

SNAPE GARDENING CLUB - NEWS



ISSUE NO 21 | FEBRUARY 2024 |

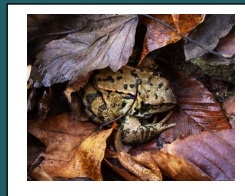
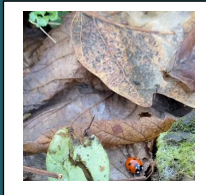
It's good to be back after our break.....but it feels like the year has blown and poured its way in, with storms and so much rain! Days in the garden have been almost impossible but now is the perfect time to put your plan together for the months to come.....so get a cuppa, put your feet up and let your gardening thoughts flow and there are jobs to do in the windows of fine weather! There's lots of news and ideas in this months issue and as early signs of Spring appear.....it won't be long before the longer, warmer and sunny days return.....
happy reading everyone x

WHAT'S INSIDE THIS MONTHS ISSUE.....

- *Ideas for your garden
- *Things to do
- *Places to visit

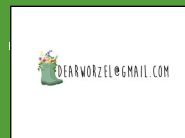
PLUS SO MUCH MORE...

THE BIG CLEAN UP.....With the Winter storms having given the gardens a battering, it's so tempting to get in there and have a big tidy up. But.....it isn't just us humans that have batted down the hatches and the insects and small mammals have needed a safe haven just as much as us! So keep your eyes peeled and try to not disturb them, if the February weather turns cold, as it should, then garden "snuggle safe spots" are necessary!



Bumblebees can hibernate in the loose soil of containerised plants!

If you do disturb something in hibernation.....gently cover it over with the material it was sleeping in. Cover it loosely so it is easily able to "dig" its way out when the time comes for it to wake up!



Send us a photo, recommend a place to visit or have a query we'll do our best to help.....

GIVE IT A TRY –

dearworzel@gmail.com

Dreaming of sunny days.....thinking of Summer Fruits.....It's time to plant bare root raspberry canes

Soak the roots well before you plant them, ensuring that the topmost roots are no deeper than 5cm below the soil surface. Make sure their roots remain undisturbed as they become established. Prepare the ground well – they do not like poor soil, so dig in plenty of well-rotted manure.



Plant at 40cm intervals, with rows about 1.75m apart. Plant at a depth of about 6cm, spreading the roots out. Prune the stem back to 25cm. Most importantly, label your rows. As the autumn and spring varieties need to be pruned totally differently you need to remember which is which!





Do you know the answer?

- a) Which is the oldest RHS garden?
- b) On which continent did broccoli originate?
- c) Which plant takes its name from the Italian phrase for beautiful woman?

(answers on the next page)

Garden Poem of the Day

He knows No Winter.....by Stuart Hagar

He knows no Winter, he who loves the soil,
 For, stormy days, when he is free from toil,
 He plans his Summer crops, selects his seeds
 From bright-paged catalogues for garden needs.
 When looking out upon frost-silvered
 fields, He
 visualizes Autumn's golden yields;
 He sees in snow and sleet and icy rain
 Precious moisture for his early grain;
 He hears Spring-heralds in the storm's turmoil

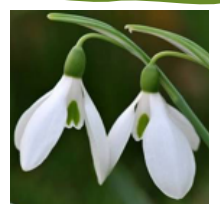
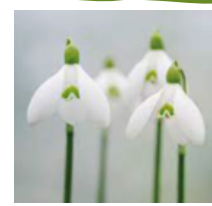


It may be too early for a tiptoe through the tulips.....BUT.....it's the perfect time for a "STROLL IN THE SNOWDROPS"



February is a glorious month to see the Winter stalwarts of the snowdrop. These hardy, clump forming perennials are fully equipped to withstand the tough challenges of the cold, wet months.....AND the wonderful thing is that they are a sign that Spring is on its way!!

So, if you want a few hours of fresh air then check out our "snowdrop walk" guides.....some have refreshments!



Need a reminder....check out the Feb 2023 newsletter edition on the Snape website for a snowdrop info refresh!

- 2nd Feb 10-4pm at Kiplin Hall, near Scorton DL10 6AT - £13 admission fee to the gardens and the tea room will be open.
- 4th Feb 11-3pm at Goldsborough Hall, Knaresborough HG5 8NR - £7.50 adult admission fee (This is the specific "snowdrop day" where the head gardener will be speaking....the snowdrops can be viewed throughout the month) Refreshments are available.
- 26th Feb 1pm-5pm at Hornby Castle, Bedale DL8 1JN - £5 admission with refreshments at St. Mary's Church.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE EVENT AT Primrose Bank, York YO41 5LH 7TH -10TH FEB IS CANCELLED DUE TO FLOODING

BIRD CARE IN THE GARDEN.....

February is the time where the male birds are starting to mark out their territory for the coming mating season. So, there are usually many feathered visitors at our feeders. The milder, wetter weather can cause the birds some issues, but with a bit of attention from us can be avoided.....hanging feeders containing wet and sodden nuts etc can go mouldy quickly, so consider putting out less and refiling the feeders more frequently. Wild food sources are at a minimum so the birds need the meals that we provide for them.

NOW is the time to trim virginia creeper and ivy as the birds may choose to move in & the opportunity will be missed!

Don't be tempted to turn the compost heap as hibernating frogs and other small mammals could be tucked up!

Clean out last years nesting boxes cleaning with boiling water. Put up a new one ideally in a north-east facing position.



ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP AND THE YEAR AHEAD!!



The annual membership is now due.....it remains at £10 for the period up-to the 31st December 2024.

The planned meetings for this year will give you a wide variety of topics and there are new venues for day trips. The monthly newsletter and the 10% discounts at local nurseries are still included. *(please see note re: discounts)*

The January talk with Martin & Gill Fish on "Happy Healthy Houseplants" was very well attended and it was certainly an inspiration to give more houseplants a home and not be daunted by their needs! Our orchid has been given the chop so fingers crossed!

So, hopefully this years calendar will provide you with lots to look forward too and a huge thank you to David for all his hard work in getting us such a variety of speakers and planning the trips away.

NURSERY

DISCOUNTS

10% discount at Thorp Perrow Homes & Gardens included up-to 31.12.24

10% discount at Braithwaites included up-to 1.9.24 - Braithwaites will then be introducing their own loyalty scheme

Please ensure to present your current membership card to avoid disappointment!

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

WEDNESDAY FEB 21ST - David Matthewman talks about his life's work with sweetpeas

WEDNESDAY MARCH 20TH - Ben Preston visits to discuss "York Gate Through The Seasons"

WEDNESDAY APRIL 17TH - Robin Davis from Firby Hall returns to talk about "Planting The New Perennial Way"

WEDNESDAY MAY 15TH - Joe Lofthouse will provide insight into the bain of the gardeners life....."Pests And Diseases"

Trip to York Gate

Trip to Breezy Knees

Social event with open gardens

Trip to Castle Bolton

Trip to Sion Hill Hall

February Jobs To Be Getting On With.....

Cut down ornamental grasses left standing over Winter

Check tree-ties strong winds can rock young trees & loosen support ties

Look out for weed seedlings

Start indoor sowing of tomato seeds into small pots or trays

Plant Summer bulbs such as lilies in pots

Sow hardy annuals undercover to plant out in the Spring

Finish pruning apples and pears

Re-train climbing roses that have fallen from their supports

Deadhead Winter pansies to prolong flowering

Do you know the answer? a) RHS Wisley b) Europe c) Belladonna

THE GREAT POTATO PUZZLE.....

I'm sure you have all heard various discussions about first earlies, main crop and chitting.....these make the job of growing the mainstay of the potato sound very complicated and off putting.....so lets write the facts easily.....bust the mystery.....and get you all with your own spuds on the dinner table!

The potato terms come from how long they take to produce a crop.....

FIRST EARLIES are ready from June-July

SECOND EARLIES are ready from July-August

EARLY MAINCROPS are ready from August

MAINCROP are ready from September onwards

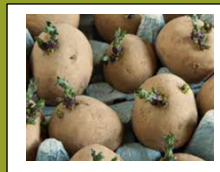
To have a continuous supply all year round, you need to grow all 4 groups.

Now is the time to start with the "first earlies". Because the ground is cold and wet this group are planted using chitted seed potatoes.

Seed potatoes are raised to be disease and virus free.....they are then chitted before planting. "Chit" is a 17th century word that means "a shoot"..... So, a chitted seed potato already has shoots when it's planted giving them a head start and giving you a "first early" crop.....give it a go!

HOW TO DO IT.....

1.



Stand the tuber in a cool, bright, frost-free place. Eyes/buds upwards for them to sprout.

2.

Your chitted seed potatoes will be ready for planting in about 4-6 weeks, when the shoots are around 2cm in length. Aim to plant from early to mid-spring, as soon as the soil has warmed up to about 6°C. The longer you can give your potatoes to grow, the higher the yields will be. Potatoes like rich, deep soils in open sites but aren't terribly fussy about soil types.

3.

Plant potatoes 10-15cms deep, either in a trench or individual holes or a potato bag if space is short! First earlies need about 30cms between tubers.

4.

Once the foliage grows to around 10cms, you need to "earth-up" which means drawing the earth around the leaves.....cover all but the top leaves. Continue to do this as they grow.

5.

Your potatoes are ready a few weeks after the first flowering and the foliage goes yellow.

When you look out of the window and look at the Winter gardenscape.....are you missing a burst of colour?

The garden can look bland in parts with only soil and green to be the mainstays.....but that doesn't have to be the case.

Have a look at a selection of Winter plants that will burst into any space with a splash of colour and provide structural interest.....

WINTER GARDEN INTEREST



Winter flowering Honeysuckles - woody twiggly stems with white or cream flowers



Wintersweet - Upright strong scented shrub



Chinese Witch Hazel - lovely scent with Autumn colour



Cornus with its stunning varieties of coloured stems

