

BLUEBELL GARDEN CLUB

DECEMBER 2018 NEWSLETTER

Wishing all our members a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Meetings 2019 :

Please note there is no meeting in January.

Next Meeting : Tuesday, 5th February 2019 : 7.30pm

"Gardeners Question Time" – Graham Porter & Tim Crowther from BBC Radio Leeds

Graham Porter FCIHort., Cert.Ed :

Graham has been involved in the horticultural industry since he started a 4-yr year apprenticeship at Southend Parks Department in 1966.

Over the past 50 years he has taken every opportunity in his professional and amateur work to influence the thinking of those around him and in November 2018 Graham's book "The Organic Way" was released and is available from independent book shops. He will be bringing some books for sale on the evening.

Tim Crowther :

Tim sits alongside Graham every Sunday morning on BBC Radio Leeds creating an interesting gardening programme which appeals to people who don't even have a garden! He currently has sole responsibility for directing, producing and presenting the three hour Sunday morning show.

He loves to take to the open road on his motorbike or make music (playing his guitar or singing in the choir). He hasn't yet found a way to combine the two !!



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Pottering About at Christmas – by Edward Kilner

If you are lucky enough to have a houseplant as a Christmas present, here are a few tips to get the best out of them.



POINSETTAS –

These are semi-tropical plants with vivid red floral bracts (not petals), surrounding tiny yellow true flowers. They are grown from cuttings in warm optimum conditions and are treated with a dwarfing agent to keep them compact.

They need a warm site with plenty of light and hate draughts. They must not be overwatered. Water when they begin to wilt and allow to drain. Do not let them stand in water.



Be careful when handling. All Euphorbias exude white latex when damaged to which some people are very sensitive and come out with a nasty rash.

HYACINTHS –

These bulbs will have been planted in early October and kept in a cool dark position. They are brought into a warmer, light position in early December when you should be able to see nice fat bulbs. Keep warm and in a light position and you should have fragrant flowers on Christmas Day.



Keep the compost moist but not soggy and you should have a good show for a couple of weeks.

Some people, including me, suffer from sneezing fits from the fragrance.

The spent bulbs can be planted in the garden.



CYCLAMEN –



These are grown from corms. They hail from the Middle East and enjoy a warm but not hot atmosphere in good light. Again, do not over water. It is best to stand in water for a few minutes and allow to drain well.

Plants can become mouldy at leaf base. Remove affected leaves and faded flowers by a sharp tug.

Cyclamen suffer from attacks of vine weevil which can devastate a plant in no time at all. At the end of the season the plants can be dried off. Start watering in late summer for a splendid display in Autumn.

ORCHIDS –



Now the most popular house plant. They are usually sold in full flower so if you can, pick one with buds emerging. The most common is Phalaenopsis (Moth Orchid) which is an epiphyte growing in the detritus on tree trunks and branches. They are potted in a compost comprising shredded bark which is very porous.

Again, do not allow to stand in water. A good soaking every couple of weeks and a misting every day will keep them going.

Mealy bugs can be a problem. Use a systemic insecticide and/or use a small paint brush to apply a liberal dose of methylated spirit.

When flowers have dropped cut back the stem to the top bud and a new flowering spike should appear.

**THE BEST OF LUCK AND
HAVE A GOOD CHRISTMAS**



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Find your perfect Christmas tree :



Help to support the work of
the National Trust at Marsden Moor at
their Christmas tree sales this December.

Choose from the classic Nordmann Fir, Fraser Fir with its blue hue and distinctive scent, a potted Norway spruce or, if you fancy a change from the norm, a wooden Christmas tree handcrafted from reclaimed pallets by our workshop volunteers.

Held in the Old Goods Yard, HD7 6DH, sales begin Saturday 1st and Sunday 2nd December, 9.30am - 3.30pm, with complimentary mince pies and hot mulled wine, and continues Saturday 8th and Sunday 9th December while stocks last.

Their friendly team of rangers and volunteers will be on hand to offer guidance and assistance. Also on sale will be wooden items crafted by their volunteers, festive gifts and National Trust retail items in the Christmas pop-up shop.

The Wreath created by Alison Hayes at the November meeting

Alison donated the wreath that she created at last month's meeting to be raffled. It was won by "our Alison".



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Future Contributions :

Please submit any comments or contributions to Mary Harrison

E - me@thepigsty.me

T - 07912 513236

Or by post to 73 Pavilion Way, Meltham, Huddersfield, HD9 5QN.