



June 2021

# NEWSLETTER

*Egham Garden & Allotments Association*

SUMMERTIME

2021



It's been a long time coming but finally the weather is improving and as I write this Newsletter it looks like "flaming June" is finally living up to its name so I hope everyone is able to get out and enjoy the sunshine. .

I am pleased to say we have gained a couple of new members over the past months and I would like to welcome Veronica Cresswell and Debbie Nash to our Club.



Work on the website is ongoing but this has been slightly delayed by the arrival

of Stephen's first granddaughter – congratulations Stephen.



Don't be shy – if you have any photos, articles or tips that can be included on the website please let me know.



We held our **SPRING SALE**

on Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> May on the forecourt of the United Reform

Church and I am delighted to say we raised some £546. A huge thank you to Margaret for the number and quality of plants she donated and for her organisation on the day. Thank you also to everyone who donated additional flower, herb and vegetable plants and for their help on the day also. The weather wasn't kind to us but on the whole it was pretty good and we had a steady stream of people throughout the morning.

**See the photos below:**





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## MAGNA CARTA DAY 2021 26th June



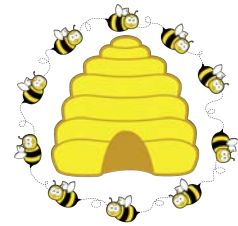
Our next event will be **MAGNA CARTA DAY** which is being held a little later this year on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> June in the hope that it would have taken place out of lockdown. However, come what may it will take place and if anyone has any free time your assistance on our stall during the day will be most welcome. Margaret will also be grateful for help in transporting the plants from her house to the High Street on the day. If you can help please contact Margaret direct on 01344 842657 or [magslister@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:magslister@yahoo.co.uk)



## PROBLEMS WITH MOLES?



Do you have a problem with moles on your allotment plot or in your garden? I certainly do this year on my allotment – every time I go to the allotment there has been fresh activity. Not being of the ilk that can trap and kill them I read in a magazine recently that garden windmills are the answer. Not the little children's plastic ones but the tall metal garden feature ones that have a decent metal spike – no, not to spear them with!! Apparently moles don't like the vibration underground – who knew ??? My other half being a metal worker will be called upon to make some for me – I will let you know if it works!



## HOME MADE HONEY & BEESWAX

***Margaret has her home made honey and beeswax to sell so if you would like some just give her a call on 01344 842657.***



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## HERB OIL & VINEGAR FOR Winter Dressings



At this time of year herbs are growing well and herb oils and vinegars let you preserve the flavour of summer herbs for winter salad dressings, sauces and marinades. Use three or four large sprigs of freshly gathered herbs to 600ml (1pt) or oil or vinegar. For herb oils the “warm infusion” method is recommended because “cold infusion” (where you leave the herbs in oil at room temperature for up to four weeks) carries a risk of cultivating botulism along with the flavour! For the same reason it is advised that no decorative sprig of the herb is added to the oil. You can take your pick between the warm and cold infusion methods for herb vinegars, as the bacteria can’t develop in an acidic environment.

**OIL** : use a good quality oil with a mild or neutral taste eg sunflower or safflower; chop the herbs and put them into a pan with the oil. Heat gently until a few bubbles rise to

the surface. Remove the plan from the heat, cover it, and let the flavouring infuse for about two hours. Strain the oil through filter paper into sterilised bottles, discarding the herbs. Store at room temperature but by keeping it in the fridge it will preserve a better flavour for longer.

**VINEGAR** : use wine or cider vinegar. Coarsely chop or crush the herbs and put into sterilised jars. Top up the jars with cold vinegar and let them stand in a warm place for two to four weeks, giving them a shake every couple of days. Alternatively for faster results, put the herbs and vinegar into a covered bowl over a plan of water. Bring to the boil to heat up the vinegar, the remove the bowl from the pan and let the flavour infuse for about two hours. When you are happy with the flavour, strain through filter paper and discard the herbs. Pour the vinegar into sterilised bottles. Add a fresh sprig

of the herb for decoration if you wish. Store in a cool, dark place.





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## HOW TO MAKE YOUR GARDEN A HAVEN FOR BEES!



Bees are in decline so it is important to plant species which will attract them and help them to thrive.

They are estimated to contribute £651m to the UK economy annually through pollination services. Some 85% of the UK's apple crops and 45% of strawberry crops rely on wild bees and managed honeybees to grow.

Pesticides, disease and loss of habitat have all been cited as reasons for the declining honeybee population so it is important to plant up your garden and/or allotment with bees in mind. Bees prefer open, daisy-like flowers but whatever plant species you choose, plant them in abundance. The honeybee foragers (the older and more experienced individuals in the hive) go out on scouting missions and then with amazing skill and precision, communicate their findings to the rest of the hive. How well

this gets communicated depends on the amount of blossom there is available from which to obtain the pollen. Bees will not get too excited by a scattering of a few plants and they may well get ignored. It is best to plant en bloc to make sure they get noticed so consider what flowers you might provide at different times of the year. January to March bees adore crocus and snowdrops. Anemones of all kinds deliver nectar as well as pollen early and this helps the bees build up their colonies to a size that will enable them to establish good stores in summer.

In the middle of the year, wild plants provide plenty of opportunities for these pollinators, so to really help those in your garden concentrate on early and late plants.

Later in the year bees are grateful for mallows, ivy, sunflowers, cosmos, rudbeckias, echinaceas to

name but a few.

If you want to help bees and other winged insects take time to learn what they like, study their preferences and grow their favourite food. They love marjoram because the concentration of sugar in the nectar is incredibly high.

When you develop an environment attractive to pollinating insects, you also encourage pest predators such as ladybirds.

A note of caution : be wary about sourcing plants from garden centres etc purporting to be bee and pollinator-friendly plants. Often the labels merely refer to the plant genus being perfect for pollinators, but it doesn't identify the method by which the plant has been grown – it is possible it has been grown with neonicotinoid pesticides - *caveat emptor – buyer beware!*