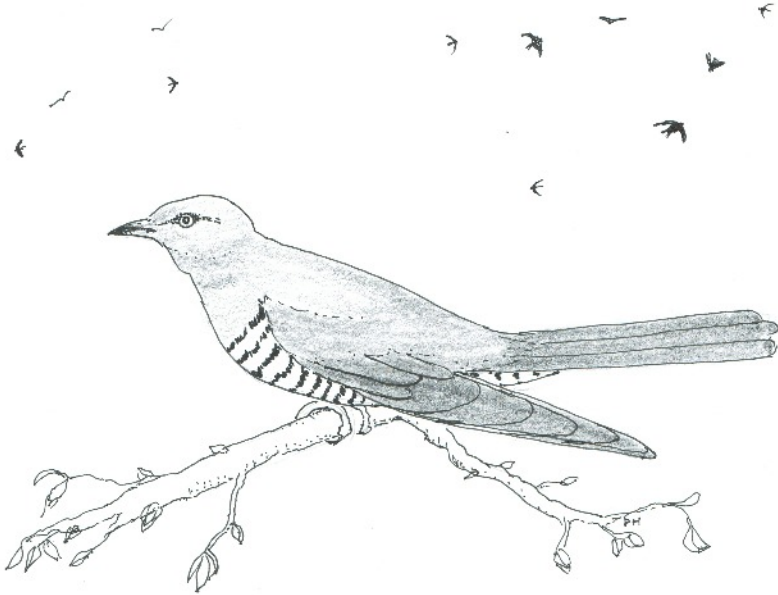




Somerset Federation of Gardening Clubs

Issue LIV

Spring 2017



*The cuckoo comes in April
In May he sings all day.
In the middle of June he changes his tune,
In July he flies away.*

**Contact Details of the Officers & Committee Members of
The Somerset Federation of Gardening Clubs**

President: Mrs. Lyn Spencer-Mills Tel: 01460 736389
Hoopers Holding, Hinton St. George. TA17 8SE

Chairman: Erland Plomgren Tel: 01278 741152
Lady Charles House, Holford, Bridgwater TA5 1RZ

Secretary: Philip Harwood Tel: 01749 679182
Fernville, Bath Road, Wells, Somerset. BA5 3HR

Treasurer: John Dunster Tel: 01934 844777
8, Copse End, Winscombe, N. Somerset. BS25 1JS

Webmaster: David Talling Tel. 01278 741116
Nutwalk, Holford, Bridgwater. TA5 1RY

Email: webmaster@somersetfederationofgardeningclubs.org.uk

Committee Members:

Mo Plomgren Tel: 01278 741152
Lady Charles House, Holford, Bridgwater TA5 1RZ

Tina Franklyn Tel:
Apartment 3, 47 Lilliana Way, Bridgwater TA5 2GG

Marie Wheatley Tel: 01935 881421
Yeoman's Wake, Higher Street, West Chinnock
Crewkerne. TA18 7QA

Sally Hawkes Tel: 01278 652658
Knaplock Farm, Stockland Bristol, Bridgwater. TA5 2QB

General Enquiries:
enquiries@somersetfederationofgardeningclubs.org.uk

Website
www.somersetfederationofgardeningclubs.org.uk

Introduction



*So have I heard the cuckoo's parting cry,
From the wet field, through the vex'd garden trees,
Come with the volleying rain and tossing breeze:
'The bloom is gone, and with the bloom I go.'*



Mathew Arnold 1822 – 1888

Here we go again. The Carnival of Spring is upon us once more, the old familiarities are with us, the daffodils, the cuckoo, the neglected corners, the repeated mistakes and resolutions broken. On a personal note I cut down on the resolutions this year. I only made one and that was to refrain from making any graven images. And to my credit I've stuck to it. While in this wild decisive mood I evaded previous year's mistakes in planting spring bulbs in inappropriate places, slicing through dormant narcissi and uprooting sprouting tulips. This year, they are all in pots. This, I thought a clever move. Of course, what is going to happen is that I shall be left with wilting foliage in containers cluttering up the place and tripping us over before I get round to Dealing with the Problem.

But, never mind, that's for later. For the moment let us revel in the Spring. The winter thrushes, redwings and fieldfares have plundered the cotoneaster berries and are long gone. The Somerton daffodils too are gone but they started just after Christmas. The rest of the Carnival is in full swing. There's a temptation to ignore the call of the mower, the pruning tools, fork and shears and join in the festivities of of birds and butterflies.

Which, by the way, long ago, they did exactly that. In Byzantine times there emerged a peculiar sect of religious zealots known as the Dendrites. These fellows were following Christ's instruction to 'imitate the birds of the air' by shinning up trees and making nests for themselves in the branches. Here they stayed refusing to descend, practising their religious devotions. It all sounds slightly endearing but after a while the Pope and authorities tired of this nonsense and ordered them down. Present suburban neighbours would probably take the same line. Not really recommended. Or you could follow Gertrude Jekyle's advice: 'It's well worth getting up at 4am to see the tender buds.....'

On the other hand you could just stay where you are, read this Newsletter and pass it on.

Pip Harwood

Few things are more annoying than dogmatism; and dogmatism is nowhere more misplaced than in horticulture.

Reginald Farrer – The Rock Garden

Chairman's Corner Spring 2017



'Time and Tide wait for no Man' so the phrase goes, meaning 'no-one is so powerful that they can stop the march of time'....is I think the truest of all sayings.. as I write this in February, when the snowdrops and daffodils are blooming, I cannot believe looking back at my last Chairman's report, we had only just seen the end of summer!

Since then, my venture to the hot climes of Australia seems almost a distant memory, however, what memories I can recall, I would like to share here with you now....!

My brother lives high up on a mountain - close to an extinct volcano called Mount Warning in New South Wales, near the border of Queensland and from where one can watch the sun rise before the rest of Australia has woken up! The air can be a little fresher and cooler up there - 'though 40 degrees to my mind, is not that cool...but to compensate for the heat and humidity, the views over the 'bush' and the lush landscape are breath-taking.

My brother over the thirty odd years he has lived there, has planted hundreds of trees on his property, the Queensland Maple, Hoop Pine, Australian Wattle, Kauri Pine, Tallwood, Blue Gum and Bottlebrush to name just a few! Palm Trees are in abundance too....Golden Cane, Date Palm, Foxtail Palm and Bungalow Palm. Foliage grown are many ferns, Staghorn, Hibiscus, Frangipani, Grevilleas and others, with poinsettia's growing wild along the roadsides during winter!

Garden flowers are more or less a no-go due to the extreme climate. Water is supplied from a well and the burning of any fallen trees and branches, can only be carried out in a concrete structure by special licence, for obvious reasons!

I mentioned in my last report that the wildlife is more foreboding and it certainly is. The Australian Huntsman spider is huge and one made itself at home in the bedroom one night where I slept, nestled against the wall, and no amount of coaxing would make it go outside, it jumped from here to there and in the end, I resigned myself that he would have to spend the night with me, fortunately he was gone by the morning.....so a little unnerving as was the snake that wound itself around the veranda bannister; 'dormant' my brother said, 'no problem'.... but to be honest, I wasn't really that reassured! I don't remember what type of snake it was, but they do have several on their land, Carpet Snakes, Night Tiger Snakes (the mind boggles!)... Red-Bellied Black Snake.... as for the venomous Red Back Spider and Cane Toads, green frogs, lizards and the occasional Goanna...they kept their distance as far as I know! Acres of

grass is mowed by tractor (and there is a lot!) but at times when working by hand, one eye must be kept on the vegetation around you in case there are snakes lurking. On one very memorable occasion, a snake was making itself towards where we were working, so my brother grabbed a long pole to which the snake - with incredible speed threw itself at and wound itself around like a piece of rope, the swiftness was beyond all belief. I think dealing with a couple of water rats and flies here in the Quantocks this summer will be a piece of cake!

The one thing I did really enjoy was the birdlife....wonderful Black/White Cockatoos, Rainbow Lorikeets, the Australian Raven and the Pink Galahs...all would come down to feed on the vast feeding tables my brother and sister in law have built.. one could sit for hours in the shade with a book and just enjoy watching the fluttering, the antics, the colours and listening to the chirping and tweeting and the notorious laugh of the Kookaburra.

Well, after all that, now back to looking forward to working in our soft like garden, living side by side with our pleasant little birds and mammals....and looking forward to our British Weather!

So to finish, my regards to you all, I like to think our clubs/societies are flourishing, and do remember, our committee is always available to help with any enquires you may have and so now it is just left for me to say, that I hope the sun shines warmly on you whilst working in your gardens this summer, those trees and shrubs will need pruning, hedges will need cutting, lawns will need mowing and plants to be planted...as I said earlier "time and tide etc.,.....!!

God Bless

Erl

n.b. If anyone is interested, there are photos of my brother's property on our website:

<http://www.somersetfederationofgardeningclubs.org.uk/>



Is it the DONG - DANG - DUNG? No, it's "THE DING"

The Ding Gardening club has celebrated its 30th birthday. Based in Horton near Ilminster, its origin goes back to 1986 when Paul Pickering and neighbour Greg Hoare set about forming a gardening club. A meeting was called for 10th February 1987 at Paul's house - 20 keen folk turned up. First decision was to call the club "The Ding Gardening Club" as Horticultural Society seemed too posh. The Ding is the river which divides the villages of Broadway and Horton, where the bulk of the membership would come from.

The inaugural meeting was to be held on 5th March 1987. 50 hardy souls turned up. With no money in the pot, Paul Pickering gave a talk on "Gardening for Wildlife" and Ron Grabham spoke on "Organic Gardening". The club was up and running with £1.05 in the kitty!

The next meeting in April a speaker was invited, Miss Christine Middleton (now Brain). She spoke on "Barrington Gardens". At the end of the evening with plant sales and teas, minus speaker's fee (£5.00) the kitty stood at £17.89. The monthly meetings continued and at the end of the year club funds totalled £127.00.

The club has enjoyed strong membership, currently 90 members, which enable us to source good speakers to keep interest going. There is usually one full day trip, one half day trip and one evening trip a year, and biannually a weekend away. All self funding.

The membership fee is £10 per year with a free buffet, free wine and free raffle at Christmas.

The club has never subjected its members to lists of rules, points of order, sub-committees, and decision making processes. The committee gets on with the job and delivers. The AGM business is now down to 10 minutes!

The club has developed into one that is efficient, well organised, well supported but most of all FUN.

Les Bayliss

Chairman - Ding Gardening Club



Bishop's Palace Gardens



2016 was a great year for the Bishop's Palace Gardens, we had lots of visitors and the weather was also very good. 2017 has started very mild and it has been another easy winter for working outside.

In 2016 we emptied, split and replanted the Wells border which was a very big job and one that relied on lots of our volunteers to help with. We added lots of new plants to the border including plenty of Philadelphus, Roses like Charles Darwin, de Rescht, King Louis 14th and Munstead Wood, Sanguisorbas and at the back larger plants like Eupatorium 'Bartered Bride', Paulownia (pollarded) and Cercis for their extravagant foliage. The border is contemporary but with a deliberate Victorian twist from the luxuriant planting and the colours particularly different shades of purple and silver.

We are having major problems with crows digging up the croquet lawn for the grubs and struggling to control them. We will apply nematodes again in the spring but they are inactive before April so we are hoping to trial a bird scarer which will be placed high up and play many different bird calls from distress to birds of prey. Along with a more satisfying way of controlling them! we will hopefully get on top of the problem. I imagine because the last two winters have been extremely mild there are more of them (grubs and crows!).

Our major project this year is the winter garden which will have been planted by the time you read this. It is situated on the west side of the South lawn and is designed to draw people from the archway to this side of the garden and provide lots of winter interest. The planting style is rather Gardenesque which we think suits the area and contains small conifers like Abies koreana 'Silberlocke', Pinus sp, Mahonias like 'Winter Sun', Hamamelis, Cornus, Ferns and Chimonanthus to name a few. In the summer Hydrangeas, Fuchsias and Anemones will produce a really colourful show. Volunteer help meant that we were able to prepare the area much more quickly!

We hope that you will visit this year perhaps for the garden festival on June 9th, 10th and 11th where Matthew Biggs, Anne Swithinbank, Alan Power, Jane Moore, Cleeve West and Tamsin Westhorpe will all be speaking.

Have a great gardening year in 2017

James Cross

Head Gardener & President, Wells & District Gardening Club

The Glory of the Garden

Our England is a garden that is full of stately views,
Of borders, beds and shrubberies and lawns and avenues,
With statues on the terraces and peacocks strutting by;
But the Glory of the Garden lies in more than meets the eye.
For where the old thick laurels grow, along the thin red wall,
You'll find the tool- and potting-sheds which are the heart of all
The cold-frames and the hot-houses, the dung-pits and the tanks,
The rollers, carts, and drain-pipes, with the barrows and the planks.

And there you'll see the gardeners, the men and 'prentice boys
Told off to do as they are bid and do it without noise ;
For, except when seeds are planted and we shout to scare the birds,
The Glory of the Garden it abideth not in words.

And some can pot begonias and some can bud a rose,
And some are hardly fit to trust with anything that grows ;
But they can roll and trim the lawns and sift the sand and loam,
For the Glory of the Garden occupieth all who come.

Our England is a garden, and such gardens are not made
By singing:-" Oh, how beautiful," and sitting in the shade
While better men than we go out and start their working lives
At grubbing weeds from gravel-paths with broken dinner-knives.
There's not a pair of legs so thin, there's not a head so thick,
There's not a hand so weak and white, nor yet a heart so sick
But it can find some needful job that's crying to be done,
For the Glory of the Garden glorifieth every one.

Then seek your job with thankfulness and work till further orders,
If it's only netting strawberries or killing slugs on borders;
And when your back stops aching and your hands begin to harden,
You will find yourself a partner In the Glory of the Garden.

Oh, Adam was a gardener, and God who made him sees
That half a proper gardener's work is done upon his knees,
So when your work is finished, you can wash your hands and pray
For the Glory of the Garden that it may not pass away!

And the Glory of the Garden it shall never pass away !

Rudyard Kipling

Submitted by Erl Plomgren

Hellebores Indoors

As I write the hellebores are bursting into bloom and with them the annual challenge to make them last indoors without resorting to complete decapitations floating in a shallow bowl. Here, apparently, is an answer. This solution from Sybil Emberton's 'Garden Foliage for Flower Arrangement'.

Taken step by step it goes as follows:-

1. Cut the blooms
2. Boil the stem ends for 20 seconds.
3. Make a shallow slit with a pointed knife from the top of each stem just below the flower - to the bottom.
4. Immerse them totally in cold water for several hours.
5. Then place in a vase, step back and admire.
6. Give it a try and report back.

Sounds a rare old faff to me but Christopher Lloyd says it works or he did when he was alive.

Pip Harwood



The Continuing Saga of the Fleece.....

Yesterday I was sitting quietly at the bottom of the garden near my tree ferns and Tetrapanax, when a squirrel trotted by with a tennis ball sized wad of sheep fleece in his jaws. He shinned up the Tetrapanax to where I had padded what I thought to be a vulnerable hole in its trunk and ripped off a further chunk of wool, which he dextrously wrapped round his tennis ball, scampered back to ground level and disappeared into the shrubbery. He had ignored the fleece at ground level round the tree ferns, perhaps as being unacceptably wet or dirty. Unlike most gardeners, I really like and admire squirrels for their amazing problem solving skills and general gung-ho attitude to life. I was left wondering if he was using fleece to line a dray somewhere in the garden.....or possibly even knit himself a jumper.

Lyn Spencer-Mills

Optimism – The Gardener’s Best Friend

I reckon we gardeners are a pretty optimistic lot. We do our best to create pleasant and interesting, productive and enjoyable, beautiful and fragrant places and spaces despite all the odds being stacked against us most of the time. There are weeds and weather, bugs and diseases, predators and mistakes. It may be, of course, that I’m just not much good at gardening and I do occasionally ask myself whether I really like it. Take weeding, for example; it’s not so much the actual process of removing the weed – which can be quite victoriously satisfying, particularly if you get all the root out – as the thought that there’s some weeding to be done which can be so disheartening. But then, when a whole patch of ground is weed free, containing only the plants you want/like/have paid good money for, comes the reward of knowing you have made an improvement. The gardener’s optimism is evidenced by enjoying the improvement reward even though the weed-free period will probably be only temporary until the next lot of weeds somehow magic themselves into the same place.

We optimistically do our gardening thing on the basis that the weather will be kind to us both as we do the work and also as we sit back – preferably with a glass of something to hand – to enjoy our surroundings. But no! So often it doesn’t happen like that. There we are, busily cutting the grass or staking the perennials or picking the beans and we feel and hear the first few drops of rain. We may carry on regardless for a while – and very, very occasionally the rain stops – but usually we have to scramble the ever-wetter machinery, tools and equipment into the shed and run for cover ourselves. Then it rains non-stop for the next few days, preventing completion of the interrupted work or preventing the enjoyment of the completed work. We all know rain is absolutely essential but, so much? And yet, we still persist in gardening!

There’s an old apple tree in my garden – I’ve no idea what variety – which in four summers has produced only about four edible apples; they were pretty tart. Most of its apples have been pecked to bits by birds, or pecked just once and then gone mouldy, or have gone mouldy all by themselves, or have just failed to grow and have fallen off. Early on I had a large branch of this apple tree cut back to sound wood as, further along, it had started to die back. Previous inappropriate pruning? Who knows? But now I see that the die-back has spread even further and is starting to track down quite a large section of the trunk. I suppose it won’t be that long before the whole tree dies. I should be rather despondent but I’m not. Firstly, the tree is, unfortunately, situated near my garden’s south boundary (the garden runs more or less due east/west) and so causes quite a bit of unwanted shade from spring to autumn. Secondly, it’s right by the water feature, into which it drops many of its leaves – not to mention its apples) which then cause a most unpleasant and pongy sludge. Thirdly, I didn’t plant it. Fourthly, there are two other healthy, large, old apple

trees in my garden so I'm well catered for, apple-wise. Fifthly, it occurs to me that, even if it dies, I can leave the trunk and the main framework of branches as an ideal support for a couple of light airy clematis which will be much prettier and will cast virtually no shade. Optimism, even in the face of the death of a tree.

We gardeners remain optimistic about winning the battle against bugs and slugs because, after all, we do have a wide range of all sorts of chemicals at our disposal to get rid of the little *****s. But then we feel guilty about upsetting the balance of nature and the potential environmental impact such products might cause. So, instead, we devise innocuous beer traps, strategically placed near the hostas, and we cover our food crops with ultra-fine insect mesh. Early last summer a sizeable sambucus in my garden became absolutely smothered with blackfly and I'm going to admit to having resorted to using an insecticide spray – just the once – and it did the trick. I'm sure the sambucus appreciated it so I was confident and optimistic that I had done the right thing.

Last year I made a bad mistake in the layout of my allotment. It wasn't anything to do with crop rotation, it was more to do with access to the various crops and the amount of space they needed. After four decades of allotmenting I couldn't understand quite why I had got it so wrong, but I had. Oh well, I thought optimistically, I'll not make that mistake again next year and by next year (I continued to speculate) I'll also have a badger-proof enclosure for my sweetcorn – images of a simple electrified fence run from a solar battery passing through my mind's eye!

Mistakes happen in the garden too. We've all planted something in the wrong spot and it suddenly dies. We've all sliced through the main stem of something desirable in an effort to prune it/weed round it/disentangle it from its neighbours. We've all dug up something we didn't mean to. But we carry on gardening with optimism, certain that a plant will recover, that next time or next year everything will be fine and go according to plan.

Well, this early March afternoon is dry and reasonably bright so I must get out in the garden to do some more weeding. I wonder if I'll get it done before the rain, promised by the weather forecast to be "pushing in from the south west", actually arrives. Of course I'll finish it – I'm a gardener. I'm an optimist!

Vee Cockerell

West & Middle Chinnock GC



A Gardener's lot is not a Happy one.

To the tune of A policeman's lot is not a happy one. Useful for a club social evening entertainment, especially if you have folk who can sing.

Echo (ad lib)

When there's mowing and there's sowing to be done
to be done
When there's weeding and there's feeding overdue
overdue
When there's digging and there's raking to be done
to be done
A gardener's lot is not a happy one.
happy one
We've got creeping thistle, curly docks that smother
So there's spraying and there's hoeing to be done
to be done
Taking one consideration with another
A gardener's lot is not a happy one
happy one

Chorus – Oh-----

When there's mowing and there's sowing to done
to be done
A gardener's lot in not a happy one.
happy one
We've got spider mite and whitefly in the greenhouse
In the greenhouse
That are spoiling all our carefully planted seeds
planted seeds
The slugs and snails are eating all our lettuce
And our cabbages are taken o'er by weeds
o'er by weeds
The carrot fly have eaten all our carrot
And there's blackfly that are nibbling at our beans
at our beans
We need some sun to ripen off our shallots
And some nails to fix that garden fence that leans
fence that leans

Somerset Federation of Gardening Clubs

Chorus – Oh-----

When there's mowing and there's sowing to be done
to be done
A gardener's lot is not a happy one.
happy one

But, you should see our pansies, lilies, roses
lilies roses

Our begonias and petunias in the sun
in the sun

Our strawberries and our raspberries ripe for picking
A gardener's lot is SUCH a happy one
happy one

We've got daffodils and crocus in the Springtime
Delphiniums and lupins still to come
still to come

Taking one consideration with another
A gardener's lot is SUCH a happy one
happy one

OH----- OH-----

When there's mowing and there's sowing to be done
to be done
A GARDENERS LOT IS SUCH A HAPPY ONE
HAPPY ONE

Marie Wheatley



An Innovation Which Fell Almost Flat!

A well intentioned suggestion that we publicise the names of gardeners did not meet with much success. One club `phoned me to say they did not have anyone to recommend, Beaminster club mailed in two gardeners and the rest remained silent on the subject. However, my own gardener, who is splendid, did offer her services. Her name is Mrs Anita Stabbins.

The list so far is:

Mrs Anita Stabbins	TA19 0NT	01460 54624	£12 per hour including use of her lawn mower.
Sam Blatch,	BA21 5FS,	07534 689696	£13.00 per hour
Zoe Tribe	DT8 3PA	01308 862051	£15.00 per hour

Lyn

Register of Speakers & Judges 2017

Change of address :

p.28 Barry Reid

11 Ladymead Road , Taunton TA2 7RP

01823 336185

07748 124185

Please delete :

p.25 Paul Newman of East Lydford who is unable to fulfil commitments

Thirty

The number 30 may or may not have any particular significance apart for a possible Lottery winner but Ding Gardening Club have just jovially celebrated their 30th Anniversary.

Our President, Lyn Spencer-Mills has been presented with a sundial for 30 consecutive years opening her garden, Hooper's Holding for the National Gardens Scheme.

So, congratulations to both.



Website News

www.somersetfederationofgardeningclubs.org.uk



Once again, have a look at the Federation website for it has news of upcoming events, documents that you may find useful, details of our insurance policies, photos of members gardens and a whole lot more. Well worth a visit, or two or even more.....

Over the last year the website was visited 4,776 times with 13,204 pages viewed. The statistics we get are from Google Analytics and DO NOT show individuals information. We only get the total numbers and not individual figures.

We keep saying this and we do mean it - 'The Website is Yours'. Please use it and if you want anything published then let us know and we will do our best. If you have an event you would like broadcast to a wide audience then let us know and if you can let us have a poster then that would be great.

If you mislay your copy of the latest Newsletter or the Diary of Events then they will be there on the website for you.

Word articles can be sent in using most formats including Microsoft Word, Apple Pages, PDF, Open Office etc. but PLEASE do not submit articles for publication in HTML format.

All items for publication on the website should be sent to:

webmaster@somersetfederationofgardeningclubs.org.uk

**Somerset Federation of
Gardening Clubs
Annual General Meeting
7pm - 23 May 2017**

**West Coker Commemoration Hall,
High Street, West Coker,
Yeovil BA22 9AL**



Ramp for disabled.
Refreshments on arrival.
6.15pm Doors open

7pm AGM

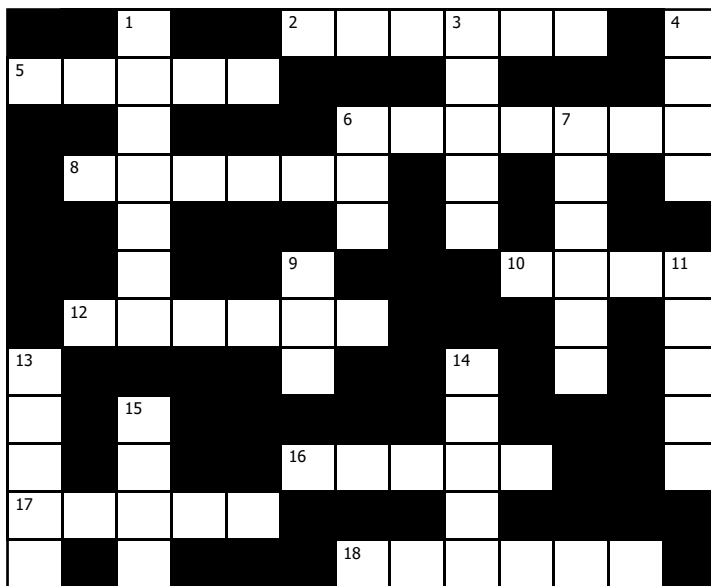
7.45pm Martin Young of
Nectar Plants on
Echinacea & Rudbeckia

8.30pm Light supper

Plants for sale
Raffle

www.somersetfederationofgardeningclubs.org.uk

Gardening Crossword



Submitted by John Dunster

Across

- 2. Nice place with obvious danger
- 5. Flocks we're told can be growing
- 6. Fir Cone source
- 8. To pot a new plant
- 10. Flag girl a bit of an eye-ful
- 12. Areplite to us a flower to you
- 16. Tree or horse out west
- 17. A vegetable vessel
- 18. To the editor both may have growing possibilities

Down

- 1. For a novice to tangle tape is a bit of this
- 3. Thick scattering of seed around the end of the garden
- 4. It grows right in a marshy area
- 6. See an outside lettuce
- 7. Endlessly she makes bloomers all over the place
- 9. Something cracked up about a bit of a stunt
- 11. Photograph a new branch
- 13. Missiles damaging to the foliage
- 14. Aspidistra on the snooker table
- 15. Going out of turn Meg can make a bloomer

Answers, if required, will be published on the Federation website in May

Gardening Crossword - Autumn 2016 Answers

Across: 1. Allotment 3. Tomato 5. Butterfly 6. Raining 10. Propagating
12. Landscape 13. Mulch 14. Winter 15. Slugs

Down: 2. Pollination 4. Perennial 7. Asparagus 8. Vegetable 9. Green stuff
11. Deals in stolen goods



He Digs, He Dug, He has Dug



Say not Eve needed Adam's pardon
For their eviction from the Garden;
I only hope some power divine
Gets round to ousting me from mine.

On bended knee, perspiring clammy,
I scrape the soil to feed my family,
Untaught, unteachable, undramatic,
A figure sorry and sciatic.

Although I've done the best I could,
Nothing comes up the way it should.
They're making playshoes of my celery,
It's rubbery, and purple-yellery,

My beets have botts, my kale has hives,
There's something crawly in my chives,
And jeering insects think it cute
To swallow my spray and spit out my fruit.

My garden will never make me famous,
I'm a horticultural ignoramus,
I can't tell a stringbean from a soybeen,
Or even a girl bean from a boy bean

Unknown



If a gardener gardens a gardener's garden, does the gardener who gardens the gardener's garden, garden the gardener's garden the way he wants it gardened?

Final Cuttings

The continuing success of the Federation, and it is a success, is dependant upon a vibrant and active membership. At the base of this organization is the need to share and pool information and possible resources. Your Committee does need to hear from you. Please keep the flow of information coming - anything which you may think might benefit another member club; e.g. a new speaker, a new judge, a successful outing and so on. Above all, please let us have the contact names for your club and whether you wish to receive most of the Federation communications by e-mail or post. Again if you think we can do something for you, let us know.

Since the last Newsletter we have welcomed Mid-Somerset Show Arts, Craft & Horticulture and Shaw & Whitley Gardening Club to our membership. We wish them well.

Enclosed you will find the Calendar of events which this year has received much better support - so well done to all those virtuous clubs who remembered to fill in the form. After all, you did vote or its continuance at the last AGM! You will also be receiving the NGS Somerset booklet by post.

So, in order to keep this Federation working like a well-oiled machine as the US President claimed of his operations, keep in touch. You do not all have Internet access but you can still give any of the committee a ring or send us a postcard. I like postcards. Speaking of the U.S., they have a short name for their flag: Tarzan. The long name is: Tarzan Stripes.

Wishing you all a Happy Easter and a proper seasonal Spring and Summer with the hope to see as many of you as possible at the AGM in West Coker.

Two finishing thoughts:

From Punch magazine 1945:

An American, asked what memory of England he would take back with him, answered, "The magical way in which Spring merges into Autumnn."

And now here is the weather forecast:

SRING & SUMMER

If the last eighteen Days of February and ten days of March be for the most part rainy, then the Spring & Summer Quarters are likely to be so too : and I never knew a great Drought but it entered in that season.

The Shepherd of Banbury's Rules

John Claridge 1670

Pip Harwood

