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Charlton & Blackheath
Amateur Horticultural Society
Founded 1950

www.cabahs.wordpress.com



NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER 2023

Grow Friends, Grow Fit ... Grow a Garden!

Our next meeting will be on Monday 20 November at Charlton House when Timothy Walker, horticultural expert and tv presenter, will talk about 'Sex, Lies and Putrefaction'. The meeting will begin promptly at 7.30pm in the Old Library.

Committee members will be around from 7pm to chat to anyone interested in putting themselves forward to join the committee at the AGM in February next year. Let us know when you sign in and one or other of us will be happy to answer questions (and encourage!).

As it's our last meeting of the year there will be a festive theme! The raffle will include a Christmas hamper as well as the usual plants. We would welcome leaves and berries on the show table, especially holly! There will be plants from the Old Pond Garden on sale and tulip bulbs. Mince pies will be provided by the committee, Frilly's Café are providing other refreshments.

More CABAHS Dates for Your Diary...

As usual there is no meeting in December. The full programme for 2024 is on the website <https://cabahs.com/calendar/>

Monday 15 January Flowers in Art. Ruth Cornett, Senior Taxation Director at auctioneers, Christies and owner of Eltham Gatehouse will talk about how flowers have inspired artists to produce some of the most exquisite artworks ever produced.

Monday 19 February: Our Annual General Meeting will be followed by a talk by Tom Stanier who will talk about his training in horticulture at Greenwich Park and plans for the Park's future.

Anna enjoyed the Wellbeing Garden at University Hospital Lewisham.....

During September 2023 I revisited the newly-built Wellbeing Garden, located at the rear of University Hospital, Lewisham. There have been some exciting changes and the most notable is the large, beautifully-built, pergola that pulls the whole garden together. The pergola not only provides shelter but acts as a meeting place for various classes, including the Gardening Club. Some of the structure's uprights are decorated with painted terracotta tiles, showcasing talented and creative individuals.

The planting in the garden had matured, and, being autumn, the grasses were in their prime, growing alongside the flowering stars of pink Tulbaghia violacea. I noticed a Snow Drop tree (Halesia diptera) and an additional small tree, Heptacodium miconioides, a species I had never seen before. The tree

was displaying clusters of prominent, white, flowers with an intoxicating perfume, so, for me, this was an exciting find. The Kusuma Food Growing Garden, tucked in at the rear elevation of a hospital building, has been established, with suitably raised beds, ideal as a sheltered and sun-loving space. Creating a division between the two gardens is a row of pleached fruit trees, including Cox's Orange Pippin Apple and *Pyrus Communis* 'Conference' Pear.

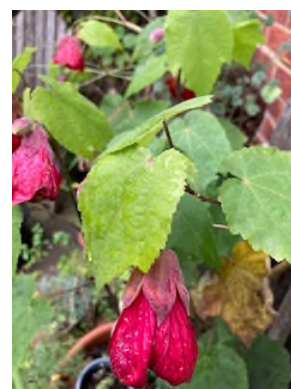
Adam Frost, the designer, has designed a garden for everyone - the visitors, the gardeners and the wildlife. Next time you are in the area, grab a coffee and spend time in this fabulous space.



November Plant of the Month from Anna.... Abutilon RED (Flowering Maple)

In the United States and other nearby countries, Hummingbirds seemingly adore the nectar of Abutilon flowers. We in the UK, however, can only sit back and admire the beauty of these stunning lantern-shaped flowers, and enjoy for ourselves, their exceptionally long, flowering period.

We first set eyes on this particular Abutilon growing as a small tree, approximately 2m high, in Highgate, sheltering under the canopy of mature trees. Luckily there were cuttings on offer. The owner, a plantswoman, had been given a cutting so we know it only as a Red Abutilon. I grow mine in a tall container and it grew noticeably once I had transferred it from a smaller to its much larger pot and has now reached a height of approximately 80-100cm. It sits against the rear (west-facing) elevation all year and survived last winter's cold weather and the droughts of the past few summers. My shrub generally produces flowers from May/June onwards, resting for a few weeks around September and then recommences. This variety is classed as semi-evergreen and retains its maple-shaped leaves if kept in a more sheltered porch, where it can flower for most of the year. Its habit is upright so it occasionally needs pruning into a more rounded shape. After a summer pruning, I placed the three cuttings around the base and one cutting has taken! Encouraged by this result, I will take more cuttings and hopefully I will have some rooted cuttings of this choice specimen in time for next May's plant stall.



Out and About...

- Although, as winter approaches, many of our favourite gardens close, in London we are blessed with numerous beautiful small parks and gardens which are accessible all year round. Explore the riches on offer through the London Gardens Trust inventory <https://londongardenstrust.org/conservation/inventory>
- The Lindley Library of the Royal Horticultural Society, which is based at 80 Vincent Square, London SW1P 2PE have a Winter Events Programme including a conversation with garden designer Naomi Slade. More information at www.rhs.org.uk

Pat's 10 jobs for November...

1. If it ever stops raining, plant tulip bulbs in pots and the ground now although it's fine to delay until December.
2. Prune roses by a third now to prevent windrock and leave the main pruning until later in winter.
3. Weed paths and paving now before the weeds set seed and pop up everywhere in the spring. My bricks become very slippery with moss when it's so wet so I do try and scrape some off for the winter.
4. Because of the rain a lot of plants failed to set seed though it may still be possible to dry some on the windowsill.
5. If you're bringing plants under glass for the winter do make sure to cut back some of the foliage and check them over regularly for pests. I always manage to bring in some caterpillars which will devastate the foliage. And remove any dead leaves and stems to avoid any fungal disease setting in.
6. Cut down and mulch dahlia tubers if you intend leaving in the ground for winter to protect from cold weather later on.
7. Spend a wet day ordering seeds for next year and also checking your seed store. I can't believe how old some of mine are.
8. Clear away spent vegetables on the veg plot to avoid overwintering pests and diseases and cover the ground where you can with cardboard if available.
9. Plant broad beans now for an early winter crop but protect from pigeons as they emerge through the soil.
10. Scrub birdbaths and birdfeeders well after all this rain to protect our wild birds for the winter.

The Garden Doctor is moving to the CABAHS website! Watch out for other changes to the website in the New Year and send your questions to garden@cabahs.com!

On the CABAHS website....

(If clicking through a problem, copy the URL into your browser search bar). Scroll down at <https://cabahs.com/> to read about:

- The garden at Down House, home of Charles Darwin
- Poppies to Remember at the Old Pond Garden
- Sedum or Hylotelephium, Aster or Symphyotrichum
- Overbeck's Garden Devon

And finally we are pausing the newsletter to concentrate on developing the website and our other activities. We will keep you up-to-date with all that is going on with regular emails.

Happy gardening all!
Contact us on: garden@cabahs.com