



Northampton & District Fuchsia Society NEWSLETTER



MAY / JUNE / JULY / AUGUST 2019

EDITORIAL

Welcome to your Summer 2019 issue of your Newsletter. I am writing this in April with snow in the forecast following the warmest February and March!

Firstly, may I draw your attention to the item at the end of this Editorial detailing changes to this year's Show Schedule relating to the Society's choice plants. It has been decided that Wendy Bendy, being a shorter-jointed, smaller leaved cultivar, will be restricted to a 3½"/9cm pot. It is important that you get the right cultivar in the correctly sized pot to avoid your entry being disqualified NAS (not as schedule).

NENE VALLEY ORGAN & KEYBOARD CLUB

For over 35 years NVOKC have been producing electronic organ and keyboard shows to the public on the 3rd Monday of the month.

Top international artistes are presented, performing a wide range of music on state of the art instruments.

A NVOKC show is a superb evening for all in the comfortable surroundings of the Plough Hotel, Northampton NN1 1PF

Come along and join us one Monday.

Doors open at 7.15pm. Start 8.00pm. Finish 10.30pm.

For any further information call Matthew Bason 01933 420130

Below that item is a timely reminder to return any trophies that you may have won last year to Peter Pettitt ready for presentation at this year's show.

For the new members, and for the older members who have forgotten, the articles on Showing your Fuchsias and the Photographic Competition in September have been repeated towards the end of the newsletter. Also do not forget to enter the Cut Blooms Competition at our September meeting.

The Editor

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AMENDMENT TO SHOW SCHEDULE

Class 11 – A cultivar of the Society's choice –
Wendy Bendy 3.5"/9cm pot (max)

Class 12 – A cultivar of the Society's choice –
Vera Garcia 5"/13cm pot (max)

Please note especially the change to the pot size for class 11.

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RETURNING TROPHIES

Will those members lucky enough to have won a trophy last year please return it (or them if you won more than one!) to Peter Pettitt.

If you wish to have your name engraved on the trophy, or trophies if you did very well, then please arrange this yourself. This will have to be at your own cost!

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ROLLING CALENDAR 2019/20 PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS

All meetings are held at the Conservative Club, 42 Billing Road, Northampton NN1 5DA commencing at 7.30pm

May 7th 2019

Meeting: Colin Baines - Hostas

May 21st 2019

Care & Culture: Plant sale

June 4th 2019

Meeting: Chris Edwards – Heritage of our Garden Birds

June 18th 2019

Care & Culture: Feeding, Watering and Growing On

July 2nd 2019

Meeting: A Talk about Workbridge

July 16th 2019

Care & Culture: Preparing your plants for the show; dressing; the dreaded paperwork

September 3rd 2019

Welcome New Members; Open Evening; Cut Bloom & Photography Competitions

October 1st 2019

Meeting: Katie King – Nene Wetlands

November 5th 2019

Annual General Meeting

December 10th 2019 – N.B. 2nd Tuesday!

Christmas Party!

January 21st 2020

Care & Culture: Looking after your plants in Winter

February 4th 2020

Meeting: speaker tba

March 3rd 2020

Meeting: speaker tba

March 17th 2020

Care & Culture: Bringing plants out of dormancy; collect your Society plant

April 7th 2020

Meeting: speaker tba

April 21st 2020

Care & Culture: Two tables meeting

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ROLLING CALENDAR SOCIETY EVENTS FOR 2019/20

SATURDAY 3RD AUGUST 2019

FUCHSIA SHOW

ST CRISPIN SOCIAL CLUB NN5 4XD

Friday August 9th 2019

BBQ / Skittles Night ?

details tba

Tuesday November 5th 2019

Annual General Meeting

Conservative Club

Saturday December 7th 2019

Christmas Fayre

Conservative Club

Tuesday December 10th 2019 – 2nd Tuesday!

Christmas Party

Conservative Club

Sunday March 1st 2020

Visit to Jacksons and Hawgrip Nursery

Sunday May 10th 2020

Malvern Spring Show

CRAMDEN NURSERY

THE GERANIUM & PELARGONIUM SPECIALISTS

A family run business growing Pelargoniums and Geraniums for over 30 years.

Now also selling Lavenders, Agapanthus and Penstemons.

The Nursery is open from March to August

Monday to Saturday - 9am - 5pm

Sunday from May to August - 10am– 4pm

Open Evenings and Talks available.

CRAMDEN NURSERY
HARBOROUGH ROAD NORTH
NORTHAMPTON NN2 8LU
Telephone: 01604 842365
www.cramdennursery.co.uk

CARE & CULTURE MEETING

15th January 2019

Clive Gould talked us through the many aspects of bringing our plants through this difficult period of the year.

Standard fuchsias should be stored flat, frost free (min 34°F/2°C) or at 40°F/5°C to keep them in green leaf. Keep watering as required with ¼ strength Chempak high nitrogen – keep the water in the greenhouse so as not to shock the plants.

To encourage plants to break into growth spray with hot water. Clive uses SB Plant Invigorator in his sprayer.

Triphyllas need more care.

Keep vigilant for vine weevil

Pot up as necessary to the next size of pot – as the compost is damp refrain from watering to draw the roots into the new compost

Clive stops the high nitrogen feeds six weeks before the show and moves to a balanced feed.

JACKSONS NURSERIES

A good selection of young plants available from March to June.

Self-service greenhouse will be open from March 1st

Closed on Tuesdays

Send a large s.a.e. (2 x 1st Class) for list of plants or see

www.rhs.org.uk/Plants/Nursery-Plant-List?id=600&name=Jackson%27s%20Nurseries

Selection of our own compost available (replacement for Humber)

A range of other composts and Vitafeeds are also available

Clifton Campville, near Tamworth
Staffs B79 0AP
01827 373307

3 miles from Junction 11 M42

GROWING YOUR FUCHSIAS

May through to August

Early May and your plants should now be growing strongly; check your plants' root systems regularly and do not let them get pot-bound as this can result in premature budding. Pot up to the next size pot as soon as the roots begin to circle the bottom of the root ball. This is especially important if you are growing your plant as a standard.

The correct watering of your plants is very important; too much water will kill a plant faster than not enough. An over-watered plant can give the same appearance as a plant that is suffering from being under-watered so do not just add water to everything. Pick your plants up; experience with the weight of the plant will soon tell you what action is necessary. Picking your plants up should be a regular occurrence, not only to check for watering but also to inspect for botrytis, greenfly, whitefly and red-spider mite; early detection of a problem is always beneficial. Treat any problems accordingly; whitefly is usually a thumb-and-finger job; greenfly and red-spider may need a spray treatment. Keeping the humidity levels in your greenhouse on the high side will also deter red-spider.

Shading of your greenhouse is now very important; temperatures can rise very quickly with just a few minutes' sun. All vents should be opened at every opportunity.

June is the best month for planting out your hardy fuchsias. Prepare the soil well incorporating plenty of well-rotted garden compost or a similar material. Adding some blood, fish and bone-meal fertiliser at this time would be highly beneficial. To plant your fuchsia make a saucer-shaped depression in the ground about 18 inches in diameter and 4 inches deep. Your plant, which should be well grown possibly in a 4 or 5-inch pot, is planted in the centre of the depression. The soil level at the top of the root-ball should finish up level with the bottom of the depression. The plant is then watered in. Allow the depression to fill

in naturally over the rest of the season; this will result in the root-ball being some 4 inches deep and, hopefully, well established giving it good protection from frosts.

If you are going to show any of your plants this year keep an eye on the stopping dates. The *backwards calendar* issued with the last newsletter will give the timing details.

July – August

With the exception of plants being grown on the biennial system and those being grown for late summer shows all stopping and potting on should now be just about finished. But our plants still need plenty of attention; watering, feeding and regular inspections for attacks from pests. Act quickly if a problem is found; any delay can quickly double the size of your problem.

Be careful with the watering. Pick the plant up and, if necessary, take the plant out of the pot to check the moisture level; a plant can die very quickly if over-watered. Feeding can be carried out at every watering but only at quarter strength. Switch to a higher potash feed if you think budding is a bit slow.

Any hardies planted out last month should be kept well-watered and a balanced feed applied every 2-3 weeks. It is essential to keep them growing well so that they form a good root system to help survive any hard frosts that we may have over the winter months. Hardies planted in the garden do not require stopping; a good hardy is self-branching and will produce plenty of laterals and, of course, lots of flowers all through the summer and well into the autumn.

Good Growing and Showing

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**Have you visited your
Fuchsia Society's
website?**

www.ndfs.btck.co.uk

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COMPOSTING with DAVID GARRETT Meeting – 5th February 2019

Our first speaker of 2019 was David Garrett from Garden Organic who entertained us all with a delightful talk about composting which was not as dull as some of us thought it would be, myself included.

He began by explaining the principle of composting being to harbour the natural decomposition process aerobically. This happens in stages beginning with bacteria and micro-organisms living on the material in the compost bin. Then larger creatures such as ants and worms move in and start to break the material into smaller and smaller pieces. All this activity will increase the temperature and the heat generated will kill weed seeds, pests and disease organisms. Ideally compost should consist of 50/50 mix of green and brown waste; not too much of one type of waste should be added at once. It should be turned regularly to aid the aeration process and will also discourage rats and mice.

David went on to explain about the different types of compost bins available, who knew there were so many; from open ones which can be home-made, plastic 'Dalek' types, the 'Green Johanna' which takes all types of waste, cooked as well as green, or even a green cone which does not produce compost. There is also the Bokashi system which is a Japanese anaerobic process which will produce a liquid that can be used as a drain cleaner!!

David did stress that composting is not an exact science; there are no hard and fast rules other than the obvious ones of not putting in food, pet waste and nappies; if in doubt leave it out!

This is just a snapshot of all the fascinating info he gave us. It was so nice to listen to someone so knowledgeable and enthusiastic about his subject.

Dot Leeke

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COMPOSTING and SLUGS & SNAILS

One aspect of composting that David Garrett covered in his talk was that of slugs and snails and whether having a compost bin would cause slugs and snails to breed in great numbers and spread to the garden.

He explained that slugs and snails help break down the organic matter in the bin. There is no guarantee that they will not spread to the garden but why should they leave when they have a constant source of food and are protected from predators. Some slugs live only on decaying vegetable matter so will have no desire to leave. I suppose the answer is to keep adding more material to the bin.

When spreading compost on the garden slugs' eggs should not be a problem as they will have decomposed in the heap.

If you do have a slug/snail problem, who doesn't?, in your garden then encourage natural predators like frogs, toads and hedgehogs into your garden.

Do not use slug pellets in your compost bin as they will also kill the beneficial organisms that are essential to the composting process.

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COMMITTEE MEETING

19th February 2019

Together with other minor matters your committee discussed:

- the non-availability of Dave Jupp's trailer for the show
- the non-availability of Dave and Carol Jupp for the barbecue – the possibility of an alternative skittles night was discussed – watch your email inbox or website for updates
- Fuchsia Show – scaffolding for hanging pots and plants for sale
- members to be invited to submit a list of their 10 favourite fuchsias – (see this issue for Dot Leeke's favourites).

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FILM NIGHT with RON KILSBY

Meeting – 5th March 2019

We had our annual film night on 5th March presented by Ron Kilsby.

This year we had three films beginning with Banana Calypso, telling the story of the planting, growing and harvesting of Fyffes bananas. Although this was many years old it was fascinating, not only how the fruit was transported in the days before freezing, but also the fashions of the 1950s.

The second film called Double Harvest was about Stewart & Lloyds and how the discovery of ironstone locally around Corby developed into steel making. The steel making process of those days looks very dangerous but I guess it is what we say nowadays as 'different times'.

The last film was a very entertaining RSPB film about birds in the Northern Hemisphere.

Super entertainment as ever.

Thank you, Ron.

Dot Leeke

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JOURNEY TO THE ARCTIC with NIGEL SPENCER

Meeting – 2nd April 2019

Our third talk of the year was by Nigel Spencer who gave a fascinating talk about his journey to the Arctic which was primarily to find polar bears.

The journey was a six-week boat trip in June 2018 to the Norwegian Svalbard archipelago on an old trawler which had once been used for fishing, and later seal hunting, but has been more recently seen on television on Blue Planet II and Gordon Buchanan's series on polar bears. On the way to Svalbard they hoped to see walrus, whales and seals but only saw oil rigs and fulmars, which are much darker in colour than the ones seen in the UK. Nigel

also found time for some line fishing and caught a 26lb cod which he put down to beginners' luck. During the trip they caught approximately 350 kilos of cod and haddock to supplement their food supplies. Being within the Arctic Circle it was 24-hour daylight so photos could be taken any time although the light was best when the sun dipped below the horizon.

After two weeks bears were spotted, about five of them around a dead 300ft whale giving the bears much needed nutrition. For 2/3 days the boat and the carcass were just drifting among the ice and about 21 bears were seen in the area. Polar bears are very inquisitive and because they are not hunted and not afraid of humans came quite close to the boat. One crew member dropped his camera overboard onto the ice and a bear came to inspect this strange object. When it lost interest and went away the camera was retrieved by the captain. During these few days when the boat was drifting in the ice a family of bears visited 5 or 6 times a day and stayed for up to an hour.

Hunting was prevalent in this area until 30 to 40 years ago but evidence can still be found on the shores covered in old bones. Polar bear skins can be found in the tourist shops but these are from farmed bears from Russia.

The other wildlife seen by Nigel were Beluga whales, arctic foxes, walrus, which were hunted almost to extinction, and seals, some Atlantic and Hart species but mainly the Bearded type, which are hunted by polar bears. They are very shy, disappearing under water whenever they heard the boat.

Nigel's talk was accompanied by some wonderful photography, some of his pictures being taken from the top of the crow's nest, giving wonderful views of the scenery.

Many thanks to Nigel.

Dot Leeke

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SHOWING YOUR FUCHSIAS

Saturday 3rd August 2019

Members are urged to make every effort to enter as many plants as they possibly can into our Fuchsia Show on Saturday 3rd August 2019.

'If in doubt bring it along' – it will look better on the show bench with all the other fuchsias than it does on its own at home.

Your Society Needs You!

Filling out the entry form

Fill out the entry form ensuring that you keep a copy for yourself. At this time making up a list of your plant cultivar names would be very helpful. Forward your entry form to me, Bob Malin, by one of the methods indicated on the entry form, usually by post or, if you have a scanner, by email. Your entry should arrive by Wednesday 31st July 2019. Late entries will be accepted only if there is space available.

Transporting your plants to the show

With just a relatively short journey involved I find pot plants are very stable using the appropriate plastic tray. Another practical method is to use shallow cardboard boxes with holes cut to the size of the pot. Hanging pots, baskets, half-baskets and standards all present different problems.

Times for staging of entries

Staging of entries can take place on Friday 2nd August from 1.30pm to 8pm and on Saturday 3rd August from 7.00am to 8.30am.

Arrival at the venue

Leave your plants in your car and have a walk around the room to see where your entries will be staged.

Collect your entry cards from the Admin table and hand a list of your plant cultivar names to Marilyn Daniels.

Bring your plants in and place them on one of the preparation tables. Dress the plants, removing any yellow leaves, faded flowers and seed pods. Ensure the plants are in clean

brown standard pots. The exception is hanging pots as it is very difficult to obtain them in brown.

Staging the entries

To position your plant on the show table, use one of the empty saucers provided. Do NOT move other people's entries. If you have a problem staging your plant, ask the Show Secretary or the Assistant Show Secretary for assistance.

Place your entry card next to your plant with your name on the underside. Collect labels of the plant cultivar names from Marilyn Daniels and place them by the appropriate entry. These are not required for the Society plant.

Check that your plants have been watered.

To give your entry the best chance position the plant showing its best features to the front. Lift plants that have laterals touching the table with an upturned pot, plastic-coated wire or string.

Useful equipment to take with you

Small watering can; spare clean pots and saucers; twine, wire, split canes; labels and marker pen; cleaning cloths; mist sprayer.

Judging the exhibits

Judging of the exhibits will start on Saturday at 9am with BFS Judge Alan Solomon assisted by our Society stewards.

The Show Opens!

Doors to the show will be open for members and the public from 11am.

Presentation of Trophies

The presentation of trophies and awards will take place at 4pm on the Saturday. Would all members please try to be in attendance for the presentations.

End of Show

The Show will end at 5pm. Please do NOT lift your entries before then. Once the Show is declared closed and the members have had a

chance to remove their entries the Show will be dismantled.

Please let us make it a great Show and give it as much publicity as you possibly can. Peter Pettitt will have plenty of posters available so please spread the word and help to keep our Show tradition great!

Thank you.

Bob Malin

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**Have you visited your
Fuchsia Society's website?**

www.ndfs.btck.co.uk

The Show Schedule, Entry Form and
Backwards Calendar are available
to view and download.

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MY TEN FAVOURITE FUCHSIAS by Dot Leeke

Lancashire Lad

Loves Reward

Red Spider

Celia Smedley

Dorothy Clive

Hawkshead

Northern Dancer

Display

Wigan Pier

Dying Ember

Which are your ten most favourite fuchsias? Perhaps add a little note as to why they are your favourites? Please send your list to the Editor.

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PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION

Meeting – 3rd September 2019

In September each year the Society holds its annual photographic competition. We wish to encourage members to enter photos in the classes in which they will be judged. The competition is intended as fun, so here are a few hints from the judges.

Taking photos

Now is the time to start taking your photos and even improve your technique.

Firstly, get to know your camera and its controls. Maybe look at the guidance leaflet that came with the camera. If you wish to use the controls set at 'auto' that is fine but you will take better photos if you try the other controls. We do not expect members to have the latest or most expensive cameras as all models of digital cameras can take terrific shots. It is the photographer that composes the photo, not the camera with lots of features.

For practice, take lots of photos of anything - it need not be a fuchsia at this stage - as we just want you to follow our guidelines. Take shots from slightly different positions, move nearer or further away and try the zoom control. Avoid distractions in your photos like bright colours, windows or door frames, posters, etc., that are not needed in the photo. Now look on the camera's screen and see the difference this makes. Delete the shots you do not want, this could be most of those you have taken, but it shows you are improving. Only keep your best photos.

Now try photographing plants, using the guidance notes above, and see how much better your shots have become. To help you there are always books and magazines on photography in charity shops and elsewhere. During the Society meetings look more closely at slide shows to see how photos have been composed.

Printing photos

Photographs can be in either portrait or landscape format, with or without a border.

The photo should be well exposed, in focus, not cluttered by other material but with the subject taking up most of the available space. To make it 'look right' the subject does not need to be in the centre of the photograph as it may include a group of flowers.

If you have your own printer, use the paper size advised, 7" x 5". Photo paper need not be expensive; why not buy at a Pound shop, Aldi, or Lidl? You will be surprised how good your photos can look. If you wish, use the 'compatible' ink cartridges specified for your printer to avoid paying for the more expensive branded inks but read the guidance notes for your printer.

If you prefer to use commercial printing, such as at Boots, etc., they will be printed on first class photo paper but check that they offer the size of paper that you need.

Selecting photos for the competition

Having a selection of photos gives the opportunity to show your best shots. Again, see the first paragraph under 'Printing photos' above for hints and be certain your photos meet the requirements specified in the rules below. Enter your name and class number on the back of the photo. If you wish you may write the details on a sticky label that can later be removed. Hand your photos to the judges before the start of the meeting. Entry is free to members.

How the judges 'judge'

It makes our job more interesting if there is a good selection of photos to be judged and the modern digital camera makes it easy for everyone to have a go.

Although judging is largely subjective, we apply the guidance notes shown above to each photo. Is the photo in the right class, is it well exposed, is it in focus, clear of clutter, the minimum of distraction, does it use most of the space in the photo, and is it generally 'looking right'.

You are not limited to entering just one photo, or just one class and we do not expect 'perfect' photographs that would only appear in photography magazines. At the NDFS meeting,

once the winners have been declared, we will both be available should you wish to discuss the techniques in any photos. Even if you do not win this time around, it is still a valuable experience to enjoy taking photographs.

And finally ...

Good Luck!

The Judges

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PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION

THE RULES

1. You may enter up to three photographs in each class.
2. Enter your name and the class number on the back of each photograph.
3. Maximum size of your photograph to be 7" x 5" unmounted.
4. Fuchsias to be correctly named where possible.
5. Closing time for entries is 7.15pm on the night.
6. The Judges' decision is final.

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PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION

THE CLASSES

- Class 1 A close-up of Fuchsia flowers showing not more than THREE open blooms. Buds and foliage are permitted.
- Class 2 A branch of a Fuchsia plant showing a number of open blooms. Buds and foliage are permitted.
- Class 3 A well-grown Fuchsia plant in any type of container or display. Multi-pots are permitted.
- Class 4 Any floral display consisting of single or multiple plants of any type in containers or growing naturally.

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RHS FLOWER SHOWS 2019

- RHS Malvern Spring Festival
9th-12th May
- RHS Chelsea Flower Show
21st-25th May
- RHS Chatsworth Flower Show
5th-9th June
- RHS Harlow Carr Flower Show
21st-23rd June
- RHS Hampton Court Palace Garden Festival
1st-7th July
- RHS Tatton Park Flower Show
17th-21st July
- RHS Hyde Hall Flower Show
31st July – 4th August
- RHS Rosemoor Flower Show
16th – 18th August
- RHS Wisley Flower Show
3rd – 8th September
- RHS Malvern Autumn Show
28th-29th September

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BFS MEETINGS & SHOWS 2019

- Fuchsia Lore Meeting, Great Bridgford
9th June
- Eastern Show, Roots & Shoots Garden Centre
14th July
- Northern Show, Bilsborrow Village Hall
28th July
- Far South West Show, Tamar View Nurseries
8th August
- London Show, Normandy Village Hall
18th August
- Midland Show, Palmers Garden Centre
25th August
- Scottish Show, Linlithgow Primary School
1st September
- Harrogate Show
13th-15th September
- Wales & West Show, RHS Malvern Show
28th-29th September
- Fuchsia Lore Meeting, Great Bridgeford
6th October

THE NORTHAMPTON & DISTRICT FUCHSIA SOCIETY

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Leo Boullemier (Founder) and V. Evans Esq

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