

The Donheads Gardening Club
2019 CALENDAR

- January 14th** 'Secret Life of Birds' Ornithologist - Dominic Couzens
- February 11th** 'Propagation & Seed's - Castle Gardens
- March 11th** AGM followed by Seed Swap &
Spring Bulb Competition
- April 8th** 'Becoming a Gardener' - Andrew Leeder
- May 13th** Discount Evening + Talk - Castle Gardens, Sherborne
- June 6th** Garden Visit - Abbotsbury Subtropical Gardens
- June 20th** Garden Visit - Plank House, Wyke, Gillingham
- July 11th** Garden Visit - The Old Rectory, Manston
- August** HOLIDAY TIME
- September 9th** 'Carnivorous Plants' - Denis Balsdon
- October 14th** 'Pickles & Preserves' - Caroline Pakenham
- November 11th** 'Garden Ponds' - Castle Gardens
- December 9th** Christmas Get-Together

Some of these events may be subject to change
check the club's website for updates



Contact Details:

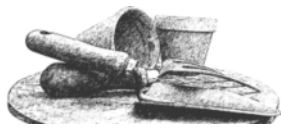
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The Donheads Gardening Club

Newsletter No. 70
Spring 2019



*Affiliated to: The Royal Horticultural Society,
The Wiltshire Gardens Trust & The Gardens Group, Sherborne*
www.donheadsgardeningclub.co.uk



THE DONHEADS GARDENING CLUB

Affiliated to the Royal Horticultural Society, The Wiltshire Gardens Trust & The Gardens Group, Sherborne

Chairman: Kevin Wood 07815 813629 • Treasurer: Roger Giles 828663 • Secretary: Vicky Daniell 828161

Newsletter No.70 • March 2019

Unless otherwise stated all meetings are held at Donhead St Mary Village Hall at 7.30pm. Visitors and guests are always welcome (for whom a fee of £5.00 is requested). Refreshments available from 7.00pm (a donation of 50p is suggested).

Although only February, it feels surprisingly like early spring! It is always uplifting to see the snowdrops and crocus in abundance, and now even the daffodils are appearing, while the daylight hours are certainly increasing by the day.

Seven new members have joined the Gardening Club since our last newsletter in November. We are pleased to welcome, Henrietta Edwards, Angela Marshall, Ian and Kathy Hunter, Frank Ewins, Graham Whitehouse and Graeme Barnes. We hope you will all enjoy the season of events planned for the summer.

The next date in the diary is our AGM on Monday 11th March. Please do support this necessary requirement of the Club's Constitution. As in previous years we will email the Agenda, 2018 Minutes and all other relevant papers to you prior to the meeting. For those of you without email, there will be some printed copies in the hall for you to read beforehand. This will be a social evening with wine available, and an opportunity for you to offer any suggestions or possible changes to the way the Club is currently running. The committee would welcome your feedback so do please bring any questions or ideas with you! During the meeting we will also be holding the 'Seed Swap' as planned; when members can bring any seed saved from their gardens last year, and find tempting alternatives available. For those of you who have been nurturing daffodil bulbs over the winter - now is their time to shine and be judged, so please bring them along for the line-up! Any of you wanting another floral challenge, there will be plug plants of Geranium and Fuchsia available for bringing on for appraisal at the end of the summer! Finally a reminder please to bring your cheque books or cash with you as the £15.00 annual subscription fee is also due in March.

Please note there is a change to the calendar for our meeting on Monday 8th April. Our speaker will now be Bournemouth based gardener Andrew Leeder. Andrew will share with us his journey towards 'Becoming a Gardener'. He will take us from his teenage years when he was asked to help clear his neighbour's jungle of a garden prior to selling their house, through the more inspiring results he has achieved developing gardens of his own and for others along the way.

Also in April, Amity will be hosting a speaker from Salisbury Hospital's Horatio's Garden. They would welcome any Gardening Club members who might like to attend this talk which will no doubt be very interesting. The date is Thursday 4th April, at 2.00pm, DSM village hall and the price for guests is £5.00 which includes an excellent tea!

On Monday 13th May from 6.45 p.m. we have our annual discount evening at Castle Gardens in Sherborne. This is always a wonderful opportunity to buy plants or tools etc for the season ahead, and we have the entire Garden Centre to ourselves!

We have two fabulous garden visits to look forward to in June. The first on Thursday 6th is to the Subtropical Gardens and Swannery at Abbotsbury. From its early origins in 1765 as a kitchen garden to the nearby castle of the first countess of Ilchester, the Subtropical Garden has developed into a magnificent 30 acre site filled with rare and exotic plants, first introduced to this country by plant hunting descendants of the countess. This special garden has been recognised with several awards over the years, and is described by Alan Titchmarsh as 'one of the finest gardens I have ever visited'. The Swannery was established by Benedictine Monks who built the monastery at Abbotsbury during the 1040s. They farmed the swans to provide food for their lavish banquets! Today the Swannery and Nature Reserve is under the stewardship of the Ilchester Estates and is home to the only colony of nesting Mute swans that can be visited anywhere in the world. Suggested timings for this visit are to arrive at the Subtropical Gardens at 11.00 a.m. There is a good cafe/restaurant serving coffee, lunch etc. A visit to the Swannery is optional and is just a short drive away. Arriving at the Swannery around 4.00 p.m. should coincide with the feeding of the hundreds of cygnets that hatch out in late May and June. The price for the Subtropical Gardens only is £9.00, and for the Gardens and Swannery combined it is £14.00. We can help to arrange car sharing if required.

Also in June on Thursday 20th at 2.30p.m., we are booked for a visit to Plank House near Gillingham. This lovely garden was originally part of King John's hunting ground and the Royal Forest of Gillingham. The river Stour flows alongside part of the garden, where during the landscaping process some evidence was discovered of a possible Plantagenet toll having been in place. During the First World War the house was used as a Red Cross hospital and 606 patients were treated here during five years. This is now very much a private garden that includes roses, vegetables, soft fruit and an apple tunnel; it is bordered by many native English trees. A voluntary donation of around £8.00 to include a cream tea will go to the owner's chosen charity 'Read Easy'.

On Thursday 11th July at 2.30p.m., we visit The Old Rectory at Manston. Featured both in Country Life and Dorset Life magazines and just six miles south of Shaftesbury, this beautifully restored five acre garden includes a south facing wall with 120 feet of herbaceous border sitting under it. Many lovely aspects of this garden include formal yew hedging around planting within, plus a wildflower meadow and a young plantation of mixed hardwoods. There is a well maintained walled kitchen garden including a cut flower area, together with a large greenhouse and a knot garden. The cost of this visit is £5.00 for the garden only, plus the option of tea for a further £5.00.

If you are interested in any of the visits please let us know, either by putting your name on one of the boards available at our spring meetings, or by contacting Fran Robson on 01747 828032. We will need payment at the time of booking in order to secure your place.

We have our events secretary Louis Parker (and the late Juliet Rogers) to thank for putting these really tempting visits and speakers together for us. On that note, we would like to put out a request once again to any of you who feel you would like to come and join us on the committee - you would be welcomed with open arms! Our committee meetings, just three times a year are friendly gatherings around one of our kitchen tables, and we would welcome some new input from anyone who was interested - gardening knowledge is not a requirement!

Finally, if you harbour a secret yearning to be published - the Donhead Digest is a good place to start! The Gardening Club have a page in the Digest every other month and we are always looking for authors. Anything vaguely garden related, no technical knowledge is necessary - do please get in touch. Contact Vicky Daniell on 01747 828161.

Please check our website for details of all our forthcoming club meetings and events.
www.donheadsgardeningclub.co.uk