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Charlton & Blackheath  
Amateur Horticultural Society  
Founded 1950

[www.cabahs.wordpress.com](http://www.cabahs.wordpress.com)



## NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER 2019

Welcome to the last meeting of 2019! Tonight we have our special lecture by Nick Bailey, who will talk about how to have “365 Days of Colour in your Garden”. We hope you can stay on a little while after the talk as we will be serving free refreshments including some home bakes (practicing for Christmas!).

Everyone on the Committee hopes you have enjoyed our talks, shows, outings and other activities as much as we have. We seem to have been successful, our membership now stands at 132 and fills up the space in the Old Library. Charlton House is such a wonderful venue to hold our meetings, we think it's worth having to be a bit forgiving occasionally about its elderly quirks (like the heating..).

Remember CABAHS 2019 New Year Resolutions? Our top vote was to try to go peat-free this year, and it was very topical to pick that, as there has been so much about it in the news this year. ITV's Tonight programme showed aerial footage of machinery stripping peat bogs in Ireland, it was truly shocking. The clip is on our website for when you feel your resolve slipping! But even if you haven't managed to go completely peat free, just being aware and reducing it as much as possible is going to help.

### **Dates for your diary**

- Chelsea Physic Garden Christmas Fair - 22-24 November, £7
- Kew Gardens Xmas Light Up – 20 Nov-5 Jan, 5-10pm from £18.
- Blackheath Flower Arranging Club, Dec 6<sup>th</sup> 2pm Mycenae House, AGM and wreath making class, £15 for non-members, ring and foliage provided.
- Hadlow College Shooters Hill campus (near Eaglesfield Rd) Dec12<sup>th</sup> “Winter Gardening” 1 day course £30. See leaflets or website to browse for more.

### **Pat's 10 Jobs for November:**

Pat's top job this month is to go away on holiday! She is sunning herself in South Africa (lucky thing), and I expect she has already done all her winter jobs and put her garden to bed. In her absence, here are a few ideas:

1. Protection of tender plants is really important now the nights are finally turning cold. As we are sheltered in London, moving pots to a spot up against a house wall, or in a cold frame can be enough to get them through. Keeping the rain off is almost

as important as keeping cold at bay. Raise pots off the ground with pot feet or stones for drainage and to stop any frost from seeping in.

2. All the books say to plant tulips this month. Absolutely right, but it's also not too late to get in all those other spring bulbs you bought and haven't got around to yet! Remember Anne (last month's speaker) from Rose Cottage's tip is to never leave bare earth above bulbs. So put a layer of grit, or overplant with violas or alpine strawberries, or just stick in prickly holly leaf prunings, this will help ward off squirrels (allegedly). I find an upturned hanging basket works well too.

3. Remember to feed the birds, and keep birdbaths clean and topped up.

4. Focus on houseplants. Some "outside" plants do well on a sunny windowsill and brighten the winter days when you can't get out. Herbs are good for a display, or scented pelargoniums. Succulents can cope with radiators but site other plants away from them or stand on a gravel-filled saucer with a little water.

### Some Christmassy facts ( 36 days to go...):

- In the UK, natural Christmas trees out-sell artificial ones by 3:1
- Christmas trees grow on average 15 years before they're sold.
- Many parts of the Christmas tree are edible, needles being a good source of Vitamin C.
- It is thought 370 million mince pies will be sold in the UK over the Xmas period.
- Mel Torme's "Christmas Song" (commonly known as "Chestnuts roasting on an open fire") was written during a summer heatwave in 1944.
- Poinsettia's get their name from the first American minister to Mexico.
- Raking and bagging leaves uses up 350-450 calories an hour 😊
- Christmas is abbreviated to Xmas because the Greek letter X ("chi") is the first letter of the Greek word for Christ or Christos.
- Mistletoe is from the Anglo Saxon word mistelan, which means "little dung twig", because the plant spreads through bird droppings. Something to think about when you are kissing under it!
- According to tradition, you should eat one mince pie for each of the 12 days of Christmas to bring good luck. (I don't think this is a firm rule, I'm sure you can eat more..)

Q *Why was the snowman looking through the carrots?*

A *He was picking his nose*

Q *What did Adam say the day before Christmas?*

A *It's Christmas Eve*

And on that note.. **Happy Christmas to all CABAHS members!** Next meeting is **20<sup>th</sup> January 2020** at 7.30pm for a talk about "Gales, Greenhouses and Global Warming" from Ian Currie of Frosted Earth.com



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