

COTTAGE GARDEN SOCIETY COTSWOLD GROUP AUGUST 2025 NEWSLETTER



SMALL GROUP GARDEN VISITS

In July we visited the Old School at Langford, 3 miles north east of Lechlade. We went to see the small formal garden designed in 1973 by Hardy Amies for his country home, with advice from Rosemary Verey and Alvilde Lees-Milne.

Once the school's playground, the garden now has formal box hedges containing old roses separated by a central path of engineering bricks with cobbled inserts. There are numerous sitting areas including a large summerhouse with a conical tiled roof. These allow different views of the garden and enable it to act as an additional room to the house.

The owner, David Freeman, has made a number of thoughtful adjustments to the original Hardy Amies design, for example, replacing hedging at the front of the house

with a herbaceous border and planting yew buttresses to balance other large features in the main garden. There are interesting sculptures in the garden, both static and kinetic, and a stone wall has glass paperweights sitting between its upright coping stones.



It turned out to be the most extraordinary garden visit any of us had experienced in all our years of garden visiting! David was a splendid, generous host whose expertise, knowledge and passion for history and the fine arts; curatorial experience; and long friendship with Hardy Amies combined to give us a fascinating tour of the house and its wealth of lovely things, as well as the garden with its old roses, salvias and extraordinary 'Praying Hands' hostas. The Old School remains very much a gentleman's country house and garden.



SMALL GROUP PRIVATE VISIT FOR LATE AUGUST:

Little Orchard in Slad (GL6 7QD) is a one-acre garden on a steeply sloping site, now with terraces, garden rooms and water features, once a wilderness! The garden uses using many reclaimed materials, stonework and statuary and offers many seating areas from which to enjoy the stunning views. Other attractions include a Children's Trail; a Cidery offering tastings; and an exhibition and sale of local artists' work.

For details of the visit and for sharing transport, contact Natalie on 01242 602384 or email natalie@lestones.plus.com

WINCHCOMBE GREEN TRAIL

In July we took part in the Winchcombe Green Trail, having a stand in the Izzy Arts Centre with some of our display from Malvern along with other groups from Winchcombe including the Seed Savers; Allotments; Vanessa with her books; second-hand gardening books; and Brenda with Ireley Plants.

It was quite a busy afternoon with visitors from near and far. A couple from Germany hope to create a cottage garden back at their home - and another couple were visiting from New Zealand. Unfortunately, after a prolonged dry spell the long awaited rain chose to come during the early afternoon, which kept numbers walking down and so fewer people out in the gardens, but there was a good buzz in the hall, with a number of families joining in - and some cash donations for our group.



GLOUCESTERSHIRE GARDENS OPEN IN AUGUST

This is a more difficult month for garden visiting with few NGS gardens open and few village openings. The big gardens, such as Kiftsgate, Painswick Rococo Garden and Sezincote, and National Trust properties such as Hidcote and Snowhill still have much to offer, of course, as do the arboretums at Westonbirt and Batsford.

If you haven't ventured there yet, try Bourton House Garden which is open from Tuesday to Friday 10am to 5pm until 27th October. The 3 acres serve an 18th century manor house with Grade 1 listed tithe barn and include topiary, water features, wide herbaceous borders with imaginative planting and sweeping views of the Cotswold landscape.

August 10th sees Cheltenham Horticultural Society's Annual Summer Show at Pittville School GL52 3JD from 12.30 to 4.30pm. Displays and sales of plants and produce. £2.50 entry.

The August Bank Holiday will see numerous fetes and shows. Look out for:

- **Winchcombe Show**, in the school grounds, is now in its 75th year. It has a range of attractions and stalls, as well as a gardening competition.
- **Dumbleton's fete** on the beautiful cricket ground site usually has good plants for sale, as well as its popular bricabrac attraction!

BIG BUTTERFLY COUNT

It's not too late to take part! The count runs until 10th August this year. 80% of the UK's 59 species have decreased in abundance or distribution, or both, since 1976. Last year's count was very disappointing –numbers were 50% lower than the previous year and the lowest in the project's 15 years. Last year's weather was

especially poor for butterflies with a wet, windy spring and cool summer. The problems of habitat loss and pesticide use continue, although Butterfly Conservation was successful in securing a complete ban from the government on the use of neonicotinoid pesticides on crops in 2025.

Spare 15 minutes to take part using the Big Butterfly Count App or download an ID chart from www.bigbutterflycount.org

TRIED PLAYING YOUR VEG YET?

You may have seen King Charles playing on a carrot recorder on television this summer during a visit to Windsor by the London Vegetable Orchestra, an ensemble of professional musicians who have been playing veg for over 10 years now. Their most successful instrument so far has been a butternut squash trumpet with carrot mouthpiece. Have a look at their website and see if you are inspired to have a go!

<https://londonvegetableorchestra.com/>

FANCY A DISGUSTING SANDWICH?

On until September, Painswick Rococo Garden has a Disgusting Sandwich Trail taking families (and well-behaved dogs on leads) through the grounds. The trail was inspired by Gareth Edwards children's book of that name and offers an interactive and creative experience with strange and silly items to collect, so Badger can create that dreadful sandwich.

The garden also has, of course, lovely woodland, and ponds to enjoy and a maze to test you. August flowers in this 18th century pleasure garden include Michaelmas daisies, helianthus Lemon Queen, hollyhocks, achillea, sunflowers and verbena.

At the end, try the cafe with entirely wholesome fare on offer!

It runs whatever the weather and is included in the usual entry of £13.50 per person; £6.30 per child; or £34.75 for families of two adults and up to four children. Open 10am to 5pm until Monday 8th September. Buy tickets in advance or at the garden on the day.

<https://www.rococogarden.org.uk/>

FREE DOBBIES EVENTS

For children (with adults) Little Seedlings holiday club on 12th and 13th August at 10.15am celebrates beautiful summer scents and a Prehistoric Plants workshop

on Sunday 3rd August at 10.15am and 11.30am provides dinosaur stories, games and activities. *You need to book these events.*

For adults: in-store Grow Your Own demonstrations will take place on Saturday 2nd and Wednesday 6th August at 10.30am and 3.30pm. Taking around 30 minutes, a live demonstration will be followed by a Q&A session. No booking usually necessary.

For more information: <https://events.dobbies.com/event-detail/?e=4372&v=0&r=v>

Dobbies Tewkesbury, Unit 1, Diamond Road, Ashchurch, Tewkesbury, GL20 7FX

NATURE IN ART

Nature in Art hosts many exhibitions and provides art and craft courses throughout the year, often with a plant or wildlife focus.

THE BRITISH WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHY AWARDS 2025 exhibition is open until 7th September.

For full details of this year's programme of events, go to www.natureinart.org.uk

Nature in Art is 2 miles north of Gloucester on the A38 at Twigworth,. SatNav Postcode: GL2 9PG. Tel. 01452 731422

DID YOU KNOW?

- **Right to Grow** is a campaign to allow local communities to produce food on unused land. It has the backing of charities including the WI, Garden Organic and the Wildlife Trusts. Their report, The Coronation Gardens for Food and Nature, details the benefits of community food growing for our health and well-being and that of nature -with boosts for the economy too. In 2023 Hull was the first council to give residents permission to do this in a pilot scheme.
- **The oldest written recipes** we have are on clay tablets from around 1700 BCE Babylon, while the first printed recipe books date from the 15th century.
- **Peas are very good for you!** Peas, whether fresh or frozen, provide antioxidant Vitamin C; manganese to help with digestion; and thiamine and niacin to keep nervous systems healthy.
- **You can get a free Wildling app for your phone** with a guide to local sites and suggested activities. The app was created by Ant Rawlins, and developed with Tim Smit of the Eden Project, Ben Goldsmith, environmentalist and financier, and Deborah Meaden of Dragon's Den fame. Supported by the RSPB, Marine Conservation and Forestry

England, it aims to nurture both the natural world and our mental health.
<https://www.wildling.app>

TO SEND ITEMS FOR THE NEWSLETTER, OR WITH ANY QUERIES, CONTACT:

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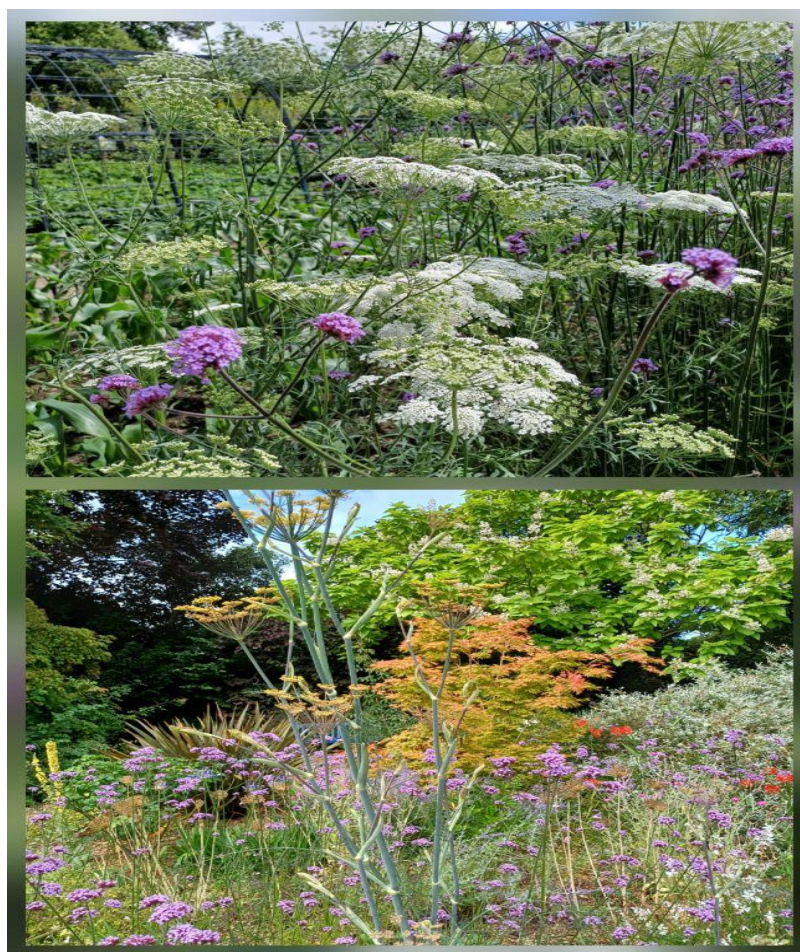
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Text 07796 106579 to join our **WhatsApp** group

NB Don't forget to tell us what topics you'd like for talks or workshops over the winter and which gardens you'd like to visit in the warmer months!



Some plants cope with the heat as these at Denmans demonstrate!