



Northampton & District Fuchsia Society NEWSLETTER



MAY/JUNE/JULY/AUGUST 2021

EDITORIAL

We Will Meet Again! As the effects of the pandemic recede, either due to Lockdown3 or our excellent vaccination programme, nobody seems to be sure which, we can look forward to meeting again.

We are planning to meet for the first time for many months on Tuesday, 20th July, at the Conservative Club for our usual Care & Culture meeting. Clive Gould will be talking and demonstrating 'Preparing our plants for this year's Show'.

Masks will be worn and social distancing observed, of course. What arrangements the

Conservative Club will be imposing are not known at the time of writing.

Committee members should note that the meeting will be followed by a committee meeting.

Our show is planned to go ahead on Saturday, 7th August. Again it will be masks and social distancing and perhaps one-way traffic around the display tables, etc. Presentation of trophies might be a little different too!

We then intend to resume our usual programme of meetings from September onwards.

All this will be dependent on the continued lifting of restrictions according to the timetable. We must hope the Indian variant, and others, do not spread here.

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



Spring is here in the Ryder's garden!

For the newer members 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.

Keep Safe and Keep Well!

The Editor

ROLLING CALENDAR 2021/22 PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS

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

May 4th 2021 **Meeting cancelled**

Meeting: speaker tba

May 18th 2021 **Meeting cancelled**

Care & Culture: Plant sale

June 1st 2021 **Meeting cancelled**

Meeting: speaker tba

June 15th 2021 **Meeting cancelled**

Care & Culture: Feeding, Watering and Growing On

July 6th 2021 **Meeting cancelled**

Meeting: speaker tba

July 20th 2021 **Meetings recommence!!!!**

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

September 7th 2021

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

October 5th 2021

Meeting: Sports Night & Buffet

November 2nd 2021

Annual General Meeting

December 7th 2021

Christmas Party!

January 18th 2022

Care & Culture: Looking after your plants in Winter

February 1st 2022

Meeting: speaker tba

March 1st 2022

Meeting: speaker tba

March 15th 2022

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

April 5th 2022

Meeting: speaker tba

April 19th 2022

Care & Culture: Two tables meeting

ROLLING CALENDAR SOCIETY EVENTS FOR 2021

Sunday May 9th 2021 **Festival cancelled**
Malvern Spring Festival

SATURDAY 7TH AUGUST 2021

FUCHSIA SHOW

ST CRISPIN SOCIAL CLUB NN5 4XD

Tuesday November 2nd 2021

Annual General Meeting

Conservative Club

Saturday December 4th 2021

Christmas Fayre

Conservative Club

Tuesday December 7th 2021

Christmas Party

Conservative Club

Sunday March 6th 2022

Visit to Jacksons and Hawgrip Nursery

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

RETURNING TROPHIES

It is to be hoped that the current social distancing/self-isolating restrictions will be lifted in time for our Fuchsia Show to take place.

The arrangements for the return of trophies are different this year as Peter Pettitt is not available to perform his usual duties.

Will those members lucky enough to have won a trophy in 2019 please return it (or them if you won more than one!) to St Crispin's Social Club on Friday, 6th August, during the period for setting up your plants for the Show.

Should this not be convenient please contact Bob Malin on 01604 459478 to make alternative arrangements.

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

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

www.ndfs.webador.co.uk

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GROWING YOUR FUCHSIAS

May - June

Early May and your plants should now be growing strongly, so 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 quicker 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 and, from experience, 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 as early detection of a problem is always beneficial. Treat any problems accordingly; whitefly is usually a thumb and finger job though greenfly and red spider may need a spray treatment. Use Provado Ultimate Bug Killer for greenfly problems but you need an insecticide based on sunflower oil or an organic soap to try and get rid of red spider mite. Keeping the humidity levels in your greenhouse on the high side will also deter red spider mite.

Shading your greenhouse is now very important as temperatures can rise very quickly in just a few minutes from the sun. Coolglass is an excellent liquid shading and can

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

be applied with a brush or a sprayer. Green shade netting is also very effective. All vents should be opened at every opportunity.

June is the best month for planting out your hardy fuchsias so prepare the soil well, incorporating plenty of well-rotted garden compost or similar material. To plant your fuchsia, make a saucer-shaped depression in the ground about 18 inches in diameter and 4 inches deep. Your plant should be well grown, possibly from a 4 or 5-inch pot, and planted into the centre of the depression so the soil level at the top of the root-ball finishes level with the bottom of the depression. Adding some blood, fish and bone meal fertiliser at this time would be beneficial and the plant is then watered in. Allowing the depression to fill in naturally over the rest of the season will result in the root-ball being some 4 inches deep and, hopefully, well established giving it good protection from winter frosts.

Use the backwards calendar that was with your last newsletter to time your stopping dates for your show fuchsias.

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 will still need plenty of attention; watering, feeding and regular inspections for attacks from greenfly, whitefly and the dreaded red spider mite. Act immediately if a problem is found as 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 its pot to check the moisture level. A plant can die very quickly if it is over-watered. Feeding can be carried out at each watering, but only at quarter strength, or feed just once a week at full strength. You can now be using either Chempak 3 or the Chempak Fuchsia Feed.

Always be checking your plants and cleaning up, if necessary removing any dead leaves and old flowers and generally keeping your plants looking tidy. Try and get them out in the open air, if possible, as they will really benefit from it.

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 we may have over winter. Give them an occasional insecticide spray to prevent damage from thrips and capsid bugs.

Hardies planted in the garden do not require any stopping. A good hardy is self-branching and will produce plenty of laterals and, hopefully, lots of flowers, of course, through the summer and well into the autumn.

Our show is just a few weeks away now and, although many of our members do not show their fuchsias (they do not know what they are missing), the show is a very important part of the Society's activities. Our show is the highlight of the Society's year where we hope we can show what a beautiful flower the fuchsia is and also to demonstrate the many ways it can be grown. If you have never shown a plant before, please give it a go this year.

If you do show, the best of luck – you may just surprise yourself.

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Fuchsia Hayley Jackson – Society Plant A

SHOWING YOUR FUCHSIAS

Saturday 7th August 2021

Members are urged to make every effort to enter as many plants as they possibly can into our Fuchsia Show on Saturday 7th August.

'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 29th July. 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 6th August from 1.30pm to 8pm and on Saturday 7th 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. So please spread the word and help to keep our Show tradition great!

Thank you.

Bob Malin

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PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION

Meeting – 7th September 2020

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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FROM THE EDITOR'S GARDEN

At last the weather has warmed up sufficiently for me to spend more than ten minutes in the garden before my fingers shut down (I am a Reynaud's Syndrome sufferer!) and I can join Maggie who has been out trimming back everywhere ready for the Spring growth.

Our brown bin garden refuse collection has resumed and the bin, which had been full right through the winter, has been emptied and promptly refilled from the bags of trimmings. We wonder how much longer that collection will be included in our council tax now we are part of North Northamptonshire and not Wellingborough BC.

We had never been able to do much with the beds immediately around the front of the house. The house faces north-east, so they are quite shady, and the soil, as elsewhere in the garden is very thin and poor. In the rain shadow of the house they needed extra watering which always seemed to sit on top of the clay soil rather than sinking in.

Also the slabs in front of the door had become uneven and a trip hazard and we also wanted to widen the drive to save walking on the grass when getting in and out of the cars.

We engaged Mike (everyone needs a Mike!) to come and lay fresh slabs along either side of the drive and in front of the entrance to the house. He also built some raised beds from sleepers and filled them with some decent soil. (I fancied a couple more beds nearer the road but these did not get management approval!)



The beds were finished off with paviours to create a mowing edge and purple slate.

A new water butt with a proper diverter that can be accessed to remove the moss washing off the roof completed the set up.

So, more 'wooden walls' but hopefully they will be softened up in time by some trailing plants.

Once the soil had settled we planted up the beds before winter set in, hoping that the plants would get some roots down before the spring.



However, it remains to be seen how many of the plants have survived because the flower beds spent much of February looking like a couple of lakes!

It may well be that what roots there were will have rotted off or the plants simply drowned. Only time will tell and we wait to see what needs replacing once the weather really warms up. We can already see a couple of plants that look very lifeless, showing only brown sticks.



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MORE FROM THE EDITOR'S GARDEN

Another area of the garden that had long needed some attention was the top left-hand corner of the garden. We have a radial pergola over a quarter-circle seating area. We had never done anything with the beds to the back of the area that were created when the paviours were laid. The soil again was very thin but had been improved over several years by leaves falling off the ivy and pyracantha clothing the fence being left to rot away.

Slightly raised beds were created using 6" x 1" timbers. (No Mike this time – I can be quite handy when I put my mind to it – it just takes some time to apply it!)



It was important to leave a gap in the bed at as this was a major entry point to our garden for hedgehogs. We put 'hedgehog highway' signs on both sides of the new fence panels (Ok, I have to confess Mike replaced the fence panels for us!) but unfortunately our neighbours promptly blocked the hole on their side with a bag of compost as they could see their pet rabbit escaping into our garden!



The raised beds were filled with a mixture of soil, some old potting compost and some grit to aid drainage but still, even though these beds are quite sheltered, planting was delayed as it was too wet to work.



Now we have planted one fern and a series of various hostas and we await their emergence. You will have to imagine how it will look later in the year.

We have finished it off with some more purple slate and some artistically (?) placed clay pots.

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WHAT IS GOING ON IN YOUR GARDEN

A little tired of reading about the Editor’s garden? What is going on in your garden? Perhaps you are not in the process of making great changes but there must be something happening as we move through the seasons.

Spotted anything unusual in the garden, perhaps, such as a fox or badger or a hedgehog? The last two are not likely to be seen together!

A picture or two and a bit of story behind it from your garden would make interesting reading for us all.

You do not have to be a great writer – I can always edit your words if necessary.

Please email some pictures and a few words to ndfseditor@gmail.com.

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Fuchsia Whoopee – Society Plant B

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YET MORE FROM THE EDITOR’S GARDEN

Attempts at producing compost to mulch our poor clayey soil using ‘Dalek’ composters have not achieved very much – they are slow and difficult to empty.



So we have a new toy! A HotBin! Three days in and it is already hot!



Update in the next newsletter. Can you wait?

