



Summer Newsletter

No 173

July 2024



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Editors Notes

It's a British thing, talking about the weather, well it has certainly been one to talk about, in particular the summer, which after many years of predictable weather here in the South, we have welcomed back unpredictability. I can normally tell a good summer by the number of evenings we have been sitting outside having BBQs, but with nighttime temperatures constantly below double figures, it is not just playing havoc with our balmy evenings sitting in the garden, but as gardeners we are having an interesting time.

Having spoken with a number of vegetable growers we are all having problems of some kind, this is certainly the most challenging growing season I have seen in many years. As I write this, I have managed to pick less than half a dozen Courgettes, lost all my broad bean crop to blackfly. I am hoping that the Autumn crop fare better.

Still like every other gardener, we have never been so popular with slugs and snails to breed in, not bad if you're a Frenchman!! Shame for the Hosta's. There are of course always bright spots, some plants prefer the cooler and wetter weather, lettuces in an abundance, a decent looking beetroot crop and carrots and parsnips all looking good, so not all bad. The ferns also look good.

Back to this month's newsletter, we are blessed within the society of having so many members who want to help the society in different ways, whether it is through donating and or helping on the plant and Rose competitions stalls at the Frensham Fayre or, sharing their knowledge and experience by writing articles for this newsletter and you will see that we have had a lot going on in the last few months and I make no apologies for the length of the newsletters. When I receive the articles, I prefer not to edit them, so please enjoy the information and news.

My thanks to all of the contributors and in particular to our regular resident contributors, Bridgette Wilson and Dan Bosence and many thanks to Kate Smith who has produced a great article on the flower garden, and I am hoping that Kate will continue providing an article for each newsletter, no pressure Kate!! We also have an interesting article from guest contributors and Grace from Frensham Garden Market, who we hope will come and talk to us at one of our meetings in 2025.

I am always looking for useful information and articles to publish in the newsletter and if you have something, to offer then please contact me, it can be a small article or large article, photographs are always useful or if you have any comments please feel free to contact me on marketing@fdhs.org.uk.

And lastly thank You Ruth

I would also like to pay tribute to Ruth Murphy who will be moving back to the Southwest with Andrew, once they have sold their house in Frensham. Since joining the society over 10 years ago, she quickly volunteered to join the committee and between 2018 and 2023 inclusive was the Societies secretary. She was instrumental in helping with a number of fundamental internal changes within the society, and as many would comment, she took on far too much, she helped introduce the societies show box and therefore by default became the show secretary as well as bringing the society into the 21st secretary by introducing us to Facebook and Instagram and during COVID managed the virtual spring show of 2020, with entries from as far as Australia. Ruth, very best wishes and you will always be warmly welcomed back, once you have gone that is!!!

From the Veg Plot

by Dan Bosence

After some cold and wet weather in late spring and summer, mid-July brought in some, much delayed summer weather and didn't the plants respond quickly? Courgettes and climbing beans growing, flowering and producing outside and tomatoes and cucumbers kicking in, in the greenhouse. However, with all this bounty comes a host of bounty hunters and as we move away from pesticides that are harmful to wildlife (and probably us as well) gardeners need to learn new tricks to keep ahead of the game.

A lot of this comes in the form of netting and I now have a large amount of space taken up storing different grades of netting for different crops. "Not more plastic" I hear you moan, but if well looked after it lasts for years and years. It is definitely not SUP (single use plastic). Traditionally we have netted winter greens, but I find I need a finer mesh than used to be sold for this purpose.

Are Small and Large Whites learning to fold their wings back and fly through a $\frac{3}{4}$ " mesh? That's what they seem to do. I use a 1.5mm mesh for the sides and the top for the winter greens and this has just gone on as the first "cabbage whites" were seen flying in the garden. Strangely 4 days later there were 2 Large Whites and one Small White flapping around inside the cage trying to get out. Time will tell if these are somehow gaining entry, or, my best guess is that they are from pupae that hibernated over the winter in the soil and emerging at the same time as those flying freely around the garden (part of this year's greens cage overlaps with the previous year's cage). If I am right, then these invaders will soon disappear.

An alternative organic approach is spraying with a biopesticide *Bacillus thuringiensis*. Has anyone on the Hort and Prod tried using this rather than netting? I know some who have used it with success.



Greens cage in foreground with 1.5 mm netting on sides and top background- fruit cage of 2 cm welded netting that is fine for thrush family but can be eaten through by our local squirrels

Another invader this year has been a family of squirrels who have learnt that they can eat their way through welded plastic 2 cm netting to gain access to our strawberries. This has not happened previously, and our only hope is that either they forget, we can get rid of them/scare them off somehow (suggestions please), or we shall have to live with sharing our crop with them.

A relatively new pest in the veg garden are the larvae of leek moths. These white "maggots" are capable of destroying a complete crop and they are now spreading throughout the country. The moths are small (7-8 mm long) so they need a fine netting throughout the summer and autumn. I use a 1.5 mm netting, and this has worked for me for the past 2 years. If you get an infestation don't put crop on compost heap. They will love it and appear again next year.



Raised bed of leek seedlings that have just been planted out and waiting to be covered with 1.5 mm netting to deter leek moths.

This bed has just been cleared of its first crop of the year early potatoes.

Finally, a photograph of a bed of sweetcorn posted on Facebook has attracted quite a few comments. All my beds go right up to a rather vigorous hedge on their eastern (right-hand) side. A bit of shade in the early morning but full sun for the rest of the day.



Effect of nearby hedge on growing sweet corn. The hedge clearly takes nutrients and water from the bed.

However, it can also be considered as a form of successional cropping with the plants on the left cropping first and those on the right later ;-)

Other crops in these beds are not affected in such a dramatic way. If they did then I should have had the path on the right of the beds by the hedge and not on the left!

Gardening at the Old Vicarage



At long last summer is here. The garden is flowering with abundance, all boosted by the very wet spring. Many plants are a month early, which is a wonderful sight, but a sad sign of climate change.

Life in my garden has been hectic. Earlier in June, I opened The Old Vicarage for the National Garden scheme. The weather was kind and we had over 500 enthusiastic visitors and managed to raise £5,000 for the NGS. Through the National Garden Scheme, private gardens are open throughout the year to raise which raise funds for nursing and health charities. Thank you to all those who came to support, it was well worth all the efforts of the previous months. Do visit another garden, we have 80 gardens open in Surrey alone and hundreds more throughout the country.

When I first moved to Frensham, nearly 18 years ago, my garden consisted of mainly lawn, a couple of oval borders and a stable.

Gradually, I have changed it, always with a new project in mind. At first, I dug skinny borders along the boundaries, that was my first mistake. Always make your borders as wide as possible. That little 2 litre shrub bought from the garden centre will soon become a 2metre wide plant!

I then crammed in any plant that took my fancy, in any random place -second mistake. When planting a border, have fewer variety of plants, but always plant perennials in threes or fives or sevens, if you have the room! Choose the plant for the correct environment - right plant right place - check whether that shade loving plant is in a shady part of the garden. Always repeat the planting around the garden. This will create a pleasing rhythm in the border. Gradually I have learned, from making mistakes. Don't be scared to dig up plants and move them around if it doesn't work. Do this in October, when the ground is warm and we have rain to help plants to establish.





As I step out of my back door, I am met by a profusion of flowers. There is very little lawn left in this part of the garden. I have a gravel terrace with box parterre, planted with *Lavandula* 'Hidcote', *Rosa* 'Natasha Richardson' and *Geranium* 'Rozanne'.

I'm giving the box hedge until November to perform before being replaced by an alternative such as yew. I've fed it, sprayed it with Top Buxus Xentari, but it's really suffered with blight and caterpillar this year. In desperation, I chain sawed it in half and fed it with rose feed, we'll just have to see if I perks up.

The back garden then has a circular lawn surrounded by deep borders. I used to have the children's climbing frame here, but it's all gone now to be replaced by three central tear-shaped borders and grass paths. I have planted multi Stemmed *Amelanchier lemarckii* in each border and at intervals around the lawn. *Amelanchier* are fantastic small trees, with dainty star shaped white blossom in spring and red colour in the autumn.

Low rise planting consists of *Nepeta* 'Walker's Low', *Geranium* 'Wargrave Pink', *Salvia nemerosa* 'Caradonna' and *Alchemilla mollis*. These are such easy perennials to grow, cut back to the ground in autumn, give them a quick 'Chelsea chop' in May or as I prefer, regular light prune throughout the growing season. Then divide in autumn or early spring for free plants. This also prevents the centre becoming woody.

Throughout the borders *Paeonia* 'Sarah Bernhardt' and 'Bowl of Beauty' give a showy appearance; I dead head these as they finish flowering.



The roses have been amazing this year. I can only put it down to the rain fall this spring.

I have quick draining acidic sandy soil so not suitable for roses, but I mulch with well-rotted horse manure in the winter and feed regularly with rose granules and liquid rose feed. They are, however covered in black spot.

I saw on Instagram recently a post that stated don't worry, just keep feeding after pruning for a second flush of flowers.



The garden now moves from early to mid-summer. *Hydrangea* 'Annabelle' is quickly budding, the lime green flowers soon to be replaced by large white spheres. I don't follow the tradition of cutting *Hydrangea* 'Annabel' down to the ground in February, but instead cut down by a third. The flowers are smaller but don't require staking. Height is now provided by the perennials *Veronicastrum*, *Eupatorium*, *Phlox* and *Verbena bonariensis* and the grass *Miscanthus sinensis* 'Adagio'. They will flower now, well into August and beyond.



I tend never sit in the garden for long. As soon as I sit, I get twitchy, always noticing weeds in the borders or a dead flower to prune. It's the same with designing my garden. Not satisfied with the existing borders, this winter, I decided to convert the tennis court. It was becoming a mossy, dangerous hazard. Last year we had a trench dug and planted 20 espaliered *Malus* 'Hillieri' underplanted with *Hydrangea arborescens* 'Annabelle', *Miscanthus*, *Geranium* and *Melissa* (see below left). There was so much sand to be removed that this year it was too difficult to remove all of the court, so we decided to build eight L-shaped raised borders out of oak sleepers on top of the surface. Forty tonnes of soil and gravel later and planted with easy reliable perennials, it is already becoming established.

Next October I will plant hundreds of mixed allium and Narcissi bought directly from the company 'Bulbi' in Holland who deliver in bulk. Hopefully I'll be rewarded with lots of colour next spring.



Noticeboard

SAVE THE DATE Members supper

Friday 29th November
At the Marindin Hall

Details of cost and how to
book to follow

August meeting ATTENTION ALL VEG GROWERS

We are pleased to announce that John Trim, who will be taking about 'Growing Greens'. John is a fellow of the National Vegetable Society, a national judge, exhibitor, and horticultural lecturer. If you are a keen vegetable grower or just want to know more about growing greens, this talk should not be missed because it is likely to be a masterclass of a meeting.

The meeting will be held at the Marindin Hall on **Thursday 22nd August at 7.30 for an 8pm start.** Non-members will be warmly welcomed

New member welcome

We would like to welcome to the society, Susan Gardner, who won the most amount of votes as a non-member at the Rose Show held at the Frensham Fayre.

Congratulations and we hope you enjoy being a member of the society.

Autumn Show

We will be holding our Autumn Show at the Marindin Hall on Saturday 7th September and hope that as many members as possible will enter one of the classes. A separate email reminder will be sent along with an entry form, nearer the time, you can also use the entry form from your handbook or check out the website.

If you have any questions, please direct them to joint show organisers Sharon Bleach and Karen Williams.

Bridget's Kitchen

I have two recipes for you this month to make use of some of the seasonal produce available.

Broad Bean Crostini

150g shelled broad beans
3tblsps extra virgin oil
Handful of finely chopped mint
Salt and black pepper

A fresh baguette
Extra virgin oil
2 peeled and halved garlic cloves
A few slivers of pecorino cheese

1. Cut bread into finger thick slices, drizzle with olive oil and grill or griddle' lightly rub one side with the garlic and sprinkle with salt.
2. Boil the broad beans for about 5 minutes until tender, squeeze out of skins, puree or mash with most of the olive oil, lemon juice and zest, and plenty of black pepper and salt.
3. Spread on crostini, sprinkle with olive oil, pecorino cheese and a scattering of chopped mint.

Cherry Clafoutis

50g flour plus extra for the dish
3 eggs
1 tablespoon of vanilla extract
250ml milk
Icing sugar

crème fraiche to serve
100g sugar
¼ teaspoon salt
450g sweet cherries preferably stoned

1. Preheat oven to 190degreesC/gas 5
 2. Butter and flour an ovenproof dish (about23cm diameter)
 3. Whisk eggs, add sugar, vanilla essence and salt and then sift in flour
 4. When this is smooth gradually add the milk
 5. Pour about 1cm of the batter into the ovenproof dish, cover with cherries and pour over the remaining batter.
 6. Bake in middle of oven for about 40mins until it is puffed and golden brown
 7. Allow to cool a little and sprinkle with icing sugar.
 8. Serve warm with the crème fraiche
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Frensham Fayre

The Plant Stall by Karen Williams



Well, what truly awful weather we had at Frensham Village Fayre this year, I got well and truly soaked on a number of occasions during the day.

I have to say though that it didn't put off the many wonderful volunteer FVS members from coming to help me on the day, to whom we all owe a huge thank you for all their hard work, and sense of humour in spite of the inclement English weather.

It also didn't stop the visitors to the Fayre buying our fruit, veg and flowers this year.

I think that the early colder spring weather and the fact that the slugs have really been out in force this year, and the shocking cost of herbaceous perennials at garden centres meant people were coming to look and keen to buy.

This year we had a record making (so our treasurer tells me) set of takings at nearly £1100!!!! This has meant a very generous donation to the Fayre, and a boost to our funds. The quality of what we had to sell was excellent and credit for that belongs to every member who donated plants from their garden, thank you so very much we couldn't have done it without you. Looking forward to next year if as many of you as possible could put aside a couple of plants for us when you are splitting your plants in the autumn or spring, we'd be very grateful.

Photograph supplied by Matthew Burch Photography

Frensham Fayre

The Rose Competition

As everyone will know, the Frensham Fayre held last month had ‘mixed weather’ – hot sunshine and torrential downpours! In the main marquee the FHDS Rose competition went ahead with a fabulous display of roses in five different classes. All categories were open to members and non-members and all entries were voted for by visitors to the Fayre. At times (particularly when it was raining) the number of people at the stand and voting meant there was frenetic activity in voting and counting.

Many thanks to Ruth Murphy, Penny Hearn and Annabel Sommerfelt for all their help with making the event so successful.

Out of the five classes, we received 63 different entries, from 21 entrants. A total of 894 votes were cast.

Winners of the classes were:

Class 1: Most scented rose – Jane Thorne

Class 2: Best rose bud – Penny Hearn

Class 3: Most unusual rose – Jane Thorne

Class 4: Most romantic rose – Lyn Curtis

Class 5: Best wedding buttonhole – Sharon Turner-Mumford



Frensham Fayre

The member with the most points overall was Jane Thorne (pictured right) who won the Perring Cup which has been presented to the winner of the Rose Competition for a number of years and a beautiful rose kindly donated by the Seale Rose Garden.

The non-member with the greatest number of votes was Susan Gardner (pictured below) who collected another beautiful rose donated by Seale Rose Garden and also receives free membership of FDHS for one year.



Each of the class winners also collected a prize for their winning entry.

We would like to thank all those that participated by entering a rose, or roses and those that attended and voted to make it such a great success. We would also like to thank Seale Rose Nurseries for their support in provided the two roses for the worthy winners.

We look forward to even more entries next year – especially from members – the challenge is on as this year we had only 10 members entering and 11 non-members. Just one entry per member would make an even better display next year.

Article: Sharon Bleach and Photographs supplied by Sharon Bleach and Matthew Burch Photography.

The Hanging Hosta Garden

On Friday 28th June a dozen of us travelled to the Hanging Hosta Garden in Lindford, the weather was very kind to us, and the garden was truly amazing. The owners June and John have a fairly small plot around their detached house (which was the old Doctors surgery) but my goodness they really pack everything in!

I thought I liked to plant lots, but they are truly experts at it, growing over 2000 different Hosta's (as well as over 200 Hemerocallis and numerous shrubs and companion plants) The largest collection anywhere in Europe, and that all came as a result of a car boot purchase by June in 1986!



They grow almost everything in pots and the watering regime is 2 hours every night as they rotate around the garden. They also have almost no slug damage on the Hosta's and John spent some time talking us through how to achieve that with minimal effort - although he does go out every night on slug and vine weevil patrol to pick off the odd one that gets through all the other defences.

The tour of the garden and the very informative talk was excellent I certainly learned a lot, they have also written an excellent book which many of us purchased on the day (if anyone is interested, please let me know and I can get some more @ £3 each).

There was almost a frenzy when they said they had some plants for purchase! There were some very unusual varieties which I haven't seen anywhere else before.

A very surprising garden which has taught me that there is always a way to fit one more plant in, even if you have to go up in the air to do it!



Article and photos supplied by Karen Williams

Affiliations

The society is affiliated to a number of other Horticultural organisations, namely: The Vegetable Society (NVS), The Royal Horticultural Society, the Surrey Federation of Horticultural Societies and Plant Heritage, each organisation others benefits to not only the society but also our members. Some of the benefits are:

RHS Discount Card

If any FDHS members are planning a visit to an RHS Garden do take advantage of our Society's discount card (not needed if you are already an RHS member). This gives a 50% discount to two adult members on entry to any of the RHS Gardens, with Wisley of course our 'local' one. It is not accepted for visits during Flower Shows and Glow illumination events. The card is kept by committee member Sharon Miller; please contact her on 07766 573856 to arrange to borrow it.

Plant Heritage Open Days

As FDHS has a club membership of the nationwide Plant Heritage, our members can benefit from reduced or free entry to events and talks. Check out the website which gives details of open days of the national collections and talks which might fit in with wherever you are going to be in the country over the summer at: <https://www.plantheritage.org.uk/events/>. We have two membership cards, again kept by Sharon Miller - details as above.

One event not too far from home is the Heliotropium (pictured below), Lantana, Queen Mary II Exotics Collection open evening between 6-8pm at Hampton Court Palace. Entry is £18 and pre booking essential: Mr M Einchcomb, 020 3166 6487. Open in support of NGS & Historic Royal Palaces.



The Surrey Horticultural Federation's website is an excellent source for finding out about local open gardens and shows such as Elstead Garden Club's Summer Show is on Saturday 6th July and Grayshott Gardeners' is 13th July. On Sunday 18th August there will be a Plant Heritage Plant Fair at Denbies Wine Estate near Dorking.

The Asian Hornet

The latest newsletter of the Surrey Horticultural Federation also has clear information about the threat to our UK bees and other insects by Asian Hornets. Two Asian Hornet nests were found in Surrey in September 2023. These nests were destroyed by experts from DEFRA.

If you think you see an Asian Hornet, take a picture if you can. Do not disturb an active nest but report it to the NNSS through their online form or by emailing alertnotnative@ceh.ac.uk.

Think you've seen an Asian Hornet? Report it!

Centimeters

3
2
1
0

Asian Hornet
Vespa velutina

European Hornet
Vespa crabro

Wasp
Vespula vulgaris

Honey Bee
Apis mellifera

Report through the Asian Hornet Watch app or www.bit.ly/asianhornetreport

GET IT ON Google Play | Download on the App Store | Animal & Plant Health Agency

Squires Garden Centre- Shepperton will be holding the National Fuchsia Show on Sunday 4th August 12-4pm

Other dates for the diary

16 th -18 th August.	RHS Rosemoor Flower Show
3 rd -8 th September	RHS Wisley Flower Show
7 th September	Frensham & Dockenfield Horticultural Society Spring
27 th -29 th September.	The Malvern Autumn Show
29 th September -1 st October	The Garden Show at Broadlands, Romsey Hampshire
13 th October	Blackmoor Estate Apple Tasting Day and fete

Sharon Miller Affiliations Secretary

Frensham Market Farm

Frensham Market Farm was started by us, Grace and Tom, in February 2023 after a campervan adventure which took us across Europe volunteering and working on organic farms. This experience not only deepened our knowledge and skills but also inspired us to create our own farm, where we could put our principles into practice. We are currently cultivating two thirds of our 3.5 acre site on Wishanger Lane, which includes 3 large polytunnels, a caterpillar tunnel and lots of outdoor permanent raised beds. We're passionate about growing produce that not only tastes amazing but is also kind to the planet.

Soil Health

Soil health is important to us, so we farm to organic standards which means no chemical inputs. Instead, we rely on compost and green manures. We found from doing soil tests that there are high levels of phosphorus and potassium in our soil, so we've had to cut back on the manure based compost to avoid nutrient overload. Instead, we're using green manures to build up organic matter, which helps unlock the nutrients plants need.



Crop rotation is another key part of maintaining healthy soil. By rotating crops, we prevent the depletion of specific nutrients and break, pest and disease cycles. Different crops have different nutrient needs and pest issues, so rotating them helps keep the soil balanced and reduces the likelihood of infestations.

We follow a tweaked no-dig approach to keep the soil ecosystem healthy. We initially set up our beds with cardboard and compost. However, we had to change this method to suit our situation. As we farm on a large space it would be very expensive and labour intensive to lay down a thick compost mulch everywhere and, like I said earlier, would actually be bad for the soil being overfed with nutrients. We contracted a tractor and also rented a walk behind rotavator to break ground as the field has been uncultivated for over 10 years. After the initial cultivation, we don't use any powered machinery to farm.



Ecological Pest Control

We work with nature to manage pests. We also use insect netting over brassicas and carrots. Once the brassicas are established, we take off the netting and let natural predatory wasps keep on top of the cabbage whites. We attract them by letting early planted brassicas flower or even planting a strip of rocket early on and letting it go to seed. We also let nettles grow around the site since they're great habitats for aphids. This keeps ladybugs and other predators close by, ready to move in and tackle any outbreaks across the farm.

General Growing Practices

Our growing practices change with the seasons. In July, we shift from planting to nurturing and harvesting. We use a variety of hand tools, including push wheel hoes, hand hoes, and good old-fashioned spades and forks. For weed control, we rely on hard work and a selection of hoes. The stirrup hoe is great for initial cultivation, the collinear hoe slices weeds just below the surface, and the wire hoe gets young weeds without damaging crops.



At the moment, we are busy with our summer harvests, including tomatoes and aubergines, and are preparing for autumn, by planting winter root crops and green manures.

By rotating crops and under sowing with plants like phacelia and clover, we maintain soil health and provide habitats for beneficial insects, avoiding monocultures and reducing pest risks.

Community and Connection

For us, farming is about, more than growing food; it's about building community. We love having visitors and volunteers, bringing the farm to life with laughter and conversation. Over the last year we've had volunteer days, school trips to the farm, farm tours and much more. Actively supporting the community is important so each week we donate a portion of our vegetables to the local food bank. This ensures that those in need have access to healthy, nutritious food, reinforcing our commitment to making a positive impact in our community.

Weekly Vegetable Boxes

We run our farm using a Community-Supported Agriculture (CSA) model. CSA is a partnership between farmers and communities and at the heart of the CSA movement is a desire to reconnect communities with the food they eat, while supporting the people who grow that food. Members make a commitment to support the farm with a seasonal subscription, paid monthly, in return, we supply a box of veg each week, all of which comes from the farm. Because of the unique way that CSA provides a guaranteed market for small and medium-sized farmers like us, we're able to farm ecologically, provide an asset for the community and keep money in the local economy. CSA helps to address increasing concerns about the lack of transparency, sustainability and resilience of our food system and members are welcome to visit the farm to see our practices and how we grow ecologically.

We still have spaces open for this year's CSA so if you would like to sign up, please send an email over to frenshammarketfarm@gmail.com or visit our website www.frenshammarketfarm.com. If you'd like to keep up to date with what we are up to the farm, follow us on Instagram [@frenshammarketfarm](https://www.instagram.com/frenshammarketfarm/), or on facebook <https://www.facebook.com/frenshammarketfarm/>.

The Marigold Competition



Every child at our local infant school, St Mary's in Frensham, was invited earlier in the summer to take part in a Marigold Growing Competition. Committee members handed out seeds, labels and instructions and taught the children how to sow and care for their seeds. At the end of term, all the resulting plants were brought back in and judged by Sharon Bleach, Annabel Sommerfelt and Sharon Miller.

Prizes were awarded to two children from each class, and it is hoped that we have helped to foster an interest in gardening that will stay with all the children.

Article and photograph by Sharon Miller