

Chairmans Chat

At last summer has arrived and the garden is strutting its stuff. The reward for all the preparation. I hope you are all enjoying your own gardens as much. Some 35 of us booked to go to Chinthurst Lodge on 19th June for a wonderful afternoon



strolling through a beautiful garden and having relaxing chats with friends over delicious tea and cake. And who could resist buying something from the plant table that had caught our eye in the garden. Thank you to Catherine for sourcing this for us and booking and liaising with the owners, Mr and Mrs Goodridge.



It was a great choice. I have included a few of the pictures taken by Cath and Jane, your membership secretary.



There is plenty else in this month's newsletter. On the last page we have items of current interest, including other events coming up and a quick reminder on how to look out for the Asian hornet, smaller than the European one but much more trouble to our bees. Jane has shared her visit to Mottisfont, and her passion for old roses, with photos from both Mottisfont and her own garden. Summer has started so it's time to think about late summer perennials with Marina Christopher in a few days time. Details on page 3 of the newsletter, together with details on our joint garden visit with Milford. The two clubs take it in turns to plan this visit so we thank Milford this year for organising it.

Do enjoy everything!, *Christine Cox Chairman*

AN APPEAL

I am lucky to be chairman of a great committee, with a band of helpers at the ready to support us. However, we are at the limit of what we can achieve on our own and sometimes we are very short-handed through illness or holidays. There are 6 of us and not all completely physically fit. We really need you to consider joining us on the committee for next year. I can assure you we do not fit the mould of many others!

POSTERS AND NEWSLETTERS

In the past I have produced posters for each of our events. We used to post around the villages, but this has all but been banned. So from now on I will not produce a separate poster for the shows and where there is a newsletter close to an event I will incorporate the information in the newsletter. We hope this will also reduce the number of emails you receive from us.

Old Roses

Before Hybrid Teas and Floribundas there were Old Roses, dating back centuries with hybridisation at its peak in the 18th and 19th Centuries, after which they fell out of fashion as the search for reliable repeat flowering roses gathered momentum during the 19th and into the 20th century. In danger of dying out completely a young man called Graham Thomas had tea with Gertrude Jekyll and set about collecting as many as he could and they are now fairly widely available.

But why grow them if they only flower once? Whilst modern roses do repeat flower, they can be fussy - turning up their noses at sandy soils – preferring the solid clay down the road in Chiddingfold, to the light sandy soils of Witley. Then whilst all roses respond to a nice rich diet, some old roses, such as Gallicas and Moss roses are exceptionally tough and can grow in the most difficult situations. With their varied forms, from stiffly upright like William Lobb dating back to 1855/1856, to bending under the weight of their blooms, and their interesting hips later in the year, old roses are perhaps at their best in a mixed border. Then of course there is their perfume, and Shailer’s White Moss, pale pink rather than white and packed with petals, dating back to 1788, fills my entire garden with scent and wafts into the house. Moss roses, have another trick up their sleeves. The backs of the sepals and the stems are covered in an oily but powerfully scented moss, and if you’re picking a few to put in the house, you’ll find your hands covered in this wonderful but slightly sticky perfumed oil. Then there’s the fact that they don’t need much pruning beyond taking out old wood, or cutting back if they become too spindly or threaten to take over the border completely as my Shailer’s White Moss is doing, but they flower on last year’s wood so if you do need to prune, do it as soon as they’ve stopped flowering, otherwise leave them to do their own thing or as the photo from Mottisfont Abbey shows you can train the taller ones up into a tree.

Pay a visit to Mottisfont Abbey in June and with any luck you might agree with me that “Every home should have one!”

Jane Foster, membership secretary

Shailer’s White Moss with a self-seeded salvia growing amongst it



A relaxing afternoon walk at Mottisfont



Shailer’s White Moss – perfectly pale pink



William Lobb Mottosfont



William Lobb showing the “moss” on the back of the sepals and on the stem

SUNDAY GARDENING ON RADIO SURREY .

The producer of this program has contacted us to suggest we promote upcoming events, or even talk to them on the program. Sadly we have no capacity in the existing committee to do this (see my earlier appeal) but you can ask them any gardening questions via sundaygardening@bbc.co.uk or call **0800 587 1046**.from 10.am on a Sunday.

REMINDER

online voting for the RHS council closes on 9th July. If you have a personal membership you will have been sent the link to do this.

THE ASIAN HORNET

The Asian hornet is smaller than our native hornet, with adult workers measuring from 25mm in length and queens measuring 30mm. The abdomen is mostly black except for the fourth abdominal segment which has a yellow band. It has characteristically yellow legs which accounts for why it is often called the yellow legged hornet and its face is orange with two brownish red compound eyes. Below is a comparison between similar insects.

If you see an Asian Hornet you should **notify the Great British Non Native Species Secretariat (NNSS) immediately** as they cannibalise our honey bees



Asian hornet



European hornet



Median wasp



Hornet mimic
hoverfly



Woodwasp

DATES NOT TO MISS

Tuesday 9th July. Joint visit with Milford to High Clandon Estate Vineyard. **NOTE** this visit is in the **afternoon at 2.00pm**. Again, the hosts need numbers in advance so please register by using the “contact us” tab on the website [www. witley gardening.org](http://www.witleygardening.org)

If this is difficult then email us on the admin email admin@witleygardening.org The suggested donation to charity is £7, payable on the gate. Jane, our membership secretary, has already sent you the flyer with info on the vineyard and the charity.

Wednesday 10th July 7.00 for 7.30 Marina Christopher, Late Summer Perennials and Grasses at the Chichester Hall. Marina will be bringing plants for sale so come prepared.