

COLINTON GARDEN CLUB

NEWSLETTER

www.colingtongardens.org.uk



No 121
February 2018

Coming soon...

A talk by
Clare Reaney of
Dundee Botanic
Garden on
Propagation

Monday 26th
February 8 pm

Dreghorn Loan Hall

Members'
Arts & Crafts
Evening
See page 3

Fertilizer Orders

An order form is
with this newsletter
- please return to
Liz Windle by
Wednesday
28th February

Have you paid
your subscription
for the year?

Dear Club Members

I hope that you have all recovered from the Colinton Garden Club Christmas Party with all the fun and frolics and carols, and that you had an enjoyable festive season.

We are now looking forward to a new year in the garden. There are signs of spring approaching and I see that the bulbs are already beginning to push their way up and the birds are beginning to sing again. So the gardening year starts again.



gardening gear, are out preparing the soil and digging in the plants with great enthusiasm.

It is amazing to think of all this gardening activity going on throughout the ages and constantly returning to the same ideas after a century or two.



Last November we had a very successful talk from Ben Dell from the Botanic Gardens in Edinburgh, who fired us with enthusiasm for growing vegetables and in particular for raised beds. Just to prove that these ideas are not entirely new, I found this sketch of a little 16th Century chap following Ben's 21st Century instructions to the letter. And he has constructed a beautiful wicker fence to keep the wildlife out as well. The painting by Pieter Breughel, I think the Elder, also dating from the 16th century, shows gardeners hard at work creating a garden that would look pretty good today, with enclosed beds for herbs and probably flowers and ornamental trees. There is even two workers putting up a walk-through trellis to the right of the painting and it looks like most of the village, in their trendy



The Choir in good voice at our Christmas Party

We have an interesting programme to look forward to this year, especially our Members' Evening in March and don't forget that we'll have our AGM in April with a display of Members' Art Work so perhaps you can start thinking about that. We always manage to have such an impressive assembly of garden themed items including photographs, flower arrangements, art work, embroidery and patchwork.

Happy New Year and Good Gardening to all our members!

Elsbeth

Ipomoea: rich in history and vowels



Ipomoea horsfalliae var. rheedii
in *The Botanics* in December 2017

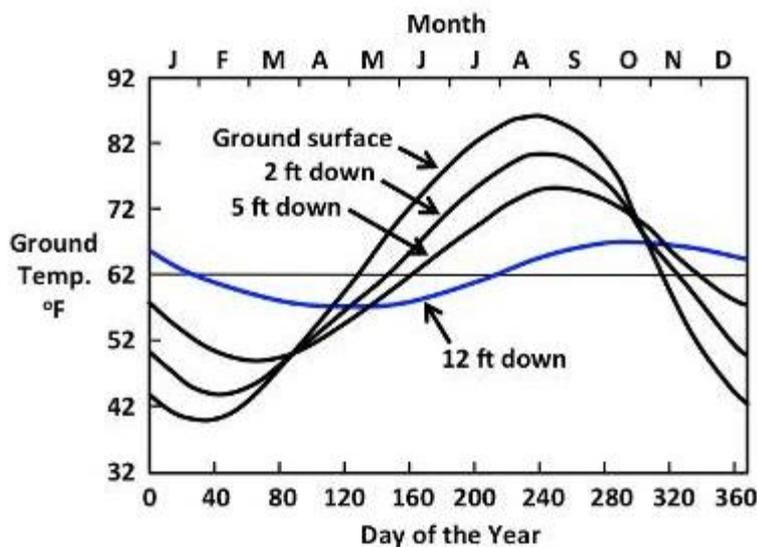
With well over 500 species, the *Ipomoea* genus encompasses a range of attractive ornamental climbers including Common Morning Glory (*Ipomoea purpurea*) and food sources such as sweet potato (*I. batatas*) and water spinach (*I. aquatica*). It also provides folk medicines, for example Mexican Morning Glory (*I. tricolor*) much favoured by shaman priests - its hallucinogenic actions are almost certainly due to the presence of various ergot alkaloids related to LSD. Dreadful 'horror trips' and even death are not uncommon. On a more mundane level, the powerful cathartic 'jalap' derives from the tuber of *Ipomoea purga*, which is grown in Mexico and around Ootacamund in southern India. Moving from bowels to vowels, 'ipomoea' is a useful word to have up your Scrabble sleeve. To continue this tortuous journey, you may wish to read the Web article by Susan Thorpe entitled 'AEIOU words in Biology'. And to digress even further, in the 1870s the colonial club at Ootacamund (Snooty Ooty) had a prominent role in the development of snooker from black pool, the latter played with 15 reds and a black ball. Then there's the act of blackballing – I'd better stop there. Editor

Getting to the root of the matter

In *The Fellowship of the Ring*, J.R. Tolkien wrote:

*"All that is gold does not glitter,
Not all those who wander are lost;
The old that is strong does not wither,
Deep roots are not reached by the frost"*

Of course the situation is more complex as shown in the diagram below for an average moist soil (from www.builditsolar.com, redrawn with apologies for the non-metric units). As the temperature at ground level fluctuates dramatically with the seasons, some 12 ft down the variation is much less and the peaks and troughs lag behind by as much as two months. Trees, shrubs and perennials vary hugely in their susceptibility to cold temperatures and while regeneration of damaged tissues above ground may occur, root damage is often terminal.



Plants have evolved to survive cold winters by becoming dormant, dropping leaves and slowing growth. They can also transfer water from inside cells to spaces between the cells in branch and root tissues. This creates a 'natural anti-freeze' within the cell and any ice crystals formed outside the cell walls are less damaging. The rate at which low temperature pervades the tissue mass is also important; the tree's own bark, a good layer of mulch and a covering of snow can all act as insulators to slow down this process.

Ordering of your Spring compost and similar items

It's that joyful time when thoughts turn to plans for the garden. I keep noticing new shoots and buds in my container garden, which is a relief after the hard frosts. The days are definitely getting longer too so now's the time to sit down and write your order for all the products that will give your garden every chance of success. You will see that there are some price increases at Garden Solutions this year but we do get 15% discount so it's still good value. Please send your order with cheque back to me by 28th February to be sure of delivery. Full details of each item may be found at www.gardensolutions.info. Orders are normally delivered about 2 weeks later. Liz Windle

Members' Arts and Crafts Evening

As an accompaniment to our AGM in April you are invited to display your recent art and craft work

Items of embroidery, quilting and tapestry, paintings, photographs, bulbs and flower arrangements, and the like are all acceptable

There is an emphasis on gardening & horticulture but no limitations to the type and number of items you may present – so let's have a good showing!

For further details and advice on displaying large or unusual items, please contact Margo Gilchrist:
441 7339 library@colintongardens.org.uk

Dates for your diary.....

Monday 26 February 2018	'Propagation' by Clare Reaney, Dundee Botanic Garden 8 pm in Dreghorn Loan Hall
Monday 26 March 2018	Members' Evening comprising 3 short presentations: 'Gardens of Barbados' by Susan Plag 'The Alameda: Gibraltar Botanic Garden' by Mary and Jonathan Davey 'Gardening with a difference – try Ardnamurchan' by Penny McKee 8 pm in Dreghorn Loan Hall
Monday 23 April 2018	Annual General Meeting - there are important issues to discuss With refreshments and an exhibition of members' work - see page 3 8 pm in Dreghorn Loan Hall

Outdoor Summer Schedule 2018

Tuesday 8 May	Evening Garden Event A visit to Kevock Garden in Lasswade at the invitation of Stella Raskin Starting at 6.30 pm. Refreshments served. Plant stall £5 per head. Own transport but lifts can be arranged Put your name down/pay at the next meeting
A Saturday in June	Open Gardens & Plant Sale We are finalising visits to 3 gardens within easy walking distance in the Spylaw / Lanark Road area
Saturday 7 July	Summer Outing We are planning a whole day outing by coach to gardens in Fife

Gardening implements

Anne Siller (implements@colintongardens.org.uk) is in charge of loaning gardening implements. We now hold the following items: Electric lawn scarifier with moss collectors (also extension leads and earth leakage trip). Tree pruning saw with telescopic handle. Tree pruning lopper with telescopic handle (stiff handle). Tree pruning saw with long handle plus two extension handles. Lawn Aerator. Bush pruning saw. Turfing iron. Leaf blower. pH meter. Please note that the lawn scarifier is heavy.

Newsletter Delivery

Not received your newsletter?
Contact Bob Jones
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Club Website

For details of all Club activities
and contact addresses
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www.colintongardens.org.uk

Membership enquiries – contact Jo Todd, Membership Secretary

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