

# NEWSLETTER

## PLANT OF THE MONTH

### Alstroemeria

Despite their lily-like appearance and being known as Peruvian Lily and Lily of the Incas, alstroemeria are not true lilies. They belong to the Alstroemeriaceae family and grow wild in South America under extremely varied conditions - from high up in the snow-capped Andes down into the damp forests and dry deserts along the coast. Some have become naturalised in the United



States, Mexico, Australia, New Zealand, Madeira and the Canary Islands. First grown in Peru, Brazil and Chile, they were named after Baron Clas Alströmer who was a Swedish naturalist and student of the distinguished botanist and classifier Carl Linnaeus.

An interesting and unusual characteristic of Alstroemeria's leaves is "resupination". This originates from the Latin word "resupinus" which means "bent back with the face upward". So their leaves twist 180 degrees from the base as they unfurl and what we see as the upper leaf surface is

in fact the lower surface. The exact reason for this is unknown but it explains why I have always thought the leaves looked a bit odd! The flower symbolises friendship, and the ability to help each other through the trials and tribulations of life - a bit apt at the moment! Each of the six Alstroemeria petals supposedly representing a special characteristic: understanding, humour, patience, empathy, commitment and respect. A deeper meaning can be assigned to the plant based on its colour.

- White: symbolises love, strength, support and purity.
- Yellow: vibrant and fun, and represents happiness and energy.
- Pink: represents romance and playfulness.
- Red: this alstroemeria colour represents passion.

Alstroemeria make great 'cut' flowers, and a bit like sweet peas the more you pick the more you get and they can keep flowering for 4 - 5 months if you are lucky. They can also last for up to 14 days in a vase if you remove all leaves below the water level and replace the water every few days. Actually they won't be 'cut' flowers as instead of cutting you get hold of the stem about halfway down and give it a gentle twist followed by a sharp tug which will pull out the stem. This encourages more flowering and makes sure there are no pieces of stem left to rot which can cause fungal disease to build up on the root. Pick them at the point when the buds are not yet open but have colour.

Plant nurseries recommend that you allow new plants to become firmly established (least one summer after planting) until employing the 'ripping' method of picking. You can still have fresh flowers by cutting them instead until the roots have had time to establish.

### BHS News

I have made plans to redo my garden for next year based on the last few weeks weather - I am going to grow rice instead of a lawn! Its completely underwater ATM but at least the car doesn't need washing as the flooded road outside the house is giving my car a jet wash. Also my failed New Years resolution to stake plants has failed and my 6 foot

helianthus 'Lemon Queen' - just coming into flower, has been flattened.



Anyway good to have climate change rather than Covid to talk/ moan about!

Barbara



## WHAT'S COMING UP AT BHS IN 2021/22

---

Meetings will be held at St James Parish Church Hall,  
Church Street, Weybridge, Surrey, KT13 8DE.

They will be on the first Wednesday afternoon of the month starting on the  
6th October from 1.30 - 3.45pm.

We are planning to serve tea and biscuits when you arrive and start the talk  
around 2pm.

More details re directions and parking options will be supplied next month

---

6th October, 2021	Peter Herring <b>Fungi: Friend or Foe</b>
3rd November, 2021	Tim Woodland <b>Planting and growing Spring Flowering Bulbs</b> Bulbs for sale
1st December, 2021	TBC: Sarah Squire <b>Inside secrets of our local garden centres</b>
5th January 2022	TBC: Neil Miller <b>The Secrets of Hever Castle Gardens</b>
2nd February 2022	Darren Lerigo <b>What do I do with this space?</b>
2nd March 2022	Cherrill Sands <b>Tulips and Turbans</b>
6th April 2022	AGM and Spring Show

---



# BIG BUTTERFLY COUNT

16 JULY - 8 AUGUST 2021

## Are you Doing the Big Butterfly Count?

Spend 15 minutes in a sunny spot. Use this chart to note how many of each species you see. Then submit your sightings at [www.bigbutterflycount.org](http://www.bigbutterflycount.org) or download the free app. Its running until August 8th so hopefully we will get some sunshine between now and then.

*NB: I have found the butterflies a bit few and far between this year. The Peacocks and Red Admirals were around early on but very few recently apart from the Cabbage Whites of course!*

Large White <input type="checkbox"/>	Small White <input type="checkbox"/>	Green Veined White <input type="checkbox"/>	Brimstone <input type="checkbox"/>
Small Copper <input type="checkbox"/>	Speckled Wood <input type="checkbox"/>	Meadow Brown <input type="checkbox"/>	Ringlet <input type="checkbox"/>
Comma <input type="checkbox"/>	Painted Lady <input type="checkbox"/>	Peacock <input type="checkbox"/>	Red Admiral <input type="checkbox"/>
Common Blue <input type="checkbox"/>	Holly Blue <input type="checkbox"/>	Silver Y <input type="checkbox"/>	Six-spot Burnet <input type="checkbox"/>
Marbled White <input type="checkbox"/>	Gatekeeper <input type="checkbox"/>	Small Tortoiseshell <input type="checkbox"/>	Jersey Tiger <input type="checkbox"/>





## Beware the Perils of Gardening

says Mike Stockbridge of Elstead  
Chiropractic and Therapies Clinic

Reproduced from  
[www.vantageointmag.co.uk](http://www.vantageointmag.co.uk)

Hard to believe, but every year, chiropractors, osteopaths and masseurs are inundated with victims of gardening injuries!



Here are some guidelines that gardeners should be sticking to:

When digging, hoeing or raking: change over with your leading hand every 5 minutes – this will mean you twist your body equally in both directions, avoid stressing the joints on one side of the pelvis more than the other and prevent the pelvic joints from slipping – the most common cause of low back pain that we see.

When kneeling with a trowel: change knees every 5 minutes and, if possible, change your trowel hand too. This will mean, again, not twisting the upper and low back in one direction for prolonged periods – it is prolonged asymmetrical postures that lead to vertebrae twisting out of position, leading to inflamed stuck joints.

When using shears: remember to drop your arms to rest the shoulder muscles every few minutes. Prolonged raising of the arms sets off tendonitis that can, in the worst cases, lead to a frozen shoulder.

When picking up heavy objects: we all know to 'bend zee knees', but should also remember to pull in the belly button half an inch. Those of you who do Pilates will know that this is a way of activating your abdominal muscles so they act as a muscle corset around your low back, preventing the pelvic joints from slipping.

When laying a patio: lift the slabs against one thigh whilst walking with them, then switch to the other thigh for the next slab. This will help to keep your body taking the strain in a more symmetrical way and avoid muscles pulling on one side of your back. Again, couple it with pulling in the belly button.

When pruning or deadheading: if you have osteoarthritic finger joints, use neoprene Thermoskin fingerless gloves to keep the joints warm and prevent them from stiffening. When you come in from the cold, put your fingers in a hot water bath for 5 minutes. At night, try smearing the joints with 'Joint-ace' (glucosamine and chondroitin gel) or an anti-inflammatory gel, and wrap them in Clingfilm or latex gloves, so the gel can be absorbed.

When weeding or planting: don't stay stooped over for too long – it's easy to get carried away and lost in a job, then find, when you straighten up, that your back muscles have tightened right up. Remember to straighten, stand upright, bend backwards and swing your hips every few minutes to avoid over-tightening muscles.

When up a ladder: place the ladder to face the job you are doing, to avoid leaning or twisting sideways to reach, so that you don't over-strain one side of your back. Also try to get high enough that you're above the area you're working on rather than reaching up for long periods, so avoiding over-straining the shoulder muscles, which can result in shoulder tendonitis.

## Some July Stunners

These have been flowering in a large pot on my patio for several weeks. Flowers only last a day and I think they are bulbs called Tigridia but I have no recollection of planting them.  
Hey Ho!



Ann's amazing lilies - the scent must be fantastic

Jenny T asked members back in January 'what can I plant here in this north facing front garden bed between the house and the garage?' She has since dug out the wild garlic and lily of the valley (although I suspect this will be an ongoing task for a few years). She got some suggestions but fortunately didn't plant anything as look how much space is available now? She had obviously forgotten how large these magnificent hydrangeas get in the summer. They were gifts when they moved to the house many years ago. She has now decided to stick with Spring bulbs, hellebores and bergenias to give some colour before the hydrangeas come into bud.





## July Colour in Jenny Tribe's Garden

### Water Feature

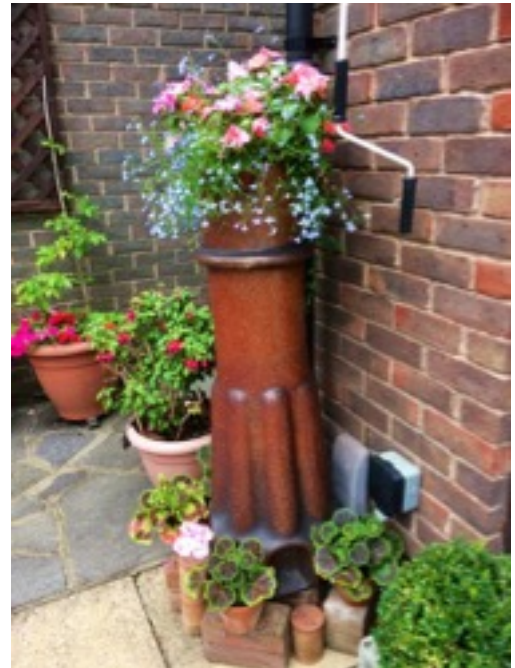
As this is in front of a 6' fence and is North facing, I decided to experiment with pots of Foxgloves, Lobelia, Busy Lizzies and Geraniums. The Foxgloves have not grown much and together with the Geraniums that both are very late in flowering. Certainly gives this area colour.



'Terrace'  
Outside Patio  
Window

Trying to  
maximise the

terrace area for outdoor eating, decided to create a Courtyard. The mirror was a birthday present and by moving the planters can now sit 8 round an oblong table - still a bit friendly! The planters contain Busy Lizzie, Fuchsia. The trellis fence behind is a rose 'Bonnie James' with Foxgloves and Busy Lizzies. We moved the Chimney Pot which contains Busy Lizzies and Lobelia, surrounded it by small pots with no drainage holes and pots of Geraniums on bricks. We now have three square tubs containing Box in line with the step. Much improvement!





## Bits and Bobs



Anyone know what this is. I am fairly sure I didn't plant it!



### Still got Lavender in Flower? Make some Lavender Sugar

Just mix 2 teaspoons of flowers with 1kg sugar. Store in a sterilised air-tight jar to create a fragrant floral sweetener for shortbread, cupcakes or tart summer berry desserts.

### Picking Dahlia's

Choose flowers that are open or nearly open because the buds will not open once they're cut - I didn't know this! Try to make the cut just above a set of leaf nodes and side buds. New shoots will grow from those nodes.

After you've harvested dahlia flowers, make a fresh horizontal cut at the bottom of the stem and place the cut ends in about 2-3 inches of very hot (not quite boiling) water. Let the stems stay in the water for at least one hour. This hot-water treatment conditions the stems so the blooms will last four to six days.



You probably know this about growing cucumbers - but I didn't.

Many varieties have both male and female flowers on the same plants.



- Both should be left on outdoor varieties, but pinch off the male flowers when they appear on indoor varieties to prevent the fruit from becoming bitter.
- The flowers are easy to tell apart - the female flower has a swelling beneath it that will become a cucumber.
- Alternatively, choose all female flower varieties.

Lightwater Gardening Club are having a plant stall at Windlesham Fete on August 30th Bank Holiday Monday if you fancy an outing. It is on the Field of Remembrance which is in the middle of the village in Updown Hill. They have built a lovely coffee shop where the pavilion was which is called The Hub. It has been a great meeting place for lonely folks during the Pandemic. One of their members does ironwork and will be displaying some of her samples - sounds interesting if they are garden ornaments.