



# COLINTON GARDEN CLUB

## NEWSLETTER

**Newsletter  
No 131  
August 2020**



*Just a few examples of members' gardens during the COVID -19 'lockdown' of 2020 – many more photos at [www.colintongardens.org.uk](http://www.colintongardens.org.uk)*

*Dear Members,*

It seems unthinkable that the world can have altered so much since our last Newsletter. Life for all of us has completely changed and we are now living in unprecedented times. We've been experiencing a 'great pause' in our day to day lives and this has given us time to do all sorts of things, although many people I know, including me, have been saying that they intended to tidy the office/ clear their files/

sort out their books and four months on this has still not happened. I think we run out of enthusiasm for these tasks quite rapidly despite having nothing to do and all day to do it in.

However, I think most of us have been spending much more time in our gardens and judging by the lovely photos many of you have sent in to our website, this has been time very well spent. Alan Titchmarsh said in a recent virtual visit to his garden: "Our gardens are the ultimate reality – created by man with the help of nature they offer us an anchor in times of turmoil, never more so than this year."

We were lucky to have such a glorious spring after one of the wettest winters on record and being able to enjoy so much sunshine. We had a glorious display of spring flowers and blossom this year, especially the cherry blossom.

We have been locked down, but nature hasn't and birds and animals have taken full advantage of the lack of humans encroaching on their space. We have had the time to watch the birds nesting, the fledglings emerging and learning how to fly and to stand on their own wee feet. I have had great pleasure watching a female blackbird pattering about the lawn pursued by four offspring who were the same size as herself and when she fished out a worm she stuffed it into the beak of the nearest and carried on. Then the babies all decided to get into the bird bath together, much to the alarm of a blue tit who was splashing happily away and had to clear off at speed.

Our Club, as with all similar organisations, had to close down and cancel all our summer activities according to government requirements. We missed our May Evening Open Garden outing, our Members' Open Gardens in June, and our Summer Outing to Branklyn and Drummond Castle.



**With regard to our 2020/21 programme which starts on September 28th, the Committee has decided to suspend all Garden Club Activities until April 2021, subject to Scottish Government regulations.**

Due to the large number of members who normally attend meetings, it is just not possible to use Dreghorn Loan Hall and observe social distancing: only about 30 members would be permitted to attend a meeting. The necessary disinfecting of chairs and the sanitising of all facilities afterwards makes this a difficult task. The possibility of a resurgence of Covid-19 during the winter months also has to be reckoned with. Hence the decision we have decided to take. You will, of course, remain a Club member, and any new members wishing to join will be added to the data base, but **no subscriptions will be levied for the year 2020/21**. If any of your details have changed, please contact our Membership Secretary, Jo Todd.

*/Please turn to page 4*

### The Birth of a Garden Pond - Lockdown 2020

For a very long time I have really, really wanted a pond in the garden. I am passionate about wildlife but somehow, even when retired, didn't get around to what felt like a mammoth task.

Similarly, many years ago, and every year since, two old friends have said they would dig the required hole, but we never named a date. When news of Covid-19 began to circulate I could not help wondering what the impact would be on me. I suffer respiratory problems and thought it likely I would have to self-isolate. How would I occupy myself?

One evening, completely out of the blue, my friend texted suggesting that she and her husband dig this overdue hole the very next morning. Why not, I thought, let them do it! They arrived, spades in hand and progress was quickly made (see photos 1 and 2 on page 3 of the newsletter). Coffee breaks were allowed. Suitably refreshed, they dug some more, packed the hole with sand and soon the liner was in situ (photos 3 and 4)

Hosepipe at the ready and after four hours hard labour ...voila .....a pond! I gathered more rocks from around the garden and bought some cobbles for the 'beach'. Tim donated both plants and tadpoles. How wonderful, the pond was taking shape (photos 5 and 6).

BOOM! Lockdown happened and I was 'shielded'. Restrictions meant Tim could not continue with the project. There was nothing else for it, I would have to carry on by myself. Tim sent me instructions and I asked friends for more rocks. The latter gradually appeared, on the path, beside the gate and on the drive! I got to work, shifting and shoving rocks until...see photo 7

Not a bad effort I thought. What about the huge pile of earth that came out of the hole? My youngest son suggested a rockery. Never having done anything like that, I looked on You Tube, asked for even more rocks (my 8-year-old granddaughter brought some too), laid them out, and came up with photo 8

Then, plants were both delivered and donated. The sun came out, a solar oxygenator was added, and soon the pond was quite pleasing to the eye.

As if by magic, pond life began to arrive. A water beetle was spotted bobbing up for its air bubble. A skater simply 'owned' the pond, rushing across the surface hither and thither, thereby ensuring its kingdom was safe from intruders.

The tadpoles grew, but predation shrank them in number. After ten weeks it finally happened, the moment I had hoped for. Mr Frog appeared (see photo 9). This creature delighted me, never fazed as I sat beside him taking multiple photographs.

During one ridiculously hot day in May, a majestic, richly coloured damselfly flew in and rested awhile (photo 10)

With some robust digging and further offerings of plants the bare patch behind the pond was populated. This is it – photo 11- the final version, almost four months to the day from the start of lockdown.

The pond has been an absolute gift. I have thoroughly enjoyed every hour spent in its creation. As I write, 'shielding' ends in two weeks' time. Little did I know that lockdown would bring such benefits, and I would have no difficulty filling my time.

Incredibly grateful thanks must go to Judith and Tim Lawson, Fiona Berry, Carol Lumsden, Diana Ennos, Alyson Kemp, Anne McClean, Fiona Stevenson, John, Matthew, William and Jessica. Without their kindness and generosity, 'shielding' would have been much tougher to bear.

*Elaine Fyfe*

### COMPOST & FERTILISER ORDER AUTUMN 2020

Liz Windle writes:

**Fertiliser Order:** *Garden Solutions are continuing to operate in the current climate and they are carrying out NO CONTACT deliveries so please do remember to self-distance from the delivery team. The 2020 Autumn/ Winter Order Form is being e-mailed out with this newsletter, and can also be printed out from the website (look under 'Services'). The order form is also available with printed copies of this newsletter.*

**Bulbs:** *I am planning to order the usual excellent selection of bulbs to sell at the October Plant Sale.*



Photo 1



Photo 2



Photo 3



Photo 4



Photo 5



Photo 6



Photo 7



Photo 8



Photo 9



Photo 10



Photo 11

*/continued from page 1*

We would hope to hold the 2019/20 AGM at the meeting in April 2021, and also hold the summer events planned but cancelled for this year, and then start the new season at the end of September 2021 as usual. However, we will have to wait and see how events turn out as nobody can foresee what is going to happen.

In order to keep you up to date with what's going on, we have decided to issue Newsletters more frequently and the website will continue to function as usual. We would love to get contributions from you, our members, as to what you have been doing during lockdown. One of our members, Elaine Fyfe, has built a garden pond, for example, with the help of other club members and must be mightily pleased with herself, as it is absolutely magnificent – see pages 2-3 of this newsletter.

#### **And Now A Date for your Empty Diary: October Plant Sale**

One ray of sunshine for the Autumn: we have decided to hold the October Plant Sale from 14.00 – 16.00 outside in Anne Siller and Ian Forder's driveway at 430 Lanark Road on **Saturday October 3<sup>rd</sup>**, with October 10<sup>th</sup> as a fall back date in case of bad weather. There will be the usual selection of bulbs from Parker's on offer.

Please start potting up your plants in preparation, and come along with donated plants (and produce) anytime from the Friday afternoon onwards, but before 13.00 on the Saturday. You'll have a chance to meet up with some friends, but we can't provide tea or coffee this time. We'll also take your names when you arrive, just in case you need to be contacted later.

I hope this Newsletter answers all your queries about next year. With all best wishes, and above all, stay well,

*Elspeth*

#### **Changes to the Committee**

- **Kate MacSween**, our Outings Coordinator, has unfortunately had to stand down due to illness and we would like to give her our thanks and best wishes.
- **Bryan Dale** is standing down after three years as a brilliantly efficient Treasurer. He has kept our finances on the right track and made sure that the Club is more than viable. He was also previously Hall Officer for three years. Many thanks to Bryan.
- **Susan Plag** is standing down as Programme and Outings Convenor after many years in office. Susan has always come up with great ideas for our Club which included a marvellous array of interesting speakers and all our Summer Outings to wonderful gardens in the surrounding areas over the past 9 years. We are enormously grateful for her organisational skills – nobody ever got left behind on our trips – she has always kept her cool, and has been a huge asset to the Club. Many thanks, Susan!

I am very pleased to let you know that:

- **Susan McMaster** has agreed to take over Susan Plag's role as Programme Convener
- One of our new members, **Jon Gibson**, will take over Bryan's role as Treasurer
- **Ian Forder** will take over the task of Hall Officer

Many thanks to each of them.

#### **Club Secretary**

This leaves us with the unfilled Committee role of **Club Secretary** and this is where you, come in. We need a Club Secretary to replace Susan McMaster. This involves taking the minutes of Committee Meetings, making Hall Bookings for Meetings and working with the Chairperson to draw up the Agenda for Committee Meetings. Our new Club Secretary is out there somewhere and we need him or her right now, and it could be you.

We would also like to welcome a couple of so called 'floaters' to join the Committee to do odd jobs and help out at events, and subsequently take over one of the Committee roles as and when an officer stands down. We hold Committee Meetings five times a year.

Please think about this, especially our newer members, and ask around your friends. Let any member of Committee know if you would like to join us.

#### **Newsletter and website**

This issue of the newsletter is being distributed to members by e-mail as a PDF and will also appear on the website together with previous issues. Much more information – including photos of the meetings, events and outings that we have missed this year - are available on our website

[www.colintongardens.org.uk](http://www.colintongardens.org.uk)



Jo McEwan recommends a visit to Saughton Gardens...

[www.colintongardens.org.uk](http://www.colintongardens.org.uk)