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Charlton & Blackheath  
Amateur Horticultural Society  
www.cabahs.wordpress.com



## NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2020

**A Happy New Year to all!**

Members will know that we celebrate our 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year and we will be recognising this in a number of ways. The theme of 'platinum' will thread throughout the year - keep a lookout for this. Our logo will change slightly, and we will be incorporating a slogan into our publicity material - we invite you to vote for the one you think best suits us, see the Noticeboard tonight.

Today we welcome Ian Currie, who will talk to us about 'Gales, Greenhouses and Global Warming'. Ian is a meteorologist and runs the Frosted Earth website.

As last year, we invite all members to write down their New Year's gardening resolution on a luggage tag (you can remain anonymous if you wish!) and we will re-visit these at the end of the year to see how many of us kept to them!

### Winter in Vija's garden

Last year I wrote in the Newsletter that I had winter aconites in flower, hellebores and, of course snowdrops, with a few pulmonaria just making an early start. In addition, this year I can see that all my camellias are breaking their buds.

I also noted the spread of the box moth caterpillar which has now, despite my best efforts, decimated my bushes. I have had to remove all from my garden. Greenwich Park have also now lost all their box hedging in the parterre in the lower herb garden and in other places in the rest of the park. They are in the process of replacing it but it will take some time to look good again.

If the winter weather keeps you indoors you can listen to the RHS Gardening Podcasts at [rhs.org.uk/podcasts](https://rhs.org.uk/podcasts) which offer seasonal advice and inspiration. The Garden Podcast [rhs.org.uk/thegardenpodcast](https://rhs.org.uk/thegardenpodcast) delves deeper into horticultural topics.

### Notes for your diary (see What'sOn page of our website)

- **Hever Castle Kent -Snowdrop walk**, from 8 Feb onwards, self-guided walks.
- **Greenwich Park Revisited** a talk by Graham Dear at the Institute of Historical Research, Malet St, WC1E, 10 Feb, 6pm Booking essential.
- **Making New Plants**, part of a series of talks by Jim Endersby at Gresham Halls, Holborn, free of charge, but numbers are limited. 10<sup>th</sup> February, 7pm.
- **Great Comp -Snowdrop Sensation** 16 Feb, £8.50, talks and plants for sale.

- **Good Gardeners of Planet Earth**, a talk by Jim Endersby at Gresham Halls, Holborn, 23 March, 7pm.
- **The Garden Museum**, Lambeth, has a programme of events which includes *Finding Change in the Garden* with contributions from Jack Wallington, Matt Collins and Charlie Hawkes. 28<sup>th</sup> January 7pm.
- If you are interested in **houseplants**, check out the article on **Jamie Song** on the **Gardenista** website, which is inspirational.
- **RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch**, 25-27 January. Register at [rspb.co.uk](http://rspb.co.uk).

## Pat's 10 jobs for January:

1. Time to cut back dead stems of perennials and compost them if they are not too dry but do watch out for overwintering ladybirds which often hibernate in thick stems.
2. The ground is absolutely soaking at the moment so better to leave any heavy digging where soil is compacted until it dries out a bit.
3. Move scented shrubs in pots like Viburnum bodnantense and Sarcococca and maybe Daphne close to your back or front door so you can catch the scent.
4. This is a good time to prune many deciduous trees but not magnolia or stone fruit trees like plums which are better pruned in the summer. This helps prevent disease.
5. Look out for leaf spot on hellebores and violas which are a result of fungal disease and remove the leaves as soon as possible avoiding adding these to the compost heap. Removing old leaves on hellebores improves the look of the plant as the flowers emerge.
6. Now is the time to do hardwood cuttings from shrubs and roses by using cuttings 6 to 12 inches long cutting below a bud at the base and with a slanted cut at the top. Insert either in the ground or in pots and await events. I always grow all my blackcurrants from cuttings which root easily.
7. Make sure that ponds are clear of fallen leaves as these will pollute the water very quickly but watch out for hibernating wildlife.
8. Prune redcurrants, gooseberries and whitecurrants now by pruning side shoots two buds from their base. Shorten main branches by a quarter pruning to an outward facing bud.
9. Encourage birds into the garden with feeders and make sure they have clean water for drinking and bathing.
10. In the veg garden remember to keep harvesting kale, chard and perpetual spinach to prevent it going to seed. My kale has been wonderful all winter and doesn't stop cropping.

Happy winter gardening, lets hope for some dry weather!

As the gardening season will soon get under way, members might like to be reminded that we hold cards for Provender Nursery (Swanley) which give a substantial discount on all their plants.

Our next meeting will be on February 17<sup>th</sup>, the Annual General Meeting, when we review the year, the committee is elected and membership can be renewed. We are always very interested to hear from any member who is thinking of standing for the committee, please do let us know.

Contact us on: [cabahshortisoc@gmail.com](mailto:cabahshortisoc@gmail.com)