

Edgworth & District Horticultural Society

ALL MEETINGS CANCELLED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

WE WILL BE BACK IN BUSINESS AS SOON AS IT IS SAFE TO DO SO



Hello everyone. First of all a reminder from the last e-mail I sent.

The AGM was due to be held on the 18th November. Due to current restrictions this is now impossible. We are planning to hold a committee meeting on that date instead and invite all members to submit any queries or comments, good or bad, **before 11th November** so that the committee can discuss these at our meeting on the 18th November. You might want to suggest changes to how the meetings, trips or holidays are organised. You may even want to help!

The annual reports from the Chairperson and the Treasurer will be put onto the website shortly. The minutes from 2019 AGM are already on the website for your to view.

I hope you are all keeping safe and well, it is very unsettling when there is so much doubt about the future. There is doubt about where we will all

be next day let alone next year but we are doing our bit to give you something to look forward to.

As we mentioned in the last e-mail, we are considering using Zoom to hold monthly meetings next year. Only 5 members have responded so far so please, if you are interested in joining a Zoom meeting until we can meet again normally, it is important that you register an interest asap so that some meetings can be arranged with speakers. We can't do this if there is not enough interest.

Have been busy tidying up the garden making space to plant extra bulbs and winter bedding and are you thinking that with all the rainy weather you will never finish? Don't worry about it. Sue Brohi suggests that we should not be too tidy when sorting out the garden at this time of year. Leave odd piles of leaves and prunings, wood etc under a shrub for beasties to hibernate in, hollow stems tied in a bunch and hung from a tree are cosy beds for some insects, and don't forget to check any bonfires for hibernating hedgehogs. Seedheads too are useful, things like sunflower seed heads are particularly loved by the birds and supplement their winter diet.

If you know of a member who does not receive e-mails from us can you please pass on this important information to them

Irene Spencer

Suttons Seeds Discount 2020-21

Because of the value of orders we placed in 2019-20, Suttons have continued to give EHS members the same fantastic discounts.

DISCOUNTS FOR 2020/21

Packets of Seeds 50% off catalogue price

All other items (inc. bulbs, onions & potatoes) 15% off catalogue price

WHAT YOU DO

1. If you wish to have a catalogue (along with our EHS specific order form) you may arrange to collect one from your nearest committee member (see the list below)

OR

Browse the Suttons web site <http://www.suttons-seeds.co.uk/>

2. Decide what you want to buy
3. Place your order in one of 3 ways:
 - By posting the order form, with payment, direct to Suttons (The Order Code is printed on it)
 - By their telephone order line giving the unique to EHS Order Code
 - Via their web site and apply the EHS Discount Order Code at check out

TO GET THE DISCOUNT

- Which ever method you choose you must quote our "unique Order Code" or you won't get the discount. Do not use last year's - it no longer works.
- The Order Code is on our order form. It is also included in this email so that you are able to place your order without collecting a catalogue.
- **DO NOT PUBLICISE THE CODE, THE DISCOUNT IS GIVEN FOR MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY.** If the code becomes public we will risk losing this.
- The 2020-21 Code is **GS11646**

TO OBTAIN A CATALOGUE

Several committee members have offered to hold a stock of the catalogues. You may call them to arrange to pick one up.

David Spencer	Egerton Area	01204 307897
Pat Whalley	Edgworth Area	01204 853444
Sue Brohi	Harwood, Bradshaw Area	01204 304686
Angela Swallow	Heaton Area	07944 255729
Jean Turner	Bromley Cross Area	01204 309394
Phil Broughton	Bromley Cross Area	01204 300541

A few catalogues have been left at The Barlow. These can be freely picked up so are without order forms (which have the Order Code)

Please contact Suttons directly if you have problems with an order or delivery. For other queries give Phil a ring on 01204-300541

October Speaker

The final speaker for 2020 to visit us would have been Steve Parker from the South Lancashire Bat Group based in Bury. He is very sorry not to have been able to come to us and bring some of his bats with him before they go into hibernation - but from what I learned when I telephoned him, what a fascinating talk it is.

It would appear that due to more people having been at home this year, the Bat Group volunteers, who work mostly during the evenings, have been inundated with calls to rescue these nocturnal

animals which have been grounded or injured, from an area which stretches from Burnley down to South Manchester and Wigan across to Oldham.

He also explained that although they eat mostly insects, they are very useful midge-catchers, appearing at dusk when they awake and early morning before they sleep, and can be seen flirting over trees and hedges, but in other countries, they are a delicacy!

Alas, our horticultural year has been like no other - the year we only had two of our planned speakers, no Annual Show and no Annual General Meeting with our social evening to round off the year. However, Steve and his bats, along with all our other 2020 speakers are looking forward to coming to Edgworth next year.

So fingers crossed for an interesting 2021!!!

Pat Whalley

Roy Lancaster's visit to EHS



The Barlow celebrated its centenary in 2009. There were several special events at the time and we were very proud of the fact that Roy Lancaster, OBE came to talk to us at our monthly meeting which many of you may remember. He was born in Bolton and began his working life here so has many fond memories of the town. His close friend lives very near to The Barlow so he stayed with him for a couple of nights.



While he was with us Roy planted this beautiful liquidambar tree which was in its full autumn glory when this photograph was taken on 26th September. The tree was growing at an angle after being knocked but thanks to Phil and Jean it now has a robust support and is straight once again.

The tree is situated behind the car park at The Barlow, near the older children's play area and the plaque is next to the tree commemorating the event.

Irene Spencer

Troubles with Espaliers

It was in 2011, we were very early in the reclamation of Turton Tower Kitchen Garden and it seemed a good idea to have four traditional apples along the top wall. By having them as espaliers they could be trained below wall height and would make an interesting feature for the garden. That autumn four different old varieties were delivered, bare root, from Roger's of Pickering and were planted immediately.: two dessert - Worcester Pearmain and Laxton Superb and two cookers - Gascoigne and Newton Wonder.

Early in 2012 we stretched horizontal wires at about 12" intervals between posts either side of each tree so that branches could be trained along them as the trees grew. They were small trees about 24" high known as "step-overs", with three branches at the top. The outer two branches were tied to slanting canes and would be progressively lowered onto the lowest wire and the central branch

would be allowed to grow upwards as the trunk, to provide branches for the next rows of wires. With everything in place we could watch them grow, tie them in and reap the crop ... simple!

Trees have other ideas! Firstly they want to grow upwards and don't seem to understand that where we have provided wires we want branches to train along them. In these early days we needed advice and were fortunate in having help from the very knowledgeable John King (now much missed). He explained some of the science and helped to guide our early pruning. He first warned us that for several years we may get flowers but fruit won't develop. In his words "children have all the right equipment but can't make babies"!



Higher buds of trees produce a hormone which is sent down the trunk or main stem to inhibit the development of side branches. He advised us to make a small cut in the bark above a bud on the main stem to encourage the bud to develop into a branch. Also when a branch is lowered to the horizontal this allows laterals (side branches) to form along it but slows or stops it growing longer. Consequently we have to tie branches onto the wires whilst they are flexible enough to do this but have to tie the growing ends to canes at about 45 degrees so they will continue to grow longer and fill the frame.



Lateral from a lower branch used to create a branch on a higher wire. The developing bud on the trunk may replace this in the future

Despite our best efforts we sometimes have no branch to train from the trunk onto a wire. To fill the gap we allow a lateral, close to the trunk on a lower branch to grow on upwards and then train it round onto the empty wire. All other laterals on the horizontal branches are pruned to three buds in August to become fruiting spurs.

Each year these spurs themselves develop laterals which each year are pruned to three buds - and this continues with each year of laterals on laterals becoming progressively longer. Not finding guidance in any books I sent a question to the RHS Advice service (which is available to members):

"Most books say prune the laterals to 3 buds. However if I always prune back the new growth on these to 3 buds they will become longer each year. If I prune it all off I worry this will prevent fruiting (which still isn't prolific). Also, in particular, the "Newton Wonder" has been slow to produce side stems and produces only 1-2 apples. Can you advise on pruning please?"

Their answer was most helpful:

"Thank you for your enquiry regarding the pruning of espalier apples. Although most pruning of espaliers is carried out in late Summer it is necessary to carry out some pruning in Winter as the tree develops. Unfortunately pruning advice often only mentions Summer pruning. The main pruning is in late summer when the new shoots start to become woody and the growth stops and the terminal buds start to form. This is usually in mid to late August in South East England. First tie in any shoots needed to extend the framework. Next prune any remaining shoots of the current season's growth greater than secateur length. Prune those from the main stem to 3 leaves from the basal cluster and those from existing spurs to 1 leaf from the basal cluster. Fruit buds should develop on the piece left either in the same Summer or the next Summer. Over time the fruiting spurs become longer and more branching. In the dormant season thin out some of the longer spurs cutting back to a side shoot on the spur nearer to the main stem. If you do a few spurs on each tier of the espalier each year this should not stimulate too much growth and will keep the growth compact. This avoids having to do a lot of restoration in the future. 'Newton Wonder' is rather vigorous and may take a bit longer than some of the other cultivars to build up good fruiting spurs."



Newton Wonder – effectively a piece of Newton's Tree grafted onto a root stock

The RHS advice service can also help to identify plants and give advice on all aspects of horticulture. Because our Society is affiliated to the RHS this service can be open to all members. They need one of our members (who is not themselves an RHS member) to help our other members by offering to be the Society's nominated point of contact to this RHS service. **This is not an arduous job so please try to help.**

Phil Broughton

Horror story in time for Halloween

We can all get quite upset and down hearted with the constant battle against our garden pests but what about this story I heard from a friend in Australia.

They were woken in the night by strange sounds from the garden. It is the start of summer in Queensland and the weather is hot. As is their custom at this time of year they put their guinea pigs' cage outside after reinforcing it with chicken wire for protection. They went outside to investigate the disturbance and were horrified to see a carpet python inside the cage with a half eaten guinea pig in its mouth. The other poor guinea pig was cowering and squeaking loudly in a far corner of the cage.



In this situation, pest control involves rescuing the remaining guinea pig then shaking the cage to release the carpet python which slithered away to make a hasty retreat, and all in the middle of the night!

I googled carpet python and they are huge, 2½ - 4 metres long so how it got through the gaps in chicken wire I cannot imagine.

The cage now is covered with a smaller gauge chicken wire and a replacement guinea pig has been bought for the remaining pet who quickly made friends with his new partner resulting in a happy ending for this particular horror story.

Never again will I complain about slugs and snails etc. (or maybe I will), though I would rather have to deal with those than a python any day, wouldn't you?

Irene Spencer

DON'T FORGET!

1. Let us know about any queries, comments or suggestions you might have before 11th Nov. so they can be discussed at the committee meeting on 18th November.
2. We need you to tell us if you are interested in attending monthly meetings on Zoom in the New Year. Normal meetings would resume as soon as it is safe to do so.
3. The Chairman's Report and Treasurer's Report will soon be available on the website and the Minutes from the last AGM are already on there.
4. There is a lot of interesting, general information on our website, why not take a look.
www.edgworth-horticultural-society.co.uk