



June 2025

# Newsletter

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**Dear Members,**

Welcome to our June Newsletter

Our Annual Show on 19<sup>th</sup> July is fast approaching. With all this sunshine everything should be growing really well and hopefully you have all decided which show classes you will be entering.

There is no charge to enter but please ensure you have completed and submitted the show entry form as soon as possible to our Show Secretary, Ann Fenton at [annfenton@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:annfenton@hotmail.co.uk) or via text message on 07771 938096, including a photograph of the entry form. You may also post your entry to Ann at The Barn, 5 Haseley Court, Birmingham Road Haseley CV35 7HG. Alternatively drop it off at Doug Timmis', 19 station Road, Balsall Common CV7 7FN.

The full show schedule and submission form can be downloaded from the Balsall & District Horticultural Society website. *Last date for submission is Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> July 2025.*

In anticipation we would like to express a huge thank you to all members who volunteered to help/bake on the day. Your support is invaluable – it could not happen without you.

Our next meeting is on Thursday, 26<sup>th</sup> June at 7:30 pm when Nigel Briggs will be talking to us about garden photography - ears should be pricked for top tips, particularly if you are entering photographs at the Annual Show (Sections F66, 67 & 68), as Nigel will be judging these classes.

Finally, We're sure many of you attended the Gardeners World Live show at the NEC as did Sharon, with the pair of tickets she won in a recent BDHS meeting raffle! And we're sure you'd agree with her that it was a fabulous day out, showcasing the amazing achievements of our brilliant specialist Growers.



Sharon and Michelle

## Summer Garden Visit

*By Ann Fenton*

We had a glorious day for our trip to Bodenheim Arboretum and John's Garden at Ashwood Nurseries on 4<sup>th</sup> June and had guided tours at each which really brought the gardens and their stories to life for us.

At Bodenheim we were shown around by James who has continued the work started by his father in 1973. We didn't have time to explore the full 170 acres (!) but we did get to see how the woodland has developed from its days as farmers fields and the work that has gone on to bring it to the stage where it now contains swathes of mature woodland mixed in with specimen trees and shrubs – over 3000 species in total. It is the home to some important collections such as Acers, North American Oaks and Alders, and has been awarded English Heritage status twice. It was amazing to hear James talk about planning with the next 200 years in mind, puts our own "garden planning" into perspective!. We had a gentle walk around the edge of one of the pools and followed a few of the many paths through the woodland to enjoy being immersed in the quiet energy of the trees. We even had time to say hello to the pigs who were resting up in the barns on the farm, before we took our own rest over tea and sandwiches by the restaurant.

Then it was back to the coach for our short drive to John's Garden. Here we were shown around by Nigel Hope (Head Gardener) who shared with us how the garden has developed from its early days and took the time to answer all of our questions.

It was easy to see why the garden is regarded as one of the finest private gardens in the UK, there are magnificent collections of trees, shrubs, herbaceous perennials and conifers all set in beautifully maintained landscaped grounds. These included a pool and rock garden planted with alpiners and bulbs, a rare tufa garden and a dramatic fern stupery. The terrace, ruin garden and Christopher Lloyd border contained beautiful seasonal planting and the wildlife garden was home to some happy birds and insects. With all this inspiration in our heads, it won't come as a surprise to know that we spent quite a bit of time in the Nursery shop and many of the plants have found new homes in the gardens of our members.

If you didn't get the chance to join us on the trip and would like to see John's garden, it is open every Saturday in June, July and August from 10 am to 4pm. Admission is £8



## Recipe of the Month

*Submitted by Sharon Nelson & Michelle Sutcliffe*

### **Easy Strawberry Ice-cream**

Use sweet strawberries whilst they're in season to make this fabulous seasonal dessert and perhaps enjoy during Wimbledon if watching the tennis at home.

*Serves 8, prep 10 minutes, cook 20 minutes + chilling and freezing*

#### Ingredients

400g strawberries, stalks removed

1-2 tsp lemon juice

600ml double cream

300ml whole milk

50g white caster sugar

5 egg yolks

2 tsp vanilla extract

#### Method

##### Step 1

Put the strawberries in a food processor or blender. Whizz to a purée, then add the lemon juice to taste – if the strawberries are quite tart you'll only need a little.

##### Step 2

Warm the cream and milk in a pan until just steaming, not boiling. Whisk the sugar and egg yolks in a bowl for a minute or two until pale yellow. Slowly pour the hot cream mixture into the eggs, whisking as you do. Once fully incorporated, strain through a sieve back into the pan. Gently cook over a low-medium heat until it thickens slightly – it should coat the back of your spoon and leave a channel if you run your finger through it (this will happen at about 82-85C). Be careful not to overcook it as the eggs will scramble. Transfer to a bowl. Cover and cool for 10 mins, then chill for 1 hr.

##### Step 3

Stir the strawberry purée and vanilla through the cold custard. Taste to see if it needs a little more lemon or vanilla.

##### Step 4

Freeze the ice cream in an ice cream maker, or container in the freezer. If you don't have an ice cream maker, freeze for 4 hrs, whisking vigorously or blending in a food processor every hour to remove any ice crystals.

This ice-cream will keep in the freezer for up to two months.





## Monthly Flower Spike and Pot Plant Competition

Points are awarded for first, second and third positions (First – 5 points, Second – 3 points and Third – 2 points).

Prizes are awarded for the highest aggregate points at the end of the competition period (March to February). Multiple entries are allowed, though only one award will be made per entrant.

### Pot Plant



1<sup>st</sup> Graptopetalum  
Alison Watson



2<sup>nd</sup> Pelargonium  
Edward Cotterrell

### Flower Spike



1<sup>st</sup> Clematis  
Alison Watson



2<sup>nd</sup> Peony  
Sue Edwards



3<sup>rd</sup> Rose  
Wendy Jenkinson

The competition was judged by our guest speaker, Duncan Coombs , who had a fantastic selection to choose from. There are only 2 awards made in the pot plant section this month as, although multiple entries are allowed, only one prize can be won in each section. Thank you to everyone who entered, the photos of the winners are also on our website.

We had a fabulous display at our May meeting and now that our gardens are full of summer colour, we are looking forward to seeing what you bring to share with us at our June meeting.

## NOTICE BOARD

### BDHS Meetings:

#### 2025 Monthly Meeting Dates

*7:30pm Tea & Coffee. Please remember to bring a mug with you if possible, it helps the environment and the clearing up after the meeting. The meeting starts at 8pm*

*Guests are welcome - there is a small charge of £3 for entry which includes refreshments.*

26 <sup>th</sup> June	Nigel Briggs	Garden Photography
25 <sup>th</sup> Sept.	Val Bourne	A year at Spring Cottage
30 <sup>th</sup> October	Dawn Fisher (Lincolnshire Pond Plants)	Pond Plants

#### Other BDHS dates:

19 <sup>th</sup> July	76 <sup>th</sup> Annual Show – St Peter's Hall, Holly Lane, Balsall Common (public entry from 2pm to 4pm). Plants, raffle tickets and home-made cake/refreshments on sale.
31 <sup>st</sup> July	Summer Social – from 6:30pm: The Garden, Oldwych Farmhouse, Oldwych Lane East, Fen End. Please remember to bring your own chair.
27 <sup>th</sup> Nov	AGM & Buffet – 7:30pm. Village Hall, Balsall Common

*Further events/details will be announced once they are finalised*

#### Other Dates for your diary:

From 6 <sup>th</sup> April	Temple Balsall Sunday Teas 2:30pm - 4:30pm. Recurs the 1st Sunday in the month from April – September.
From 30 <sup>th</sup> March	Wren Hall Sunday teas served between 2pm and 5pm. Funds are raised for a different charity each week. Last Sunday Tea for 2025 is Sunday 26 <sup>th</sup> October.
21 <sup>st</sup> , 22 <sup>nd</sup> , 27 <sup>th</sup> , 28 <sup>th</sup> , 29 <sup>th</sup> June	1pm to 5pm - Warwickshire Open Studios-John Beaman Retrospective at The Oldwych Gallery, Oldwych House Farm, Oldwych Lane East, Fen End CV8 1NR
28 <sup>th</sup> June	10.30am to 12.30pm Temple Balsall Coffee Morning at The Old Hall, Temple Balsall
29 <sup>th</sup> June	11am to 6pm. Berkswell Open Gardens. Entry fee £7 (Children Free)
4 <sup>th</sup> to 6 <sup>th</sup> July	1pm to 5pm - Warwickshire Open Studios-John Beaman Retrospective at The Oldwych Gallery, Oldwych House Farm, Oldwych Lane East, Fen End CV8 1NR
6 <sup>th</sup> July	11am to 6pm Meriden Open Gardens. Entry fee £6 (Children Free)

## Some jobs for the next few weeks...

Along with a little lawn maintenance and weeding here are a few more tasks you may wish to undertake through late June/July.

- Deadhead cosmos and roses to encourage flowering
- Thin out carrots
- Finish picking any asparagus
- Stake flowering perennials
- Water & feed vegetables, especially any grown in pots
- Take soft wood cuttings of herbs and shrubs
- Clip fast growing and evergreen hedges as required, taking care not to disturb any birds that have built a second nest.
- Inspect indoor plants for red spider mite, whitefly and thrips
- Sow spring flowers such as wallflowers and violas for next year
- Trim back summer flowering plants to encourage second growth (The Chelsea Chop).
- Prune late-spring or early-summer shrubs after flowering, such as weigela and philadelphus, thinning out the older stems
- Give wisteria its summer prune, cutting all the long sideshoots back to 20cm, to promote flowering next spring
- Take cuttings from pinks and carnations, selecting non-flowering shoots, which should root readily
- Fill any gaps in borders with pots of tall bulbs, such as fragrant lilies, to add instant colour
- Rejuvenate chives by cutting the clump down to the base, for a fresh crop of new leaves in just a few weeks
- Increase greenhouse shading and ventilation to keep temperatures down on hot days, damp down the floor when you can

Happy gardening and enjoy the sun whilst it shines.

