

COTTAGE GARDEN SOCIETY COTSWOLD GROUP JANUARY 2024



WINTER EVENTS

PLANTS FOR POLLINATORS

17th JANUARY 2024

For those who enjoyed our talk last January by Jo Worthy-Jones of Haven4Wildlife, or weren't able to make it, Winchcombe Gardening Club are having Jo as their speaker on Wednesday 17th January. She will be speaking on 'Plants for Pollinators'. at Abbeyfield Community Centre, Winchcombe at 7pm for 7.30. Visitors £3.

THE SNOWDROP SEASON

This is fast approaching. There are some splendid snowdrop gardens in Gloucestershire, not least Painswick Rococo Garden and Colesbourne Park.

Colesbourne Park's gardens have about 10 acres of formal snowdrop walks around the house and lake, with further parkland and an arboretum around the

house. It is open from 1pm – 4pm every Saturday and Sunday from the last weekend in January until the end of February.

The Painswick Rococo Gardens are open every day in January and February from 10 – 5. Their 5 million snowdrops, including rare varieties, usually start in late January and are at their best in February.

Downton House: This year we hope to arrange a small group visit to snowdrops at Downton House in Painswick in February, a lovely garden in all seasons. Details to follow!

NGS GARDENS (<https://ngs.org.uk/>)

The NGS Gardens start to open again with Home Farm, Newent Lane, Huntley, Gloucestershire, GL19 3HQ on Sunday 28th from 11 - 4. Adult £4; child free.

DAY TRIP TO THE ORCHID FESTIVAL AT KEW GARDENS

14TH FEBRUARY 2024

Some spaces are still available on a private 19-seater coach going from Temple Guiting village car park at 8am to arrive at Kew for 10.25. Leaves Kew at 4pm to arrive back at Temple Guiting for 6.20pm.

All inclusive cost £48 (if all seats sold). If interested, contact Yvonne Everest at info@chocolategenie.co.uk or ring 01386 576111

SPECIAL OPEN DAYS FOR THORNCROFT CLEMATIS

17th AND 18th FEBRUARY 2024 FROM 10AM - 4PM

To be held at Rails End Nursery, Back Lane. Ashton-Under-Hill, Evesham, Worcestershire WR11 7RG

12 times Chelsea Gold Medal winners, this specialist clematis nursery will be open locally for an exclusive 2 day period on **17th and 18th February 2024 from 10am - 4pm** with free pruning demonstrations at 10:30am and 2pm.

They assure us that the nursery will be fully stocked and looking fabulous and say that it is the perfect time for planting ready for the year ahead. The nursery is under cover so good to visit even if weather is poor.

As they are usually a mail order company, this is a great chance to browse the nursery; meet the team; get advice on your plants; make a purchase; and even get pruning advice at one of the free clematis pruning demonstrations being given on each day.

They say: "We're a small team of 4 and every visitor counts, so please do share this with your members and friends as widely as possible, so we can have a busy start to the 2024 season."

Tel. 01953 850407 Email: sales@thorncroftclematis.co.uk

Website: <https://www.thorncroftclematis.co.uk/>

ONLINE FLOWER WORKSHOPS

Common Farm Flowers in Somerset (Common Farm, Barrow Lane, Charlton Musgrove, BA9 8HN) offer a range of in person and online workshops.

In January they offer two online which might be of interest:

- Sweet Pea Demo on 19th January
- The Flower Farmer's Year on 31st

In February offers include:

- Design a Cut Flower Patch Workshop on 7th
- Sowing Hardy Annuals Demo on 9th
- Perennials for Cutting Workshop on 28th.

Most online events are £35 each and can be viewed live or as recordings on a later date. For more information, contact Georgie at Common Farm Flowers:

georgie@commonfarmflowers.com Tel. 01963 32883

Website: <https://www.commonfarmflowers.com/>

NATURE IN ART

BIRD PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR is back after its popularity last year **until 21st January.**

Photographers from all over the world entered more than 20,000 images for this year's competition, which carries a £5,000 grand prize. Photographer Jack Zhi, from the USA, was declared this year's grand prize winner for his dramatic image taken in Southern California.

Photographers competed in 8 different categories in the adult competition: Best Portrait, Birds in the Environment, Bird Behaviour, Birds in Flight, Black and White, Urban Birds, Conservation (Single Image), and Comedy Bird Photo. There was also a Conservation Award, Portfolio Award, and Video Award.

Importantly, Bird Photographer of the Year has conservation at its heart. This year the competition donated £5,000 to partner charity Birds on the Brink, which provides vital funding to grass-roots bird conservation projects around the world.

AND AFTER THAT!

WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR is back from February 6th – April 7th 2024

This is the Natural History Museum's annual competition and exhibition highlighting the unique and beautiful relationship between photography, science and art.

A forest rodeo, a hidden stargazer and a mason bee at work are just a few of the awe-inspiring images featured in the fifty-ninth competition. **All** winning photos will be on display at Nature in Art.

This year's competition attracted almost 50,000 entries from photographers of all ages and experience levels from 95 countries. Entries were judged anonymously on their creativity, originality, and technical excellence by an international panel of industry experts.

Dr Doug Gurr, Director of the Natural History Museum, summed up the importance of the exhibition: 'We are facing urgent biodiversity and climate crises, and photography is a powerful catalyst for change. The Wildlife Photographer of the Year exhibition reveals some of nature's most wondrous sights whilst offering hope and achievable actions visitors can take to help protect the natural world.'

<https://natureinart.org.uk/>

Tel. 01452 731422

Nature in Art, A38 Twigworth Gloucester GL2 9PA (2 miles north of Gloucester on A38. SatNav Postcode: GL2 9PG.)

Open: Tues – Sun 10am – 5pm and Bank Holidays.

AND WHILE CONSIDERING THE BEAUTY OF NATURE:

DO YOU KNOW ABOUT NATURE'S CALENDAR?

This is a long biological record that dates back as far as 1736. It logs your observations so that we can see what effect recent weather has had on our wildlife and whether climate change affects timings in nature. You can join Nature's Calendar and help scientists discover answers to these questions. From leaf buds bursting to blackberries ripening, let Nature's Calendar know what's happening - both in your garden and near you. Notice and record such things as the first butterfly or swallow of the year; the arrival of frogspawn; a good or bad year for particular fruit.

Look at <https://naturescalendar.woodlandtrust.org.uk/> to find out more; watch a free webinar; and download the phenology calendar.

STATE OF NATURE REPORT 2023

The fourth State of Nature Report was published in the autumn, the product of collaboration between environmental Non Governmental Organisations, academic institutions and government agencies, including Natural England.

It provides the most comprehensive overview ever of species trends across the UK, with conclusions based on millions of records collected by thousands of volunteer 'citizen scientists' spanning terrestrial, freshwater and marine species.

Since 1970 UK species have declined by about 19% on average, and 16% - nearly 1 in 6 species - are now facing extinction. Some populations, such as dragonflies and some species of bats, are increasing, however, and there are recommendations for actions now needed to recover nature.

Look at the full report or its summary:

<https://naturalengland.blog.gov.uk/2023/09/29/state-of-nature/>

WINTER WALKS

While most gardens are closed for the winter, National Trust gardens and estates are generally open, as are RHS sites, botanical gardens and arboretums. Some sites still offer their festive illuminated trails.

For a good winter's walk, try the National Trust's Croome Park where an extensive Capability Brown landscape surrounds Croome Court, an 18th-century Neo-Palladian mansion. Croome Court, Croome D'Abitot, near Upton-upon-Severn, Worcestershire WR8 9DW
Telephone: 01905 371006 E-Mail: croome@nationaltrust.org.uk

For a winter walk a bit further afield – have you visited Waddesdon Manor, Waddesdon, Near Aylesbury, Bucks HP18 0JH?

There 6,000 acres around this splendid Rothschild mansion. Magical decorations and light installations illuminate the gardens over the winter season. Explore the Eythrope Gardens, with their perfectly-pruned bushes and beds of snowdrops or visit the Aviary of exotic birds.

The grounds are still open after the festive season from 10-4 on Saturday and Sundays from 6th – 28th January and then from Wednesday to Sunday until 20th March. (The house reopens on 20th March.)

SOWING THE SEEDS: A BLOOMING ENGLISH HORTICULTURAL SECTOR

The House of Lords Horticultural Sector Committee published this fascinating and detailed examination of the horticultural industry in November.

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld5803/ldselect/ldhortcom/268/268.pdf>

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld5803/ldselect/ldhortcom/268/26802.htm>

This 185 page report is the work of a cross party committee of 12 members of the House of Lords with a wide range of experience including farming, finance, health and social care, law, physical and mental welfare and the environment.

The report calls on the Government to take steps to safeguard the future of the sector and harness its potential to deliver on critical food security and environmental goals. It includes issues affecting the amateur gardener as well as the professional and the food shopper as well as the farmer and grower and supermarket.

Lord Redesdale, Chair of the House of Lords Horticultural Sector Committee, said:

“Horticulture is a multi-billion-pound industry employing over 50,000 people, but it is too frequently overlooked by policymakers.

In the face of a cost-of-living crisis, supermarkets are battling to keep prices down, but this squeezes UK growers out of the market in favour of cheaper imports. This fundamentally threatens food security and the domestic market for ornamentals.

Our report calls on the Government to publish the ‘world leading’ Horticulture Strategy it promised over a year ago and get on with its review of fairness in the horticulture supply chain.

As part of this, it must secure the skills pipeline by boosting the place of horticulture on the curriculum, draw up a clear workforce strategy, and urgently address reports of exploitation linked to the seasonal worker visa.

Amateur and professional horticulturists alike must be supported to transition towards more environmentally friendly practices, and the R&D landscape must be reviewed to ensure it backs British growers to innovate.

With the confidence and support of Government, the horticulture sector can realise its limitless potential.”



Don't forget to let us know of ideas you have for trips and talks.

Join our WhatsApp Group to benefit from spare plants and seeds. *Just send your name and mobile number to sueatwillowbank@btinternet.com and download WhatsApp onto your smart phone.*