



WHALEY BRIDGE Allotment & Gardeners' Society



July 2020

Welcome to the lockdown news. Days of blazing sun and sudden showers of torrential rain have challenged our green fingers but hopefully you are now all enjoying the fruits of your labours.

Thanks to **Christine Lomas Marshall** for sending me pictures of her plot on Macclesfield Road.



This looks like the perfect spot for a G & T. even if you only have your shadow for company!

I have been busy with a few projects to while away the time. I have always wanted an auricula theatre and was able to buy a reproduction mahogany bookcase from an online Adam Partridge auction. Several coats of chalk paint and marine varnish later it is now set up but I was too late to obtain any auriculas this year.



I also made a small, solar powered water feature so the birds can now choose between a bath and a shower, they seem to appreciate both.



Please send pictures of your projects to aizlewood@sky.com as I'm sure you have all been busy in the garden.

Roger Wood has taken advantage of the lockdown to clear an overgrown bed at the bottom of his garden.



Having filled 10 compost bags with debris, he had to call a halt until the tip reopened.



As usual he propagated many perennials for the cancelled coffee morning. Luckily Roy at the pet shop took them and sold out within 48 hours. If you bought any you will know they

came from an excellent source, (see below).



Alec Clough is harvesting his first tomatoes and reports that they are delicious. I have to take his word for this as he hasn't provided samples!



Bob Kellock has had a glut of redcurrants on his allotment. High in vitamin C, these can be used in sweet and savoury dishes. Rich desserts such as cheesecake benefit from their added sharpness and they make an excellent sauce combined with port to accompany game.

New members

We welcome three new members from Whaley Bridge – Warren Lockett, Sonya Pickford and Matt Stokes.

If lockdown has increased your love of gardening don't forget to ask **David Osborn** for a copy of next year's Dobies seed catalogue with 50% discount on all flower and vegetable seeds for members.

Out and about.

Some NGS gardens are now open for visits with limited numbers and timed tickets which need to be booked in advance online. New tickets are released each Monday. National Trust parks and gardens are operating on a similar basis with tickets released each Friday. I was able to make an enjoyable visit to the gardens at Quarry Bank Mill.



The upper garden has restored glasshouses, a productive kitchen garden, a glorious peony border with a walk through the woods down to the River Bollin. This takes you to the riverside flower and shrub borders.

The RHS Tatton flower show will "go virtual" on 22nd July with a day of dedicated content on its website including ideas for gardening in small spaces inspired by the back to back gardens.

MUSINGS from PODICEPS CRISTATUS

Despite the lack of water at Toddbrook the Whaley Grebe is flying over from Combs once or twice a week to check out the changing face of the reservoir. The low water level has resulted in a greatly increased area of bank and beach which has brought in many new visitors. Two pairs of lapwings seem to

have settled nearby and one pair was busy preparing a scrape.

Our old friends, the Canada Geese, are very much in evidence with one family proudly marching their five fluffy goslings up and down the muddy waterside most evenings. The area of exposed mud around the residual reservoir pond has attracted quite a variety of waders and long billed birds, our resident herons, many oyster catchers and ringed plovers have been seen.



The most obvious change is the rapid growth of vegetation over the whole surface of the exposed silt. Huge banks of willow herb and vetch grass are 30 inches high but the real surprise is the appearance of a mass of brilliant yellow flowers identified as "Tilling's monkey flower" (*Erythranthe tillingii*) We used to know this as *mimulus*. Whose garden has that come from?



That's all for now. Keep safe and patient until we are fully released from the Coronavirus lockdown.