



December 2023



NEWSLETTER

Egham Gardens & Allotments Association

WINTER 2023



WINTER AGAIN!



Well, we have come full circle again and find ourselves back to the dark, cold days and nights but with Christmas approaching there is much to look forward to – good food, good company and good times ahead.



CHRISTMAS HAMPER RAFFLE

Wendy has donated a Christmas Hamper to be raffled at the December meeting. Tickets are £1.50 each with proceeds going to Club funds.



TEA LADIES

Thank you to everyone who stepped up to help with the teas at the club meetings throughout the year – this is much appreciated.

RAFFLE

Thank you to Jean for dealing with the raffle each month and collating the prizes.

Donations for the monthly Club raffle are always welcome so if you have anything to donate please bring it along and give it to Jean.

KATERINA'S CHRISTMAS MARKET TRIP - WINCHESTER

On the 24th November a few of us enjoyed a day at Winchester Christmas Market. With so many things to do, everyone had a lot of fun. The stalls were rich and varied, plenty of clothes and hats, Christmas food, wine from fruit (very tasty), beer and interesting wood carved items.

There was a chilly wind and nothing was better than eating warm, roasted chestnuts whilst walking. Those who preferred a more cultured visit disappeared into the Cathedral. With such a long and rich history there was plenty to talk about at lunchtime. This is definitely a visit to repeat.





WISLEY GLOW TRIP



Unfortunately the planned Wisley Glow trip had to be cancelled due to lack of numbers but.....if you want to travel out a bit Wakehurst is Kew Gardens' wild botanic outpost in Sussex where Glow Wild began 10 years ago. The winter trail has more than 1000 handmade lanterns, the UK's largest living Christmas Tree (37m tall) and is lit by 1800 energy-saving bulbs. Artist installations include an illuminated willow grove and a constellation of 300 stars. You can visit in the evening from 23rd November to 1st January.

CLASSIC CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS



A classic addition to Christmas decorations and easy to grow is the Amaryllis. Place the bulb in a pot barely larger than the bulb and leave 2/3^{ds} of it showing above the compost. Add stakes or twiggy supports as the flowers can be top heavy. Keep the plant warm in a well lit room.



Also, there is the Poinsettia. Although the popular colour for them at Christmas is red, they do come in a variety of other colours. Do remember though to wrap them up in a couple of bags when taking them from shop to car to home as they don't like the cold. Once home, place the plant in bright, indirect light and water sparingly only once the soil has dried out. Sit back and enjoy.

MONTHLY COMPETITION

Entries to the monthly competition have been down this past year so do remember to bring something along to enter – points win prizes !!

RSB BIG GARDEN BIRD WATCH 2024



It is 45 years since the RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch started and now it is our chance to take part in what is thought to be the largest garden wildlife survey in the world and help the RSPB understand more about birds in the UK. Last year more than 1/2 million people took part.

To be included all you have to do is watch and count the birds in your garden or indeed, any green space, for an hour at some point from 26th – 28th January. Registration opens on 13th December so just go to rspb.org.uk/birdwatch.



WREATH MAKING

The wreath making demonstration in November went down very well with everyone and Wendy has taken a photo of the one that she bought at the end of the evening.





BOURNE RIVERSIDE WALK & LOCAL NATURE RESERVE



If you receive the free publication Runnymede Life you may have read the article about the Bourne Riverside Walk and Local Nature Reserve in Virginia Water. The area is about 52 hectares and follows the course of the River Bourne from Wellington Avenue to the footpath between Trumps Green Road and Virginia Water station. Designated as a local nature reserve containing a significant area of wetland woods it has around 250 species of plant, 57 species of bird and numerous insects and mammals.

Costing around £20,000 a year to maintain the boardwalk, remove fallen trees and removing invasive species such as Himalayan Balsam and skunk cabbage, coppicing trees and keeping the River Bourne clear of debris they are looking for new members to join the Friends of Cabrera Trust and Woods. Membership is just £10 per year but feel free to be as generous as you can.

It is important to maintain such local areas for ourselves and future generations to enjoy so take a look at their website friendsofcabrera.co.uk where they have a donation page.

ONE FOR THE KITCHEN BOOKSHELF



Preserves and Pickles by Gloria Nicol. We all know that preserving and pickling is perfect for using up surplus seasonal fruit and vegetables. From sweet jams, jellies and marmalades to tangy

curds, cordials and chutneys this book has 100 original recipes including some unusual flavour combinations and ONE FOR THE GARDENING BOOKSHELF is The National Trust Gardener's Almanac 2024. This book is full of month-by-month inspiration, tips and trivia from the National Trust.



WHATSAPP GROUP/ NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL



Veronica is setting up a What's App Group for the Club as a way of keeping in touch with each other for quick updates etc. If you are happy to join then the sign up sheets will be at the December meeting.

As I'm sure you are all aware postage is becoming increasingly expensive these days so if you are happy to receive Newsletters etc by email a slip will be left on the signing in table for you to fill in your details.



PEAT FREE COMPOST

For many years peat has been the mainstay for us gardeners but now with an all out ban looming we have to turn to peat-free alternatives. Being fully cognitive of the benefits we get from peat and the fact that it must lay undisturbed to be fully functioning – ie be wet and covered with vegetation to enable it to safely store carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gasses I have to confess I really miss it in the compost bags. If anyone has come across a good alternative do let me know as most of the ones I have tried are rubbish!

TIME TO TAKE CUTTINGS

To save the pennies next year (and to donate to the Club sales). Remember to always use clean, sharp scissors or snips and cut lengths of about 4in (10cm) of this years' healthy growth. Strip the lower leaves and dip in rooting powder. Insert the cuttings around the edge of a pot of damp, gritty seed compost and gently firm in. Seal in a plastic bag and place somewhere light and frost-free. The bag can be removed when the cuttings have rooted and started growing.



LECTURE PROGRAMME FOR 2024

EGHAM GARDENS AND ALLOTMENTS ASSOCIATION

(RHS Affiliated)

PROGRAMME OF TALKS and SHOWS 2024
Easter Centre, St John's Church, Egham at 7.30pm



January 11 th	Snowdrops	Lyn Miles
February 8 th	80 Things you don't know	Ray Broughton
March 14 th	Pest recognition and control	Andrew Halstead
April 11 th	SPRING SHOW and QUIZ	
May 9 th	Homes and Gardens	Paul Whittle
June 13 th	Butterflies in Oaken Woods	Phil Darley
September 12 th	LATE SUMMER SHOW and QUIZ	
October 10 th	World Food Garden, Wild Life Well Being Garden at Wisley	Sheila Das
November 14 th	Shoots and Roots	Tanvir Hynes
December 12 th	AGM/Social evening & Photographic Competition and Quiz	



MOLES WHO KNEW?



I'm sure we are all familiar with molehills – usually right in the middle of the lawn or the newly sown line of seeds !! There are an estimated 41 million of them yet remarkably few people have seen them in the wild.

William III of England, also known as William of Orange, died on 8th March 1702. Despite years of wars with France, King Louis IXV did not have a role in his death nor did the Catholic Jacobites who opposed him. While hunting in Richmond Park the king's horse, Sorrel, stumbled, throwing William and cracking his collarbone. The injury soon became infected, his health deteriorated, leading to his death. What had Sorrel stumbled upon? The humble molehill. For years later, Jacobites would secretly raise their glasses to "the little gentleman in the black velvet waistcoat".

Website Address: <https://www.egaa.org.uk>.

Scan the QR code (QR - Quick Response Code) below:



This can be done using your iPhone or your Android mobile phone. You can also download the QR reader software from the iPhone App store or Googleplay



For further information about membership and/or lectures please contact :

Membership Secretary on 01784 452146 or email: enquires@egaa.org.uk

**Non-members welcome – FREE ENTRY to first meeting and thereafter
£3 per meeting
or
Annual membership £15 per person**

