

SOUTH EAST ESSEX ORGANIC GARDENERS

NEWSLETTER NO: 90 – MARCH 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.

SEEOG Group Nights/Events/News

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

The first of the Rochford markets is on Saturday 6 March, the second on Saturday 3 April, both in the WI Hall, Market Square and starting at 9.30am.

The next two Leigh markets are in the Leigh Community Centre (Elm Road) on Saturday 20 March and Friday 16 April, 9.00am – 12.00 noon.

Vic saw this item in the Evening Echo at the beginning of January: A historic range of Essex apples are being used in a new drink. Chelmsford Wonder, Maldon Wonder and Braintree Seedling are being used in a new apple juice being produced by the Co-op.

Financial Matters

The Treasurer has reported that we face a great reduction in our bank balance by the end of the financial year. To help solve this problem, we are proposing the following measures:

Newsletters: Ron has very kindly agreed to deliver a certain number by hand – can anyone else help out?

Posters: Posters advertising Group Nights will now only be sent by email. It has been decided that printed posters are not cost effective as they do not attract enough guests. We have at last updated our email lists to which we can add and amend as necessary.

Subscriptions: Subject to ratification at the next AGM, subscriptions will increase from £7 to £8 for singles and £10 to £12 for families from 1st July this year.

Monday 15 March - William Tyler presents *Dig for Victory*

During World War 2, when things were tight and self sufficiency and recycling were the keys to a better quality of daily life, the war department and the Ministry of Food applied great imagination to supporting and encouraging efforts on the home front.

The foundation stone of the combined effort was the famous 'Dig for Victory' campaign to promote the home production of fruit and vegetables. Guidance leaflets and books were issued on a wide range of topics covering the growing and cooking of every imaginable thing.

The imaginative innovators conjured uncomplicated and tasty meals for every occasion from simple ingredients. The standard bearers for the campaign, were a pair of cartoon characters, 'Potato Pete and Dr Carrot' and the jewel in the crown of their promotion was Potato Pete's recipe book.

Lovingly restored by the Dundry Nurseries & Garden Centre in Cheltenham, Potato Pete's recipe book has been re-launched, in its original format, as invaluable and relevant today as ever it was. They resisted the opportunity to upgrade the book, to pull in colour pictures or introduce modern ingredients.

Rather bizarrely, Chris Evans said he was able to take the copyright on the book, just by asking, as it had been just a wartime publication that no one at the Ministry seemed bothered about. He has very kindly sent us a complimentary copy. Should we suddenly find a big interest from our members, he

would like to send us some at trade price. He said Dundry Nurseries have strong connections with their local organic group, the Gloucestershire [Organic Gardening Group](#) and he sends his best wishes to us.

Saturday 15 May

We have 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!

Graham still has a supply of used aluminium litho plates for your plant labels. If you're interested, please either ring him on 01702 558871 or email grahamoster@aol.com.

Monday 17 May

Monday 17 May - Peter Garrod, Teacher in charge of Garden Organic at The Sweyne Park School. The Sweyne Park School is a flagship school for the Food for Life Partnership, which promotes the part nutrition plays in young people's lives and in the wider community. Peter is, in fact, a Maths teacher who has been the driving force behind the garden and has the expert knowledge of all things that are green! He will have all the pictures of the progress and is keen to present to SEEOG. Peter is also a member of the local garden group and will be available to answer any questions on the garden and its progress.

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.

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 posts a listing, telling others where you are and what you are offering or looking for; hopefully, you get responses using their mail system to receive and send messages and then you have a chat and see what happens!

Allotments

Twigs Way, garden historian and writer <http://www.twigsway.com/> will give a talk on the history of the allotment movement on Thursday 17 June in Southend Central Library to tie in with the BBC's 'Dig in' promotion - either in the Lecture Theatre or on the second floor.

The Southend branch of the Huntington's Disease Association have been chosen by Waitrose as one of their charities for March so, if anyone shops in there anytime this month, please don't forget to put the green token (that they give you when you buy something from there) in the Huntington's box by the exit door.

Shed Appeal

Commission an original pen and ink drawing of your favourite place (shed) - all for a tenner (£10) and ALL monies go to Charity... What's not to like!!!

See the mini-shed gallery on the Springfield Drive Allotment Facebook page or visit www.humbledesigns.co.uk (July 2009)

Are there any other allotmenters who'd like a shed portrait?

Shed-tastic Simon!

Plot 174 Springfield Drive (most weekends 10-1)

Coach to Cherry Festival, Brogdale Farm, Faversham, Kent: Saturday 10 July

At Brogdale, you can celebrate fruits in season - you can taste them and take them away (when they are in season), see them growing and hear the stories about the different varieties all through the year. There will also be local Kent craft stalls and local Kent produce and events, as well as a range of things for children to do and enjoy. Their food events include cookery demonstrations, tastings of the food cooked and new recipes for you to try with the different fruits in season. Their cafe serves delicious home-made food, using the seasonal fruits.

The price on the attached booking form includes coach only and does not include admission. Details of pick-up places and times will be in the May newsletter.

Brogdale festival and events entry charges:

Adults: £8.00

Children £4.00

Families £20.00 Children under 2: FREE

<http://www.brogdalecollections.co.uk/fruit-festivals.html>

Food for Life Partnership

Their regional event plan will be available on their website in April <http://www.foodforlife.org.uk/about-us>

Garden Organic

The Garden Organic website is always a 'veritable mine of information!'

For example, there are the handy, quick-reference Growing Instruction Cards that you can download for free, which include all the information you need to start growing your own vegetables, fruit, herbs, edible flowers and green manures.

http://www.gardenorganic.org.uk/growyourown/growing_cards.php

And then we have our own copies of their Factsheets, which we normally try to bring to each meeting at St. David's.

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

GM Watch

GMWatch has a fan page on Facebook - please join and invite all your friends, too. And don't forget to follow them on Twitter for all the breaking news.

Monthly Review editor: Claire Robinson

Website: <http://www.gmwatch.org>

Profiles: http://www.spinprofiles.org/index.php/GM_Watch:_Portal

Twitter: <http://twitter.com/GMWatch>

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/GMWatch/276951472985?ref=nf>

Growing Organic: Our Very Own Seminars Introducing the Concepts of Organic Gardening!

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	Scout Hall, Church Walk, Hall Road, Rochford, SS4 1NN, 9.30am
Saturday 6 November	Village Hall, 25 Hullbridge Road, South Woodham Ferrers, CM3 5PL, 9.30am

As explained in January, we are still hoping that a member (or two!) will come forward to offer some help with these as the Saturday morning dates clash with our market commitments.

Event contact details

Carole Shorney, 01702 201914, caroleshorney@hotmail.com

Robert Wiseman, 0794 107 8135, robert.wiseman@talk21.com

Grow It Yourself – Organically!

Suitable for those wishing to grow their own vegetables and fruit organically

A 6-week course on SATURDAYS beginning 6th March 2010 9.30am-12.30pm

The 'hands on' course will cover organic principles, understanding the soil, plant nutrition, propagation from seed, pest and disease control, companion planting, protected crops and much more!

Venue: Growing Together Gardens, 47 Fairfax Drive, Westcliff-on-Sea SS0 9AG. Course fees: £60

For more information call 01702 213134, www.trustlinks.org Tel: 01702 213134

Permaculture - A Weekend for Beginners

28 - 30 May 2010 at Dial House, North Weald, nr Epping, Essex and will be Led by Graham Burnett and Ron Bates.

Contact: Graham Burnett 07535 344780 Email: graham@spiralseed.co.uk

Website: www.permaculturecourses.co.uk

The course will include sustainable design principles and ethics; organic gardening; community economics; forest gardening; optional yoga sessions; 'hands on' practical experience and more...

Cost: £100 - concessions/flexibility available + 'early bird' discount before April 2010

Publications

Suggested by Simon, Allotment Month by Month: Dorling Kindersley by Alan Buckingham (without the Palace gardens?), pleasing to read (and on the eye) as it is very well illustrated etc. A welcome addition to the library of any happy plotter + it is in library stock....

If you enjoy reading, love allotments and growing your own, Simon suggests the following, all available via your local library. We'll display full details at our March meeting.

Keeping Bees by Paul Peacock; Dig that Garden, Save the Planet by Johnnie Dominic; Companion Planting by Brenda Little; The Half-Hour Allotment by Lia Leendertz; The No-Work Garden by Bob Flowerdew; Back to the Farmer: A guide to seasonal farm food by Nick Jones & Nick Forde; Successful Allotments published by Impact press; Vegan with a vengeance by Isa Chandra Moskowitz; Rose Elliot's Vegetarian Supercook; Ration Book Cookery from English Heritage; Using the Plot - Tales of an Allotment Chef; Seaweed and Eat It; Norma MacMillan's cookery book In a Shaker Kitchen; The Book of Idle Pleasures by Tom Hodgkinson and Dan Kieran; Valentine Low's One Man and His Dig; Richard Reynolds new book On Guerrilla Gardening.

St. Luke's Community Allotment Project 2010

On Tuesday 16th & Thursday 25th March, between 2pm – 4pm, they will be planting some seasonal perennial vegetables and volunteers are needed! This is your opportunity to meet new people and get fit at the same time, as well as helping the community and learning new gardening skills. For more information, please contact Gareth Gault, 01702 445525, mobile: 07527 806520 or email him at st.lukeshlc@hotmail.co.uk - www.stlukeshlccic.org.uk

SEEOG Talks/Events (with own stall)

1. Thursday 25 March, 7.30pm: Alzheimer's Society, Southend & District Branch, The Harland Centre, Balmoral Road, Westcliff-on-Sea – Ron has kindly offered here.
2. Monday 12 April, 8.00pm: Southend & District Wine & Gardening Club, St. Augustine's Church Hall, Thorpe Bay
3. Thursday 15 April, 7.30pm: Ladies' Club, Belfairs Methodist Church, Eastwood Road North, Leigh-on-Sea
4. Sunday 20 June, 1pm-6.00pm: Community-In-Harmony event at Southend High School for Boys Prittlewell Chase, Southend-on-Sea – lots of volunteers wanted here!

S E Essex Women's Environmental Network

The Network is planning to show the film *The 11th Hour* on Thursday 18 March. If you missed this film, but would like the chance to see it (or if you'd like to see it again!), call Pauline on 01702 712596 - the size of the venue booked will depend on the number of people who'd like to see it. Please phone soon so arrangements can be made.

WEN is also holding a coffee morning at the YMCA in Southchurch Road, Southend-on-Sea (next to the Slug & Lettuce) on Saturday 24 April when they will be inviting parents to come along to find out how they can save money while keeping their children healthy. The subject under discussion will be toiletries used on babies and children. WEN campaigns on health issues and is concerned at the 'potential harm' done by some synthetic chemicals in toiletries, but they have a special concern about some chemicals in the toiletries to which babies are exposed.

WEN invites anyone interested to come along to the YMCA between 10.30am and 1pm on Saturday 24 April. They would particularly like to hear from any health professional who is interested in supporting the campaign. For more info contact Eileen on 01268 752264

WEN will be having a stall at the International Women's Day at Southend College on Saturday 6 March and would welcome your visit.

Send a Cow

Cicely Morris informed us of the work this group does in eight East African nations; all with social, political and human rights difficulties. The talk - billed as illustrating growing techniques - appeared practical in its outcome. But the keyhole beds and sackbed methods described were not fully developed, giving only a basic insight and not detailing the pest control used; whether local, indigenous, traditional herbs, or whether of old or recent origins! The practice of using protective nets necessary to deflect large hailstones in their season (like shade growing in Cuba) was mentioned.

The role of the corralled animal production, providing the base for manure and composting for the horticultural methods shown, was developed incidentally and deemed an organic development which had not been planned into the schema, as one would find with Practical Action or Tree Aid projects.

That the King of Lesotho accepted three rabbits from his subjects, who were so poor, was too illustrative of the problems of distribution of wealth and goods endemic within government related aid schemes (Ghandi's enough for all our needs but not our greed). We also see the Bishop in finery and the project team socialising - not my idea of aid well directed for local empowered sustainable development projects. It did make a difference but maybe not a fully effective use of resources.

The charity sell seemed stronger than the action of practice; so we learned a little of techniques we all can share, and may require for a future of more extreme weather patterns, with our need to adapt our growing to continue our organic way for a sustainable truly Living Soil.
Ron Bates.

Soil Association News

This is the link to *Food, Inc.*, the new film that exposes how our food supply is controlled by a handful of multi-national corporations putting profit ahead of consumer health and the environment.

<http://www.soilassociation.org/Takeaction/tabid/85/Default.aspx>

Tips & Hints

If you can't keep your own bees, the next best thing is to become actively involved in ways to create an environment where bees can thrive and flourish:

1. Grow wild flowers and leave a place for "weeds" to thrive - many of which provide excellent foraging for bees - garden, allotment, school or back yard, all are good!
2. Make simple consumer choices to support bees, e.g. choose to shop where the integrity of bees is respected and buy local honey or at least British honey with stated provenance.
3. Be informed - read up and learn about bees - and encourage your children to take an interest
<http://www.britishbee.org.uk/bees4kids/index.php>
4. Try to encourage wild bees with nesting boxes and DON'T kill any that take up residence for the season (this is a common problem, unfortunately). Think about joining (or make a donation) to your

local beekeeping association.

5. Don't use pesticides/ insecticides!! If you have a larger garden or space, see if a local beekeeper group would be interested in siting hives etc.

Useful Websites

Simon thought you might find these website/projects of interest ...travelling shed and all!!

<http://www.what-if.info/index.html>

<http://www.what-if.info/Profile.html> and also Shed - sanctuary of the artist?

<http://www.chriscyprus.com/#/sanctuary/4535182754>

The Land Information System is provided by Cranfield University. This site offers an interactive map of all the soils in Britain. If somebody is intending to move, they can look up their future allotment or garden soil and its natural fertility.

<http://www.landis.org.uk/index.cfm>

This is a handy little list - and a useful reminder as you order your flower seeds and plan for the season!!!

http://www.bumblebeeconservation.org.uk/gardening_for_bumblebees.htm

Permaculture Introductory Course

Summary; This residential introductory weekend is a 'potted' permaculture course, looking at the foundations of permaculture and learning about some of the practical tools it offers. Broad Oak Farm is a beautiful 6 acre field located a mile or so from Hullbridge, near Rayleigh in south East Essex. Over the past 19 years 250 broad leaf trees and 800 hedge plants have been established, creating a wonderfully secluded site incorporating a newly constructed Peace Circle.

There are productive vegetable plots, compost toilets and plans for a straw bale yoga/gathering studio. The establishment of a medicinal herb area is also underway.

It is hoped to establish a community resource enabling people to reconnect with the land each other and their own potential!

Full cost of this residential weekend is £98, please contact us for concessionary rates via the link below

http://www.spiralseed.co.uk/courses/index.html#14_-_16_May_2010

SEEOG Committee

Ron Bates	Chair	01702 477681	anebates@hotmail.co.uk
Brian Slemmonds	Treasurer	01702 200572	audrey4brian@talktalk.net
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Maureen Nightingale	Committee Member	01702 540030	
Martine Vyse	Committee Member	01268 781694	

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

The next committee meeting will be on Wednesday 24 March at 7.30pm, kindly hosted this time by Maureen.

Finally, please notify Graham Oster-Ritter on 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

The current list is as follows:

001. The Illustrated Guide to Flowering Houseplants by Jack Kramer
002. Fences, Trellises and Screens by Peter McHoy
003. The Living Soil by Lady Eve Balfour
004. Children's Gardening by Peter A. Please
005. The Carbon Fields by Graham Harvey
006. Farming & Gardening for Health or Disease by Sir Albert Howard
007. Thoughts on Feeding by Lionel Picton
008. The Real Food Book by Friends of the Earth
009. Plunder for Profit by Richard Hering & Stuart Tanner
010. The A-Z Guide to Local Pollution by Friends of the Earth
011. Composting and Peat Free Gardening by English Nature
012. The DIY Guide to Climate Change
013. The Allotment Handbook by Sophie Andrews
014. Organic Gardening – March 1991
015. The Truth about Food by the Soil Association
016. One Planet Agriculture by the Soil Association
017. Growing in the Community – A Good Practice Guide for the Management of Allotments by Professor David Crouch, Dr Joe Sempik and Dr Richard Wiltshire
018. Collins Guide to Alpines & Rock Garden Plants by Anna N Griffith
019. The Complete Urban Farmer by David Wickers
020. Root Vegetables – Grow your Own Guide
021. Pests, Diseases and Common Problems by George Culpan
022. Vegetable Gardening Made Easy by Violet Stevenson
023. My Life on a Hillside Allotment by Terry Walton
024. Gardening Month by Month
025. The Compost Fruit Grower by W E Shewell-Cooper
026. Gardeners' Calendar by RHS
027. Successful Gardening by David Carr
028. The Observer Book of Gardening by Frances Perry
029. Development Dialogue – November 2007
030. Development Dialogue – December 2008
031. Development Dialogue – January 2009
032. Development Dialogue – August 2009
033. Development Dialogue – November 2009
034. The Cool GreenHouse by G W Robinson
035. The Indoor Plant Spotter by Dr D G Hessayon
036. The New Vegetable and Herb Expert by Dr D G Hessayon
037. The New Lawn Expert by Dr D G Hessayon
038. Be Your Own House Plant Expert by Dr D G Hessayon
039. Eat Your Heart Out by Felicity Lawrence
040. The Complete Book of Vegetables, Herbs and Fruit by Matthew Biggs, Jekka McVicar and Bob Flowerdew
- 041.
- 042.
043. The Conservatory for Plants and People by Alan Toogood
044. Cottage Gardens by Geoff Hamilton
045. Ryton Organic Gardens Guide Book

Masanobu Fukuoka "The One-Straw Revolution"

Contact Kamil direct on kamilpac@googlemail.com or 07707676308

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

Thanks to Eileen Peck for donating books 033 – 037, Louise Adams for 045, 027, 044, Carole Shorney for 040

After you have read one of our library books, why not write a review of it. In the meantime, members can find reviews of most of the books on www.amazon.co.uk.