

# SOUTH EAST ESSEX ORGANIC GARDENERS

NEWSLETTER NO: 90 – JANUARY 2010

<http://www.seeog.org.uk/>



**Soil Association**

The group was formed in 1994, to promote the principles of organic gardening by:

- *Composting organic waste;*
- *Protecting wildlife;*
- *Reducing pollution;*
- *Encouraging species diversity.*

*Membership is currently £7.00 per annum, £10.00 family.*

**“Always the story of the downfall of nations has been connected with failure to conserve the soil. A nation's land is its greatest resource. When we ruin the soil, we ruin the nation. Men, whom have studied the problem, find that a worn-out soil is followed closely by a depleted citizenship.”**

US President Harry Truman speaking in 1940

## ***A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO YOU ALL!***

### **SEEOG GROUP NIGHTS/EVENTS/NEWS**

Our venue is St. David's Church Hall, 400 Rayleigh Road, Eastwood (off The Rodings) at 8.15pm.

Please let us know if you would like to help us with any of our events, as we rely on your help to make them a success and not a challenge!

For instance, In March we need one or two kind members to help Robert Wiseman with the Rettendon seminar, as with the Canvey seminar in May, the Westcliff seminar in June, the Rochford seminar in July and the South Woodham seminar in November.

We very much hope our minibus trip to the Potato Day will be a sell-out this year, as well as our coach to Brogdale in July.

We are also planning a visit to Hilltop Farm in Benfleet (to be arranged with Mo Perkins before 18 May) and are contemplating another to the Purleigh Wine Festival on Sunday 5 September.

### **MONDAY 18 JANUARY**

A small garden? Very little time? No gardening skills? Reduced housekeeping budget? A wish to eat more healthily?

Come along and hear Cicely Morris, the South Essex Ambassador for the charity **Send a Cow!**

Cicely's talk will include how to construct and maintain both keyhole kitchen gardens and sack gardens, showing how small spaces can be used effectively and sustainably.

Send a Cow works with rural community groups in nine countries in Africa, providing small-scale farmers with the skills and means to feed their families and earn an income.

Its work is based around:

- **Sustainable agricultural training**, following the principle of integrating crops and livestock
- **Livestock** (bought in Africa) and **training in animal husbandry**
- **Environmental sustainability training** to ensure that land is protected for future generations
- **Social development support** to strengthen groups so they can move towards self-sufficiency
- **Support and follow up** from its staff until community members are able to support each other
- **The pass-on principle**, by which farmers pass on the benefits (e.g. the first female offspring of their livestock and the skills they have learned) to another family, so their work goes on multiplying

## **MONDAY 15 MARCH**

William Tyler presents *Dig for Victory*. It was all hands to the spade and fork as Britain faced a war on The Home Front in 1940 to provide as much of its own food as possible. William will take a look at who grew the food, where they grew it and what they grew. The message for us today is a clear one - Get Digging!

## **SATURDAY 15 MAY**

We have provisionally booked our Plant Sale at Growing Together for Saturday 15 May from 11.00am to 2.00pm but this may well be the last due to ever-decreasing sales and the feeling that a handful of gallant and stalwart members are carrying the load year on year!

## **MONDAY 17 MAY**

Assistant Head Teacher/Vocational Co-ordinator Simon Cox, Sweyne Park School presents 'Food for Life'

Sweyne Park is a very successful and oversubscribed 11-16 community comprehensive school in Rayleigh. They are committed to very strong partnerships between home, school and community members and believe that the whole community can contribute to motivating and supporting pupils' progress. This commitment can also be seen in their recent successful bid to become a flagship school for the Food for Life Partnership as they believe that nutrition plays a huge part in young people's lives. As a school, they will strive to ensure that all their pupils are fully informed of their nutritional needs and the food choices that are in their wider community.

## **MONDAY 19 JULY**

'Sustainable Farming and Climate Change' – Spencer Christy, Lauriston Farm, Goldhanger  
Lauriston Farm featured on the BBC 2 show *What to Eat Now* in 2008. The 125-acre site, which is owned and run by Spencer Christy, a biodynamic farmer, was awarded organic status earlier that year.

## **MONDAY 20 SEPTEMBER**

Damien Errington has just embarked on his third season as Horticulture tutor at Hadleigh Training Centre. During the previous twelve months the department has taken delivery of a new polytunnel that, with height and ventilated sides, will be an excellent addition to the variety of plant production and hopefully in turn improve sales revenue to the social enterprise element of the project.

## **FRIDAY 22 OCTOBER: APPLE DAY CEILIDH**

## **MONDAY 15 NOVEMBER**

John Williams, who works in the Storehouse Community Centre, Southend-on-Sea, tells us about Landshare, where the landowner, grower or helper

1. Posts a listing, telling others where you are and what you are offering or looking for;
2. Hopefully, you get responses using their mail system to receive and send messages;
3. Then you have a chat and see what happens...

It's recently grown to over 40,000 people who have signed up on their website, here at <http://landshare.channel4.com/how-it-works>

It also features a large section for 'community questions' across a wide range of subjects, with which you can interact. A useful tool for if you're a grower or a landowner or need some advice!

## **ALAN WILSON'S POTATO TALK 16TH NOV 2009**

This was a fascinating, thought provoking and wide ranging talk from a man with a commercial background (he works for Waitrose), who knows the agro-business side of production and preparation of the potato, as well as buying, and the market which is driven by customers who want new potatoes washed! And all clean; although they are, in fact, best fresh from the earth and the earth is the best storage facility for them as it enables the flavour retention that is gradually lost in the stress of lifting, preparing and packing for sales counters. And organic earth/soil is his obvious choice - with its living micro flora and fauna in the complex world of soil/humus, unlocking nutrients for plants with symbiotic and mutually beneficial relationships that abound here and are only beginning to be understood in the world of soil/organic growing.

NO compaction and NO dig (least intervention) - so give up the destruction of the spade and only fork gently. These are Alan's commendations and are being adopted in the commercial world, too. Beware of over feeding, especially nitrogen, which leaves over-tall stemmed, light green leafy growth that indicates a vulnerable plant (especially for blight). We want many shoots from many eyes and shorter strong dark growth from organic soil that is also LOCKING UP CARBON. (1) We get 2 weeks' advantage from saving our greenings from this year's crop if planted next and it is safe to do so, Alan says.

Alan's only prop was his converted flower bucket pot of Red Duke of York he was growing for Christmas. A variety that suits my system as does his recommendation for International Kidney, and for me Desiree, that keeps in the soil and can be dug most of the year. Perhaps a Potato Day visit in February will help you venture into the huge range of spuds out there? Kestrel came out good and others that I've forgotten - help! He was scathing of Nadine, and others, as having lost any virtue in the taste department. Taste is personal, so try! Ask? But, most importantly, grow them. They need moisture and continuous layers of mulch to cover the growing potato, do not disturb - even annual weeds add to this effect - until ready to eat, dig as required, cook and taste the taste.

Thanks to a man with a passion and knowledge for and of potatoes. His new book is out in the spring 2010 so read and review.  
Ron Bates

(1) See Soil Association report on their conference in November 2009 - organic farming is the only resilient way of feeding the world reliably, sustainably and creating work as it is more labour intensive (we need to value food and its production) as we move toward quality, slow food production and more home cooking (community of food and eating); quality of life that peasants have had insight into since cultivation started with settled peaceful peoples - oppressive landholding and political systems have been their downside. It's the way out of a high cost ever declining fossil fuel dependent agribusiness into smaller scale local more productive organic modes of production.  
<http://www.soilassociation.org/Whatwedo/Conferences/Internationalconference/tabid/586/Default.aspx>

## **ALLOTMENTS**

A charity is appealing for help to make some muddy allotment plots more accessible for people in wheelchairs. The Southend branch of the Huntingdon's Disease Association is renting two plots near Southend Airport Retail Park to allow disabled members to grow their own vegetables. Pat Nelson, its allotment project manager, explained that they need to lay three paths and some shelter. The group needs help with the work and sand for a bed for paving slabs it has already been given. The £16,500 project also needs wood to make raised beds and hopes to build a summerhouse with heating and lighting. If you can help, please call Pat on 01702 544606 or her mobile 07941 778202.

Karen Kenny is the Eastern Region NSALG representative. Her mobile number is 07712 766916 and her email address is [karen.kenny@homecall.co.uk](mailto:karen.kenny@homecall.co.uk)

Darren Fazackerley is the Essex representative of the NSALG and his email address is [darren.fazackerley@harlow.gov.uk](mailto:darren.fazackerley@harlow.gov.uk). His home number is 01245 490700. Please don't hesitate to contact them if you want help.

The Allotments Regeneration Initiative's Mentor for the East of England is Frank Owens.  
Tel: 0845 313 8461  
[fowens.ari@googlemail.com](mailto:fowens.ari@googlemail.com)  
<http://www.farmgarden.org.uk/ari/>

## **ASHLYNS ORGANIC FARM**

You are welcome to walk their farm trails at North Weald, which start at the shop. There are several different paths and there is always plenty to see. Take friends, family, picnic baskets, the dog (on lead) and make the most of their beautiful countryside.

Ashlyns' address is The Courtyard, High Laver Hall, High Laver, Essex CM5 0DU; Telephone: 01277 890821, Email [gary@ashlyns.co.uk](mailto:gary@ashlyns.co.uk),  
Website: <http://www.ashlyns.co.uk/>

## **COACH TO THE CHERRY FESTIVAL AT BROGDAL FARM, FAVERSHAM, KENT: SATURDAY 10 JULY**

Brogdale Farm became the home to the National Fruit Collection in 1952 and now consists of 160 acres of beautiful orchards – see attached booking form – more details to follow later.

## **EAST ANGLIA POTATO DAY: SATURDAY 13 FEBRUARY**

National Potato Day at Garden Organic Ryton is at the end of January but we have a much more local one to attend (and support) at the Mid-Suffolk Showground, Stonham Barns, near Stowmarket in Suffolk. We have booked a good quality minibus, driven by Gordson Simpson, who took us last year. Alan Romans' booklet is no longer included in the admission fee, but will be available to purchase if anyone wants one on the day.

Our booking form is attached. We asked three local companies to quote a price, with Gordon's being the cheapest. Last year, we had three seats left – let's see if we can fill the bus this year!

This is the link to the East Anglia Potato Day website: <http://www.eapd.btik.com/>

Here's a little piece about East Anglia Potato Day, which is an annual event that has been running since 1994. It is organised and run entirely by volunteers from three organic gardening groups: Ipswich Organic Gardening Group, Norfolk Organic Group and Suffolk Organic Gardeners, all affiliated to Garden Organic like us.

They make available up to 100 varieties of seed potatoes, which are sold as individual tubers so that you can buy as many or as few as you require. They also aim to offer as many organic varieties as possible, usually about 25%.

So, they cannot guarantee which varieties will turn up on the day. They place their order in good time, but sometimes a harvest will fail due to pests and disease, or quantities are low and varieties they've ordered do not turn up. They always have an excellent range though, so it's a good idea to have some alternatives in mind on your shopping list. If your preferred variety isn't there, please see it as an opportunity to try something new - you may find a new favourite!

Every year they're on tenterhooks about the weather, not just in East Anglia but in Scotland, too! The vast majority of their supplies are delivered by lorry from the far north, so they often have nervous moments. However, so far they've always made it, and in fact they've had some spookily good weather for the middle of February.

You need to come prepared with plenty of plastic carrier bags, although paper bags are always provided for you on the first table as the tubers are arranged in alphabetical order.

The price: Admission £1.50

Tuber price 12p for standard range and 20p for premium range

Chip and potato tasting, which is delicious!

Home Composting Advice

Alan Romans value seeds

Books, tools, produce and plants

Current list of tubers for sale:

1<sup>st</sup> Early – Accord, Amorosa, Colleen, Duke of York, Dunluce, Epicure, Foremost, Homeguard, Lady Christi, Maris Bard, Pentland Javelin, Premiere, Red Duke of York, Rocket, Sharpes Express, Swift, Ulster Prince, Ulster Sceptre, Vales Emerald, Vanessa, Winston

2<sup>nd</sup> Early – Anya, Balmoral, Bonnie, British Queen, Carlingford, Catriona, Charlotte, Edzell Blue, Estima, International Kidney, Kestrel, Marfona, Maris Peer, Maxine, Nadine, Oria, Osprey, Pixie, Saxon, Shetland Black, Vivaldi, Wilja, Yukon Gold

Early Maincrop – Ambo, Argos, Bambino, Belle de Fontenay, Celine, Desiree, Harmony, Highland Burgundy Red, Hunter, Isle of Jura, King Edward, Lady Balfour, Majestic, Maris Piper, Markies, Nicola, Pentland Crown, Pentland Dell, Pentland Squire, Picasso, Record, Remarka, Robinta, Rooster, Salad Blue, Sante, Setanta, Stemster, Stroma, Saturna

Late Maincrop – Arran Victory, Cara, Golden Wonder, Kerrs Pink, Navan, Pink Fir Apple, Valor

### **Seed Swap Table:**

Take packets of saved seed, your own or bought, and swap them for other packets on the seed swap table, i.e. 2 packets in, 2 packets out. If you have no seeds to bring, you can still join in by making a donation (per packet) for any seeds on the table. Put your saved seed into a small envelope, clearly marked with variety and date of harvest. Put reasonable amounts of seed in the packet, i.e. 10 runner beans, 50 lettuce.

- Do not save F1 seed
- Onion, leek, corn and parsnip seed are short-lived
- Beware that runner beans and pumpkins are prone to cross-pollination
- Store seed in cool, dry conditions

We will probably have lunch at The Victoria in Earl Soham before setting off for home.

## FARMERS' MARKETS

- **Leigh-on-Sea** In Leigh Community Centre, Elm Road: Friday 19 February, Saturday 20 March, Friday 16 April, Saturday 29 May, Friday 25 June, Friday 23 July, Friday 27 August, Saturday 25 September, Friday 29 October, Saturday 20 November and Saturday 18 December
- **Rochford** in the WI Hall, Market Square on (Saturday) 6 March, 3 April, 1 May, 5 June, 3 July, 7 August, 4 September, 2 October and 6 November

We wish to thank Leigh Town Council for enabling us to have a free stall since the market moved to the Community Centre. At Rochford, however, we very much have to 'pay our way' (and often don't!), which is why we are always pleading for 'something different' to sell! In other words, do you make bird boxes or the odd wooden planter, or maybe you have spare fruit in season.....

- **Hadleigh** at the Salvation Army, Home Farm, Castle Lane, held on every second Wednesday of the month from 12.00 until 2.00pm.
- **Southend-on-Sea** High Street, every second and fourth Saturday of every month, 8.30am - 4.00pm.
- **Rayleigh** at Rayleigh Market Place opposite Rayleigh Church from 9am to 2pm on the last Wednesday monthly.
- **Hockley:** Saturday 9.30am – 12.00pm. It is intended to be an ongoing event, subject to support by traders, and will normally begin about 8.00am, with other dates yet to be fixed but hopefully on a monthly basis.

## FOOD FOR LIFE PARTNERSHIP

There are approximately 60 schools that have registered with the FFLP, of which nine are Flagship schools.

Liz Davies is the Garden Education Officer for the East of England Food for Life Partnership. Her contact details are:

E: [ldavies@gardenorganic.org.uk](mailto:ldavies@gardenorganic.org.uk)

M: 07554 450650

W: [www.foodforlife.org.uk](http://www.foodforlife.org.uk)

Garden Organic, Wolston Lane, Ryton-on-Dunsmore, Coventry, CV8 3LG

Ian Nutt is the Food for Life Partnership coordinator for the East of England. His contact details are:

Email: [inutt@soilassociation.org](mailto:inutt@soilassociation.org)

Phone: 07917 671416

## GARDEN ORGANIC

Their first news item is that you can gain 2 months' membership FREE when you pay by annual Direct Debit – see <http://www.gardenorganic.org.uk/join.php>

Their new One Pot Pledge campaign, which fits in neatly with our own seminars, is an initiative designed to challenge novice growers to grow one or more pots of edible plants, and will be launched this year. To find out more about the One Pot Pledge phone 024 7630 3517 or visit [www.gardenorganic.org.uk/onepot](http://www.gardenorganic.org.uk/onepot).

## GARDEN ORGANIC FOR SCHOOLS

39 schools in Essex have joined the schools programme since the start of 2009. Garden Organic will be communicating with all schools in future by their e-newsletter.

[schools@gardenorganic.org.uk](mailto:schools@gardenorganic.org.uk)

We found this website tucked away on the Marketplace page of The Organic Way, described as "specially designed to be an interactive classroom, allotment plot, and hobby garden of 21st century....."

<http://www.gardeningwithchildren.co.uk/>

## **GM WATCH**

The website comprises sections devoted to all areas of the subject, including detailed reports on GM myths, the people behind the myths and the GM companies peddling them and reaping the benefits, as well as frequent news updates on global developments and a guide to how the media are manipulated by misleading claims.

Visit the new site at [www.gmwatch.org](http://www.gmwatch.org) for up-to-date information and regular newsletters.

## **GROWING ORGANIC: OUR VERY OWN SEMINARS INTRODUCING THE CONCEPTS OF ORGANIC GARDENING!**

Kamil feels that people in our community are at different levels of understanding the need for change, and engagement with the change, so conversations, films and seminars play a big role to get them thinking. This way, even if they are not doing anything now when the real food crunch comes in - as a result of climate change and peak everything - they will at least know about organic growing and alternative ways to do things.

Like in Cuba, organic didn't catch immediately after the collapse of imports from the Soviets and the US embargo. It took their organic farmers and researchers years to spread the word despite it being the obvious solution to their problems. Their government and society was probably so shocked at first and then tried old methods they were used to before they considered organic or permaculture.

Saturday 20 February:	Great Wakering Community Centre, SS3 0EJ, 9.30am
Saturday 20 March :	Rettendon Memorial Hall, CM3 8DP, 9.30am
Saturday 1 May :	Hall 3, The Paddocks, Canvey Island, SS8 0JA, 9.30am
Saturday 5 June :	Crowstone Christian Centre, Westcliff-on-Sea, SS0 8LH, 9.30am
Saturday 3 July :	Rochford, venue to be confirmed
October :	Leigh Community Centre, SS9 1SP, 10.00am
Saturday 6 November:	South Woodham Ferrers Village Hall, CM3 5PL, 9.30am

### **EVENT CONTACT DETAILS**

Carole Shorney, 01702 201914, [caroleshorney@hotmail.com](mailto:caroleshorney@hotmail.com)  
Robert Wiseman, 0794 107 8135, [robert.wiseman@talk21.com](mailto:robert.wiseman@talk21.com)

## **LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

For the last two years I have been using ladybirds as a control for black aphids on runner beans at the allotment, with great success. In the first year, I added about a dozen Harlequin ladybirds to my half row and they cleared the lot in about a week. This year (2009), that species was scarce so I used a few 7-spot ladybirds and they did the trick in about three weeks. I would say about twenty to the row is enough!

I have, however, never had an idea what to do about whitefly on brassicas, which have been a nuisance, until I noticed this week (10<sup>th</sup> September) that numbers had reduced dramatically. On examination, I found many larvae of hoverflies on the underside of leaves busily eating from the waxy 'capsules' in which the whitefly complete their development, and when I showed them to Mr. Roger Payne at Southend's museum we could see those capsules destroyed at the rate of three or four per minute, so the moral must be 'encourage hoverflies.' To do this, I will interplant flowers for nectar to bring in the adults, in the hope that they will then breed near my pests.

I have found Woad to be very attractive to them, with its masses of small yellow flowers which last a long time, although it is quite a large plant. (I am sure there are others)

If anybody tries this method of control, with success, please tell us all, as I hope this is of some help.

Jim Bishop

## **MANURE**

1. Pam Mitchell, The Grange, Murrells Lane, Hockley (Tel. 01702 207491) has a very good, old supply of manure. If you ring her first, giving a couple of days' notice, she will arrange for a load to be brought to the gate to ease bagging up.
2. We now have another provider of free manure - chemical free - in Barling, near Wakering. Tel. 01702 219835

## **MEMBERS' NEWS**

Simon Wallace has given us this very advanced notice, but thought we might still want to know!!

**Twigs Way**, a professional garden historian, author, freelance lecturer and researcher is happy to give a talk next June at Southend Library - '**Digging for victory, digging for modern times**' as the theme.

Her recent book on the history of allotments is a fascinating read (Shire Books). See her website for more info <http://www.twigsway.com/> Simon will confirm dates and times etc once he knows more.

Early in the New Year, Simon will be pruning/pollarding the willows that seem to be thriving in the wet cold clay soil down on his allotment!! He has three different colours and all are basket weaving varieties. If any one wants some short withies, which should grow into your OWN willows, please let him know. Willows have lots of uses, as everyone knows, but one important use is to provide important early spring bee fodder.

For more info on willow-lore see <http://www.treesforlife.org.uk/forest/mythfolk/willow.html>

Thanks to Simon again, we've just come across the shed sketches on Graham Burnett's <http://www.humbledesigns.co.uk/>

Southend in Bloom now has a Facebook page - this year's theme will be "World on a Plate" - lots of great ideas and plans, so watch the website or Facebook/Twitter as things start to grow next year, etc. <http://www.southend.gov.uk/content.asp?content=11884>

The **Women's Environmental Network** works to educate, empower and inform women and men who care about the environment. They look at how the environment impacts on our health and that of the planet. WEN is especially concerned about chemicals in the environment - in food, in cosmetics and toiletries, in the home and in the workplace.

S E Essex WEN is planning a coffee morning in the New Year when they will invite parents to come along to discuss how they can 'save money and look after the health of their children' by careful consideration of the toiletries they use. Just what do parents need to be putting in the bath for their young children? What is it best to use for shampooing the hair or rubbing on the skin?

WEN would like to hear from anyone who would like to be involved and would specially like to welcome hearing from a health professional who feels this is a subject which needs public discussion.

Please contact Eileen on 01268 752264  
Eileen Peck, Co-ordinator S E Essex WEN

Maike's nephew, who lives in Africa and was in Copenhagen last month, sent her a definition of Organic Farming in Africa – see their website at <http://www.ifoam.org/>  
She believes we could probably replace Africa with Essex in most of the paragraphs.

## **PLANT LABELS**

Have you tried Graham Oster-Ritter's used aluminium litho plates yet for your plant labels? We've found them very useful when we've run out of juice or margarine cartons! They can be cut with scissors quite easily and make sturdier labels than our cartons! If you're interested, please either ring him on 01702 558871 or email [grahamoster@aol.com](mailto:grahamoster@aol.com) - he can bring some aluminium to Group Night. There will be no charge for the above but a small donation to SEEOG would be appreciated.

## **PUBLICATIONS**

We subscribe to The Journal of Pesticide Action Network UK, Living Earth, and The Food Magazine and attempt to pick out a few choice articles from each if we have the time and space.

From PAN UK we have chosen the article *Shropshire sheep control weeds in orchards*, which explains how fruit farmers in Europe have found a novel way to reduce the use of herbicides known to contaminate ground and surface waters in many countries.

If you're fidgeting nervously on your vegetable patch, wondering how you forgot to sow the clover for the winter, we have chosen the article 'Cover up' in Living Earth on page 26!

## **SEEOG TALKS**

We need some assistance with the daytime events – heavy bags and plants on the bus are not good!

1. [Thursday 4 March 2010, 10.00am](#): Vange Village 'M' Townswomen's Guild, Youth Hall, Trinity Methodist Church, Clayhill Road, Basildon - Ron
2. Thursday 25 March, 7.30pm: Alzheimer's Society, Southend & District Branch, The Harland Centre, Balmoral Road, Westcliff-on-Sea - Ron
3. Monday 12 April 2010, 8.00pm: Southend & District Wine & Gardening Club, St. Augustine's Church Hall, Thorpe Bay
4. Thursday 15 April 2010, 7.30pm: Ladies' Club, Belfairs Methodist Church, Eastwood Road North, Leigh-on-Sea
5. Tuesday 7 September 2010, 2.00pm: Bournemouth Park Ladies Club, United Reform Church Hall, junction of Bournemouth Park Road/Central Avenue

## **SOIL ASSOCIATION NEWS**

New research from the Soil Association reveals that if all UK farmland was converted to organic farming, at least 3.2 million tonnes of carbon would be taken up by the soil each year - the equivalent of taking nearly 1 million cars off the road.

According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), 89% of agriculture's global greenhouse gas (GHG) mitigation potential is from carbon sequestration – a fact that Governments seem to be ignoring in the critical run-up to climate change talks in Copenhagen (COP 15) in December.

The research's key findings are:

- The widespread adoption of organic farming practices in the UK would offset 23% of UK agricultural emissions through soil carbon sequestration alone, more than doubling the UK Government's pathetically low target of a 6-11% reduction by 2020
- A worldwide switch to organic farming could offset 11% of all global greenhouse gas emissions. Raising soil carbon levels would also make farming worldwide more resilient to extremes of climate like droughts and floods, leading to greater food security
- On average organic farming produces 28% higher levels of soil carbon compared to non-organic farming in Northern Europe, and 20% higher for all countries studied (in Europe, North America and Australasia)
- In the UK, grasslands and mixed farming systems also have a vital role to play, and soil carbon may go a long way to offsetting the methane emissions from grass-fed cattle and sheep.

*Soil carbon and organic farming, A review of the evidence of agriculture's potential to combat climate change, Summary of findings*, is available to read at

<http://www.soilassociation.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=DfAMsKNaVDI%3d&tabid=574>

Alternatively, we have a hard copy on order which will be available to borrow from our new lending library!

## **USEFUL WEBSITES**

The Natural Beekeeping Trust aims to promote awareness of ways of beekeeping which take as their starting point the nature and needs of the bees, rather than maximising honey yields. The founders of the Trust believe that this is the best way to ensure long-term bee health. For more information, their website is <http://www.naturalbeekeepingtrust.org/>

The UN declared 2010 the International Year of Biodiversity (IYB). Throughout the year countless initiatives will be organized to disseminate information, promote the protection of biodiversity and encourage organizations, institutions, companies and individuals to take direct action to reduce the constant loss of biological diversity worldwide.

<http://www.countdown2010.net/year-biodiversity>

The Great Plant Hunt – following in Darwin's footsteps

<http://www.greatplanthunt.org/home>

Here you will find some new ways to grow vegetables, and to harvest them over longer periods, all with a different approach to handling your soil - **NO DIG**. Charles Dowding has grown vegetables without soil tillage for two and a half decades. The continual success of this approach leads him to explain it more fully for those who seek a less weedy garden and more abundant harvests.  
<http://www.charlesdowding.co.uk/Homepage>

What Will the Harvest Be? This garden occupies a 2000 sq meter urban site in East London, protected from development by English Heritage due to its mediaeval monastic and Victorian ruins. The local Newham area – in a state of imminent change and growth – provides an inspiring backdrop, bringing in new transport links, new residents and commuters, and in time the 2012 Olympic visitors and competitors. Historically this echoes the hub of travellers, commerce, debate and food production that the Cistercian Abbey would have been and the idea of returning the land to production has been very influential on the project.  
<http://www.whatwilltheharvestbe.com/about/>

Capital Growth launches £150,000 fund to help Londoners boost food growing  
Fruit and veg to be grown above Southwark Tube station, as Transport for London joins Capital Growth  
[http://www.capitalgrowth.org/press/04\\_12\\_2009/](http://www.capitalgrowth.org/press/04_12_2009/)

Article by R Bateman 'Last word: Would algae be a greener biofuel?' in Kew Magazine No. 67:p72 Nov 2009  
Go to [www.kew.org/kewmagazine](http://www.kew.org/kewmagazine)

The Community Channel – see <http://www.communitychannel.org/>

### **SEEOG COMMITTEE**

Ron Bates	Chair	01702 477681	anebates@hotmail.co.uk
Brian Slemmonds	Treasurer	01702 200572	audrey4brian@talktalk.net
Graham Oster-Ritter	Membership Secretary	01702 558871	grahamoster@aol.com
Violet Poulten	Minutes Secretary	01268 768391	violetpoulten@talktalk.net
Carole Shorney	Secretary	01702 201914	caroleshorney@hotmail.com
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Maureen Nightingale	Committee Member	01702 540030	
Martine Vyse	Committee Member	01268 781694	

Please post/phone/email your contributions for the March newsletter to Carole by the end of February at the very latest.

The next committee meeting will be on Wednesday 20 January at 7.30pm courtesy of Ane and Ron at 60 Sandleigh Road, Leigh-on-Sea.

Finally, please notify Graham Oster-Ritter on [grahamoster@aol.com](mailto:grahamoster@aol.com) if you wish to receive your newsletter by post/email, or to change your email address,

## SEEOG LENDING LIBRARY

The Committee has decided to set up a lending library. It will be run by me and books can be collected from me on Group Nights or from my home by prior booking. Books can be kept for a maximum of two months (i.e. collect on one Group Night and return on the next) unless no one else requires the book (please confirm with me).

Graham Oster-Ritter  
380a London Road, Hadleigh, Benfleet SS7 2DA  
Telephone: 01702 558871 E-mail: [grahamoster@aol.com](mailto:grahamoster@aol.com)

The current list is as follows:

01. The Illustrated Guide to Flowering Houseplants by Jack Kramer
02. Fences, Trellises and Screens by Peter McHoy
03. The Living Soil by Lady Eve Balfour
04. Children's Gardening by Peter A. Please
05. The Carbon Fields by Graham Harvey
06. Farming & Gardening for Health or Disease by Sir Albert Howard
07. Thoughts on Feeding by Lionel Picton
08. The Real Food Book by Friends of the Earth
09. Plunder for Profit by Richard Hering & Stuart Tanner
10. The A-Z Guide to Local Pollution by Friends of the Earth
11. Composting and Peat Free Gardening by English Nature
12. The DIY Guide to Climate Change
13. The Allotment Handbook by Sophie Andrews
14. Organic Gardening – March 1991
15. The Truth about Food by the Soil Association
16. One Planet Agriculture by the Soil Association
17. Growing in the Community – A Good Practice Guide for the Management of Allotments by Professor David Crouch, Dr Joe Sempik and Dr Richard Wiltshire
18. Collins Guide to Alpines & Rock Garden Plants by Anna N Griffith
19. The Complete Urban Farmer by David Wickers
20. Root Vegetables – Grow your Own Guide
21. Pests, Diseases and Common Problems by George Culpan
22. Vegetable Gardening Made Easy by Violet Stevenson
23. My Life on a Hillside Allotment by Terry Walton
24. Gardening Month by Month
25. The Compost Fruit Grower by W E Shewell-Cooper
26. Gardeners' Calendar by RHS
27. Be Your Own House Plant Expert by Dr D G Hessayon
28. The Observer Book of Gardening by Frances Perry
29. Development Dialogue – November 2007
30. Development Dialogue – December 2008
31. Development Dialogue – January 2009
32. Development Dialogue – August 2009

If you have any books that you would like to lend or give to the library, please let me know.





# SE ESSEX ORGANIC GARDENERS

BOOKING FORM: EAST ANGLIA POTATO DAY – SATURDAY, 13<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY

COST PER PERSON   £15.00 (members of SEEEOG)  
                              £17.00 (non-members)

The price includes minibus only and does not include admission.

Normal pick-up points – times to be arranged.

For details of pick-up places and times, please see Newsletter or contact Carole

Name.....

Telephone.....Email.....

Address.....

.....

Please book the following seats:

..... seats @ £15.00                   £.....

..... seats @ £17.00                   £.....

TOTAL                                   £.....

I enclose cheque / cash for £..... Cheques should be made payable to SEEEOG and sent to Carole Shorney at 19 Folly Lane, Hockley. SS5 4SE. Telephone: 01702 201914

*In the event of passenger cancellation we can only refund if we can re-sell your cancelled seat(s), however, there will be an administration charge of £2.00 per seat. SEEEOG reserve the right to cancel an excursion due to insufficient numbers or any unforeseen circumstances ie. venue cancelling due to bad weather/insufficient numbers. In these circumstances only monies paid will be refunded.*