

## **SOUTH EAST ESSEX ORGANIC GARDENERS**

**NEWSLETTER NO: 95 – JANUARY 2011**

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

**SE Essex Organic Gardeners**

<http://www.facebook.com/home.php#!/group.php?gid=43705483846>

**Southend Food Growers (and producers)**

<http://www.facebook.com/home.php#!/group.php?gid=10150117854010788>

**SEEOG 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 £8.00 per annum, £12.00 family.**

## ***SEASON'S GREETINGS & HAPPY NEW YEAR!***

**With effect from January, we will be holding all our meetings at Growing Together Gardens, 47 Fairfax Drive, Southend-on-Sea SS0 9AG (corner of Fairfax Drive and Prittlewell Chase), from 7 - 10pm. Our speaker will start at 8pm. Please park in Prittlewell Chase and use the Fairfax Drive entrance.**

### **THE FIRST SE ESSEX POTATO DAY!**

**In association with Leigh-on-Sea Allotment & Leisure Garden Association**

**Date: Saturday 19 February**

**Time: 10am - 2.00pm**

**Venue: Growing Together Gardens, 47 Fairfax Drive, Southend-on-Sea SS0 9AG  
(Corner of Fairfax Drive and Prittlewell Chase)**

**Please park in Prittlewell Chase and use Fairfax Drive entrance.**

**Admission: £1.00**

**Organic: To be confirmed**

**Non-organic: To be confirmed**

**Refreshments available**

This will be a joint effort, both financially and otherwise, and organised and run entirely by volunteers from the Leigh-on-Sea Allotment & Leisure Garden Association and SEEOG, in conjunction with Julian Turner, organiser of the East Anglia Potato Day. He has already warned us that the first lesson we will learn is the weight of the stock and that we need to accept that setting up takes time and oomph! Even the clear-up will be heavy work! We now urgently need volunteers, both beforehand, to pick up our stock, on the day itself and later to clear up. Please don't leave it to the normal few, as so often happens!

We have ordered a free tree pack from BTCV and Keep Britain Tidy, who are working together to achieve their goal of planting 100,000 trees across England by the end of March 2011 as

part of DEFRA's national tree planting campaign. Each tree pack will contain 50 trees, size 20-

- No need to fly in Spring Onions from Mexico into Southend Airport
- Tips and tricks to Grow Your Own all the year through
- Ways to deal with climate challenges in the South East
- A fresh look at composting

40 cm, in a mixture of silver birch, rowan, cherry, beech and oak. BTCV will also provide spiral guards, 60cm canes and planting instructions. Trees supplied are root trainers, to give trees a better chance of survival if there is a delay between despatch and planting date.

### **SEEOG Library and Website**

Our Library will be kept at Growing Together. As I cannot manage the door, raffle and Library, I will need an Assistant Librarian to deal with the Library on Group Nights. It need not be just one person but could be a rota or a member at random on Group Nights. However, no assistant, no library! Graham

### **Website Help Appeal!**

Can anybody volunteer to help keep the SEEOG website up to date? We require somebody who has basic skills in managing Wordpress software, a smattering of html skills plus a few minutes to spare every month or so. If this is you and you'd like to help out, please contact Carole, our Secretary. Thanks!

### **SEEOG Group Nights/Events/News**

The Apple Day Ceilidh has been abandoned, for a variety of reasons, and may be replaced with an Apple Day Celebration at Growing Together in conjunction with local community groups. The future of our Plant Sale is also under discussion.

Carole is bringing three large indoor wooden plant containers to Growing Together, for a donation to SEEOG. Two are 12" plus, the third is a little larger. There is also a tall bamboo plant holder going, which can take four hanging plants.

### **Monday 17 January**

SEEOG member, Maike Windhorst, on Growing for Self-Sufficiency

Maike has been an organic gardener all her life and has been carrying on a life-long experiment to gain self-sufficiency. She has had large vegetable plots on all sorts of soils and rainfalls (in temperate Europe). When she came to England (1992), she joined Brentwood Organic Gardeners. Sadly they have packed up since. At the time, she met gardeners who knew Lawrence Hill from the Bocking days.

She has written a brochure (Growing for Self-sufficiency in a Changing Climate). This covers what leading authorities have written on Grow Your Own and how it should be developed further taking into account her own experience. She gave a rudimentary version of this talk at SEEOG some years ago after we invited her to stand in for another speaker.

Maike is now on the RHS speakers' list and has given this talk to several societies in Essex. She also did a Veggie advice desk in Hyde Hall some time ago.

### **Monday 21 March**

Keith Tyrell, Director of Pesticide Action Network UK, to discuss *Birds and Pesticides - Is the threat of a silent spring really behind us?*

### **Monday 16 May**

Broad Oak Herbs - the only medicinal herb farm in Essex producing organic herbal medicines. They also provide education on herbs and run workshops. The Partnership of Broad Oak Herbs is not yet pursuing Soil Association or Demeter certification due to the costs involved. Dawn's land has been organic since she

moved there seventeen-odd years ago and she has never used a pesticide since then. They don't use chemicals and garden organically. They are just delving into Biodynamics and working with Nature Intelligence. When they sell their tinctures to other qualified herbalists they shall just state with integrity that they are non-certified organic and grown without the use of pesticides.

### **Monday 18 July**

Barons Court Primary School's involvement with the Food for Life Partnership, to be confirmed

### **Monday 19 September**

Essex Bees! Home is where the hive is! Essex Bees is a small family concern run by three Essex boys. They originally started keeping bees for the honey but have since realised that without honey bees it's not just the honey that we won't be able to have on our tables at mealtimes. Without wishing to sound alarmist the honey bee is in trouble and needs all the help it can get.

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

### **Monday 21 November**

Brian Arbuckle presents "Love Food Hate Waste"

### **Allotments Regeneration Initiative**

"We work with absolutely anyone involved in regenerating or creating allotments – all of our services are free to not-for-profit organisations throughout the UK!

If you would like to keep up to date with ARI developments please send us your postal address, organisation name and brief description of your interest in the project, stating ARI Database in the subject line."

[www.farmgarden.org.uk/ari](http://www.farmgarden.org.uk/ari)

Simon has been doing a bit of background reading....and following up some info in the latest ARI newsletter, for which many thanks!

**Green Up! Five ways to work with your council on the environment and sustainability** by Agnes Gautier (download for free at [www.cdf.org.uk](http://www.cdf.org.uk)) provides community groups with everything they need in order to work productively with their councils on environment and sustainability issues. This indispensable plain English guide explains how community groups can use everything from Local Area Agreements to Sustainable Community Strategies to get their work supported. The guide also explains all the words and vocabulary commonly used by councils, so local groups can clearly understand 'council speak'.

Finally, something else mentioned in the ARI newsletter is the Rainwater Harvesting Association - looking at the important issue around water conservation and managing increasing demands on supplies in future. See

<http://www.ukrha.org/dl/articles/04%20-%20Article%20-%20Environmentalist%20Mag.pdf> and [www.ukrha.org](http://www.ukrha.org)

### **Farmers' Markets 2011**

We have been invited to both these markets for some years and would like to thank both Violet and John for their help with transport during 2010. Please offer help for 2011 as transport to and from Leigh may be a challenge for us in the coming months.

- **Leigh-on-Sea** at Leigh Community Centre, Elm Road: Friday 25 February, Saturday 19 March, Friday 15 April, Saturday 28 May, Friday 24 June, Friday 22 July, Friday 26 August, Saturday 24 September, Friday 28 October, Saturday 19 November, Saturday 17 December, 09:00 – 12:00
- **Rochford** in the WI Hall, Market Square on (Saturday) 5 March, 2 April, 7 May, 4 June, 2 July, 6 August, 3 September, 1 October, 5 November, 09:30 – 12:20

We have just been informed about another market, as follows:

Date: Every 4th Saturday in the month commencing 22 January  
 Time: 09:30 – 14:30  
 Venue: Rochford Primary & Nursery School, 6 Ashingdon Road, Rochford, SS4 1NJ

### **Food for Life Partnership**

Approximately **102** Essex schools have now registered. See their website  
<http://www.foodforlife.org.uk/in-your-region/east-anglia>

For more information, please contact Rebecca White, Administration Team, Food For Life Partnership, Garden Organic, Wolston Lane, Ryton-on-Dunsmore, Coventry CV8 3LG; [fflp@gardenorganic.org.uk](mailto:fflp@gardenorganic.org.uk); 02476 217 747

Ian Nutt

07917 671 416

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

## **Garden Organic News**

### **Sow, Save, Share: Audley End Seed Swap, Sunday 20 February, 11am - 3pm**

A seed club, which will help to sow, grow, save and share historic seed with gardeners and growers in Essex, is to be set up at Audley End House and Gardens, near Saffron Walden.

Kicking off with a Seed Swapping Event on Sunday 20 February, English Heritage and Garden Organic, which manages the restored walled organic kitchen garden at the site, will give local people the chance to swap their surplus seed and try something different in the coming season. They will also be able to hear about some of the Victorian techniques used to this day by the Garden Organic team.

Visitors to the event are being urged to bring in their spare vegetable seeds to swap in return for more unusual varieties such as rare Heritage Seed Library tomatoes. Visitors can also enjoy talks and demonstrations on Victorian techniques from the kitchen garden's Head Gardener, Mike Thurlow.

Entry to the event for Garden Organic and English Heritage members is free. All others will be required to pay normal entrance fees.

### **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](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: Seminar Introducing the Concepts of Organic Gardening!**

Date: Saturday 26 February  
Time: 09:00 – 12:30  
Venue: St. Catherine's Church Hall, Southend Road, Wickford SS11 8EB  
Cost: By donation

Contacts:

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)

### **Huntington's Disease Association Southend Branch**

The Southend branch collects used postage stamps for their charity. Please send or take yours to Pat Nelson, 137 Rochford Garden Way, Rochford SS4 1QL or email [terrynelson123@btinternet.com](mailto:terrynelson123@btinternet.com)  
<http://www.hda-southend.org.uk/> Anything that you have and don't want, please ask them, as they would be so grateful: 01702 544606 (Pat) or David on 01702 304698

### **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 have another provider of free manure, chemical free, in Barling, near Wakering. Tel. 01702 219835
3. Our third new provider is Julie Davis who has a large, well rotted manure pile in Great Wakering, ready to be taken away and put to good use, with good vehicle access. You can help yourself to a bagful, a car load or a lorry load if you want it, but please contact her first to arrange a time as her yard is kept locked for security reasons.

Julie says she can't say it's organic, but she has run her land along organic guidelines, so there have been no sprays, medicines, etc. used and all their livestock were fed on organic feed, with no growth promoters or hexane, so it is completely safe for organic vegetables, etc. Her number to make arrangements on is 07742107855.

### **SEEOG Talks/Events (with own stall)**

Wednesday 16 February at 2.30pm: Talk to Shoebury Village WI, St. Peter's Church Hall, Hinguar Street, Shoeburyness.

### **S E Essex Women's Environment Network**

They're starting the S E Essex Women's Environment Network programme for 2011 with a speaker from the Parliamentary Outreach team who will help them to understand something of how Parliament works and how we can best use Parliament in their campaigns. **Please contact Sharon of South Essex WEN on 07947 655947 for further details.**

In the New Year they are planning to replace their monthly eco coffee and chat with a 'green' reading group at Southend Library, the first arranged for Saturday 15 January at 2pm. To book your place in the 'Green' reading group, please call Southend Library on 01702 534123

## Soil Association News

### Of particular interest to our school members ....

Do you dream of running your own farm or smallholding?

You can find out more about the Soil Association's Organic Apprenticeship Scheme and

The Organic Farm School courses at

<http://www.soilassociation.org/Takeaction/Learning/Apprenticeshipscheme/tabid/240/Default.aspx> and

<http://www.soilassociation.org/Takeaction/Learning/Organicfarmschool/tabid/239/Default.aspx>

Did you know that children's knowledge of some of Britain's most iconic wildlife is so poor that more than a third (39%) is unable to recognise an otter, according to new research published by Soil Association member, the Organic Milk Cooperative (OMSCo) - to support the launch of the OMSCo Cub Scouts Global Conservation Badge.

[http://www.smallholder.co.uk/news/8495158.Organic\\_Milk\\_Co\\_op\\_support\\_new\\_Scouts\\_badge\\_for\\_Conservation/](http://www.smallholder.co.uk/news/8495158.Organic_Milk_Co_op_support_new_Scouts_badge_for_Conservation/)

Smallholder Online, 11 December

Their latest report '*A rock and a hard place: Peak phosphorus and the threat to our food security*' reveals that supplies of phosphate rock are running out faster than previously thought. Declining supplies and higher prices of phosphate pose a new threat to global food security. A radical rethink is crucial for ensuring our future food supplies and '*A rock and a hard place*' sets out the actions needed.

<http://www.soilassociation.org/Default.aspx?TabId=1259>

## Spring 2011: Full 72-hour Permaculture Design Course, Westcliff-on-Sea

Are you concerned about climate change, peak oil and our children's future? Do you want to go Green? Are you interested in creating a Sustainable Local Community? Thinking about making significant changes in your life? Fed up with the problems and want to start looking for solutions? Then this full Permaculture Design Course is for you.

The full 72-hour Permaculture Design Course is a vital stage in the development of understanding of permaculture ethics, principles, design processes and implementation techniques providing essential skills for the post-peak oil world.

Held over 5 weekends at a venue less than an hour from central London, we will be running this course in partnership with Southend in Transition, Milton Community Partnership and Growing Together.

### Dates:

7 - 8 May

21 - 22 May

4 - 5 June

18 - 19 June

2 - 3 July

### Times:

10 am – 6 pm, with optional additional sessions and/or social events on the Saturday evenings

### **Accommodation:**

Options for attendees from outside of the Southend-on-Sea area are available, more details to follow

### **Cost:**

£450 - £300 depending on income, some concessionary places available, please enquire to Milton Community Partnership (see below)

£50 deposit secures a place

Led by: Graham Burnett and guest tutors

Full course details including syllabus;

<http://www.spiralseed.co.uk/westcliffpdc.html>

For enquiries and bookings contact Milton Community Partnership  
miltoncommunity@hotmail.com or telephone 01702 213264

### **Useful Websites**

1. The Food Commission, Britain's leading, independent watchdog on food issues,  
<http://www.foodmagazine.org.uk/>
2. Simon thought you might find these sites of interest  
<http://nhsforest.org/>  
<http://www.camulos.com/fordham/orchard.htm> - a North Essex Orchard + a good pub nearby (the Shoulder of Mutton) and woods for a nice walk afterwards!
3. Wallasea Island Wild Coast Project Update –December 2010  
<http://www.rspb.org.uk/community/groups/wallaseaisland/default.aspx>
4. Swift Conservation, keeping the skies alive!  
<http://www.swift-conservation.org/>
5. Now is the time to order your fruit trees ahead of the planting season. The new full winter bare root catalogue for Grow Plant Centre at Brogdale is available from **Grow**, Brogdale Farm, Kent ME13 8XZ, 01795 531 888, [fruit@brogdaleonline.co.uk](mailto:fruit@brogdaleonline.co.uk)  
<http://www.brogdalecollections.co.uk/index.html>

### **SEEOG Committee**

Ron Bates	Chair	01702 477681	anebates@hotmail.co.uk
Brian Slemmonds	Treasurer	01702	200572
<a href="mailto:audrey4brian@talktalk.net">audrey4brian@talktalk.net</a>			
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
Vic Shorney	Committee Member	01702 201914	caroleshorney@hotmail.com
Ray How	Committee Member	01702 544632	ray.how@btopenworld.com
Maureen Nightingale	Committee Member	01702 540030	

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

The next committee meeting will be on Monday 24 January at Maureen's.