

Buckingham

Garden Centre



'Passionate about gardening'

NEWSLETTER



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**LATE JULY /
AUGUST
2015 ISSUE**

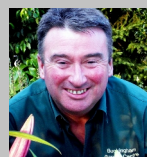
**WHAT'S
INSIDE**

Pet Friendly Gardening, Top Tasks for late July and August, New Products, Reports on visits to Bransford Webbs Nursery and The National Botanic Gardens of Wales, our upcoming events and much, much more

A customer said to me the other day the only reason they spent time and energy growing vegetables was for “the taste”. If you watch any of the foodie programmes on TV - Nigel Slater, Raymond Blanc, Greg Wallace and John Torode, the overriding mantra to a delicious dish is simply that the food ingredients are tasty and they excite the senses. So, what better way is there to grow tasty fruits and vegetables than hand-picking your own flavoursome varieties from the catalogue? The good news is we are doing more of it and embracing it, as certainly at the Garden Centre sales of all edible seeds and plants continue unabated.

Rediscovering and preserving the older and tastier varieties is being championed by Garden Organics with their excellent Seed Heritage Scheme. This year we are growing a wide range of vegetables for Garden Organics under the Seed Guardian scheme. You'll see the growing bed (pictured above) in the Garden Centre situated in our tree area - do please come and have a look. These vegetables are being allowed to deliberately set seed, so allowing the developing seeds to be collected then distributed to fellow gardeners to grow and preserve these varieties for the future.

Happy and productive gardening folks!



Chris

JOIN US FOR OUR APPLE AND HONEY SHOW WEEKEND

Join us for our Apple and Honey Show over the weekend of the 26th & 27th September where we will feature top fruit identification expert Gerry Edwards (second left below), vegetable seed specialist Jason Breed from Kings Seeds (first left) and fruit propagator and grower Fritz De Zutter from Moulton College (pictured third right).

On the Saturday we'll be staging sunflowers grown by local schools as part of our Sunflower Challenge, The Largest Bloom, which will be judged by 12 noon.

On Sunday we will be delighted to include the North Buckinghamshire and Buckingham Bee Keepers joint Honey Annual Show as part of our Event. Classes include different sorts of honey, beeswax, candles, combs and other crafts. Staging will be on Saturday (late afternoon). For details www.nbbka.org website.

We'll also be joined by local beekeepers to help answer questions as well as provide advice on selecting bee-friendly garden plants and advice on beekeeping.

There will be entertainment for the little ones – magic and face painting. We promise some food and drinks tasting from our Food Hall, including Tim Chafor (pictured far right) from Chafor Wines of Gawcott. We'll also be running a tombola for PACE, our chosen charity of 2015. So, come along and support the event and if you are looking for practical fruit and vegetable growing advice - please ask our experts!



TIME TO DISCOVER A WELSH GARDENING OASIS

Trevor Bradley, from our I.T. Department, recounts his visit to National Botanical Garden of Wales made earlier this summer.

Holidaying in South Wales, it wasn't my intention at all to visit the National Botanical Garden of Wales. In fact, until I passed the brown tourist sign, I didn't even know it existed. I had my days planned and it wasn't on my itinerary. I had left Tenby earlier on my last day and caught a glimpse of the sign again, which I had seen several times on my journeys around the South West Wales area. Curiosity got the better of me! Thinking it would just take a couple of hours to walk around the attraction, I arrived just before midday and I thought I would still be home in plenty of time.

Pulling off the A48 and a short distance into the Carmarthenshire countryside, you arrive at some very uninspiring entrance gates that do not announce in anyway what lies beyond.

I parked the car and checked the prices, £9.75 for an adult – good value considering what I paid elsewhere for attractions during my stay in Wales.

The Garden was built to celebrate the Millennium and is run as a charity partly funded by The Welsh Government. First impressions are that the whole place could do with a 'wash-and-scrub' and I wondered if I had made the right decision in stopping.

But I decided I should look past the infrastructure and concentrate on the planting. And I was so glad I did.



The Garden covers 568 acres and was built on the grounds of the former Middleton Hall and retains many of those historic features including the double walled garden, Principality House and the stables and lakes.

On entering The Garden your eye is immediately drawn to an imposing glass structure at the top of the hill – The Great Glasshouse. Your head says to visit straightaway, but it is worth resisting and visiting the other areas of the garden first and keeping a visit to the glasshouse as your 'Grand Finale'.

The first part of the garden you reach, after strolling past some lovely mature lakes, is the unusual Double Walled Garden. Divided into 4 specific areas, you can wander around the pathways which lead you through 150 million years of botanical history. Centred in the middle of the garden are primitive Water Lilies, but the paths lead you out to the extremities of the garden where the very latest cultivars are planted. Another area of the garden is the modern Kitchen Garden. Not a weed in sight! Nor any pest damage – no slugs, pigeon activity etc. and everything is grown organically so it shows just what can be achieved without the use of chemicals.

Housed in the Double Walled Garden is the Tropical House. Now, you have to be brave to enter here on a hot day which, surprisingly for Wales, it was that day! On entering, the heat and humidity really hits you. And this isn't helped by the occasional 'misting' of tropical fog from one of the humidifiers! But it is worth bearing the heat and humidity.

There are some fascinating species here that almost belie belief. Luckily, there was a very helpful staff member on hand to explain some of the more unusual plants. Most of the plants are orchids, gingers, aroids, palms and bromeliads. Despite the uncomfortable environment, you just have to stop, look and wonder.....

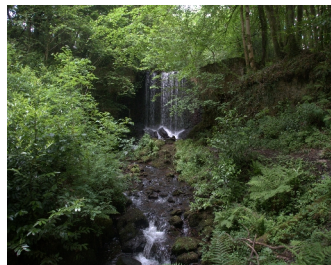


Leaving the Tropical House was like walking out into a cool spring day – relief! You then stroll up the tree lined avenue to the stables. Within the stables is a fascinating exhibition on Apothecary. Here you get a feel for how plants have been used throughout history in Wales for pharmaceutical purposes. They even still have the old prescription books, but you will need to be an expert in Latin to understand them! Outside, behind the exhibition, is a garden where they still grow some of these medicinal varieties. The Stables also house the tea rooms and restaurant where you can reward yourself with a

lovely cup of Welsh Tea and a sandwich!

Leaving the stables, the Great Glasshouse still imposes! But resist! Plenty more to see... along from the stables is the 'behind the scenes' area. From here you get an insight into how the garden remains environmentally friendly and you can see the large biomass boilers which produce energy and heat for the site.

Leaving this area it is worth taking the time to divert from the garden and wander on the way marked Welsh Country Walk. I had now abandoned all thought of a 'brief visit' and so took the yellow walk. This was a fantastic 60 minute walk through woodlands, wild flower meadows and arable land, and even passing a waterfall! All set against some fantastic Carmarthenshire scenery as a back drop. But that Great Glasshouse could still be seen!



The walk brings you back into the Gardens past the old Water Park, which is made up of a series of lakes and a bridge. The area is currently being cleared and replanted to return it to its former glory and will be fantastic when it is completed.

Walking back towards the Great Glasshouse you pass through the eerie Ghost Forest. I had seen the exhibition before in Oxford, but in this setting it somehow bought out a feeling of sadness that these great trees were no longer and highlighted the real effect of deforestation taking place on the other side of the world.

One last resistance of temptation before entering the Great Glasshouse was a visit to The Boulder Garden, Wallace Garden and Principality House. The house isn't open to the public, but provides a backdrop to the Wallace Garden which attempts to explain the principle behind plant DNA and plant breeding.



Passing through the Boulder Garden, planted with plants native to warmer, drier climates such as Southern Europe, you can finally reach the Great Glasshouse. Oh, and it is so worth the wait. Walking in through the entrance your immediate thought is WOW! It is a truly spectacular construction. The plants are in front of you, but it is worth looking up at the fantastic structure. It is the World's largest single span glasshouse – 374ft long by 204ft wide, and has 785



panes of glass. The heat is created by the biomass boiler. As amazing as the structure is; the plants are the star here. You won't see anything like this planted in any garden in the UK. The glasshouse is split into 6 separate areas – Western Australia, California, Canary Islands, South Africa, Mediterranean Basin and Chile. There are some spectacular plants on view. The landscape of the glasshouse has been cleverly created on multi levels so you can walk around above and then again on the lower levels

past pools and ponds full of unusual fish. The colour, form and just the different sizes of plants in this area is inspiring. You could spend hours in here just looking at the detail. Sadly time I didn't have. The Garden shuts at 6pm and it was now 5.45pm and time to make my way out. As I walked back down the path to the car park, I realised I had even missed some parts of the Garden, so it is worth taking a little more time than I did if you visit. I bought an Ice Cream, had a chat to some of the staff and finally left – the last car to leave the car park.

Joining the A48, then the M4 and passing the chemical works at Port Talbot, I reflected that the Botanical Gardens were well worth the visit and a small oasis in what is quite an industrial heartland of Wales.

If you are visiting South Wales, take my advice and make time to visit the National Botanical Garden of Wales.

For further details visit their website at www.gardenofwales.org.uk

OFFERS AND UPDATES FROM AROUND THE STORE



We are stocking the Oxford Honey Company's wide range of regional as well as specialist honeys including boxed cut comb – pure honey in its most natural state.

Continuing on the food front we're delighted to be stocking a new range from Warwickshire-based Fatherson

Bakery, well-known for their range of delicious and tempting homemade cakes all cooked in the traditional manner. These include Carrot Cake, Rich Fruit Loaf, Classic Victoria Sponge and Lemon Drizzle. Cup cake enthusiasts won't be disappointed either with their Salted Caramel and Banoffee cakes also on offer!! All guaranteed to compliment a good pot of English tea!



We are now stocking Gun Dog Ales including Bad To The Bone, Hot Dog, Jack's Spaniel, Booze Hound and Lord Barker bottle beers, all brewed in Northamptonshire and priced at £2.79, 500ml each.



Another addition to our local beer range comes from the Brill-based Vale Brewery Company. Their range includes a dry hoppy golden ale V.P.A, Off The Hook, a golden ale inspired by the River Nene, Gravitas, a pale premium hoppy bitter and Grumpling, a ruby brown premium ale amongst others.





When visiting our stunning Giftware Department look out for the fine bone china in the **Wrendale Design** range by Royal Worcester, featuring colourful animal themed mugs (£10.49, left). More regal mugs are featured in the Queens range manufactured by **Churchill China** with their very individualistic look.

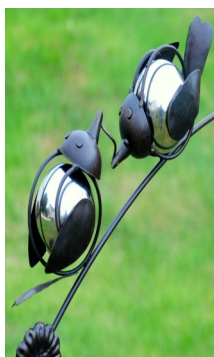


Did you know? Churchill China can trace its history back to 1795 in the heart of the world famous potteries at Stoke-on-Trent. Since then, Churchill have developed a long history of providing ceramics to hospitality and retail markets. Churchill produces pottery for famous brands including Jamie Oliver and Disney whilst also continuing long term relationships with Cath Kidston and the RHS. (Churchill's own brands consist of Queens, The Caravan Trail and Little Rhymes). Queens is a constantly expanding range, renowned for its bone china mugs, giftware and tableware.



We have two new products designed to help soil improvement - **J Arthur Bower's Organic Soil Improver** and **J Arthur Bower's Mulch & Mix Composted Bark** (£4.99 each for 50-litres). Both will add valuable humus into your soil provided it is applied to moist soils, and it is perfect summer mulching material too!

If you are doing some later sown and planted salad crops we've got a fantastic value multi-buy deal on **Levington Tomorite Giant Tomato Planter**, normally £4.99 each or 3 for £12. Limited offer so you'll need to grab them quick!



Perfect to create balanced movement in the garden, the **Balancing Owls and Birds from Avocado Stone**, make a stunning yet equally fun garden feature. Choose from perfectly balanced love birds (pictured left) to two or four owls perched in a row. They make great funky gifts too!

We are pleased to announce we are now stocking a wide range of hand and digging tools by **Kent & Stowe** (Built on Tradition, Crafted for life). They offer a great range and are sensibly priced. Check them out when you are next visiting us.



Finally, and we really don't want to depress you but... the 2016 Calendars & Diaries arrive in the week commencing 19th August!

PLANTS OF THE MOMENT

The height of summer has really two top floral favourites – herbaceous Salvia (for July) and big, blousy and beautiful Hydrangeas (for August). That said we've actually been enjoying both of these floral contrasts for weeks already as the excellent May and June growing conditions for ornamentals have suited them both.

So, what to choose? Well, Salvia 'Hot Lips' continues to prove a hit with its distinctive



and striking colour combination. But there are plenty of traditional blue and pink forms of Hydrangeas around as well as Lacecaps and the ice cream cone-like Grandifloras.

Hydrangeas have and continue to undergo massive transformations in the colour of stems, such as the black stemmed varieties as well as the amazing colours currently being offered by the specialist growers.



LET THE NATURAL PREDATORS CONTROL YOUR PESTS!

Nematodes are naturally occurring microscopic roundworms, already present in our soil in the UK. Beneficial nematodes attack and kill targeted garden pests. They are environmentally friendly and safe in areas for children, pets and wildlife. Research scientists have isolated the nematode that kills specific garden pests including Slugs, Vine Weevils, Chafer Grubs, Leatherjackets, Caterpillars, Codling Moths and various others. Millions of nematodes are bred to be easily applied by gardeners. When nematodes can no longer find prey they will die back to their original numbers.

We are offering a wide range of nematodes produced by Nemasys Nematode Pest Control. They are suitable for the control of Slugs, Vine Weevils, Leatherjackets, Chafer Grubs, Ants and a useful Grow Your Own Mix which covers a host of popular pests such as Carrot Root Fly, Cabbage Root Fly, Leather Jackets, Cutworms, Onion Fly, Scarid (fungus gnats), Caterpillars, Gooseberry Sawfly, Thrips and Codling Moths.

You can order these in-store or through our website where you will find out much more information on the individual treatments together with an online ordering option.



WHAT'S ON

EVERY SUNDAY Stock up on your favourite fresh fruit, vegetables and fresh free range eggs as Aston Clinton based Lance Smith joins us between 10am-4pm.

EVERY TUESDAY Grimsby based fishmonger Steven Wilson brings a wide range of fresh fish to us each week. Steve will be with us from approximately 2-4pm in the Car Park.

TUESDAY 14th JULY The Royal Society For The Protection of Birds (RSPB) will be joining us between 10am-4pm in the Garden Centre Foyer.



SATURDAY 18th JULY Pedal for PACE, Summer Sportive and Garden Party at The Manor House, Towersey, Nr Thame. Oxon. We will be attending this event with a Plant Stall to help raise money for the PACE charity.

transforming the lives
of children with disabilities

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WEDNESDAY 22nd JULY Summer Open Evening at Ball Colegrave trial Grounds at Milton Road, West Adderbury, Oxfordshire OX17 3EY. The Gardens will be open to the public from 4-8pm. There will also be a craft fayre. Admission £3.00, children under 12 free. A contribution from admissions will be made to Katherine House Hospice and David Colegrave Foundation.

FRIDAY 14th AUGUST Visit to Shrewsbury Flower Show. Book Now! A traditional flower show set in the wonderful backdrop of The Dingle featuring floral marquees, celebrity talks and much more.



FRIDAY 28th AUGUST Spaces available! Garden trip visit to Buckingham Palace State Rooms and Garden Tour. A fantastic opportunity to visit perhaps the most famous house in the country together with a 45-minute tour of the Royal Gardens – absolutely fascinating! The cost includes return coach transport from the Garden Centre. Contact our Customer Services for full details.

FRIDAY 28th AUGUST Please come along and support our Tea and Cake Fundraising Party for PACE, our chosen charity of the year, in our Gardeners' Retreat Restaurant.

SATURDAY 29th AUGUST Tingewick & Water Stratford Horticultural Society host their 91st Annual Show. The show will be held in Tingewick Village Hall and is open for public viewing from 2-4pm. The show will feature plenty of competitive classes as well as a tombola, raffle, refreshments and other attractions.



WEDNESDAY 2nd SEPTEMBER Orchid Day. 10am-3pm. Two talks at 11am and 2pm. Orchid expert Manos Kanellos (pictured) will be joining us.

WEDNESDAY 16th SEPTEMBER A self-drive just down the road to the Chafor Wine Estate on Preston Bissett Road, Gawcott for a vineyard tour and wine tasting at 3pm. The cost is £6 per person payable on the day to Chafor Wines. For details and to register please contact our Customer Service Desk.

SATURDAY 26th & SUNDAY 27th SEPTEMBER Our Apple & Honey Show Weekend (see page 2 for details).

FRIDAY 16th OCTOBER We plan to visit 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.

VISIT TO BRANSFORDS AND FOWLERS OF EARLSWOOD

We had arranged to take a group from the Garden Centre to visit the wholesale nursery Bransford Webbs who are based near Worcester, writes Pauline Brown, but unfortunately not enough customers showed interest for us to fill even the smallest coach, so we ended up with just three of us from the Garden Centre staff plus two customers who were prepared to drive themselves there. All of us were so pleased we went as we had a most interesting and enlightening time. Richard and I visited the nursery back in the 1970's when we were buying plants for the Garden Centre but since then have only met people from the Nursery at trade shows and Gill Delaney, our plant buyer, is in regular weekly contact, but only by telephone, so she was delighted to see where all the plants she buys from them are propagated and grown.



Bransford Webbs are renowned for the quality of their plants and they consider this is because they have complete control over the production of approximately 70% of the plants they produce, the remainder they buy in from other sources as 'plugs' (rooted cuttings) then grow these on. They have found over the years that the few problems they have in the production of plants are nearly always with those bought in as plugs. They are, therefore, really pleased that a few years ago when their propagation house was past its 'best before' and needed replacing; they decided to invest in a new, much enlarged unit. This was against the general trend in the wholesale nursery trade when many companies decided not to renew their units but to rely on specialist plug producers.

The nursery covers nearly 25 acres (10 ha) of which 45,000 square metres is under glass. The majority of the unprotected space is used for ornamental and fruit tree production. They employ 48 full time staff and between 40 and 50 seasonal staff, all local people, of which 23 return each year. It produces 1.3 million plants a year from 1,400 production batches and these consist of approximately 1,000 varieties of which we buy a few! All these plants take a lot of water so 25-30,000 square metres of water is extracted from the River Teme and this is stored in a reservoir with a capacity of 63,000 square metres. All the time they are trialing 150-200 potential new plants of which only about 15 end up in the production line.

It is an impressive site with rows and rows of beautifully grown, weed free plants. They do very little spraying with chemicals preferring to use organic means wherever possible. We were shown from the beginning of the production to the packing and despatch department at the end. The only area which was run entirely by females was the cuttings as they find, without any doubt, that this work is done far better by their female staff, but throughout the rest of the nursery, staff are moved from one task to another at regular intervals throughout their working day. It is found that a change of task makes for a more interesting day and hence better standards are attained.



The picture, above left, shows Gill (centre) with Karl O'Neil (left), the propagation manager, and Adrian Marskell (right), the Sales Director. You can see in this glasshouse it features a vast area of plug plants, and some of the new species in their production line which we were asked to judge for quality. For all new lines they produce they get staff and visitors to give their opinion, so with this and the growing and flowering performance of the plants they can decide on which ones to take beyond the trial stage.

Whilst there it was great to see batches of plants from which stock we had already received had come from and also batches which we would be receiving later in the season. Gill had her well-trained eye open for new varieties or others which were looking particularly good, so our Garden Centre plant area will really benefit from the visit. The five of us who went certainly thoroughly enjoyed the fascinating visit and we all felt very sad that many others had not joined us.



At this point we bid adieu to our garden centre guests, stopped for a bite to eat and a speedy visit to Webbs of Wychbold, then on to a potential supplier – this time not plants but cheese! Some of you may remember when we ran a Farmers' Market here at the Garden Centre; we had a 'cheese man' selling really good English cheeses, many varieties of which you are unlikely to find in the supermarkets. We are planning to install fridges and freezers in the Food Hall Area of the shop soon and one of these will stock English cheeses and it will also give us the chance to offer these interesting, tasty cheeses to customers eating in our restaurant.



Fowlers of Earlswood who are based in beautiful countryside north east of Worcester, have been exceptional cheesemakers since 1670. Over fourteen generations the Fowlers family have been developing the craft of cheese-making and today offer an unparalleled range of cheeses. These are made using the finest milk from the family's herd taking pride in their environment and animal welfare standards. Incredibly, some of the recipes date back to the 1600s. Their gold, silver and bronze winning cheeses are suitable for vegetarians, G.M.O. free and audited to the highest

standards of SALSA (Safe and Local Sourced Approval) plus Specialist Cheesemakers Association.

The dairy today combines up-to-date equipment with hands-on expertise and the result is a range of excellent cheeses. For health and safety reasons we were not allowed in the production area, but could spy the pristine clean stainless steel equipment through the windows. However, we did get the chance to wend our way down some steep stairs to the cellars to see the cheeses maturing in rows and rows. The smell was quite intoxicating despite the cool temperature, and we came away with a box of samples for chefs and staff to taste back at the Garden Centre. Keep an eye open for the arrival of the fridges in the Food Hall, or check for updates on our Garden Centre web site, www.buckinghamgardencentre.co.uk where we will announce when the cheeses arrive.

TOP TASKS FOR LATE JULY / AUGUST

PRODUCTION Pick vegetables when young on a regular basis to maintain continuity, quality and a full flavour and continue earthing-up main crop Potatoes. Sow a succession of quick maturing salad items on ground released from earlier crops, such as Radish, Lettuce, Beetroot, Carrots and Spring Onions. Sow now: Cabbage, Swede, Turnips, Peas etc. to overwinter until next spring. Remember to prune soft fruits such as Raspberries and Blackcurrants immediately after fruiting and keep checking and removing side shoots from Tomatoes. Watch out for the leaves of Garlic, Onions and Maincrop Potatoes turning yellow – this means they are ready to harvest! Pinch out the tips of your Runner Beans once they reach the top of their support. This will

encourage more side shoots and flowers to grow lower down on the plant enabling easier picking. Net your soft fruit to keep the birds off.



BUGWATCH Watch out for emerging red Lily Beetle larvae, Viburnum Beetle and the metallic Rosemary Beetle (pictured left) which can also be present on Lavender. Pick them off by hand or spray in the evening with any of the following options - Thiocloprid* (e.g. Bayer Provado Ultimate Bug Killer), Acetamiprid* (e.g. Bug Clear Ultra), Deltamethrin* (e.g. Bayer Sprayday Greenfly Killer, Bayer Provado Ultimate Fruit & Vegetable Bug Killer) or Lambda Cyhalothrin* (e.g. Westland

Resolva Bug Killer). Organic gardeners can use natural Pyrethrum/Pyrethrins (e.g. Py Spray Garden Insect Killer, Bug Clear Gun for Fruit & Veg or Growing Success Shrub and Flower Bug Killer). These products should control newly hatched larvae but are likely to be less successful against adult beetles. Remember plants in flower should not be sprayed to avoid harming bees and other pollinating insects.

**Do read the instructions on all insecticides carefully before use.*

CLEAR algae, blanket weeds and debris from garden ponds, and keep them topped up. Any pumps on water features should be left on during sultry nights, as oxygen levels are lower in such conditions. Remove promptly any dead foliage and blooms from Water Lilies and other aquatic plants. We have a product called 'Clear Waters' a blanket weed control by 'Nishikoi'. A pack to treat a 10,000 litre pond costs £14.99. This product was awarded Best Buy by Which? in May 2014.



TREE ROUTINE Check all trees for extra growth forming at the base as these will take goodness away from the main tree, remove using sharp secateurs. On trained fruit, tie in new growth, prune to control growth and promote the formation of fruit buds. After fruiting, prune cherries and plums, never to be done in winter due to risk of disease introduction, namely Silver Leaf. Fruit trees growing against a wall may need mulching and heavy cropping pears may need careful thinning so as to produce well formed fruits later. Due to the weather

conditions this summer, supplement all your fruit (fruit trees and soft fruit) with a generous sprinkling of Sulphate of Potash fertiliser around the base of trees to help encourage the production of embryonic flowers and fruit for spring 2016.

MUST-DO'S Water your container grown Camellias, Azaleas and Rhododendrons well with rain water to ensure good bud-set this year and a spectacular spring display next year. A feed of high potassium tomato feed wouldn't go amiss as well. Divide your Bearded Iris now to allow them time to establish before winter. Trim and tidy back Box, (Buxus), Holly (Ilex) and Yew (Taxus) hedges and clear weeds around the base. Give woodwork a lick of paint or wood preserver, while the weather is dry.

PRUNE your climbing and rambler Roses as soon as they have finished flowering, unless they are repeat-flowering, in which case leave them. Double check the base of Roses for sucker growth, remove these as soon as possible otherwise they will divert valuable energy away from the flowering rose stems.



POISONOUS 'PAWTANIC GARDEN' MAKES A POINT!

Earlier this month the world's most poisonous garden for cats and dogs opened for a short while at Horniman Museum & Gardens in Forest Hill, London, writes Pauline Brown. For humans it was a stunning show garden and a place of quiet serenity, but for cats and dogs, however, it was a certified death trap! One may question why it was built at all, especially as its ambassador was Charlie Dimmock who is a well known dog fan. The reason was to raise the public's awareness of the dangers of pets being poisoned by common household plants and flowers as it has been found that one in three pet owners admit they have no idea if the plants and flowers in their gardens are toxic to pets. The garden was open to coincide with the Chelsea Flower Show and although tiny, some 10 x 5 metres, it aroused a lot of interest and the staff at the museum feel it should be repeated elsewhere, if not again by themselves.



The Garden was sponsored by the pet insurance company More Than Insurance who are trying to make people more aware that plants can be poisonous to pets. Charlie Dimmock commented "The Garden isn't about telling pet owners to go around uprooting their flower beds – it's a way to help them make more informed choices when they design their gardens or buy new plants for their home as well as being more aware of the garden plants they already have."

We have tried to accumulate some information about plants which are poisonous, such as Monkshood and Yew, but it appears that there is no comprehensive list. However, the information we do have does give some indication of the plants to be aware of and what to do if you suspect your pet has been 'grazing' on potentially poisonous plants.



It is, of course, not only plants in the garden but also house plants which potentially could cause problems. Plants such as Dieffenbachia (pictured) and Schefflera immediately spring to mind to be wary of, especially with puppies and kittens, but if you look at advice from different sources, again you can get conflicting advice, so to get warning labels on plants would be very difficult.

If you have concerns on this subject do pop into the Plant Information Office where we have a list of some plants to avoid. It has been suggested that plant labels should give this information but at the moment as the information is scattered, sometimes conflicting and not easy to find, I think this is a long way off.

STOP PRESS! STOP PRESS!

We are now pleased to offer a Click and Collect service on Weber BBQs, Rondeau Leisure, Alexander Rose and Kettler garden furniture and Poultry sundries. Check our website for full details:

www.buckinghamgardencentre.co.uk



Buckingham Nurseries & Garden Centre

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