



## Seasons Greetings and a Happy New Year

<http://seeog.org.uk/>  
[https://www.facebook.com/?ref=tn\\_tnmn#!/groups/43705483846/](https://www.facebook.com/?ref=tn_tnmn#!/groups/43705483846/)  
<https://twitter.com/seeorganic>

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

- Composting organic waste
- Protecting wildlife
- Reducing pollution
- Encouraging species diversity



Soil Association

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!

### Venue, notes etc.

The Cheryl Centre, Growing Together Westcliff: please use the entrance in Prittlewell Chase, Westcliff-on-Sea SS0 9AG (corner of Fairfax Drive and Prittlewell Chase).

We want to know if you have difficulty with transport as we can then try to coordinate a lift for you.

Unless stated otherwise, our speakers start at 8.00pm sharp, but Growing Together is open from 7.00pm to allow members to change their books, etc.

The next committee meeting is on Thursday 12 November at 7.30pm. WANTED: Minutes Secretary!

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

For future reference, our newsletter copy 'deadlines' for 2016 are as follows:

January	Wednesday 30 December
March	Sunday 28 February
May	Saturday 30 April
July	Saturday 30 June
September	Tuesday 30 August
November	Sunday 30 October

### Membership renewals

Our Membership Secretary has informed us there are currently 44 paid members, with still 28 unpaid and 23 schools. Do please contact Graham Oster-Ritter if you wish to renew your membership or see him at Group Night.

### Monday 16 November

'Soft Fruit Growing' presented by Philip Fawcett - a presentation on the principles of soft fruit growing, involving cultivation, propagation and pruning - Philip has worked in horticulture for nearly 50 years. He started as a nurseryman, moving to a 22-year period as a head gardener for a large estate near Colchester. Currently he works freelance for a variety of clients. His most recent project has involved preparing a 7-acre 'open garden' for the National Gardens Scheme near Tiptree. Philip is a member of Garden Organic. He also is a keen poultryman, showing at National Poultry Club events. Plus the opportunity to meet up for a festive mince pie (or two) and a chat before Christmas!

### Monday 18 January

Steve Oakley and Faye Owen are the founders of The Friends of Shopland Churchyard. Following a trip to Jenny Murrell's campsite at Shopland Hall Equestrian Centre in September 2013 (very much recommended if you are a camper), they stumbled across the Churchyard. The site has an incredible magnetism and air of peacefulness but was in a terrible state of disrepair. An enthusiastic team has been granted the relevant permissions to restore the site to its former glory.

## Monday 21 March

Henry Webber, Mistletoe Trees

## Monday 16 May

Pesticide Action Network UK

## Monday 18 July

James Campbell, Chief Executive of Garden Organic, will talk about the work of the charity

## Monday 19 September

Ben Lambert, Crapes Fruit Farm

**Monday 21 November: speaker** to be confirmed

## Allotment breeding Birds Survey 2016

Attention all allotment birdwatchers/ornithologists!

We're liaising with the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) for an "Allotment Breeding Birds Survey 2016", as part of quantifying the environmental benefit of allotments. But we do need your help! We need one or more local sympathetic allotment sites willing to assist us and wonder whether any allotmenters/keen ornithologists in SEEOG would be interested. If so, please do contact us! So far, we've heard from Basildon Borough Council, Hadleigh Allotment Society and Maldon Town Council.

A few preliminary questions help to get a 'feel' for your allotment site(s) and the answers need only be approximate at this stage. The Breeding Bird Surveys have to be done from April to May.

1. Location? (Description and postcode or similar for GPS, if available)
2. Size? (Any unit of measure you like)
3. No of plots?
4. No of mature trees around perimeter and in the site?
5. Length of perimeter hedge?
6. Any areas set aside specifically as a "nature reserve"?
7. Tenant participation

Google Earth is useful for this sort of exercise although the imaging is not always up-to-date.

After you've collated the information, we would greatly appreciate if you could send the information to SEEOG member Graham Adamson: [ga.adamson@gmail.com](mailto:ga.adamson@gmail.com)

Here are some useful websites:

Bird specific:

BTO Garden BirdWatch (GBW): <http://www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/gbw>  
BTO Breeding Bird Survey (BBS): <http://www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/bbs>  
[RSPB Various wildlife surveys: http://www.rspb.org.uk/thingstodo/surveys/other.aspx](http://www.rspb.org.uk/thingstodo/surveys/other.aspx) Looks an easy one to do, if you can identify birds by sight and sound (and you like getting up early)

Broader wildlife links:

[Hedges for Wildlife:](http://www.wildlifetrusts.org/sites/wt-main.live.drupal.precedenthost.co.uk/files/files/HedgesforWildlife.pdf)

<http://www.wildlifetrusts.org/sites/wt-main.live.drupal.precedenthost.co.uk/files/files/HedgesforWildlife.pdf>

[Wildlife Trusts Consultancies](http://www.wildlifetrusts.org/how-you-can-help/working-business/ecology-consultancy) – local knowledge, national delivery

<http://www.wildlifetrusts.org/how-you-can-help/working-business/ecology-consultancy>

## Chase Organics & The Organic Gardening Catalogue

Dori Halliday (PR & Marketing) has kindly said that she would be very happy to help out with donations of seeds for our members to trial – perhaps there are some specific varieties that you would like to sample and they'd be happy to arrange.

[dori.halliday@chaseorganics.co.uk](mailto:dori.halliday@chaseorganics.co.uk) <http://www.organiccatalogue.com/>

## **Crapes Fruit Farm: Andrew Tann's mid-Autumn update**

Apart from a few brief rainy spells, the sunshine has given both colour and flavour to the fruit. The Cox from the sandiest soil here has actually sported rattling pips.

The last picking chores, namely the Sturmer Pippin and the Medlars, are upon us before either the Fieldfares arrive or the Medlars fall in the next gale. Usually we await a frost or two before the Medlars are gathered a little later in November. Sturmer Pippin are usually harvested in mid-November - a chilly job. Next week looks far from chilly and the fruit has coloured more than most years. There are just about a few D'Arcy Spice, which have now all been pre-booked!

The mid-season varieties have now sold out: no more Sunset, Ribston or Michaelmas Red until next year.

Beetroot and onions have both been popular; these will be available for some time yet.

You can read Andrew's full report at <https://crapes.wordpress.com/author/crapes/>

Ben's Diploma site is at: <http://dreadbensdiploma.weebly.com/index.html> - just hover over Projects at the top of the screen to view each

## **Farmers' Markets 2015**

These are the two markets where we have a stall and always appreciate help, produce and plants where available!

**Leigh-on-Sea:** Leigh Community Centre, Elm Road, 09:00 – 12:00 on Friday 20 November and Saturday 19 December.

**Rochford:** WI Hall, Market Square, 09:30 – 12:00 on (Saturday) 7 November and 5 December.

## **Garden Organic news**

Please help support Garden Organic's work by buying one of their lovely 2016 calendars for just £6.99 plus postage and packing. The 12 photos on the calendar are the winning pictures taken by members and supporters following their recent competition. The calendars come in a card envelope with postage and packing costing £1.50, however many you purchase. To buy one, please visit their website at: <https://portal.gardenorganic.org.uk/public/donate/donate.aspx>

## **GMWatch news**

The European Patent Office (EPO) in Munich has granted the Swiss seed giant, Syngenta (who was represented at the Essex Food & Farming day at Writtle earlier this year) a patent on pepper and its use "as fresh produce, as fresh cut produce, or for processing such as, for example, canning" (EP 2 166 833 B1). The patent also covers the plants, their cultivation, harvesting and seeds. The plants have been developed to produce pepper without seeds and are derived from conventional breeding using existing biodiversity. There was no genetic engineering involved in the process.

European patent law prohibits patents on processes for conventional breeding. Nevertheless, the EPO continues to grant patents on plants and their characteristics, seeds and fruits derived from such processes. By doing so, the EPO is serving its own interests, since its budget is reliant on services such as granting and examining patents.

"Step by step, patent by patent, the seed giants are taking control of our daily food. In future we might even need permission to cut a pepper into pieces", says Christoph Then for the coalition of No Patents on Seeds! "In any case Syngenta can prevent anyone from growing or harvesting this pepper, selling it for food or using it for further breeding. In the same way that the privatisation of water has raised deep concerns, the patenting of food plants poses similar problems and needs a clear political response."

You can read more of this disturbing story at <http://www.gmwatch.org/news/latest-news/16472-syngenta-is-granted-patent-on-pepper-for-use-as-food>

You can keep up with the latest news and comment on genetically modified foods by visiting their website at <http://www.gmwatch.org/news/latest-news>

## 'Make Compost Not War!'

Spiralseed have recently re-launched their exclusive T-shirt range, starting with their most popular designs, 'Make Compost Not War!' It's a good shirt!

You can also download *Our Allotment* from the link below. Hopefully, folks will enjoy this little period piece, an important early chapter in the history of Spiralseed, and maybe you or your own children might enjoy printing it out and colouring it in despite the dated references!

<http://spiralseed.co.uk/make-compost-not-war-t-shirts-available-plus-our-allotment-for-free-download/>

## Manure/Compost

This information is now on our website, apart from updates, of course, which we trust won't inconvenience too many people.

## Members' contributions

1) Does anyone want a nice Sedum just coming into flower, because I have quite a few I need to sell before winter sets in! I will be bringing a small tray-ful plus one of indoor plants. So hope to see you on November Group Night! Let's make it a busy one!

But has anyone yet thought of becoming our Minutes Secretary, which isn't at all onerous and would help us, the committee, to remember what we said we would do! We also now need another Librarian; again, not an onerous task, but simply bringing out a few of the books from the cupboard at the back, putting them out on a table for folks to look at/take away/record etc into a book and then returning them back after the meeting finishes.

2) A Manifesto for the Modern Gardener from Darren

"The Modern Gardener uses their spending power wisely to help turn the gardening industry a deeper shade of green..."

"The Modern Gardener benefits people, wildlife & our environment."

"The Modern Gardener understands death in the garden is really a process of renewal."

What is your Manifesto for the Modern Gardener?

<http://modernmint.co.uk/manifesto-modern-gardener/>

3) Does anyone save seeds for the Heritage Seed Library, or grow their seed? We would like to hear from you if you do. For instance, Ron has told us he has grown Bowland broad beans from two seeds, 'now a few more, not a great yield'.

## New members

When you join SEEORG, not a lot will happen in the beginning. If you join on Group Night, you can collect a current newsletter from Carole, our Secretary. Alternatively, you can download a newsletter from SEEORG's website at <http://seeog.org.uk/resources-information/newsletters/> - our website will also give you lots of useful information. In future, you will receive a newsletter bi-monthly either by email or post. We do not issue receipts or membership cards at present in order to keep down costs.

## Pesticide Action Network UK

In their September issue of *Pesticide News* they outline the first set of findings from a recent year-long study, working with local partners in six former republics of the Soviet Union, to identify risky pesticide practices among farming families and communities. In this issue they look at the findings in Armenia.

They look at the latest developments on neonicotinoids, where the UK government has recently over-ruled an EU-wide ban to allow the planting of neonicotinoid-treated oilseed rape, in a decision that has sparked controversy, and threatens public trust in the whole system of pesticide regulation.

And they also look at recent developments on glyphosate, following the report of International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) – part of the World Health Organisation – that concluded glyphosate is a possible human carcinogen.

You can read the full document at [http://www.pan-uk.org/files/PN101\\_Armenia.pdf](http://www.pan-uk.org/files/PN101_Armenia.pdf)

## Publications

A long time in the making, *The Book of Pears* is now published. It tells the story of the pear in eight narrative chapters and contains a Directory to around 500 varieties of pear. Following the pear's journey across continents and cultures, the chapters trace its history, the gradual emergence of its luscious textures, exotic perfumes and increasing status to that of a highly prized fresh fruit. 'Gold to the apple's silver', it used to be said.

The pear's role as a market fruit and international commodity forms part of the story and also the use of other pear varieties for cooking and making into the drink, Perry. Water colour paintings of pears by Elisabeth Dowle illustrate the chapters, plus many period images. In the Directory, which forms the second half of the book, each variety entry contains tasting notes, an account of its origin and history, a full fruit description for the purposes of identification and details helpful to its cultivation. The Directory is based on the Pear Collection in the National Fruit Collection at Brogdale. *The Book of Pears* has a companion website, which is now also launched: <http://www.thebookofpears.fruitforum.net>

## SEEOG library

Please contact us if you wish to change your books. Any book may be borrowed by members at a cost of 20p per book for each 2-month period. Ever wanted to grow your own but don't have the time, the space, or even know where to start? Well, we have a new book available – 'Do Grow/Start with 10 simple vegetables' by Alice Holden. We would very much like to hear from anyone who could take out a few of the books from the cupboard and set them out on Group Night – there are some good titles in that cupboard.

## Seekay Horticultural Supplies (Colin Turner)

As you know, we run Seekay Hort Supplies.

I am not sure if you would be interested, but we have just come across an organic fertiliser that we are at present stocking. The RRP is £11.99 for a 20kg bag (the product is volcanic dust - fully certified, etc).

We would be more than happy to offer your members a discounted price of £9.49 for this product or for a 10kg bag £5.42. We can arrange delivery at a small extra fee if needed or you could collect from Seekay Horticultural Supplies?

PS: Local delivery within Southend area only, sadly. They can deliver elsewhere but the cost would be £6.99 for up to 30KG.

<http://www.seekay.co.uk/> - also on SEEOG's website – Colin Turner

## SEEOG talks

Monday 1 February 2016: Lavers & District Horticultural Society

## Soil Association news

This month their policy director, Peter Melchett, will be delivering a petition with over 20,000 signatures to the UK's leading bread manufacturers and retailers, asking them NOT to use wheat that has been sprayed with glyphosate in their products. To date, they have raised almost half their target amount, definitely insufficient to:

Continue their campaign for a ban on pre-harvest use of glyphosate.

Go head to head with chemical giants like Monsanto.

Scale up their pioneering work with farmers to find and share effective ways of farming without chemical pesticides and herbicides.

Do more to understand and highlight the devastating effects that glyphosate may be having on our soil and wildlife.

There is more information on their campaign at <http://www.soilassociation.org/notinourbread>

## South Essex Natural History Society

All talks are held at the Beecroft Centre, Victoria Avenue, Southend-on-Sea.

Thursday 19 November: AGM and DVD, 7-9pm

Saturday 12 December: The Thames Through Time, 2-4pm

For further details, please contact their Chairman, Pat Wortley – 01702 588115 or email [pjwortley@btinternet.com](mailto:pjwortley@btinternet.com)

## Southend Apple Day

There are plenty of photos showing this very popular event on our website at <http://seeog.org.uk/2015/10/southend-apple-day-2015-2/> courtesy of Trust Links – and a big THANK YOU to all those who helped to make the event so successful.

## Trust Links news

When you buy your beautiful new 2016 Trust Links diary you will want to put the wonderful Trust Links events in it! So here they are:

Sunday 7 February, 1.30pm – 3.00pm: Wassailing at St Laurence Orchard

Saturday 27 February, 10am – 2pm: Seed Potato Day (in partnership with SEEEOG) at Growing Together Westcliff

Saturday 14 May, 11am – 2pm: May Fayre at Growing Together Westcliff

Saturday 2 July, Colourthon at Chalkwell Park (in aid of Trust Links, of course)

Saturday 8 October, 11am – 3pm: Apple Day at St Laurence Orchard

Saturday 26 November, 11am – 2pm: Christmas Fayre at Growing Together Westcliff

They will no doubt announce events at Growing Together Shoeburyness and Growing Together Thundersley in due course! Their new website is <http://www.trustlinks.org/>

## Turkey: Tons of fruit and veg deemed unsafe for export on domestic markets

Andrew Tann thought that we might be interested to see this item:

Tons of fruit and vegetables rejected for export due to unsafe levels of pesticides or insecticides are returned to Turkey. According to the Chamber of Agricultural Engineers, these products are not being destroyed. From the beginning of this year exports of fresh fruits and vegetables have been returned to Turkey due to high quantities of pesticides, as well as the presence of Western flower thrips. Tons of goods, such as tomatoes which were found to contain harmful and illegal substances, were returned from Russia especially, as well as Germany, Switzerland, and some European countries: apricots, peppers, cherries and pears were the most returned products.

Last year Turkey produced 28.7 million tons of vegetables and 17.1 million tons of fruit. 5% of production was exported. Russia ranked first in exports, the EU was second. Due to pesticide residues and pests found in the products, Turkey is experiencing serious difficulties in both markets. The problems experienced in exports to the EU can be seen in the RASFF "rapid alert system" report. In the first six months of 2015, 169 reports were made.

600,000,000 Euro market

World pesticide consumption amounts to 3.5 million tons with annual sales of 50 billion dollars. In Turkey, annual sales of pesticides by the end of 2014 amounted to €600 million. The use of agrochemicals is distributed as follows: insecticides and pesticides, 42 percent in Turkey, 30 percent in the world, herbicides 29 percent in Turkey, 45 percent in the world and fungicides, 18 percent in Turkey, compared to 20 percent in the world. 36 percent of agrochemicals are used in the Mediterranean region, 15 percent in the Marmara region, and 18 percent in the Aegean region.

This year the presence of Western flower thrips in fresh fruit and vegetables, like tomatoes, have been a reason for returning the shipments, says Ozden Gungor, the general chairman of the Chamber of Agricultural Engineers. At the same time traces of the pests were found in citrus, cherries and pears. Gungor drew attention to pesticide use in Turkey: in the last 3 years the use of plant protection products has increased from 1.3kg/ha to 1.7kg in 2014; in the Mediterranean region quantities as much as 3.1kg/ha were detected. Gungor said that the maximum residue limit is determined according to each individual pesticide, "If foods containing pesticides are consumed continuously, it could present a health risk. The biggest problem here is not the use of the agrochemicals but the misuse of them," he said.

According to Gungor, returned food products should be destroyed, but the destruction of these products does not take place and if they are not being destroyed then they are being used for the domestic markets.

Source: milliyet.com Publication date: 10/1/2015

## SEEOG Committee

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