

SOUTH EAST ESSEX ORGANIC GARDENERS

NEWSLETTER NO: 96 – MARCH 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>



Soil Association

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.

Is your local school a member of SEEOG? If not, we offer free membership on receipt of application form!

SE ESSEX POTATO DAY!

It rained persistently, and the gazebo was challenging at the beginning, but everyone was pleased with this result on the day, with the final tally coming later plus a full report:

We took £45.00 on Alan Romans' booklets
£112.00 admission fees (112 people)
£320.70 on potato tubers
£477.70

As our 'residual stock was significant but not intimidating' we decided to try our luck at the Leigh Farmers' Market, where Audrey Sheehy and John took £54.00 on potatoes and £4.50 on the potato booklets. One more effort will be made on Saturday 5 March at the Leigh clubhouse.

We give an enormous THANK YOU TO everyone who made this happen, especially to Growing Together for so very kindly hosting the event.

SEEOG Library

Audrey Slemmonds has very kindly offered to be our Librarian at Growing Together. Hopefully the books will all be sorted by then and you will be able to browse and choose them at leisure, especially if you arrive early!

SEEOG Group Nights/Events/News

Barbara Jakes sadly died last month. We knew she had difficult health and we will miss her; she seems always to have been around and one of our stalwarts.

Barbara was always very willing to help SEEOG, in many ways. For instance, stepping in when we were short of transport to Leigh for the Farmers' Market and also when we had to go to various other places for talks and events all over the district, whether it was Shoeburyness, Eastwood, Hadleigh or Benfleet.

Barbara also loved her trips out either in the minibus or by coach, always sitting in the front and pointing out to us all the places where she took her horses to shows and occasionally having a friendly chat with the drivers. But Barbara's favourite visit was to Courtyard Farm in Hunstanton in 2006, because she was chauffeured around the farm in a Land Rover. She was so ecstatic about one of the little piglets that she wanted to take it home with her but had to make do with some photos instead!

Now, although our new venue is central for the bus and train, there are still some members who find it difficult to attend our meetings. For example, can anyone offer a lift to one of our Hadleigh members? If so, we would like to hear from you!

Pat told us that The Royal Bank of Canada has announced its partnership with the Landscape Agency to present the "RBC New Wild Garden" at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show, inspired by the Victorian horticulturist William Robinson. Led by award-winning landscape designer Nigel Dunnett, the RBC New

Wild Garden will be RHS Chelsea's first full-scale "rain garden", designed to capture and use every single drop of rain that falls on it. The central building, a shipping container, will have a "living roof" and drainage and water collection pools to reuse rainfall. Robinson's 1870 The Wild Garden introduced "naturalised planting."

Finally, we have two minibus trips this year – please support them if you can, as it will be cheaper all round if we can fill the bus. There may well be a third, to Wisley, as one member has asked at least twice. This will be later in the year, once we have looked at their autumn events.

SEEOG Talks/Events

Tuesday 23 August, 7.30pm: Laindon Westley Heights Townswomen Guild, Laindon Community Hall, Aston Road, Basildon SS15 6NX.

The Events Coordinator at RHS Garden Hyde Hall has invited us to attend their Grow Your Own weekend that they are holding on 26 - 27 March.

This weekend is all about learning to grow your own and she thinks that we would fit into this really well. However, I will only accept her invitation if I definitely have some volunteers to help with transport, etc. One day would be enough for us. I need to know asap, which is by Monday 7 March!

SEEOG Visits

1. Minibus to Lauriston Farm, Goldhanger: Saturday 11 June, arriving 11am

Lauriston Farm is situated on the Blackwater Estuary, just outside Goldhanger. It is a 125-acre fully Demeter certified Biodynamic holding with rare breed cattle and sheep, bee hives, laying hens, vegetables and woodland. Eighty-five per cent of the farm is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest. Within this, there are also two listed ancient monuments. Spencer Christie, who runs it, is a Permaculture Diploma Holder. Lauriston Farm takes great pride in showing people around and have been running farm tours for a few years. Each tour takes in all of the above through a relaxed and enjoyable walk. The tours are free of charge and typically last for two hours. A booking form is attached.

2. Valley Farm Kitchen Garden, Flatford Mill: Saturday 30 July, arriving 10.30am. In the beautiful Dedham Vale, you can see the restoration that the National Trust is doing on the formal kitchen garden behind Valley Farm, which happens to be the oldest building at Flatford. The Warden, David Piper, will take us for a tour (donation only). A booking form is attached.

Monday 21 March

*Monday 21 March - Dr. Keith Tyrell, Director of Pesticide Action Network UK, to discuss **Pesticides - Is the threat of a Silent Spring really behind us?***

Pesticides are the only chemicals deliberately made to be toxic and introduced directly into the environment. They are used in agriculture, in homes, and in urban areas to kill or control insects, weeds and diseases. Pesticides are used everywhere: in crops and carpets, boats and bananas, and unwanted residues can be found in humans, water, food, air and soil.

PAN UK is the only organisation in Britain dedicated to raising awareness of the problems with pesticides as part of a global network. They work closely with partners in developing countries, where pesticide problems are sometimes far worse. In developing countries there are as many as three million poisonings and 20,000 deaths each year from pesticide incidents. Unnecessary use puts farmers on an expensive pesticide treadmill.

Over 800 different chemicals are made globally and sold in tens of thousands of mixtures.

<http://www.pan-uk.org/>

'What we have to face is not an occasional dose of poison which has accidentally got into some article of food, but a persistent and continuous poisoning of the whole human environment'

First published in 1962, Rachel Carson's scientifically passionate exposure (*Silent Spring*) of the effects of the indiscriminate use of chemicals is still of vital importance. In her vivid and well-informed text she describes how pesticides and insecticides are applied almost universally to farms, forests, gardens and homes with scant regard to the consequent contamination of our environment and the widespread destruction of wildlife. She argues that unless we recognize that human beings are only a part of the living world, our progressive poisoning of the planet will end in catastrophe. *Silent Spring* remains the classic statement which founded a whole movement and should be read by everyone who is concerned about the future of our world.'

Courtesy of Penguin Science

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

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"

Children's Food Campaign

The Children's Food Campaign have been busy scrutinising the latest phase of the Government's Change4Life anti-obesity campaign, in which junk food companies are even more involved.

They are also gearing up for a big new campaign to coincide with the Government's review of how many children will get free school meals under the new benefits system.

In the meantime, they're doing all they can to make sure they're reaching out to everyone who cares about children's food and want to see the Government and food companies do their bit to protect children's health - to find out how you can help, please read at <http://www.childrensfood.org.uk>

Farmers' Markets 2011

- **Leigh-on-Sea** at Leigh Community Centre, Elm Road: 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

Food for Life Partnership

Check out Stuffed, their new website for secondary schools. Online debates explore some of the issues they have with our current food systems. Each debate has lesson plans and resources - relevant articles, weblinks and information. www.stuffedonline.org

Approximately **104** Essex schools have now registered. Essex Flagship schools are Galleywood Primary School, Holy Cross Primary School Harlow, Kings Road Primary School Chelmsford, St Peter's High School Burnham-on-Crouch, Sweyne Park School Rayleigh, The Ockendon School South Ockendon and Wells Park Special School Chigwell.

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; 02476 217 747

Ian Nutt 07917 671 416 inutt@soilassociation.org

Garden Organic News

Garden Organic believes a growing appetite for green gardening presents opportunities for building a nation of organic and sustainable gardeners, the subject of its first annual conference on Saturday 14 May. The conference - a day to promote lively discussion about what it would take to turn the nation's gardeners organic will be led by a panel of expert gardeners, including TV presenter Alys Fowler, author Pauline Pears, Environmental Journalist of the Year 2010 John Walker, best selling author Caroline Foley and BBC Radio 4 Gardeners' Question Time panellist Matthew Biggs.

Price (including lunch): Garden Organic Members £12.50, non-members £25. Venue: Ryton Gardens, Warwickshire. Call 02476 308210 to book your place now.

Please note that this conference can be joined directly after the Garden Organic AGM.

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>

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

<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. Tel: 07742107855

Publications

'The Polyunnel Book' Fruit and Vegetables All Year Round (paperback) by Joyce Russell (author) and Ben Russell (photographer), is described by Ben as 'a great production and 100% organic' and available via this Amazon link or, of course, via your local bookshop:

[http://www.amazon.co.uk/gp/product/0711231702/ref=s9_simh_gw_p14_d0_i1?](http://www.amazon.co.uk/gp/product/0711231702/ref=s9_simh_gw_p14_d0_i1?pf_rd_m=A3P5ROKL5A1OLE&pf_rd_s=center-2&pf_rd_r=04W9TCM1830NSBQ7AYP2&pf_rd_t=101&pf_rd_p=467128533&pf_rd_i=468294)

[pf_rd_m=A3P5ROKL5A1OLE&pf_rd_s=center-](http://www.amazon.co.uk/gp/product/0711231702/ref=s9_simh_gw_p14_d0_i1?pf_rd_m=A3P5ROKL5A1OLE&pf_rd_s=center-2&pf_rd_r=04W9TCM1830NSBQ7AYP2&pf_rd_t=101&pf_rd_p=467128533&pf_rd_i=468294)

[2&pf_rd_r=04W9TCM1830NSBQ7AYP2&pf_rd_t=101&pf_rd_p=467128533&pf_rd_i=468294](http://www.amazon.co.uk/gp/product/0711231702/ref=s9_simh_gw_p14_d0_i1?pf_rd_m=A3P5ROKL5A1OLE&pf_rd_s=center-2&pf_rd_r=04W9TCM1830NSBQ7AYP2&pf_rd_t=101&pf_rd_p=467128533&pf_rd_i=468294)

Soil Association News

During their 2011 conference they released a new report called 'The Lazy Man of Europe', which asks the Government to wake up to what Europe can teach the UK about backing organic food and farming. You can read this report at

<http://www.soilassociation.org/Whatwedo/Conferences/Annualconference/TheLazyManofEurope/tabid/1315/Default.aspx>

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. If you are looking for a polytunnel and bemused by the choice, have a look at www.firsttunnels.co.uk as their products look to be excellent quality and value for money.
3. Please take a look at these websites, sign up to the Facebook page and share widely
<http://www.voicesforthelibrary.org.uk/wordpress/>
<http://www.facebook.com/voicesforthelibrary>
4. Bee Guardian Foundation, a newish bee initiative <http://www.beeguardianfoundation.org/>
5. Welcome to the website of the South East Essex Conservation Volunteers!
<http://groups.btcv.org.uk/seecv/>
(Please note the website is still being developed. Any suggestions on its development are very welcome)

Report from the 2010 EUROPOM in Wisley

The EUROPOM 2010 turned out to be one of the most exciting ones ever as it took place in the grounds of the RHS show garden in Wisley. It was part of the annual Taste of Autumn festival and was held from 22nd to 24th October.

The Friday started with a day of talks and lectures at the Hilltop Event Centre. Everybody was greeted and made welcome by Jim Gardiner, the Wisley curator. He contributed some interesting facts like the one that the Wisley Show Garden had only moved to its present site in 1903. Before that it was located in Chiswick. This will ring a bell with apple-loving Londoners as a lot of the old orchards must have been located around there.

Jim Arbury started off with some facts about the present fruit collection in Wisley. There are 700 apple varieties on M 26 rootstock, 175 different pears and 100 plums. Soft fruit is represented by 170 different gooseberries, 34 blackcurrants, and 41 red and white currants. There are also trials with standard trees on Bulmers Norman and an ongoing research programme into organic fruit management.

You can read Maïke's full report at Growing Together on Group Night.

S E Essex Women's Environmental Network

are just getting going with the new season at their community food-growing plot 'DIG IN' at the Manchester Drive Allotments, Leigh on Sea. Having taken on a second plot last year, the group is busy preparing the ground for this year's crops as well as clearing the pond of last Autumn's leaves, preparing the quiet sitting corner and looking for a hand pushed lawnmower to keep the grass-covered paths under some sort of control.

New members are always welcome so whether you are new to gardening or an old hand, able-bodied or with some physical limitations you will be welcome to join in the work, share the produce and make new friends. Growing is fun with the 'WENNIES' so if you are interested get in touch with Pauline on 01702 712596. Men are welcome too!

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
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 May newsletter to Carole by the end of April at the very latest. Please also notify Graham Oster-Ritter on 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 28 March at Brian's house.