

WEARDALE FLOWER AND GARDEN CLUB - MARCH 2019 NEWSLETTER

Welcome to our March meeting. Tonight, Derek Armstrong was to show us designs for Spring Flowers. Although he was booked last Summer, he has unfortunately, at very short notice, informed us he is unable to attend as he needs to be in London. Thanks to Barbara's perseverance in finding a replacement demonstrator, JOHN DALTON, also from Carlisle, has agreed to be with us tonight. We know he will do a fantastic display of Spring Flowers, and we hope you enjoy our first dem of 2019.

If you didn't get your primrose plant last month, pick one up tonight ...

FEBRUARY MEETING We donated £100 to the Auckland Project last month, in lieu of a fee for Lee Brownson and colleagues. We have asked that this is used to purchase a tree for the new walled garden. A letter of thanks has been received. A further donation of £150 will be made this evening to the play equipment fund at Wolsingham Primary School.

WILLOW WEAVING WORKSHOP If you would like to attend the weaving workshop on Sat. 30th March (10 am to 1pm at St Annes Centre) to make garden supports with Jo Anne Bolton, please see Barbara or Janice tonight. There are just a few places still available. The cost is £25 pp, including all materials, instruction, use of tools, coffee and scones, which can be paid on the day. Please note if you book a place we will have to charge, even if you are unable to attend on the day. The number of places available is 12, which covers our costs, and the workshop is open to friends.

RABY CASTLE Raby Castle's walled gardens opened on 2nd March, 7 days a week, from 10 am. There are 'behind the scenes' tours of the Castle on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays in March.

RHS GARDENING ADVICE FOR MARCH

PRESERVING DAFFODILS FOR NEXT SPRING Daffodils usually bloom well year after year provided they are not short of water and nutrients after flowering. Water bulbs to prevent soil or compost drying out for at least 6 wks after flowering. Apply a high potassium feed, eg tomato fertiliser, to bulbs in containers and on poor soils. Remove flowers as they fade. Never tie up the leaves as this reduces their ability to function; as they begin to yellow, stop watering. If daffodils are growing in turf you can begin mowing the area when the leaves die away (normally around June).

INCREASE DAHLIA STOCK If you buy dahlia tubers, or have some stored from last year, you can easily make more plants by encouraging the tubers to shoot - half cover in compost in a seed tray or similar, and keep in a warm and light spot. The compost must be damp, but not wet. The cuttings will root well in March/April, and should flower by mid July or early August. Each dahlia tuber can produce up to five new plants. Only put out when and all frosts have passed.

TREES, SHRUBS AND FLOWERS Those grown in containers benefit from an annual topdressing in the years between repotting. Remove the top 2in of old compost and replace with new, mixing in some fertiliser granules.

PRUNING ROSES Finish pruning shrub, patio, floribunda and hybrid tea roses this month. To support strong, new growth; feed afterwards with a general purpose or proprietary rose fertiliser and mulch with well rotted manure.

DIVIDE SNOWDROPS Dig up a group of snowdrops 'in the green', ie just after flowering, and divide the clump by carefully pulling it apart into individual bulbs or small groups. Replant at the same depth.

APRIL MEETING 16TH - Please bring along a friend to our April meeting if they would like to see a really good flower dem by John Thexton. £5 entry for non members

COMMITTEE The following members will form the Club's Committee to March 2020.

Ruby Potter, Anne Jackson, Barbara Thompson, Ann Cramb, Jean Shepherd, Margaret Shephard, Janice Radley, Carole Elliott, Ann Richards, Pat Welch, Christine Robinson, Emm Shaw, Susan Harris. We'd welcome more volunteers to join us!

We're delighted that Pat has agreed to be our Chairman. Other officers are:
Vice Chairman - Susan; Secretary - Barbara; Treasurer - Anne Jackson

SARAH RAVEN 10% off orders before 31 March, with code SU19392.

FLORAL FOAM The RHS has taken the decision to ban the use of floral foam at all RHS competitions. Foam, eg Oasis, cannot be recycled and is full of unpleasant substances including formaldehyde, barium sulphates and carbon. This will affect both flower arranging competitors and flower exhibitors. For the present time, the use of foam will be allowed at RHS shows, including Chelsea, Tatton etc. A new 'environmentally friendly' foam is being marketed, but only 50% of this can be recycled; still, it's an improvement.

WYNYARD HALL Mother's Day Floral Masterclass, 10-12 or 2-4 on 6th April. £30. Spring Wreath Making Masterclass, 10-12 on 13th April, £30.

CROOK HALL, DURHAM Spring Garden Tour, 11-12 1st May, £8 or £7.50 concessions. Booking essential.

RHS COURSES AT HARLOW CARR IN APRIL 4th - An Introduction to Allotments; 5th - Garden Walk - Staking and Plant Supports; 12th A Beginner's Guide to Gardening; 26th Garden Walk - A Beginner's Guide to Propagation.

STANHOPE CHURCH HALL 28TH March, 6.45pm, Gardening Talk and Questions with Martin Fish. Tickets from Emm and Christine, £6.

OPEN GARDENS

RICHMOND - Manor House, 43 Richmond Road, Skeeby. 14th April, 10-4.30pm, entry by donation, tea/coffee and cakes to purchase, and plant stall.

DARLINGTON - 45 Blackwell, 28 April, 1-5pm, £4.

CUMBRIA - Dora's Field of Daffodils, Rydal, Ambleside, 24 March, 11-4pm, entry by donation.

NORTHUMBERLAND - Wallington (National Trust), 27 April, 10-5pm, £14.50.

Wolsingham Gardens will be open for the NGS on Saturday, 22nd June.