderful Quarry Gardens, this traditional Flower Show has a great mix of horticulture, crafts, food hall, show jumping, floral art, demonstrations from top TV chef Tom Kerridge and *Gardener's Question Time* favourite Pippa Greenwood, plus much more.



On **Friday 14th October** we'll be visiting two gardens reflecting the autumnal flavour of the season. First stop will be Mill Dean Garden, a relatively small but plant-packed garden and then off to Batsford Arboretum for a spot of lunch and a look around the colourful trees of the season.

Spaces are currently available on both visits, so please contact our Customer Service Desk if you'd like to join us on any of these trips.



10 PLANTS YOU SIMPLY CANNOT DO WITHOUT

Or perhaps plants that every garden should have, suggests Chris Day! At this time of the year we get asked about good doers, plants that simply get on with growing without too much hassle. It's a big ask to come up with a list, however this is what the plant team have suggested and we hope you find it useful.

For an evergreen plant that remains compact yet produces the most fantastic perfume then opt for *Daphne aureomarginata*. Granted this little beauty needs some good well-improved soil which needs to be reasonably free-draining and a spot in the garden with good light but that's it! It flowers through late winter and its attractive foliage is perfect for the rest of the year. They are normally available in the autumn-winter in a 2-litre pot.

If you want a perennial that blooms for at least nine months of the year then invest in a *Erysimum 'Bowles's Mauve'* (RHS AGM, shown right). This has to be one of the best

value plants you can buy with its long spires of vivid deep mauve flowers filling the air (in warmer weather) with a delicious fragrance. It is a relative of the wallflower so likes a clay soil with a bit of lime added. Apart from regular deadheading its easy to grow and doesn't seem to mind our often extremes of weather.

Okay, some plants simply have staying power! When *Choisya 'Sundance'* (RHS AGM) was introduced to the Garden Centre world in the mid 1980s it took everyone by surprise. Colourful bright evergreen aromatic foliage and orange-scented white blossom in spring and in the autumn (if you are lucky!). Best of all, it doesn't mind being cut back once it's reached its allocated space in the garden and quickly regenerates into bushy and colourful plant.

Another shrub to think about. *Viburnum plicatum 'Mariesii'* (RHS AGM) is 'the' plant for that shady spot in the garden that needs filling and illuminating with colour in May! The tiered stems which grow outwards in tiered branches are covered in beautiful white lace cap-like flowers through the month of May. You often see red fruits later turning to black berries which form after the flowers. After the May display it makes an architectural green leaved plant before a spectacular firework display of autumnal foliage in late October.

The lawn, containing thousands of turf plants and numerous species, is a must-have. Yes, we know! Despite battles with flagstones,

decorative gravel and over the last couple of decades - decking, a well tended lawn, even if it has a few daisies or moss growing in it, makes for a practical and living surface – warts and all. There is no reason why a lawn should be a problem these days – technology regarding grass cutting to the control of weeds and feeding is particularly well covered now. Still not convinced? If that's not enough you can get in a specialist company such as TruGreen to give your lawn the perfect tender loving care it requires. We say Vote for Lawns this May!



Potatoes are our most popular crop and every garden should be able to enjoy a few, especially those first early tatties. Growing spuds is our best connection with the soil and to nature and with some effort you get a crop which everyone can enjoy. Simply grow a few in pots, you'll need to add further compost as they grow to earth-up to cover the developing tubers and you'll have a crop 10 weeks or so after planting them – they are that straightforward! Look out for specially prepared Potato tubers available in late summer for planting and harvesting for Christmas!

No plant produces more deliciously fragrant cut blooms than the humble Sweet Pea. They are easy to raise from seed or you can cheat and buy young plants, including mixtures for patio planters, hanging baskets and specialist named Heirloom varieties, there's often too much choice! Set them at the base of a frame of netting and they will clamber up in no-time at all. They do require moisture-retentive soil to grow in and if you wish to grow them in pots, a good depth of compost is a must. Just like the *Erysimum* 'Bowles's Mauve' where deadheading is the order of the day, the likes of sweet peas regularly cutting the flowers for the vase ensures no seeds are formed, so encouraging new flowers throughout the summer and into the autumn.



Just like the massive Potato variety pool, there are technically enough apple varieties to enjoy a different flavoured fruit every day of the year! Whether picked ripe off the tree or enjoyed in bakes and pies, apples are invaluable in the garden. They are highly decorative to look at – in flower and fruit - and for all of us you can buy them with a specific rootstock which allows them to grow in the tightest of spaces! Still short of space? You can purchase fan-trained, espalier and step-over and rootstocks, many sounding like motorway routes, for example M9 or M26. The rootstock controls the overall height and vigour of the tree. They are a magnet for bees and other pollinating insects and can be pruned in the height of summer and the depth of winter (if you forget!). You can even buy apples trees with two or more varieties grafted onto the same plant called Duo Minarettes or family fruit trees. All this and delicious fruits too!

Hydrangeas really do have everything going for them. They flower in the summer, often over many months. Some types will grow on walls and fences and effectively 'climb', plus they come in a wide range of flower colours (and even stem colours) and flower forms – mopheads and lacecaps – being the most popular. However, its how they fit in within the garden which makes them highly prized. Give them full sun or partial shade and they thrive, so long as they have some water (note the name = Hydra, now there's a clue!) in the soil where they are planted. Working plenty of home-made compost into the soil where you wish to establish hydrangeas usually does the trick. As many people plant Hydrangeas in flower in the summer, its important they are given lots of TLC at planting and for a few months afterwards.



From our own observations at the Garden Centre Japanese maples relish a sheltered location, ideally away from drying winds, so in a north or east facing garden they are perfect. They need around 40% shade, however the red and purple leaved varieties such as *Acer Garnet*, 'Bloodgood' and 'Trompenburg' need some sun to develop fully their dark hues. Just so you know, green-leaved forms tolerate full sun, but are best in dappled

shade as very bright conditions can sometimes cause scorch on the delicate foliage.

NEW IN: EMPATHY TAKES THE BISCUIT!

Two new products have been launched in the Empathy Range, both containing the now well known and used Rootgrow. Firstly Basket Starter and secondly Tomato Starter and although called 'Starter' both products are beneficial throughout the growing season for the following reasons. The convenient to use 'biscuits' contain Rootgrow mycorrhizal fungi, which will quickly establish a secondary root system that will transport nutrients and water to the plants. They also have beneficial bacteria which acts to fix nitrogen from the air, and seaweed meal which stimulates root development and offers a source of essential trace elements. They contain organic and highly available macro-nutrients and trace elements in slow release form. The mycorrhizal fungi secrete a sticky protein which helps to bind the compost thus improving drought tolerance of the plants. The 'biscuit or biscuits' should be added under the plant or plants, then when watered they will swell up to five times their original size and all the beneficial microbes will start to grow bringing the compost to life and the other components will provide a steady release of nutrients for up to four months. They are principally designed for container planting but are also excellent if used in the open ground. Basket Starter, which is perfect for hanging baskets or containers, comes in a pack of 12 biscuits and costs £3.99. Tomato Starter, which is perfect for getting the absolute best from your tomatoes, salads and vegetables, comes in a pack of 6 biscuits and costs £2.99.



AND FINALLY... WATCH THIS SPACE GROW!



As mentioned in our last newsletter we are working with Garden Organic as 'Seed Guardians' growing a range of Heritage Seed varieties for seed production. We've cleared one of our bare-root beds, removing all weed growth and then rotovated the bed to a good tilth. We'll be adding some organic fertiliser to

the soil to help establishment.

As for the production of the young plants, we've taken no chances sowing the seeds directly into the soil, instead we've sown everything into individual pots. The reason for this is seed is scarce and we really need good germination to achieve the number of plants for producing sufficient stock to provide a good harvest of seeds for the Heritage Seed bank. The Plant Team members - Tom and Matt - are both getting involved in growing the plants as this gives them great practical experience nurturing a wide and varied range of vegetables. The crops will include a variety of Climbing French and Runner Beans and French Beans, Peas, Squashes, Beetroot, Celery, Chop Suey Greens and Lab Lab!! All exciting stuff! Do check the progress of them when you next visit us!



Buckingham Nurseries & Garden Centre

Tingewick Road, Buckingham, MK18 4AE. Tel: 01280 822133

E-Mail: enquiries@hedging.co.uk, Web: www.buckinghamgardencentre.co.uk

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Opening Times: Mon-Sat: 8:30am-6pm, Sun: 10am-4pm.