

WHALEY BRIDGE Allotment & Gardeners' Society

August 2015

I hope you are all taking advantage of the recent fine days, at least all the damp weather has provided a bumper crop of soft fruit. Somehow, whatever the forecast, Rosemary manages to arrange fine weather for our days out and the recent expedition was no exception.

Report on coach trip 23rd July 2015 to Burnby Hall Gardens and Breezy Knees

A party of 18 set out on a cool and cloudy summer's day, thankfully free of rain.



Our first stop was Burnby Hall gardens and museum, approx. 15 miles east of York, renowned for its superb national collection of hardy water lilies (over 100 varieties). With a little sunshine the flowers began to open up, each patch of lilies was labelled on posts on the upper and lower lakes.



We had a brief introductory talk by the head gardener. The original owner of the estate, Major Percy Stewart, an adventurer and collector, developed the gardens, inspired by his wife Katherine, and left them in trust after his death in 1962. The lakes are full of carp and roach which could easily be fed along the edges adding greatly to the interest.



Other attractions were the stumpery, Victorian garden, aviary, and rockery, all in a very attractive park setting.



Refreshments at the Lilypad café were enjoyed by all.



Our next stop was Breezy Knees Garden & Nursery, on land which was arable farmland, exposed to the wind - hence 'Breezy Knees'. The site has been developed since 1999 with trees, shrubs and hedges, then flower borders, created in 2006, and expanded into numerous varied gardens covering an extensive area.



It was quite possible to get disorientated but everything was extremely well laid out with very impressive large scale planting combined with features such as the timed fountain and double borders.



To minimise weeding and retain moisture the beds are generously covered with bark chippings which also show the planting off to best effect. All the plants are kept in excellent condition, almost too good to be true, and must reflect a considerable investment. The Nursery claims to be

'perennial specialists' reflecting everything seen growing in the gardens. We certainly felt they were designed to show plants at their best. As visitors we were duly impressed, albeit glad of some further refreshments at the café to restore us before the journey back home.



COMING EVENTS

Daresbury and Norton Priory Walled Garden – Thursday 1st October.

This visit will add to the interesting talk on the walled garden's restoration we were given on 8th May. The coach will leave Whaley at 9.30 a.m. The cost is £22.60 – payments to Rosemary by 18th September please. (01663 733393)

Talk by Anthony Norman of Conquest Plants – Thursday 29th October.

2 p.m. at the Uniting Church. Roy will speak about "Colour in Seasons" and is a regular stall holder at specialist plant fairs.

Also advance reminders of our AGM on Friday 6th November 2 p.m. and our Christmas coffee morning on Saturday 19th December. Further details in the October newsletter. If you have any unwanted decorative pots suitable for amaryllis or other bulbs please could you pass them on to any committee member so we can pot up bulbs for sale as gifts.

OUT AND ABOUT

Don't forget the Whaley Bridge Show and Garden Society annual show taking place on Saturday 6th September at 1.30 p.m. at the Bowling Club. There are over 100 different classes to enter including not just vegetables and flowers but also

arts and crafts, baking and preserves, photography and homecrafts, a children's section and delicious cream teas. For further information and an entry form please contact Mr C Heathcote (01663 73346) or Mrs G Slater (01663 733140).

Chapel Gardening Club have speakers on Butterflies on 26th August and the Imperial Gardens of Japan on 30th September – both 7.30 at Chapel Town Hall.

Julie's annual "Party in the Field" will be held on Monday 31st August from 12.30 p.m. in the field next to 7, Dane Hill Close, Disley SK12 2BP (opposite the Ploughboy on Buxton Old Road) to raise money for cancer research at Christie. Bring your own seat and enjoy music, plants, cakes and refreshments, a raffle and auction. A total of £8,000 has been raised since this event began. More information from Julie 01663 763331/juliebat@live.com

NEW MEMBERS

We have been pleased to see new faces joining in events this year and welcome new members Mr Roy Travis and Mr and Mrs David and Diane Beever.

Roy says not enough people see his lovely garden on Whaley Lane – maybe we should gauge the interest level for a members' open garden event next year.

STORE NEWS

The store has now closed but David Osborn and his team would like to thank everyone for their support in making this a successful year. If you need any items please call David (01663 733659) or Dave Parker (01663 750172) who will do their best to oblige.

MAKE A BEE AND BEE

Create your own bed and breakfast accommodation for bees; a bee hotel to provide nesting spaces for many different types of solitary bees, breakfast from simple and wildflowers with nourishing nectar and a refreshing water source to allow honey bees to collect water to cool their hive.

Our bees are facing an unprecedented crisis. They've lost much of their natural habitat in the last 60 years including 97% of wildflower rich meadows and are

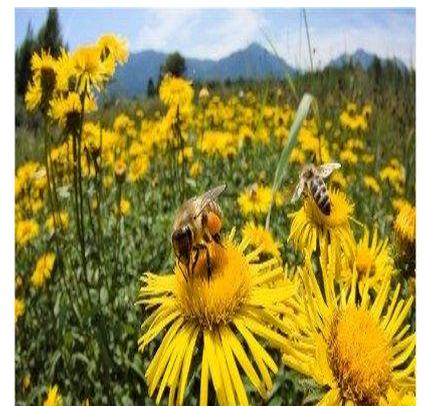
under assault from pesticides, parasites and intensive farming methods. By creating bee-friendly spaces in our gardens we can start to replace and restore lost habitat.

In the UK there are more than 220 species of bees, many of which are under threat. Solitary bees make individual nests for their larvae in holes in the ground, hollow stems of dead flowers, old brick walls or logs. One of the features of the walled garden at Norton Priory is a wall built to house mason bees.

One of the simplest methods of making a bee hotel is from a section of old plastic bottle filled with nesting material of hollow stems of varying sizes – this should be hung in a sheltered spot at least 1 metre off the ground.

Further details can be found on the Friends of the Earth web site foe.co.uk/bee_hotel.

Bees also need a year round supply of bee friendly flowers for nectar and pollen. If possible aim for a range of plants which flower at different times throughout the year – not all flowers are bee - friendly; generally speaking avoid double flowers which have so many close petals that bees cannot reach the nectar. The RHS mark suitable plants as "Perfect for Pollinators" and you can find more bee-friendly gardening tips at foe.co.uk/beegardentips.



The Bumblebee Conservation Trust has an interesting web site which can help you to identify any bees you see; they even produce an iPhone identification app. for those of you living in the 21st century. For those like me still hankering after the 20th, I would be happy to print any information/leaflets mentioned. Just give me a call on 01663 733070.