



Newsletter

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Dear Members,

Welcome to our March Newsletter and 2026.

It was lovely to see so many of you at the February meeting when we hosted Pip Smith for his fabulous talk on the life of a garden designer. We are sure you will agree that his talk was fascinating, interesting and most informative. Next month we look forward to welcoming Liam Beddall from David Austin Roses. Liam will be judging the Narcissus Falconet bulbs on the 26th with a prize of a £10 gift voucher to the best entry. There will be no pot plant and flower spike competition in March.

A little reminder to please pot up as many plants as you can to bring along to the plant sale on Saturday 9th May at the front of village hall. Labels will be provided at the meeting in March. Also a reminder that the Annual Supper is on 19th March when we welcome those of you attending to a sociable and fun evening with a quiz and prizes.

Tickets are still available for the gardens trip on 14th June. Please contact Helen Jones if you wish to book a ticket & seat on the coach.

We are expecting to have the plug plants (Begonias and Pelargoniums) available for our meeting on 26th March, for you to grow on for submission at the Annual Flower Show Competition on the 18th July.

We have received a request from one of our members for help pruning fruit trees. Please contact Brian Buzzard in Meriden via suebuzzard@outlook.com if you can help or know of someone who can – experts in pruning only please.

We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at the next meeting on 26th March from 7.30pm where we will have teas, coffees, biscuits and homemade cake available for you to enjoy before you settle into your seats for our guest speaker.

We hope you enjoy reading our newsletter and are sure you will be in your gardens more now the sun is breaking through and the weather is a little warmer with so much to attend to.

Sharon & Michelle

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). This monthly competition is designed to recognise the efforts of our members having grown their own plants for submission. Judging is by our guest speaker on the evening.

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 Plants



1st Jane Brennan
Iris



2nd Sue Edwards
Hepaticas



3rd Helen Goodwin
Cyclamen

Flower Spikes



1st Helen Goodwin
Daffodil



2nd Mark Gregory
Iris



3rd Alison Watson
Daffodil

The competition was judged by our guest speaker, Pip Smith, who had a large selection to choose from. Photos of the winning entries are also be published on our website.

NOTICE BOARD

2026 B&DHS Meetings:

Monthly Meeting Dates (Thursdays at 8pm unless otherwise stated)

Doors open from 7:30pm with tea, coffee, cakes and biscuits free of charge. Please remember to bring a mug with you if possible, it helps the environment and the clearing up after the meeting. The meetings start promptly at 8pm

Guests are welcome - there is a small charge of £3 for entry (including refreshments).

- March 26th Liam Beddall, David Austin Roses
- April 30th Classy Plants for Classy People – Josh Egan
- May 28th Vintage Garden Tools – Carol and John Matthews
- June 25th Sweet Peas – Phillips Cooper
- July 30th Summer Social Evening
- September 24th Plants for the Late Garden – Jack Wildgoss
- October 29th The Garden Chemist – Dr Alison Foster
- November 26th Annual General Meeting – 7.30pm start.

Other BDHS dates:

Thursday 19th March - Annual Supper - Village Hall Balsall Common (Ticketed event £20 per person)

- This will be a 2 course cold supper, served from a buffet. It will include Salmon, Ham, Coronation Chicken a selection of salads and a choice of deserts. Coffee, wine and soft drinks will be available throughout the evening. After the supper we will be having a prize quiz.

Saturday 9th May – Plant Sale – Balsall Common Village Hall (outside)

- Our very successful annual plant sale – please drop plants on the morning of the sale - labelled

Sunday 14th June - Annual Garden Trip - Dorothy Clive Garden and Hodnet Hall Garden, Shropshire.

- Tickets are £35.00 per person and limited to coach capacity. Departure at 8.30am from Co-Op car park Balsall Common. Additional £2.50 pp charge for guided tour at Dorothy Clive Garden only.

Saturday 18th July from 8.30am MEMBERS' FLOWER SHOW - St Peter's Church Hall, Balsall Common

- More details will follow over the next months. We need as many entrants as possible to ensure a successful show and future of our Society.

Other Dates for your diary:

Wednesday 11th March	Shrewley & District Garden Society @ Shrewley Village Hall, 75 Shrewley Common, Shrewley, Warwickshire, CV35 7AN from 19:00-21:00. Speaker Phillip Corral, Head Gardener at Kenilworth Castle & Elizabethan Knot Garden. Payment of £8 on door.
Saturday 14 th March	Save the Children Charity Spring Fayre, St Francis of Assisi Parish Centre, 110 Warwick Road, Kenilworth CV8 1HL. Free admission and Parking.
Friday 20 th March	Shrewley & District Garden Society @ Rowington Village Hall, Rowington, Warwickshire CV35 7DB from 19:30. Spring Flower Show, Shrewley & District Garden Society. Class of many types of spring flowers, daffodils, narcissus, polyanthus. Buffet, tombola, prizes, tea, coffee. Payment of £10 on door.
Saturday 21 st March	11:00 to 16:00 Solihull and District Orchid Society Open Spring Show. Bentley Heath Community Centre, Widney Road, Solihull B93 9BQ Solihull & District Orchid Society Open Spring Show - britishorchidcouncil.org.uk
Saturday 21 st March	NAPS Midland and West -Auricula & Primula Society Annual Show, from 14:30 @ Arden School, Knowle B93 0EP Flower Show Dates N.A.P.S. Auricula & Primula Society
Sunday 7 th June	Styvechale Open Gardens - Styvechale Gardens, Baginton Road, Coventry, West Midlands, CV3 5DE from 12:00 to 18:00 Find a Garden National Garden Scheme

NOTICE BOARD

2026 Plant Hunters Fairs visit the website at: www.planthuntersfairs.co.uk

If you want more information about a particular plant fair, please contact janet@planthuntersfairs.co.uk

Sun 15 March	Thoresby Park, Newark NG22 9EP 10am-4pm Plant Fair and Country Park Free Entry (Normal Parking Charges Apply)
Sun 22 March	Arley Hall and Gardens, Northwich CW9 6NA 10am-4pm Gardens and Fair £5.00
Sat 28 March	Bodenham Arboretum, Kidderminster DY11 5TB 10am-4pm Plant Fair Free Entry
Sun 29 March	Sugnal Walled Garden, Eccleshall ST21 6NF 10am-4pm Gardens and Fair £1.00
Fri 3 April	Whittington Castle, Oswestry SY11 4DF 10am-4pm Plant Fair and Castle Grounds Free Entry (Normal Parking Charges Apply)
Sun - Mon 5 - 6 April	Dorothy Clive Garden, Market Drayton TF9 4EU 10am-5pm Gardens and Fair £5.00
Sun 12 April	Middleton Hall, Tamworth B78 2AE 9am-4pm Gardens and Fair £4.00 TICKETED *
Sat - Sun 18 - 19 April	Weston Park, Shifnal TF11 8LE 10am-4pm Gardens and Fair Special Price for Advance Ticket Purchase: £5.00 TICKETED
Sun 26 April	Cholmondeley Castle Gardens, Malpas SY14 8ET 10am-5pm Gardens and Fair £5.00
Sun 3 May	1620s House, Donington Le Heath LE67 2FW 10am-4pm Gardens and Fair £2.00 TICKETED
Mon 4 May	Chasewater Country Park, Brownhills WS8 7NL 10am-3pm Country Park and Fair Free Entry (Normal Parking Charges Apply)
Sun 10 May	Capesthorpe Hall, Macclesfield SK11 9JY 10am-4pm Gardens and Fair £4.00
Sun 17 May	Southwell Minster, NG25 0HD 11am-4pm Plant Fair £2.00
Mon 25 May	Arley Arboretum, Upper Arley Worcs DY12 1SQ 10am-4pm Plant Fair Free Entry
Sun 31 May	Norton Priory, Runcorn WA7 1SX 10am-4pm Plant Fair £1.00
Sat - Sun 6 - 7 June	Hodnet Hall Gardens, Market Drayton TF9 3NN 10am-5pm Gardens and Fair £6.00
Sun 21 June	Middleton Hall, Tamworth B78 2AE 9am-4pm Gardens and Fair £4.00 TICKETED *
Sun 28 June	Whittington Castle, Oswestry SY11 4DF 10am-4pm Plant Fair and Castle Grounds Free Entry (Normal Parking Charges Apply)
Sun 5 July	Thoresby Park, Newark NG22 9EP 10am-4pm Plant Fair and Country Park Free Entry (Normal Parking Charges Apply)
Sun 19 July	Chasewater Country Park, Brownhills WS8 7NL 10am-3pm Country Park and Fair Free Entry (Normal Parking Charges Apply)
Wed 22 July	Cholmondeley Castle Gardens, Malpas SY14 8ET 10am-5pm Gardens and Fair £5.00
Sun 26 July	1620s House, Donington Le Heath LE67 2FW 10am-4pm Gardens and Fair £2.00 TICKETED
Sun 2 August	Southwell Minster, NG25 0HD 11am-4pm Plant Fair £2.00
Sun 9 August	Capesthorpe Hall, Macclesfield SK11 9JY 10am-4pm Gardens and Fair £4.00
Sun 16 August	Middleton Hall*, Tamworth B78 2AE 9am-4pm Gardens and Fair £4.00 TICKETED
Sun - Mon 30 - 31 August	Dorothy Clive Garden, Market Drayton TF9 4EU 10am-5pm Gardens and Fair £5.00
Sat 5 September	Bodenham Arboretum, Kidderminster DY11 5TB 10am-4pm Plant Fair Free Entry
Sun 13 September	Weston Park, Shifnal TF11 8LE 10am-4pm Gardens and Fair Special Price for Advance Ticket Purchase: £5.00 TICKETED
Sun 20 September	Arley Hall and Gardens, Northwich CW9 6NA 10am-4pm Gardens and Fair £5.00

*Middleton Hall is not suitable for coaches

Jobs in the Garden for March

Around the middle of March, the weather should become more spring like with more warm, sunny days.

Now you can make a real start on your vegetable and flower gardens.

Here are just a few early spring tasks to get you back into the swing:

- Sprinkle diatomaceous earth around tender shoots to keep the slugs away.
- Get your pond up and running for spring and begin feeding your fish.
- If your grass needs mowing, get started before it gets out of hand.
- Add compost to your containers as a top-dressing.
- Plant your potatoes, shallots, onions and garlic.
- Plant over-wintered bulbs and tubers.
- Prune roses, dogwood and willow.
- Thin overgrown perennial plants.
- Begin early weeding.
- Feed the birds
- Check houseplants and feed if necessary



If any members would like to make contributions to the monthly newsletter please get in touch with the editors as we would love to hear from you. Please email to either sharonmarie1406@btinternet.com or michelle@sutreyfit.co.uk before the end of the month previous to publication.

Members monthly prize Quiz

To win a copy of the RHS magazine please submit your answers to the quiz below to Sharon Nelson, Editor - sharonmarie1406@btinternet.com First past the post to be announced at the next meeting.

1. Which flower's name comes from the Ancient Greek word for star?
2. What common name was *dianthus barbatus* given to honour the Duke of Cumberland's victory at the Battle of Culloden? And, in contrast, what name do the Scots sometimes call the weed noxious ragwort also in memory of the infamous Duke? (Two answers required)
3. Which plant, widespread in Britain, if touched causes a serious chemical reaction which makes skin hypersensitive to ultraviolet light?
4. What is the common name for *salix babylonica*?
5. Which flower is also the goddess of the rainbow in Greek Mythology?
6. Most species of eucalyptus are native to which country?
7. True or false. Ericaceous plants like acid soil?
8. Who designed the *Blue Peter* Garden in 1974?
9. The Avenue of the Baobabs is a group of famous trees in which African country?
10. Which garden in the Cotswolds is notable for its miles of sculptured hedges?
11. True or false. Tulips were once so valuable in Holland that their bulbs were worth more than gold?
12. Which king created the Hanging Gardens of Babylon?