

Chichester Organic Gardening Society

Newsletter 58
January 2012



NOTES FROM THE COMMITTEE

January 2012

It is getting commonplace now to comment on 'what strange weather' but it has been an odd year. Very mild autumn and rain at times we did not expect. Now we have finished with harvesting and clearing the ground, some seeds and beans have gone in for next spring and we look forward to what the new year will bring.

As you know, COGS will be 20 years old in 2012, the society having started officially in October 1992. We think it would be good to have some sort of celebration, and that the most appropriate would be to mark next AGM and Harvest Supper, in October 2012, in a special way. Nothing definite has been decided, so any ideas would be welcome This will be an occasion for everyone. Something of a Feast, and do bring a friend who is interested in what we are doing and might like to join. ('Bring a friend' applies to every meeting of course). And for our 25th we can be even more festive ...

As well as Stansted, we had stands at two other shows this year: the Weald and Downland, and Transition Chichester, both in October – short reports on these are in the Newsletter. Again, many thanks to all those who helped.

We have an interesting mix of talks and discussion lined up for the first part of the year, to inspire us for those days when sometimes we don't feel inclined to get outside so much. But there is a lot going on in the soil And we must remember to feed the birds and provide them with water, and may have to work to keep wild spaces for them.

Just a reminder, we will be needing a replacement for our Treasurer by next autumn, so if anyone out there feels they could do the job, do get in touch with Rachel or one of the Committee.

We wish you all a good Gardening Year, and look forward to seeing as many as possible at the meetings,
The Committee

COGS NOTICES

COGS MEMBERSHIP

COGS continues to sustain its membership at around 100. Throughout the year we lose a few members and we gain a few. It would be lovely if we could increase our number to a stable 110/120 members during the coming year, so let's have an active campaign to spread the word.

Thank you to those members who have elected to receive the Newsletter electronically, it certainly saves on paper and costs. If you haven't signed up to this yet then you can at any time - there isn't a time limit on it. Just email me at nina@nrglearning.co.uk and I'll add you to the list.

Perhaps you could consider renewing your membership via a standing order? The amount is completely under your control and is really just one less thing to have to deal with! You can do this on line or at your bank. The details you will need are:

Lloyds TSB

No: 1914064

Sort code: 30 91 97

In the name of Chichester Organic Gardening Society.

£5 subscription

You can do this for your renewal for the year 2011-2012.

RHS Concession Card

We now have just one RHS concession card, which gives the holder and a guest one third off the price of entry to the RHS Gardens at Wisley (except Sundays), Rosemoor in Devon, Harlow Carr in Yorkshire, Hyde Hall in Essex and Trebah in Cornwall. It also entitles us to one free group visit of up to 55 people per year to an RHS Garden. Nina Guilfoyle holds this card, so if you would like to borrow it, please contact her.

We have to pay a small fee for this card and it is only valid for a year, so if there is little interest from members, we will not renew next year.



COGS NOTICES

Speakers and Meetings

We are always looking for suggestions for speakers. If you have any idea for speakers or visits, please let Vi Cowan, our Speakers' Secretary, know.

Raffles

A reminder that these are held at every meeting except May and October. Any good items, especially bottles, good plants, and 'gifts' are welcome.

Also at meetings:

Surplus, Gluts, whether plants or produce or no-longer-needed useful garden things, are also welcome. People can help themselves (for a small donation) – but please take yours home if no-one wants them!

Goodwood Home Farm gains awards

Some of us remember the meeting in April 2006 at which Carl Barton of the Goodwood Farm, an organic local enterprise, came and talked to COGS about their work. Now we hear they have national approval.

The Chichester News of 18th August 2011 quoted from the *Independent* to tell us, under the headline 'Goodwood Home Farm Shop is Top of the Shops', that the Goodwood Farm Shop had gained some prestigious awards. At the 2011 Great Taste Awards – organised by the Guild of Fine Food – Goodwood won two Gold awards and in 2010 they were awarded 1 Gold Star for their Organic March Burgers.

For livestock, the shepherd, Nick Page, was named Supreme Champion at the National Southdown Sheep Society Early Breeders Show 2011, and also won Reserve Champion Prize. The Goodwood Home Farm and Shop is open 7 days a week; www.goodwood.com/farmshop. For those unable to get there, it is good news that they now come to the Farmers Market on the 1st and 3rd Fridays of the month. And non-carnivores will be interested to hear that they also bring their organic milk and samples of their cheese. 'Raw' milk is available from the shop.

Weald and Downland Open Air Museum

The WDOAM holds a number of shows during the year, and at their Countryside Show on 8-9th October there was the usual variety of events and activities, including ploughing, steam-powered threshing (on a 100-year-old machine), gun dogs, falcons and owls. And as always there were the commercial stalls and plenty of food and drink.

In the Horticultural tent, COGS had been offered a stand, thus returning after several years to the first place they ever exhibited. The volunteers who organised the horticultural tent were very helpful, and we had a corner site, along with the historical-based plants of the Museum itself and the entries for the competitions.

There were plenty of visitors, a lot of interest, and although not selling plants we dispensed the usual leaflets and some special ones on Companion Plants. We felt it was a very worthwhile event for COGS, in particular being a local show which attracted people likely to have an interest in our aims and our events.

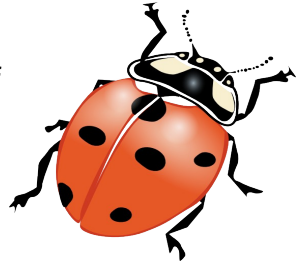
Very many thanks to those who helped, on the stand and with 'exhibits' – we now have several very lovely posters specially designed for us some years ago. Congratulations also to those members who won certificates for their competition entries: a Second to Kathy Baker for Flowers, Thirds to Vee for Chutney and Rachel for Quinces.

Transition 'Changing Times Green Fair'

Later in October, on the 29th, COGS took part in the one-day Transition Chichester Green Fair, called 'Changing Times', in the Assembly Rooms. We were more restricted on space, and were closely flanked by 'Grow Your Own' on one side and Maggie Haynes on the other, but it was a friendly though crowded atmosphere. There was plenty of interest – very local, and with like-minded people – and donations again came in for plants and cooking apples; also we gained four new members. A big thank you again for help in looking after the stand and for produce provided for it.

Are our native Ladybirds under threat?

There are about 4,500 different kinds of ladybird in the world and they come in all different sizes, colours and patterns. In Britain we have 46 species, of which the 7 spot is probably the most well-known.



Most kinds of ladybird are useful to humans because they and their larvae eat tiny insect pests. They feed on very small insects such as aphids, scale insects and mites. However a few species are pests themselves and eat plants.

You may have read in the press or heard on the radio, that our native species are being put under pressure by a foreign invader called the Harlequin Ladybird, *Harmonia Axyridis*. This has been called 'the most invasive ladybird on Earth' and it was recorded as arriving in Britain in the Summer of 2004 and is now steadily working its way north.

The harlequin is large – between 7 to 8 mm long and is more domed than European types. Its colour ranges from yellow, orange, red on black, and black on red and it can have any number of spots between 0 and 22. A native to eastern [Asia](#), it was introduced to [North America](#) in 1988 to control aphids and scale insects. It is now the most widespread ladybird species on that continent.

It is generally agreed that killing the harlequin is not a good idea as it is unlikely to make any difference to the numbers and the risk of killing a mis-identified native species is all too possible. It may not all be bad news either as the *Harmonia Axyridis* has been reported eating blackfly very efficiently! There have also been reports of large numbers of 7 spots and it seems likely that they are holding their own at the moment. As with most things, planting native plants to support our native species might be the best and only thing we can do

The UK Ladybird Survey would like you to record your sightings of ANY ladybird <http://www.ladybird-survey.org>

Nina Guilfoyle

Food and Farming Awards 2011

Once again Radio 4 devoted a whole hour to Sheila Dillon's special Food Programme, to celebrate the best of British food and farming. We'll just look at some of the winners and highlights.

Best Public Caterer: rather appropriately, this award was won by Harper-Adams, the agricultural college, which with 8 cooks serves 2,000 meals a day. Best quality, and local food.

Best Food Market: Bolton (covered) market, which has rare fish, and is supported by the council. Runners up were Maltby in South London, and Cowley, East Oxford.

BBC Radio 4 Farmer of the Year: Andrew Hughes, who has a 700 acre farm in Hampshire. Grows barley, wheat, oilseed rape. Minimum ploughing, 'letting the earthworms do the work', using less machinery and thus less impact on the soil.

Derek Cooper Award: was won by the Food For Life Partnership, supported by both Soil Association and Garden Organic; focusing on schools, but educating whole families in healthy eating.

Best Takeaway: fairly local – the Brighton Smokehouse, on Brighton beach, serving fish stew and hot mackerel sandwiches.

BBC Food Champion: won by Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall, chiefly for his 'fish fight' to stop the wasteful practice of discarding unwanted fish. He tells us he is continuing the fight...

Best Food Producer: this one featured also in the regular Food Programme. It was won by the Locharthur (or Locharcher? Not sure of the spelling!) a Camphill Community farm on the Scottish borders. The organic farm gives 'meaningful work' to the residents, and the leader, Barry Graham, described the cheese making process. From one batch of organic milk they make 4 different cheeses, through variations in time and acidity. All these provide cheering news in a time of recession, and show that Organic farming and growing can still hold its own, as it must.

Penelope Johnstone

Sometimes it is worth republishing a useful piece, so here is one from April 2008.

ROTATION REMINDER *(Adapted from gardenorganic.org.uk)*

Rotation helps in the control of pests, diseases and weeds, and in the maintenance of soil fertility, organic matter levels and structure.

For annual plants and replanting perennials, do not reuse the same site for the same type of plant but vary over a period of years.

Best practice

Plants with similar pest and disease susceptibility are separated by an appropriate time interval.

A balance is kept between fertility building and exploitative cropping. .

Varying weed suppressing with weed susceptible crops.

Rotations are used that minimise the time soil is left uncovered.

Perennials are not put where a related plant has recently grown.

Acceptable

Keeping the soil healthy by shorter rotations when space is limited.

Intercropping and companion planting as long as the soil is healthy.

Not recommended

Growing the same annual crop in the same location year after year.

STANSTED SHOW

At the AGM I told COGS members that we would not be taking a stand at Stansted Garden Show this year. Although we had a very successful show last year there were several problems.

Therefore Penelope and I have made the difficult decision that we will not go to Stansted and try and find another show that is nearer Chichester. We also hope to find a show which is smaller and less commercial. At present nothing has been confirmed but I will let you know as soon as we have news.

Vee

COGS – CELEBRATING 20 YEARS
Monday October 26th 1992,
Inaugural Meeting held at Fieldings Church Norton

* * * *

Monday October 29th 2012
AGM AND SPECIAL HARVEST SUPPER
Put the date in your diary!
Susan Maguire

Woodhorn Group

Our 28th November meeting was on Composting. Martin Llewellyn, Sales & Marketing, and Vikki Brown, Marketing, shared the presentation. So now we know what happens to the green waste which we and others put into our council bins or deposit at Westhampnett or Tangmere.

Earth Cycle Products are based on an organic farm of 1500 acres, which has been in the same family since 1882. They have a 250-cow herd and produce organic milk, also grow arable crops.

Green and wood waste are both used, and go through a very specialised process. Green waste is first weighed on arrival, held up to 48 hours, shredded, and any contaminants removed. It then goes into 'windrows' for 16 weeks, reaching temperatures of 65-80 degrees, and is turned four times to assist the decomposition. It is then stored for a month, and has to pass the BSI specification PAS 100.

Various products come from this, including a general Soil Conditioner; Top Soil (mixed soil and compost); Cow Compost (mixed manure and green compost, ready to use); Turf Dressing, mixed with sand; and Ericaceous compost.

They also have Turf, ornamental bark (FSC approved), and playground chip. They have been recycling for ten years, but the retail side is more recent.

Martin and Vikki very kindly donated 5 bags of compost for the raffle – and would be able to supply to COGS members at wholesale rates. They would welcome a visit, of up to 15 people, to see the site and the whole process; we might take up this offer next summer.

Transition Chichester Films and Talks

These are held at the Bassil Shippam Centre, usually on the first Friday of the month, at 7.30 p.m. and TC have just produced a leaflet with their New Season.

February 3: 'Hooked on Growth', 'the film they don't want you to see', about the growth-based economy.

March 2: Newcomers Evening: a chance to see the film of Rob Hopkins' presentation in Chichester, and to find out more about TC.

March 30 (note date) Population Matters: talk by Eric Rimmer on world population growth.

May 4: Community schemes: Presentations on Tangmere Community Garden, the Community Car Club and a community shop (tbc).

June 8 (note date): In Transition: a chance to see the new film, followed by a summer party.

For more details on everything:

www.transitionchichester.org

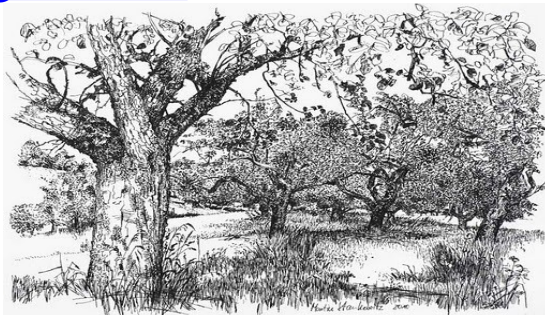
News of an exciting Transition Chichester project

On Tuesday 14 November the first community orchard was planted in Chichester's Oaklands Park, comprising 30 trees (including six heritage varieties of Sussex apple – Alfriston, Wadhurst Pippin, Crawley Beauty, Egremont Russett, Duck's Bill and Eastbourne Pippin). The planting day was a huge success with over 50 people turning up to help plant the trees, and support from all three Chichester Rotary Clubs, Chichester District Council, The Chichester Festival Theatre, the RSPB, Lancastrian school, Jessie Young Husband school, the Chichester Bowmen (archery club), local residents and, of course, Transition Chichester members! Several COGS members were part of the team.

Many exciting plans are now in the pipeline for the orchard including the sowing of a wildflower meadow, possible introduction of beehives, and, should space, allow even more fruit trees. To keep up with plans log on to our dedicated Oaklands Park Community Orchard facebook page:

<http://www.facebook.com/OakIPkCommOrchd>.

If you have a piece of green space near you that could benefit from the planting of a community orchard, or alternatively you live near an orchard that could do with looking after, do get in touch, we'd be happy to get involved to make it happen. You can contact the project co-ordinator Ellie Garwood on: e_garwood@hotmail.com



John Bennett our new Committee Member has kindly offered to write a regular herb article – this is the first one!

The Benefits of Rosemary

Rosemary leaves contain certain phyto-chemical compounds that are known to have disease preventing and health promoting properties.

Rosemary may improve memory, relieve muscle pain, and stimulate the nervous system. It is used for digestive, circulatory, neuralgia, spasms, wounds, eczema, rheumatism and depression problems.

In addition to calming nerves, rosemary relaxes muscles, eases pain, and reduces tension and anxiety.

Because it possesses Strong antioxidants, it can help with bronchial problems, it also stimulates and improves circulation throughout the body, it increase the blood supply to the skin, which is thought to help restore a youthful glow.

We all need some of this, or maybe lots.

John Bennett

For Your Information

I was given some Fairtrade Gardening gloves for Christmas+ garden twine. www.traidcraft.co.uk

Bid (Richard Biddell) runs a veg stall by Priory Park (end Guildhall St) Wed + Thurs + Fri 10.00 - 2.00 and Saturdays 10.00 – 4.00. He has a wide variety of local produce.

Tuppenny Barn. Maggie Haynes has temporarily suspended visits to Chichester Markets to focus on grant fundraising for the education centre. She will be selling veg from the field on Thur 10 – 5 and Fri 9.30 – 4.00.

2012 Dates for your diary

Bignor Park Floral Fringe Fair - May 19-20

Stansted Show - June 15 -17

Tuppenny Barn – June 25 Open Day (2-4 pm) part of Southbourne Jubilee Celebrations. Cream Teas + plant sales.

West Dean (Events are open from 10.30am and 5pm).

MedFest - June 23 - 24

Chilli Fiesta - July 27 - 29

Apple Affair - September 29 - 30

INFINITY FOODS

Next orders to Pat by Monday 20th February 2012 please.

(cheques to be with Pat by Monday 20th February 2012)

Delivery on Tuesday 28th February 2012 please collect asap

Any member is welcome to order and there is no minimum order

If anyone new is interested please contact
pat_adams@btopenworld.com or 01243 602713

COGS DIARY DATES

January 30

Talk by SUSAN MAGUIRE and COGS Seed Exchange

Susan has kindly said she will come and talk to us about companion planting, awareness and adaptability to change. Inspired by Fran's talk about Seedy Sunday we are holding our own evening of exchanging seeds. Please bring seeds you would like to give/share with others. If an unusual variety it would be useful to have a photo of the mature plant.

February 27

STEVE LAWRENCE

Pruning without worry

Steve will show us how to prune our fruit trees and bushes. Topics will include preparation, hygiene, shaping, support and all the P's! (to be revealed)

March 26

BARRY CHAMBERS

The Garden as a Sanctuary

Barry will tell us about his successful show garden inspired by a sonnet by John Keats. He will talk about his show gardens with vegetables and sea and shore as a sanctuary. The Garden in relationship to nature.

April 30

STEVE PEACH

**Conservation Ranger, Queen Elizabeth Country Park
Hedgerow Harvest**

How humans and animals benefit from different hedgerows and how we can copy our ancestors to forage, create and conserve our productive hedges and woodlands.

All COGS indoor events are held at:

Bassil Shippam Centre, Tozer Way, St Pancras, Chichester
PO19 4LG

Start at 7.30 p.m, doors open at 7.15 p.m.

Free to COGS members, £2 for non-members.

Chichester Organic Gardening Society was formed in 1992 as a local group of both the Henry Doubleday Research Association and the Soil Association.

Aims of the Society

To encourage the growing of healthy produce and beautiful gardens by sustainable and environmentally kind gardening methods.

To provide a focus for local gardeners and growers to meet those sharing their interest in gardening with nature, both for social activities and to discuss gardening and related issues.

COGS activities in support of our AimS

- A programme of regular meetings (indoors September to April, outdoors May to August) with speakers on gardening and related topics.
- Occasional visits to places of gardening interest.
- Promotion of organic methods at COGS special events and appropriate local shows such as those at West Dean, Transition, and the Stansted Show.
- Shared purchase and bulk purchase scheme for whole food cooking supplies to obtain discounts.
- Books available for purchase or on loan from our small library.

Membership costs £5.00 per household. The membership year runs from October to September. To join contact Nina Guilfoyle on 01243 776063.

Your COGS organisers are:

Officers:

Secretary – Penelope Johnstone (01243 771881)

Treasurer – Rachel Ritchie. rcritchie@hotmail.com

Membership Secretary - Nina Guilfoyle (01243 776063) nina@nrglearning.co.uk

Organisers:

Speaker Secretary – Vee Cowan (01243 780518) varianec@yahoo.com

Bookshop/Librarian - Barbara MacGregor (01243 781849)

Infinity Orders – Pat (01243 602713) pat_adams@btopenworld.com

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www.chicogs.org.uk

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