

Trends in Gardens

It's the gardening equivalent to London Fashion Week but both the Royal Horticultural Society's Chelsea Flower Show (back in late May) and the RHS Hampton Court Palace Flower Show (open 4-9th July) see keen gardeners as well as TV gardeners hedging their bets on what's in (popular) and what's out (not in vogue).



Telegraph Garden at Chelsea Flower Show

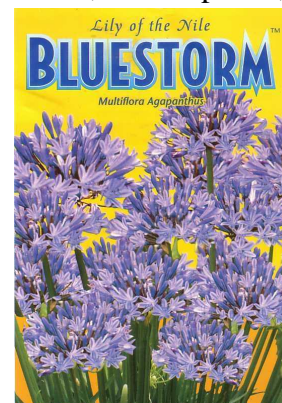
Well, let's start with three things, which we have closely observed here at Buckingham Garden Centre, that are definitely in and selling well!

1. Plant a purple haze... and plum, blue, magenta and, yes, red. It's that now famous line-up of alliums, geraniums, salvias and veronica 'Royal Candles' which when planted together create a wonderful 'mist effect' and look even better when contrasted with splashes of white from the likes of foxgloves, geraniums or roses.
2. Why not grow your own? We predicted an increase in vegetable and potted fruit sales, and we've seen a sharp rise in plug vegetables, greenhouse crops as well as herbs. Interestingly, top TV cook, Jamie Oliver announced at this year's Chelsea Flower Show that he would be going into growing fruit, vegetables and herbs next year for a new TV series. Remember the success of vegetable growing is continuity of crops, so keep planting and make sure all space is being cropped to the maximum. We are growing a range of larger vegetable plants for those gardeners with space to fill, so check them out. If you are planning your garden for next year make space for some wall-trainable fruit later in the year. Apples, pears, kiwis, peaches, apricots, figs and

cherries are perfect for those spare south or west-facing fences and walls.

3. Drought-tolerant plants were much in evidence at Chelsea this year, so if you are thinking about creating a roof garden covered in the succulent *Semperviviums*, that's one option. Alternatively, we have teamed up with growers Farplants to bring a succulent themed display to the Garden Centre, featuring aloe, *delosperma*, *echeveria*, *pachyphytum* and *sedum* for planting in pots or on the odd roof! These succulents are best treated as bedding plants, bringing them indoors at the end of the summer to enjoy them in a cool, light, airy spot from late September onwards. Don't forget the more traditional drought-busting plants like lavender, *brachyglottis* and *cytissus*.

Plants to look out for this summer – *Verbena bonariensis*, *Ipomea Sweet Caroline* (the decorative sweet potato), *Coleus 'Kong Series'*, *Restio* plants, *Melianthus major*, fruiting grape vines, the new repeat-flowering *Agapanthus 'Bluestorm'*, the lovely shrub rose 'Bonica' and the intriguing purple Millet. And finally one for non football fans, how about one of our beautifully grown *Impatien 'Ball Baskets'*, full of flower for just £19.99.



Hay Fever Gardening

Grass, tree, rape seed and many other pollens cause great distress to gardeners and non-gardeners, so if you are itching to find some pollen-free plants for your garden, where should you look?

Well, first consider plants that produce little or no pollen. These tend to be ones which are insect pollinated, as against those which are wind pollinated. The wind pollinated plants tend to produce far more pollen than insect pollinated varieties and all this pollen is blown around and then is breathed in, and gets into our eyes, causing the typical hay fever reactions.

Some examples of low pollen trees are the many varieties of flowering cherries, any of the magnolias and ornamental fruit trees. For shrubs the wide range of the hebes, all being evergreen and varying

in height from very dwarf to about one metre tall, the spring flowering camellias, summer flowering hydrangeas and fuchsias, winter and spring flowering viburnums and spring flowering weigela. From these one could create a garden with colour all year round but very little air borne pollen. Spaces between these could be infilled with perennials and annuals such as forget-me-nots, pansies, phlox, petunias, begonias, antirrhinums, impatiens, penstemons, salvias, agapanthus, oriental poppies, aquilegias, astilbes and hardy geraniums.

The plants to try to avoid are any grasses, except your lawn which is kept low and therefore does not flower. Grasses flower over a very long period and it is difficult to avoid being near meadow grasses if you live in the countryside, but at least you can avoid planting ornamental grasses such as miscanthus in your garden. Unfortunately another culprit is the 'daisy' family and this includes so many garden favourites such as the chrysanthemums, asters, marigolds and zinnias. The other final warning is that many of the beautifully scented plants like carnations, freesias, honeysuckle, wisteria and lilies are also not good, but maybe if you avoid putting your nose right in to savour the delicious perfume (often ending up with pollen on the nose!) they may not be quite so bad.

Water, water, water

Summer is sometimes a difficult time in the garden if you have been busy planting new trees and shrubs as these will all need constant watering, especially if there is a lack of rain. As ever, we would emphasise that it is important to make sure that at least two gallons of water is applied per square yard (8 litres per square metre) in one watering. This quantity will need to be applied about twice a week if there is no rainfall. This will ensure that the water actually gets down to the roots where it is needed. If a small amount only is applied the danger is that the roots will come to the surface to get the water then be damaged from the extra heat from the sun. We think enough has been said about the hose pipe bans that many are suffering from but we would advise to think about future planting schemes. We are always here to help on any planting schemes.

Leisure in the Summer

I expect you are all converted to the 'Garden Visiting' with the National Gardens Scheme, but for any who have not taken advantage of this scheme we would thoroughly recommend it. Not only do you see some truly wonderful gardens but also get a

chance to speak to the owners and other visitors. We still copies of both the Buckinghamshire and Northamptonshire leaflets giving details of all gardens open in those counties.

For those living locally another garden to visit is Claydon House. There has been a lot of work done on the gardens recently, not only the ornamental garden but also the new vegetable garden. It is well worth a visit.

Another 'must' is to get to the Plant Fair at Chenies Manor on the 16th July. We consider this to be one of the best Plant Fairs you could possibly attend. Apart from the many really good nurseries selling excellent plants, there are other exhibitors with garden related goods, all of good quality, so unlike some of the larger garden shows you will not be walking past endless exhibitors with 'ordinary' plants or 'tacky' goods. Also, what a setting! If you have not visited Chenies Manor you are missing a treat if you love beautiful gardens and interesting old houses. The fair is only open on Sunday 16th, so make a note in your diary as we are sure you will not be disappointed.



Chenies Manor

Plant and Garden Fair

Sunday, July 16, 2006

10am to 5pm

*Entrance £4.50 - children under 15 half price
(includes entrance to Manor Gardens)*

Rare and exceptional plants, topiary and trees from specialist nurseries.

Gardening and plant advice centre. Pottery, sculpture, antique garden tools and accessories, gardening books etc.

Plant creche in aid of Iain Rennie Hospice.

Lunch and refreshments available.

Music and children's entertainment.

Manor House open 2-5pm (£3 extra)

Ample free car parking

The Manor House
Chenies
Rickmansworth
Herts WD3 6ER
Tel: 01494 762888
www.cheniesmanorhouse.co.uk

Directions: From M25 Exit 18 follow A404 to Chenies (between Chorleywood and Little Chalfont)



Chenies Manor and Garden open Wednesday and Thursday (2pm-5pm) from April until October

In association with The Watford Observer




Garden Centre Shop Expands

By the time this get to you our new giftware department should be nearly complete. In order to increase the floor area in our shop we have moved most of our shop store out from the main shop. This area will soon be incorporated into the main stop so we will be able to display such bulky items as furniture and barbeques in a less cluttered way. Also it will also enable us to increase the range of goods we have on offer. Unfortunately there has been a little dust flying around!

Summer Greenhouse Offer

If you are considering investing in a greenhouse for this autumn and want a coloured one against a plain aluminium one, we are able to offer a 5% discount on the price of the Halls coloured greenhouse range. This would mean, for instance, that if you were interested in the Green Supreme 86, the price would go down from £690 to £655.50. This offer is only on orders taken between 1st July and 31st August 2006.

Internet Shoppers

For those who enjoy shopping via 'the net' you will see that our Web Site is slowly but surely expanding as we are now offering a much wider range of sundries (non plant goods) for despatch. The latest lines to go on will be most of the Hacknicks' range of sundries. These are, of course, already available to visitors to the Garden Centre. As well as our own Web Site (www.hedging.co.uk) we also offer that compete range of Draper Garden Tools via Amazon. If visitors to the shop wish to order any of the Draper range which are not on display in the shop, this can be done from the catalogue available at the customer service desk. The goods, as long as they are in stock with Draper, will come in the following working day.

Seed sale

As last year we shall be having a half price sale to help clear the end of this year's seed stock. As the 'sow-by' time of seeds is often many years, this is good time to pick up bargains for next year's sowing. The new range will come in at the beginning of August – always exciting to see what is new.

Water Butts

At last we have a good range of water butts available, but unfortunately we cannot provide the

rain to go into them! There are many different styles available and you should be able to find one to suit your house. Apart from the fact that rain water is so much better for the plants, if you have one where you can plunge your watering can in to fill it up, it is so much faster than filling the can up from a tap.

Another useful new watering product we have in the shop is the Hozelock 'Flower Shower'. This is basically a pressure sprayer which has been adapted for watering hanging baskets and flower pots. It is more precise than using a watering can, it is easy to carry with a shoulder strap and therefore there is no heavy lifting, and with the on/off switch there will be no spills or wastage, and for those with a hose pipe ban it is approved for use. One filling will water up to twenty pots. These are on promotion at the moment at £19.99.

Autumn is on its way



Daffodil, Sir Winston Churchill

It hardly seems possible, but autumn bulbs have already been scheduled in for the second week in August. Daffodil of the year is Sir Winston Churchill. This daffodil has the RHS Award of Garden Merit, and not surprisingly as it is a very attractive double, multi-headed, scented flower, with a white perianth (outside petals) and a small orange-red centre. The bulb of the year is Muscari. We will have a good supply of both, but if the pattern is as previous years it will still be advisable to buy early as once it gets mentioned on the television gardening programmes, stocks will quickly be taken up.

Newspaper Recycling

All the year round we are sending plants out on our Mail Order Service and in order to wrap these satisfactorily for transporting we use a lot of newspaper. Despite all our staff bringing in their read papers and collecting all the unsold local papers, we still always seem to be looking for more. So if you live close to our shop and want to help us recycle newspapers please drop these off at the Customer Service Desk in the shop. This really will be very helpful to us.

And finally our 15 Gardening Tasks for July

Flowers

CUTTING back plants in baskets followed by feeding can encourage new growth and help revive tired displays.

SOME late-flowering border perennials may benefit from a quick-acting feed before they come into bloom, especially if the soil is not very fertile.

CUT BACK delphiniums and geraniums after the first flush of flowers to encourage a second flowering period. Feed after cutting them back.

Fruit

CUT back side-shoots on gooseberries to four or five leaves, or just beyond the fruit clusters. This will speed ripening (by increasing sun on the fruits), encourage fruit bud formation for next year, and control aphids on the new growth.

FRUIT picking can begin now, with strawberries, cherries, summer-fruiting raspberries, currants and the earliest of the plums. Remember to harvest red and white currants in bunches, still on the stalk - they will keep and taste better. Blackcurrants can be picked singly or in clusters, as preferred.

CONTINUE to tie in and train new blackberry canes. Keep new canes separate from older, fruiting canes to ease later pruning.

Vegetables

SOW spring cabbage, turnips, oriental vegetables, chicory, fennel, and autumn/winter salads such as

lamb's lettuce. Plant out leeks and brassicas for a winter supply, if not yet done.

REMEMBER to pick your bean and pea pods as they mature, to stop them becoming tough and stringy later in the summer.

ENSURE all vegetables get a regular, consistent supply of water. This will aid healthy development, and help to avoid diseases, disorders and bolting.

Trees & Shrubs

TIE-IN climbers and ramblers as they grow.

REMOVE rose suckers and tree suckers.

PRUNE June-flowering shrubs such as Philadelphus and Weigela after flowering.

Lawns

DON'T worry unduly about brown patches on the lawn - they will recover quickly when the autumn rains arrive.

REMEMBER that some areas are under a hosepipe ban. Check with your local authority for details, as the levels of restriction vary.

KEEP mowing regularly, except during drought. In hot weather, set the mower at a slightly higher level than normal for early summer. This can prevent the lawn drying in hot weather.

Pests and Diseases

CONTINUE to spray for aphids, blackspot and mildew on all roses on a 10-14 spray cycle. Use Rose Clear 3 or Multirose.

SAP-SUCKING aphids on bedding plants can cause a sticky mess and spoil your displays, especially if sooty mould gets a hold. Use Traditional Soft Soap or Pravado Ultimate Bug Killer on ornamentals to keep the problems at bay. Do read the recommendations on all garden chemicals before usage.

MILDEW on honeysuckles has been especially bad this season - high humidity and water stress can fuel this disease. Do keep all honeysuckles well-watered (using grey water if available) and feed with a Tomato fertiliser to help boost growth.

BUCKINGHAM NURSERIES AND GARDEN CENTRE

Tingewick Road, Buckingham, MK18 4AE Tel 01280 822133, Fax 01280 815491
E-Mail: enquiries@hedging.co.uk Web: www.hedging.co.uk

SPRING & SUMMER OPENING HOURS

Monday-Saturday: 8:30am to 6.00pm, Sunday: 10:30am to 4:30pm (open 10am for viewing)