Buckingham



NEWSLETTER

JULY / AUGUST 2016 ISSUE



MER GARDEN 10W TO GET THE BEST FROM YOUR I

Bonmarché

Exciting new concession store opening!

See page 4 for more details

I suspect most of us have had enough of the wall-to-wall politics, football and rain, so for many of us our gardens are our sanctuary. A place you can escape, relax, unwind, chill and entertain. So, as we move towards mid-summer we are celebrating everything positive we do in our own 'green space'. If, like me, you find the garden the perfect antidote to the hurly burly of day to day life we hope you like our themed newsletter this month. Still, let's not forget our plants need attention feeding and or watering, too!

One aspect of nature we all can get involved in is helping to encourage, protect and appreciate bees, butterflies, moths and even earthworms (see page 5). We've been advocating the use of native species in our hedgerows for decades now to help our buzzing and fluttering populations. You can easily do the same and all within a flower pot, yes it's that simple! Many of the flowers that make great pollinators are, of course, members of the Daisy family, so not only will you be helping your local population of insects but also you will be donating to our chosen charity of 2016, Medical Detection Dogs too!

Two garden visitors we won't be celebrating this summer are the slugs and snails! I heard a customer say the other day where do they all come from? Hmm then I remember listening to some advice on BBC Radio's *Gardeners' Question Time* about throwing your

unwanted slugs over the fence! Crikey, let's hope that particular customer is on speaking terms with their neighbour!

Enjoy your summer garden - whatever the weather!

Chris

LET'S GET THIS GARDEN PARTY STARTED!

Inviting friends and relatives around for a BBQ is something we Brits take incredibly seriously. First, the BBQ invariably is manned by er, a man! Why? Well, BBQ's are perhaps one of the best gadgets the garden possesses, apart from the man cave, the garden shed where all the other gadgetry things are lovingly stored. As soon as the chef dons his chef's hat we're off usually with military like precision until the Prosecco kicks in and somebody, usually the partner takes to the helm to save the night from charred burgers and cremated sausages! Second – seating. You've got to have some comfortable, practical and nice looking furniture to be able to seat your guests. Metal, wood or Rattan, there's plenty of choice. Selecting the right furniture to suit your garden can be a tricky shopping exercise, however



practicality and functionality needs to be uppermost in your sights before parting with your hard earned cash! Parasols are essential to help provide welcome shade. Remember you can add your own personality by adding bright, bold scatter cushions



and even use this as part of your party theme. Printed cushions of the mug shot of the birthday girl or boy or the anniversary couple always raises a giggle!

Ambience needs some careful consideration — think about the neighbours, actually scrub that and definitely invite your neighbours so at least they will be involved in the evening and won't feel left out. Lighting is important — natural tea lights or the solar alternatives are always a good option. We particularly like the Zanzibar



lanterns but it's down to your own choice and there are plenty of great options to select from! Where possible make the entire garden open and inviting to help encourage your guests to explore and this can be helped by using lanterns, bunting and rows of tea lights to follow paths. If you have an arbour use it as a good excuse to create some engaging mood lighting. This way your garden expands to the eye allowing your guests to freely roam. It also helps to keep crowd control around the temporary outdoor bar and eating area manageable. The major advancement in both LED light and rechargeable

battery technology makes the prospect of investing in solar lights much more attractive these days - see page 5/6 for more solar lighting info.

Keeping pesky annoying pests at bay, no not the children or the pets, but night nipping insects including mosquitoes, is simple by using Citronella Candles. You will need to set these up around the eating and seating

areas to ensure good blanket coverage.

Look out for something new this summer – Swedish Eco Torches. These are instant bonfires that are standalone giving both instant light and concentrated heat. If you are

looking for something a bit different to light up a driveway or outdoor party these might be worth considering. Burn time varies depending on the wind, but typically a torch will burn down completely after around 1.5 to 3 hours.

Pesky wasps can be a real pain in general but at parties with the combination of food and sugary drinks they can quickly

become a major nuisance. Prior to your party, set up some wasp catchers strategically positioned around – reasonably high so out of harm's way. These large brightly coloured glass jars are often seen in the Mediterranean. There is an entrance hole at the base of the wasp catcher to lure wasps and flies in. All you

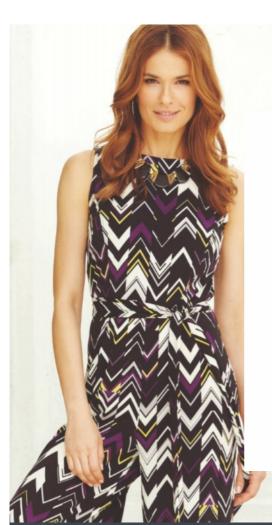
need to do is fill with 200ml of fruit juice or sugar and water mixture to help attract the insects. Do keep the cork in the top to keep the

trapped pests captive!

Let's get back to your party plans! It's all about wining and dining whether you are doing the Al Fresco thing or pushing the boat out with the whole works and a full sit down meal. Keeping your guests fed from your fired up Weber BBQ makes the occasion far more social than being tied to the cooker in the kitchen. If you are looking for locally sourced alcoholic inspiration then do check out our range of wines, especially from the Chafor Estate. In our relocated drinks and food area near the Restaurant you'll find Chafor wine favourites including the new seasons Bacchus 2015, Rosé 2015, Chardonnay Reserve 2013 as well as Tim Chafor's new sparkling Vintage Cuvée



2013. Micro breweries are also well represented here, including beers from Muddy Wellies, Towcester Mill and Hornes Breweries and these are all well worth a sample! If you opt with the buffet and easy nibbles then check out our range of delicious Cottage Delight tasty bites, including the Salsa and Crackers offer for just £3.50. Finally, give your sweet toothed guests a treat with some scrummy cakes, such as the Fatherson Bakery Lemon Drizzle Loaf or how about a slice of Victoria Spongewhat could be a more delicious way to complete the evening's proceedings?



Bonmarché

Exciting new concession store opening!

visit us at Buckingham Garden Centre

OPENS Friday 15th July at 9:30am

FREE GOODY BAGS FOR THE FIRST 30 CUSTOMERS

Bonmarché



10% OFF

Present this voucher in-store to redeem your discount

Terms and Conditions: Discount valid at Bonmarche Buckingham Garden Centre store only from Friday 15th July until Friday 29th July 2016, Discount is not valid on purchase of gift vouchers or in conjunction with any other discount code or voucher. Discount code 10REOPEN,

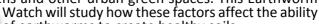
EARTHWORM WATCH: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

An interesting and different challenge which would probably prove to be very popular with children of all ages is to get involved in an Earthworm Watch being organised by the Natural History Museum as they are wishing to categorise earthworms of all types throughout the country this Spring and The results of the survey will

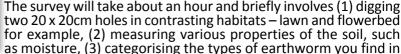


contribute to research into soil health and carbon storage by measuring soil properties and earthworms in gardens or local green spaces throughout the country.

It is not yet understood how human activity such as planting schemes, moving topsoil and adding fertilisers affects soils and earthworms, especially in gardens and other urban green spaces. This Earthworm



of earthworms to create healthy soils.



the holes and (4) sending the results to Earthworm Watch.

Earthworms are fascinating and basically there are three types, anecic, which make vertical tunnels, endogeic which make horizontal tunnels and epigeic which live mainly on the surface. There are some 6,000 species of earthworms throughout the world but only about 150 are widely distributed. They vary from 10mm to 3m long and in poor soil it is estimated there are 250,000 per acre and in rich soil 1,750,000 per acre so the weight of earthworms below the soil could be greater than the livestock grazing above.

If you are interested in getting involved in this fascinating and worthwhile survey you can apply for a Survey Pack by e-mail to earthwormwatch@nhm.ac.uk or go to the Natural History Museum website and go to Earthworm Watch and from this you can get masses of information.

A word of warning though, if you are travelling in New Zealand and are offered 'Noke' be forewarned as this refers to earthworms which are considered delicacies by Maori chiefs!

BE A BRIGHT SPARK WITH SOLAR LIGHTING!

Installing outdoor lighting can pose many challenges. In addition to the cost of the lights, it's usually necessary to hire a licensed electrician to do the installation. Solar-powered lights are an increasingly popular alternative, writes Chris Day. They are affordable, easy to install yourself and can be relocated to find the best position or for various occasions. You also save on electrical costs.

light and were not all that reliable. This has changed,

Until recently, most solar lights emitted only a dim as super-bright LEDs have replaced more conventional filament bulbs. Light-emitting



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diodes (LEDs) create light without generating the waste heat of normal bulbs, so they are very bright, yet require far less electricity to operate. The result is a dependable, long-term 'bulb' that will usually shine for the life of the product.

Other recent advances in solar lighting technology include the development of more efficient photovoltaic cells, improved circuitry and more efficient batteries. These new solar lights are able to perform year-round - even through the cold, short days of winter - with little variation in performance.

When shopping for solar lights, it's important to match the light to the function you want it to perform. There are three primary categories of solar lights for use in the

landscape: accent lights, path lights, and spotlights/task lights.

Solar Garden Accents Accent lights add a pleasant glow to your landscape. Their

relatively low level of illumination is designed to 'mark a place,' not illuminate an object or light a pathway. Due to their low light output, accent lights usually boast longer runtimes than other types of solar lights. In fact, it is not unusual for a quality accent light to run many nights on just a single day's charge. Ice Orb, one of the solar lights we stock is pictured right, and priced at £9.99 or 2 for £15.00.

Accent lights typically use efficient multi-crystalline solar cells that allow them to charge even on cloudy days or in partially shaded areas. Many accent lights utilize amber LEDs to create an even softer

ambience than the standard white LEDs. Some of them also 'flicker' to simulate candle light. Amber LEDs use less power than their white counterparts. Accent lights can be used to mark landscape hazards, such as a large rock that could be tripped over at night, or as garden features themselves such as a garden ornament, water feature or a tree. Compared to the other categories of solar lights, accent lights have the lowest light output and are the most affordable.

Solar Path Lights As the name implies, path lights are meant to light paths,



walkways, driveway perimeters or other small areas around your home and in your landscape. They are often used in multiples to guide the way along a set of stairs or a dark walkway. Path lights typically come with a choice of ground stakes, flange mounts and hanging hooks, to give the user a wide choice of positioning options. Most are designed to focus their light downward. Pictured left, Cole & Bright Marker Lights, £4.99.

Solar Task Lights and Spotlights Task lights and spotlights are the brightest class of solar lights and usually carry the highest price tag. They are designed to cast a bright beam of light on plants, statuary or entryways. That said, it is important to realize a solar task light will not perform like a standard 100-watt outdoor floodlight. A high-quality solar light with good LEDs can produce a focused beam of light equivalent to a 40-watt incandescent spotlight - an impressive amount of light that's both clean and free. Pictured right, Cole & Bright Spotlight, £4.99.



Solar task lights and spotlights are generally the most durable class of solar lights. While nearly all solar lights are weatherproof and UV protected, solar task lights and spotlights are often more ruggedly constructed.

Solar lights that use LEDs have another little-known benefit that makes them especially well suited for landscape use. As temperatures drop, LEDs generate an even brighter light, due to their solid state design. In this respect, solar lights are superior to low-voltage outdoor lights and compact fluorescent lights, which operate less efficiently in cold conditions. LEDs also have a lifespan in excess of 100,000 hours compared to 2 to 3000 hours for the average incandescent bulb.

EXPLORE EVENLEY WOODS THIS SUMMER

With the kids out of school during the warmer summer months of July and August, it can get pretty busy out there, writes Sophie Cheesman, PR and Events Coordinator at Evenley Wood Garden. This is why we feel that Evenley Wood Garden, a privately owned woodland and garden tucked away in the ever so charming village of Evenley in south Northamptonshire, is the perfect place for you and your family to escape? It's not often we get



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hordes of people bursting through our gates, but if you ask us, this is just part of our charm. We have 60 acres of diverse natural landscape with plenty of space where you can explore and relax away from the commotion of everyday life.

Colourful Summer Highlights Winter has snowdrops, spring has blossom, and autumn has golden leaves. And summer, of course, is when many deciduous trees and plants reach their peak, creating vibrant petals and plump foliage. But what makes Evenley Wood Garden particularly special during these warmer months is our collection of 300 roses and 150 lilies.

Scattered throughout the garden, our rose collection consists of Bred British roses, climbers, and ramblers; with various notable specimens including *Rosa* lichiangensis 'Gigantia Hybrid' and *R*. 'Paul's Himalayan Musk' (pictured bottom left).

Our lilies, whilst smaller in number, are incredibly eye-catching. As they are a speciality of the garden's owner, Mr Tim Whiteley, we have an inspiring collection of both common species and cultivars. Among these are *Lilium* 'Evenley Jane', which is one of a selection of plants that have been developed and propagated here, and the unmissable deep reds of *L*. 'Theodor Haber'.



Space to Relax Lose yourself in the enchanting woodland, stroll along the stream, rest on a bench and enjoy a calm moment of observation, spot the roaming guinea fowl, bring a picnic blanket and lay in the meadow, enjoy a packed lunch in the Pavilion, or watch out for birds of prey soaring between the treetops. There are so many possibilities!

Take Part We are offering a variety of exciting events and workshops over July and August. On

3rd July, we are holding our Lily and Rose Festival – a special event with stalls, talks, a nature workshop, delicious food,



music, children's activities, and a guided tour which is exclusive to all Buckingham Garden Centre Discount Club members. Later on in the month and throughout August, we have additional



workshops including flower arranging, hands-on nature, photography, plus more to be announced. For further information on events, please visit http://www.evenleywoodgarden.co.uk

HOW TO PLANT A PATIO POT FOR POLLINATORS

You can help butterflies, moths, bees and other pollinators by adding a container of nectar-rich plants to your garden or outdoor patio space this summer. So with this in mind, we've created one for our newsletter cover and you can read what we used and how we put it together, writes Chris Day. Select a pot of your choice — any container that will hold

compost can reasonable size plants selected spread so ne

compost can be used for planting. A reasonable sized pot will be essential as the plants selected will grow in both height and spread so need to be proportionate. Whatever pot you choose don't forget to add drainage holes! If the pot just has a

single hole, it would be worth adding a few crocks (broken pots or polystyrene) over this to help aid the drainage.

Next select the plants that will produce good quantities of nectar. There are plenty to choose from

including ornamental Onions (Alliums), Bee Balm (Monarda), Cosmos, Catmint,

Cranesbill, Coneflower, Shasta Daisy, Gayfeather, Lamb's Ears, Salvia and Wild Marjoram. We used (pictured top right, left and bottom left) Cosmos 'Sonata', Alyssum maritima (sometimes called Sweet Alison), Allium christophii (AGM) and Salvia nemorosa 'Ostfriesland'. As the Allium die back after flowering we would add a small pot of Nepeta mussinii (Catmint) and Marjoram to continue the colour into late summer and autumn. Next add your plant or selection of plants. When you are happy with their position top up the pot with more compost and firm them in gently. Remember you can add a few bulbs if in season

to help extend the pollinators' season. Good ones include Alliums, Crocus (especially for early bumblebees) and Muscari, that's the popular Grape Hyacinth. You will need to water the plants in to help establish the roots.

Place your plant pot for pollinators in a sunny spot. It's recommended you also turn it 180 degrees every week to help ensure strong balanced growth. Water regularly



and feed fortnightly with a high potash fertiliser such as Phostrogen or Tomorite to encourage plenty of flower production. You will also need to deadhead regularly to help produce a plentiful supply of nectar-rich blooms. Finally visit www.plantpotsforpollinators.org to put your pot on the map and discover how pollinator friendly your neighbourhood is. We've also put together an instructional video with further information and practical advice. You can find it at this link:

http://www.buckinghamgardencentre.co.uk/gardenvideos.html

Did you know? If every one of the UK's 22 million gardens had a plant pot for pollinators, it would create a highway for the threatened insects! Alan Titchmarsh, Butterfly Conservation, May 2016.

FEEDING THE BIRDS THIS SUMMER

The RSPB (Royal Society for the Protection of Birds) and the BTO (British Trust for Ornithology) both recommend that wild birds should be fed throughout the year. However, from April until September, whole peanuts must be fed from wire mesh feeders as the adult birds can only peck at the nuts thus taking small pieces to their young preventing chicks from choking on whole peanuts or large pieces. This is unfortunate, as peanuts are nutritious and attractive to birds, but they can be fed in the form of 'Peanut Bites', which are small bite sized pieces of peanut or 'Flutter Butter'. This is increasingly popular and is a low salt peanut butter specially formulated for birds. It comes in jars for which a hanging holder is available.

By popular demand, in addition to our existing range of high quality foods, we have extended our range of Peckish brand foods. These are all enriched with Calvita: this is not a gimmick as it contains nutrients

which artificial feeds often lack.

We now stock Peckish Complete in the full range of sizes from 1kg to 12.75kg. The 12.75kg size is the answer if your birds are not "Peckish" but ravenous, and it is extremely good value at £13.99. The only disadvantage for fans of Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs is that this size is zero rated for VAT. This helps to keep the price



Calvita is a natural enrichment unique to Peckish which has been developed to replace the nutrients that garden birds need to stay healthy. e are

CAROTENOIDS

✓ Develops feather colour.
✓ Protects from sunlight damage

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CALCIUM

✓ Promotes bone & feather growth
✓ Essential for egg production.

VITAMINS A, D, E & BIOTIN

✓ Strengthens beaks & bones.
✓ Helps growth & reproduction.

down, but means that you are not helping to pay for all of the Government's good works! We also stock Daily Goodness Nuggets, which we know from experience are extremely popular with the birds, as well as Nesting & Young Bird Seed Mix, and other feeds for individual types of birds.

LATEST BUZZING BEE SHOW NEWS



After last year's highly successful Bee & Honey Show as part of our Apple Weekend we are delighted to announce the entire Buckinghamshire Beekeepers Association will be joining us on Sunday 25th September. There will be numerous classes for judging which you will be able to see, as well as live bees in an observation hive, a beekeeping



information desk and samples of hive products to enjoy. Also promised, there will be skep making, hive building and soap making amongst other activities. New this year there will be a couple of talks which will be open to all Garden Centre customers. The Talks will take place in our 'Goods In' Tunnel located close to our Poultry Centre. We'll keep our website and Facebook pages updated with the latest information from late July onwards.

ENJOYING THE TWILIGHT GARDEN

Long working hours and commutes can seriously eat into quality garden time for us planty types, suggests Chris Day. But if you are often only home in time to see the sun dip over the horizon, a few design tricks can not only extend the amount of time you can enjoy your plot, but can also make it look its best in twilight.

As light levels drop in the evening our perception of colour changes. The hot reds and yellows that look so fiery in bright afternoon sun appear flat and dull, as our eyes are less able to detect the longwave light that these reflect. Our vision



switches from using specialised structures at the back of our eyes, called cone cells, to a different group called rod cells, which are semi-colour blind. Under these conditions blues and greens are far easier to detect, explaining why everything looks

cooler and fresher in the evening.

Of course you can go one better and opt for whites and silvers, which reflect the last rays even better, making them visible long after others have faded into the gloom. This may help explain why spring flowers tend to be paler than the richer, redder flowers of high summer, with their comparative lack of red pigment helping them shine out in lower light. Fortunately, white mutations are fairly common in plants, meaning almost every popular garden plant is also available in an ivoryflowered form. The word alba (Latin for 'white') in a plant's scientific name is a bit

of a giveaway.

Starting with snowy white Narcissi and Tulips in the spring, you can get a good succession throughout the summer with Jasmines, Hydrangeas (Mopheads, Grandiflora and Lacecaps) Lilies, Roses, Ten Week Stocks and Nicotiana sylvestris, rounding the season off with Acidantheras, Colchicums and Japanese Anemones in the autumn.

A curious bonus with many of these plants is that whiteflowered species are often the most intensely fragrant, because the structures that create their aromatic oils replace those responsible for generating pigment in their petals. When do many of these emit most fragrance? Sunset.

Variegated plants work a treat to add a cool glow to evening

gardens, and despite common belief, they don't have to be tacky. I particularly like some of the larger-leafed Hostas and grasses which provide a lush, understated backdrop to the cream-coloured flowers. A flash of silver from the fuzzy leaves of Astelias or Stachys, which have evolved to reflect light, will help add an ephemeral texture and shimmer.

Finally, add a light-coloured mulch to paths, or paint walls and decks in a fresh pastel colour. They will act like big reflectors, bouncing even more light in and allowing you to eke out every last minute from your garden.



WHAT'S ON & GARDEN CENTRE VISITS

EVERY SUNDAY Stock up on your fresh fruits and vegetables as Aston Clinton-based Lance Smith joins us between 10am-4pm. You can also purchase fresh meat and poultry as Crawley's Family Butchers from Brickhill will also be in the Car Park.

SUNDAY 3rd JULY This is EXCLUSIVE to Buckingham Garden Centre Garden Card Members. Evenley Wood Gardens admission, Lily & Rose Event and a one hour garden tour for £10. Full details from the Customer Service Desk. This is a self-drive visit, however you must register your interest as numbers for the Tour are strictly limited.

TOOL MARKING EVENT Thames Valley Police and Aylesbury Vale

together we can

safer place to live and work

District Council will be at the Garden Centre on 13th July, 24th August and 14th September

between 11am-2pm to run a Tool Marking Event after seeing a spike in shed thefts. Bring your tools to get them marked for free with your name and contact information in the case make Aylesbury Vale an even that they may go missing. Security marking your tools and garden items will act as a visible deterrent to thieves and

enables the Police to return recovered stolen property to its owner. Attend the Garden Centre to find out more information, including how to prevent these shed thefts from occurring.

WEDNESDAY 20th JULY Ball Colegrave Trials Grounds is open to the public in the evening from 4-8pm. Enjoy the spectacular trial grounds, colourful gardens, patio displays, containers and hanging baskets. There will be a number of craft stalls along with some musical entertainment including the Rock Choir. Light refreshments are available for purchase or bring along your own picnic if you prefer. Entrance fee is £3, children under 12 admitted free. A contribution from the admission fees will be made to the local hospice, Katharine House, and to the David Colegrave Foundation. Ball Colegrave Trials Grounds, Milton Road, West Adderbury, Banbury OX17 3EY.

WEDNESDAY 20th JULY The Diss Experience at Bressingham Gardens. Full details are available from our Customer Services Desk or call 01280 822133.

TUESDAY 6th SEPTEMBER RHS Wisley Gardens and Flower Show. Details as above.

WEDNESDAY 14th SEPTEMBER BGC's Chris Day delves into the world of Great Plants & Ideas For Small Spaces. All our talks are in the Talks Room in the Restaurant at 4.00pm, and will last approximately 45 minutes with time for questions at the end. To book a seat please contact our Customer Service Desk on 01280 822133. Garden Club Members free, £3 for Non-Members.

SATURDAY 24th & SUNDAY 25th SEPTEMBER Our Apple and Bee Weekend goes from strength to strength and this year the Honey Show now includes Beekeepers from the whole of Buckinghamshire! We're delighted to have Gerry Edwards, top RHS fruit expert and judge on hand over both days identifying your mystery apple varieties. Do check our website from mid July onwards for regular updates.



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SPECIAL GARDEN CLUB MEMBERS OFFER COUPONS

WEBER CHARCOAL **BRIQUETTE 2KG**

Normally £3.49 NOW £2.99 PLEASE PRESENT THIS VOUCHER WITH A VALID GARDEN CENTRE DISCOUNT CARD **FOR OFFER**

Offer valid until 30th August 2016



PLANT OF THE MONTH: JULY

PHORMIUM TENAX

Normally £9.99 each

Garden Club Members Price:

PLEASE PRESENT THIS VOUCHER TOGETHER WITH A

VALID GARDEN CENTRE DISCOUNT CARD FOR OFFER





CREAM TEA FORTNIGHT... SAVE £1.00!

Homemade fruit scone with cream and strawberry jam served with a pot of tea, or with a filter coffee. Normally £3.95 only £2.95 between the following dates. Cream Tea served from 9:30am-3pm.

Monday 18th July - Sunday 31st July 2016 inclusive

PLEASE PRESENT THIS VOUCHER TOGETHER WITH A VALID GARDEN CENTRE DISCOUNT CARD FOR OFFER





PLANT OF THE MONTH: AUGUST

PEROVSKIA 'BLUE SPIRE'

Normally £9.99 each

Garden Club Members Price:

PLEASE PRESENT THIS VOUCHER TOGETHER WITH A VALID GARDEN CENTRE DISCOUNT CARD FOR OFFER

OFFER SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY



Buckingham Nurseries & Garden Centre

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