



THE DONHEADS GARDENING CLUB

Website: www.donheadsgardeningclub.co.uk

THE DONHEADS GARDENING CLUB – AUTUMN NEWSLETTER August 2025

What a wonderful summer it has been! There can be no grounds for complaint, other than the obvious problem of the very dry conditions; but the benefits reaped from consistently having the ability to enjoy our gardens and the lovely long evenings has been a real treat. The butterfly population seems to be extra special this year, and thankfully the slugs have been the losers this time! It's been a daily event keeping saucers of water available for the bees and birds etc, and generally speaking, only the very young plants in my garden have been given a helping hand with a drink now and then. But the consistency of bright warm days over the past month or two has been an absolute joy.

Two new members have joined the gardening club over the summer – we welcome Pamela Fisher and Benedict Tomlinson, and hope that they enjoy all that we have to offer with forthcoming events, and the social side of the club as well.

We are looking forward to a guided tour of **Mapperton House** and its magnificent gardens on **Tuesday 9th September** <https://mapperton.com/> The wonderful grade 1 listed manor house was entered into the Domesday book in 1066 and has been the home of the family of the Earl of Sandwich since 1955. The house holds a collection of very special paintings, and the award-winning gardens are famous for their romantic setting, varied planting and their sense of tranquility. The Group ticket price is £18.00p.p. which includes a 50 minute tour of the house at 11.00a.m., and entrance to the gardens. If you would like to join the 2.00pm guided tour of the gardens it is an extra £5.00. If you are an individual RHS member - entrance to the gardens only is free on a Tuesday, but you would need to pay £5.00 for the house tour and £5.00 for the garden tour if you want to join either of those. There will be a complimentary coffee/tea on arrival in the Coach House Cafe. The cafe also serves a light lunch (not complimentary). Mapperton is near Beaminster and is approximately a one and a quarter hour's drive from the Donheads. Please let Penny know by 20th August if you would like to go, or have any questions. Pennyshort2@gmail.com 01747 828062.

We return to the village hall on **Monday 13th October** when we will learn about the wonderful work that the team from '**Hazlebury Hedgehog Rescue**' carry out, caring for sick and injured Hedgehogs in the Dorset area.

Our **November meeting on Monday 10th** will feature a talk from the gardener and acclaimed travel writer **Rosemary Legrand**. Rosemary's beautifully illustrated talks cover the many destinations she has visited across the globe, where she has studied and documented an enormous variety of gardens and their plants. The talk she will be giving is titled 'Spring in Japan' encompassing the exquisite gardens and culture of Japan.

There are two super gardens opening for the **NGS in Donhead St Mary** this month. Donhead Hall, SP7 9DS, is opening its garden on Saturday 23rd August from 1.00-4.00pm. Admission is £7 (children are free) and there will be homemade teas available. The following day the lovely fragrant garden at Castle Rings, SP7 9BZ will be open from 2.00-5.00pm. Admission is £5 (children are free). There is parking available and teas will also be available in the Donhead St Mary village hall.

The Mere Literary Festival takes place this year from 13th-19th October, and one of the authors at the festival this year is Jane Moore, who is the head gardener at a Benedictine Abbey, a writer for national gardening magazines, a researcher on BBC gardening programmes and a TV presenter on BBC Gardeners' World. Jane is the author of six books in the 'Planting For' series, including for instance, Wildlife, Butterflies etc. Her talk on 16th October at 8.00pm, will cover her recent book, 'Planting for a Year of Flowers', and tickets at £10 are available to buy here: <https://mereliteraryfestival.com/product/jane-moore/>

Should any of you be planning a visit to one of the **RHS gardens**, please remember that one of the bonuses of our Club affiliation with the RHS, is that we have an RHS 'Garden Entry Discount Card'. This card is for sharing amongst all our members, and offers two adults (DGC members only) a 50% discount off the entry fee to any RHS Garden - Bridgewater, Harlow Carr, Hyde hall, Rosemoor and Wisley, with unlimited use until it expires on 31st January 2026, with the exception of Flower Shows and Glow events. If you would like to use this card over the coming months, please get in touch with me for further details at vdaniell66@gmail.com or 01747 828161.

We hope you will enjoy all the club events that are planned for this year. Penny will email timing and details of each event to you about a week or two beforehand.

In the meantime, let's enjoy the rest of this glorious summer!

Vicky