



SUNFLOWER NEWS

ISSUE 22

SPRING 2025

HORSHAM HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

www.horshamhorticulturalsociety.co.uk



EVENING GARDEN VISITS 2025

Lynda Eaton has organised three visits this year, two to gardens and one to a cut flower farm. As usual, all visits are on Tuesday evenings, to start at 6.00pm. Sunflower signs will be displayed where appropriate.

Tuesday 27th May 2025

Parsonage Farm, Kirdford, RH14 0NH

A major seven acre garden in a beautiful setting developed over 30 years, with a fruit theme and many unusual plants. Formally laid out on a grand scale with long vistas, a large lake, walled garden, topiary walk, tulip tree avenue, rose borders and a vegetable garden with trained fruit. It also boasts a turfed amphitheatre, yew cloisters and a jungle walk.

Directions: Head towards Billingshurst. At the roundabout before entering the village, turn right onto the bypass (A272), and right at the first roundabout, to Wisborough Green. At the Village Green, turn right onto Durbans Road (A272), and after 170 yds turn left onto Kirdford Road. After 2.4 miles turn right onto Village Road. The garden is 0.9 miles on the left (restricted usage road).

£15 including refreshments, to the NGS & The Jane Lemon Foundation

Tuesday 24th June 2025

Chalk Farm Flowers, Roger's Lane, Findon, BN14 0RE

Molly and Dan are an enterprising and inspiring young couple. They have a one acre site where they grow a wide range of flowers without the use of any chemicals or pesticides. They also have five runner ducks who help with pest control. They prioritise farming alongside nature rather against it, and looking after local wildlife is important to them.

Directions: Take the A24 towards Worthing. At the Findon Roundabout take the 1st exit onto School Hill. After 0.3 miles turn left to stay on Cross Lane. After 0.4 miles turn right onto Findon Bypass A24, then after 0.2 miles turn slight left onto Roger's Lane. The farm is 130 yds on the left. Parking is limited, so please car share if possible.

£10 to include a drink (Optional £2.50 for scone/cream tea. Please let Lynda Eaton know by 17th June if you would like this—07876 530355 or email Lynda.eaton@hotmail.co.uk)

Tuesday 22nd July 2025

Ichi Coo Park, Russ Hill Farm, Russ Hill, Charlwood, RH6 0EL

Ichi-Coo Park is unlike any garden we have previously visited. The 16 acre garden is full of glorious shapes and shades of green, painted into the background of the Sussex Weald. It hosts a huge collection of plants, trees and water, spaces, forms and vistas. Positioned ten minutes from Gatwick Airport there is also a picturesque view of the entire airfield—a plane spotter's dream!

Directions: Travel from Horsham to Rusper along the Rusper Road. Turn left onto High Street, and then in 0.8 miles turn right onto Partridge Lane. After 1.5 miles turn right onto Charlwood Lane. Continue for 0.7 miles and the park will be on the right.

£10 including refreshments, to the NGS & St Catherine's Hospice.

PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION

The photographic competition will be judged at the Spring Show. If you're out and about with your camera please consider entering one of the categories this year. The subjects are as follows:

- A Pathway
- Winter Glow
- Yellow
- Something beginning with 'O'

Entries should be submitted to Carolyn Smith, Little Oaks, Kentwyns Drive, Horsham, RH13 6EU by **Sunday, 23rd March 2025**. Further details can be found in the show schedule and on our website.

2024 INTER-SOCIETY QUIZ REPORT

Southwater Horticultural Society hosted the Inter-Society quiz back in February last year, which was the last time that they would be taking part in the competition as the Society sadly folded in November.

Although Southwater were hoping to win the cup in their final year, our Horsham team triumphed again, just pipping Bolney to the post. It was a good evening, with lovely food provided by Southwater. We played the Joker tactically, and walked away with the cup!

Many thanks and well done to our team for their combined knowledge.

L-R Julia Muncey, Daryl Muncey, Liz Baguley, David Hide, Diana Hartley, Sue Rushton.



AGM REPORT

At the AGM on 9th January the Committee members listed below were elected. The position of President will now be an annual role, nominated each year by the Committee from our membership.

President (for the year) - Hazel Bockh
 Chairman— Vacant
 Vice-Chairman—Carolyn Smith
 Treasurer—Sally Birchmore
 Show Secretary—Sue Hammond
 Secretary—Lynda Cheeseman
 Outings Secretary—Lynda Eaton

Our thanks go to Jenny and Jimmy Lee, who have now stepped down from the Committee.

There will be a small increase in subscriptions from October 2025, and due to the rising costs of banking, hall hire and speakers' fees, the number of evening talks will be slightly reduced next winter.

OBITUARY

We were sad to hear the news that Elsie Phillips had passed away in January. We extend our condolences to her friends and family.

MEMBERSHIP FEES

If you have not yet paid your annual subscription, please send your £15 per person (£25 per couple at the same address) to the Membership Secretary at Little Oaks, Kentwyns Drive, Horsham, RH13 6EU or (preferably) pay by bank transfer to: Horsham Horticultural Society, Account No. 00053900, Sort Code 30-94-41.

Please use your name as the reference.

2024 SHOW REPORTS

We held last year’s **Spring show** on Saturday 6th April at North Heath Hall where there were some lovely exhibits of Spring plants and flowers. The weather prior to the show had not been favourable, but there were still a reasonable number of daffodils. We had a good number of our members enter the classes and there were a lot of visitors in the afternoon. In addition to viewing the exhibits, our visitors were able to enjoy tea and cakes, a grand raffle, as well as plants, fruit and preserves for sale.

The Domestic classes also attracted a good number of entries; most popular were the chocolate éclairs. There were six categories in the photo competition with several entries in each section. The Reg Smith cup for the most points in the photos was won by Julia Stevenson.

The cup winners were:

Stanley Cup, for the best exhibit in daffodils – Paul Dalby; Irene Crackston Cup, for the best exhibit pot or bowl of bulbs – Paul Dalby; Spring Floral Cup for the best cut flower/shrub exhibit – Carolyn Smith; Secretarys Cup for a petite arrangement – Carolyn Smith; Woods Mill Cup for three sprays of a shrub – Sue Hammond; Domestic Trophy for most points in the Domestic classes – Helen Hinvest; Butchers Trophy for the best exhibit in Handicrafts – Julia Stevenson. The Weald Cup for the most points in the whole show was won by Julia Stevenson.



* * * * *

The **Summer show** was held on 10th August, and attracted over 200 exhibits! It was a lovely warm sunny day and we had a good number of visitors come to view the exhibits and buy plants, refreshments and raffle tickets.

All of the classes had a good number of entries, especially the sweet pea class and the tomato classes.

The cup winners were.

Festival Cup, for most points for flowers except roses—Sue Hammond; Shelley Cup, for best sweet peas—Margaret Rogers; Rose Bowl for the best rose – Zena Latham; Nora Poole Cup for best flower – Liz Baguley; Founders Salver for most points for vegetables—Paul Dalby; Arun Cup for most points for fruit – Andrew Latham; Garden News Shield – Sally Birchmore for best fruit or Vegetable; Presidents Cup – Paul Dalby for most points for flowers, fruit and vegetables; Ron Mitchell Cup – Liz Baguley for best flowers, fruit and vegetables; Layton Cup – Sue Hammond for the Domestic section; Handicrafts Trophy – Barbara Budd for best Handicraft; Padwick Floral Bowl – Sue Hammond for most points in the whole show; and the Banksian Medal awarded by the RHS went to Sally Birchmore for the highest number of points in the horticultural classes.



RHS GARDEN ENTRY DISCOUNT CARD

The Society is affiliated to the RHS, and as part of this affiliation we have received an RHS Garden Entry Discount Card. This card offers two adults a 50% discount off entry to any RHS Garden (Bridgewater, Harlow Carr, Hyde Hall, Rosemoor and Wisley), with the exception of Flower Shows and Glow illumination events. If you would like to borrow this card please contact one of the Committee.

Natural Pest Control

We are increasingly being encouraged to use more natural methods of pest control and fertilising in our gardens, and below are some suggestions of alternative methods.

Garlic Spray is one of the old favourite recommendations to control everything from slugs, bugs, and even larger pests like mice, moles and rabbits. It is also said to deter ants from getting in your home if sprayed near your doorway. You can purchase it ready made, or here is the recipe for producing your own by chopping or blending a whole bulb of garlic with two cups of water and setting aside for a day. You can also simmer it for a couple of hours to produce the same result. Strain out the pulp and mix the residual liquid with one gallon of water in a sprayer. Spray above and below leaves thoroughly. Apply about once a week in dry weather.

There are, however, some plants that actually suffer when planted near garlic. Be sure to keep asparagus, peas, beans, sage, and parsley far away from it, as their growth can be stunted, so best use Nematodes here.

Nematodes are soil-dwelling micro-organisms which are parasites to slugs and other pests. Simply mix them with water and apply to the soil, but make sure the soil temperature is in excess of 5°C for the treatment to be effect. There are different nematodes for the control of ants, vine weevil, white fly, gooseberry sawfly, box moth, caterpillars, lawns etc. and are proving very effective. The whole range of products can be found at <https://www.nematodesdirect.co.uk>. It is best to use a sprayer ((Miracle Gro sell a sprayer complete with nematodes), but for larger areas a watering can with a fine spray will work.



Scented plants can also act as natural deterrents for pests, such as:

Marigolds – greenfly and blackfly
Nepeta (Catmint) – aphids
Mint – aphids, whitefly, ants

Basil – whitefly
Chives and onions – aphids

The old favourites of beer traps, egg shells, salt and copper tape also work well, and of course the most beneficial control is to encourage natural predators such as toads, newts, hedgehogs and song thrushes to take care of the slug problem.

Natural Fertilisers

For a natural fertiliser, **banana skins** can be placed directly onto pot plant soil, or around the base of your plants as mulch. As they decompose, they will release nutrients into the soil to feed plants. It is reported that the plants thrive on the potassium, especially roses. Place a single layer of skins straight on top of the soil, being sure not to let them touch the plant stem, or bake the skins and grind to a fine powder. The powder acts as a slow release organic fertiliser and as it helps to encourage blooms, you can mix it into cut flowers when potting them up for your garden. You could also place the skins in a bowl of water overnight for a liquid feed.

Other natural fertilisers include manure, compost and grass clippings (which add nitrogen to the soil).

Coffee grounds work fairly well as a fertiliser, as they are rich in nutrients, particularly nitrogen, with traces of potassium and phosphorous.

To prevent the spread of powdery mildew, mix 1 tablespoon of **baking soda** with 1 tablespoon of vegetable oil and 1 teaspoon of non-detergent dish soap in 1 gallon of water and spray liberally onto the plants.

The Final Word...

Entitled "Eye Rhyme Calamity at the Annual World Limerick Contest" by *Brian Bilston*

There was a young poet from Slough
Who hadn't prepared quite enough.
He started to read
Then wished himself dead,
Having failed to think his rhymes through.

His brain must be made out of dough,
So slapdash, careless, unthorough!
Mumbling into his beard
He made them unheard
And ended each line with a cough.