

Newsletter October 2005

Apple Day 15th and 16th October 2005



Everyone here at the Garden Centre is hoping for good weather for the Apple Day weekend. Last year the sun shone down on our first weekend of hosting this event, and as it was such a success we are planning the event again, with more attractions.

Firstly our three 'Apple Experts', Dr Barrie and Sarah Juniper and Alan Watson will be bringing a selection of British Apples for visitors to taste. When deciding what to do early this year they were planning to have over 60 varieties to view and taste, but as anyone with apple trees will know, it is not a good year for apples with some trees bearing virtually no fruit or very little. We will still have plenty of varieties both eaters and cookers.

There will be a large stand with good British apples and pears to buy plus related goodies such as chutneys and jams. As we are keen to promote good British food we shall have a Gloucestershire cheese maker with Double and Single Gloucester cheese, a local farmer with meat and a local bee keeper with honey and other 'bee' products. Apple Day would not be Apple Day without apple juices, ciders and meads so 'The Drunken Monk' will be providing these again, and we will also have an apple press to demonstrate how you can use your own surplus fruit to make home produced juice or cider.

During the day there will be a series of talks and demonstration. Ali Templeton will be with us again giving cookery demonstrations at 11.30 and 2.30 on both days, and members of HDRA will not only be manning a stand to display work on the Heritage Seed Library but also giving talks as well. We will also have talks on bulbs, flower arranging demonstrations and there will be hanging basket and pot planting demonstrations.



For the children – and adults – there will be a falconry display with wonderful birds to view and some to handle.

For those wanting to have a bite to eat whilst with us we have arranged for extra caterers to come to provide excellent soups and other home made goodies, then there will be breakfasts and lunches served in our restaurant.

All in all a good day out for the keen or budding gardener and with no entrance charge what could be better!

New 2005-2006 Catalogue

Our new catalogue has now appeared from the printers this year in corporate colours of green and cream. In order to fit in the forty new items we have increased the length by four pages, two of which are used for extra illustrations. So, what is new?

Firstly, four exciting new hedging lines, Berberis Golden Rocket, Cotoneaster Lucidus, Etna Laurel (*Prunus laurocerasus* Etna), sometimes known as English Laurel and Pendulina Rose (*Rosa pendulina*, or *rosa alpine*). The inspiration for including the new rose came from a plant hunting holiday in Slovenia earlier this year when we came across this gem of a small rose growing high up in the mountains. A local plantsman with us explained that you could always be sure it was pendulina as you can pull your hand over the rose and as there are no thorns you will not get injured! High up in the mountains it only reached about 1ft (30cm) but lower down it can reach 3ft (90cm).

We have introduced a new elm which has considerable resistance to Dutch Elm disease, *Ulmus Sapporo Autumn Gold*. This is a fast growing tree, which tolerates exposed positions, and has good autumn colouring.

A new mixed hedge we are offering this year is 'Edible Hedging'. There has been considerable interest in planting fruit trees and soft fruit in gardens and on allotments recently, so with this in mind we have put together a collection of hedging plants which all bear some edible element, and which can be planted as a garden hedge or as an edging for an allotment area. The fruits can either be harvested or left on giving a valuable source of food for wildlife.

Another really attractive shrub which bears an edible crop is in the ornamental shrubs section, that being the Japanese Quince *Cido*. Anyone who has gone to the trouble of making jelly from fruit from their ornamental quince will really appreciate this new variety! It has the traditional orange-red flowers in spring, but is followed by very large, tasty quinces which make delicious jelly. We have also added the popular Mexican Orange Blossom (*Choisya ternata*), its Golden Form *Choisya ternata Sundance* and the Strawberry Tree (*Arbutua Unedo*), so that people are able to buy these plants in much smaller pots than normally available thus paying a more economical price.

There are seven new varieties in the Ornamental Tree section including Liquidambar for those with a large garden or the variety Rudolf Crab Apple for those with less space. These young ornamental trees prove

more popular every year as customers have found how quickly they develop and, therefore, what good value they are.

The Ground Cover section has been extended to include some perennials, including a good selection of bare root bearded iris and four varieties of hemerocallis. Also listed is Mount Vernon Laurel, which, with its dark shiny leaves, makes a perfect ground cover especially under birch as the contrast is so dramatic.

In the Climbers section there are five new items, two of which we would not have recommended for outside planting a few years ago, but now with our warmer winters both the Blue Potato Vine (*Solanum crispum* Glasnevin) and Star Jasmine (*Trachelospermum jasminoides*) have survived very happily here on the nursery for several years.

Ornamental grasses seemed to be on the decline in popularity recently, but gardeners seem once again to realise how useful they can be in so many situations, so we have increased the range with three beautiful tall varieties and two low growing ones. In the Fruit section we are really happy to be able to offer the fascinating apple variety Bardsey. This first hit the headlines on the BBC news back in 2000 when they reported that a visitor to the remote Welsh holy island Bardsey discovered the apple growing on a tree against an old building. It is believed to date back to the 13th Century when it was grown by the monks who lived on the island and it has been said to be on only one of its variety in the world. Experts at the Brogdale Agricultural Trust have examined the apple and named it 'Bardsey'. The monks were obviously wise fruit growers as it is completely disease-resistant, self fertile, bearing sweet dessert apples which can be eaten between September and November.

If you would like a copy of the New Catalogue do just give us a ring or pop into the shop and pick one up from the Customer Information point, or visit our web site, www.hedging.co.uk, where you will find the descriptions and in some cases illustrations as well.

Time to potter.... At The Potting Bench

If you are looking for some autumn planting inspiration over the next few weeks then look no further than our new display area aptly named The Potting Bench. The basic concept of this area is all about giving you the ideas, the plants and know-how on how to create your own wonderful planters, hanging baskets and pots, crammed with colourful plants.

So, if you fall into any of the following categories then do please come along and let us help you. Our container and basket planting service is now available. We can...

- Re-vamp your tired looking displays with bright, colourful seasonal plants.
- Offer a while-u-wait planting service, courtesy of our trained gardening team.
- Give you practical advice and inspiration to help make your containers look gorgeous whatever the season as well as ideas on colour themes.
- You can choose from our wide range of ready to go containers and baskets.
- You can also choose from our massive selection of containers, baskets and plants and we will pot them up for you.
- Or why not just use us for inspiration and have a go yourself?
- Pubs, hotels and commercial premises: do please ask about our bulk planting service.



Autumn Planting Bulbs

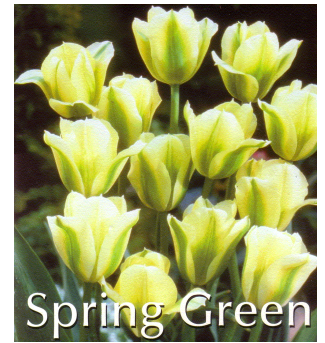
'Salome' is Daffodil of the year. It has a delicate pink trumpet which stands out against the pure white petals. This is a later flowering daffodil so will prolong your spring displays. These are available in a net of 25 bulbs for £2.99 or any 4 nets for £10.00. Green is the new Black! 'Spring Green' Tulip is bulb of the year. The white flowers with fresh green stripes start to appear in May and as this variety will grow up to 50cm tall it will add height to any bedding displays in your garden. They are available in a pack of 8 for £2.49, a carry pack of 25 bulbs for £3.99, or you can buy any 4 carry packs of bulbs for £15.

We have a range of species Narcissi which come in a range of colours. Many are multi-headed like the golden yellow 'Jumble' and 'Minnow' and some are heavily fragrant like the ivory and peach 'Bell Song' and

the pure white 'Silver Chimes'. Species Narcissi are much smaller in habit than their daffodil cousins which makes them perfect for patio pots or in alpine gardens.

If you want to bring spring in to your home this winter, then why not try planting some daffodils in pots? 'Paper White' is an all time classic that will not fail to disappoint you with its multi-headed, fragrant white flowers or 'Hugh Town' again a very fragrant multi-headed daffodil that has an orange cup against golden yellow petals. Loose Paper White bulbs are 60p each or 5 for £2.50.

Other offers in the bulb department are Loose Crocus bulbs 10 for £1.50 or 30 for £2.99. Loose Hyacinth bulbs 50p each, any 5 for £1.99.



Ten Jobs for October

HALF-HARDY fuchsias are best given a rest period over the winter, allowing them to dry out slightly and drop their leaves, rather than forcing them into active growth with lots of heat, water and feed. Just keep them alive with gentle heat in the glasshouse, or in a cool room, and they will reward you with strong growth next spring.

FLOWERS Now is a good time to plant new herbaceous perennials, as the soil is still warm, but moister than it was during the summer. Check any bulbs being forced in darkness. If they show signs of top-growth and have a healthy root system when knocked out of the bowl, bring them into a cool, light room to induce flowering.

FRUIT Lift and divide old crowns of rhubarb. Pick grapes when ripe, as well as nuts (hazelnuts, cobnuts and filberts) when the husks begin to yellow. Put up sticky greasebands on fruit trees to protect them from female winter moths. Tree stakes will also need banding if they provide a route up into the branches.

VEG PLOT October is a good time for digging over vacant areas of the vegetable plot, as the approaching cold weather will help to improve the soil structure by breaking it down into crumbly particles. After digging, any vacant ground should be covered with new planting or with black polythene, to prevent re-colonisation by weeds.

Remember garden hygiene at this time of year - regular clearance of fallen leaves and debris will do much to prevent the spread of disease and the overwintering of pests, so reducing problems the following year.



BEDDING Plant wallflowers, forget-me-nots, winter-flowering pansies and other spring bedding plants in prepared ground. Keep them well watered if no rain is forecast.

HERBS Lift and divide sections of selected herbs. Once potted, they can be brought into the kitchen to provide easy supplies over the winter. Basil will not survive outside during the winter, so bring it into the greenhouse, or to a heated conservatory, to protect it from the cold.

HARDY PLANTS Reduce the height of roses to prevent wind-rock. These plants are generally shallow rooted and can become loose in the soil if buffeted by strong winds. Bare-rooted plants usually become available next month, so you could think ahead and prepare the ground for them now. They are a cheap way to buy plants in large numbers - a new hedge for example.

LAWNS Rake fallen leaves off lawns before they block out light and moisture to the grass. On large lawns a leaf-blower will make the task much easier. This is the last chance to mow recently sown grass areas, to neaten them up before the winter. Don't cut lower than 2.5cm (1in). Topping with the mower will also prevent any weeds from getting out of hand.

GENERAL TASKS Consider building a post and chicken wire leaf pen for autumn leaves. They turn into leafmould, very useful as a soil improver or as an ingredient in potting and seed composts. Clean water butts by emptying them and spraying out with a jet nozzle on the hose. They will then be ready to catch the extra water expected at this time of the year.

POND PLANTS Give winter protection to Gunnera by cutting off old leaves and placing them over the crown of the plants. Use gloves when handling Gunnera foliage as it is covered in vicious spines. Protect Zantedeschia (arum lily) by covering in a layer of straw or bracken.

BUCKINGHAM NURSERIES AND GARDEN CENTRE

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WINTER OPENING HOURS

Mon-Thurs: 8:30am to 5.30pm, Fri-Sat: 8:30am to 6.30pm
Sunday: 10:30am to 4:30pm (open 10am for viewing)