

# DARRINGTON GARDEN CLUB

## February 2021 NEWSLETTER (11)



**So pleased it was Mary at Castleford Civic Centre and not Mohammed Ali who jabbed me!**



**Y**es, You've guessed it! I've had my Jab. Still struggling with side effects as I type but hugely relieved that both Val and I now have a tad more protection in these very challenging times. Actually, I had initially felt like I'd done a round with 'the Louisville Lip' until my darling wife reminded me how she'd not made anything like as much fuss when she was jabbed a few weeks ago! I'm now making a remarkable, speedy recovery!

**M**ohammed Ali (as Cassius Clay, initially) received the label not only because of where he was born but also because he never stopped talking – and grabbing headlines - with pithy sayings!

Some of his more quotable quotes:

- "Don't count the days; make the days count"
- "It isn't the mountains ahead to climb that wear you out; it's the pebble in your shoe."
- "I'm so mean, I make medicine sick"
- "He who is not courageous enough to take risks will accomplish nothing in life."
- "Hating people because of their colour is wrong. And it doesn't matter which colour does the hating. It's just plain wrong."
- "Live everyday as if it were your last because someday you're going to be right."

And .....

**"Float like a butterfly, sting like a bee."**

**O**ver three-quarters of our butterfly species have declined in occurrence and/or abundance since 1976 and two-thirds of our common and widespread moths declined in abundance between 1968 and 2007.

**N**ature is in crisis and we can play our part to protect our planet. **Butterfly Conservation** are inviting us to be our own **Butterfly Effect** and make changes in our lives. From how we eat, shop, garden and even enjoy nature itself, we're invited to discover how to make a difference

<https://www.yorkshirebutterflies.org.uk/sightings>  
<https://butterfly-conservation.org/butterflies/recording-and-monitoring>

**S**tart by planting out to encourage **caterpillars** into your garden, after all, it's where the butterflies begin! Creating an area for them to lay eggs for and produce young will certainly attract breeding butterflies to watch as well.

**O**ddly enough, many of the most common plants that we choose to attract the actual butterflies are not particularly suitable for caterpillars to live on. Unfortunately a lot of caterpillars like to eat plants that we often term as weeds, such as nettles, thistles, ivy or docks. These plants can however, easily be grown in a wildflower area in your garden, where cornflowers, daisies and other more attractive annuals can be grown too.

**I**f you really want to have a wide range of butterflies in your garden, then it is better to plant out flowers that will bloom through the different seasons, giving these wonderful creatures a chance to feed for as long as possible and also giving you the opportunity to see as many as you can through spring, summer and autumn.

### Butterfly Friendly Plants:

Buddleja, Sedum, Hebe, Verbena bonariensis, Echinops, Echinacea, Aster, Lavender, Cornflower, Fennel

**T**he loss of flower-rich habitat since the 1930s has taken its toll on our **pollinators**, but thoughtful planting of a plot *even the area of this page* can make a world of difference to a bee. That may seem a drop in the ocean, but every centimetre planted with the right flowers counts. According to Richard Glassborow of the **London Beekeepers' Association**, "Window boxes,

planters and pots can collectively contribute to a flower-rich environment.”

Small plants have a massive part to play in this, even in the most inhospitable environment. Pretty little **Mexican fleabane** will happily seed into walls and steps; **creeping thyme** transforms gravel into an oasis for bees and butterflies; and the **spotted deadnettle** ‘White Nancy’ can brighten even the darkest corner.

When selecting plants for butterflies, bees and hoverflies, avoid double flowers and cultivars with little or no pollen or nectar. If in doubt, look out for the **RHS Perfect For Pollinators logo**. Here’s a selection of the best small plants for pots. They may be Lilliputian in stature, but their value is immense.

## Sunny



Catmint *Nepeta nervosa* ‘Blue Moon’.

Photograph: Alamy Stock Photo

A balcony on a busy road may not seem the most promising location for flowers, but consider **White Thrift** (*Armeria maritima* ‘Alba’), which is only 15cm tall. Delicate pompoms of pure, white flowers held atop grassy foliage belie the true nature of this tough little perennial: its cliff-dwelling ancestry makes Thrift a superb plant for sunny, urban sites and window boxes.

The **catmint** *Nepeta nervosa* ‘Blue Moon’ is 30cm high and 20cm wide, while *Echium vulgare* ‘Blue

Bedder’ can be grown from seed scattered in a container. Either can be teamed with dainty, pale

**yellow scabious** (*Scabiosa*

*columbaria* subsp. *ochroleuca*) and the cascading, fragrant flowers of **sweet alyssum** ‘Snowdrift’) for a light, summery mix.

For a taller, more sumptuous scheme, combine the stately purple spires of *Salvia*

*nemorosa* ‘Caradonna’ with the trailing stems of

**ornamental oregano**, *Origanum* ‘Kent Beauty’. Hardy annuals can also be sown directly into a container. Try

**California poppy** and **poached egg plant** for a bright and beautiful, pollinator-friendly display. For a slightly larger space, sow **honeywort** allow it to seed around, and you’ll be rewarded by years of flowers for the cost of a packet of seeds.

In autumn, plant bulbs and corms that flower in late winter: they are inexpensive and portable, yet these plants, barely 15cm high, can be lifesavers for bees in February. Make them a feature in shallow bulb pans or

add to containers of perennials. Early **crocus** and early bulbous **Iris**, bloom in sun or light shade. After flowering, allow leaves to die down naturally. Perennials will help mask fading foliage – **hardy geraniums** are especially adept at this. **Striped bloody cranesbill** at 15cm tall, is perfect for pots.

## Shady

Shade from buildings and trees need not be a barrier to planting a container of elegant blooms for bees. *Helleborus x hybridus* ‘White Lady’ mingling with white common bleeding heart (*Dicentra formosa* f. *alba*) and the violet-blue flowers of *Pulmonaria* ‘Diana Clare’ will brighten a shady corner, while providing a bee feast from winter until May, after which contrasting foliage will add interest.

A couple of years ago, we were delighted to welcome a Beekeeper to share his expertise at one of our Garden Club meetings (Remember those days? When people could meet together in a room with not a mask in sight (other than the Bee Keeper’s Mask) and no thought about social distancing or bubbles.

Roll on the time when we can all meet again!

Featuring flower show favourites like show gardens, plant nurseries and live theatres, **THE OUTDOOR COVID-SAFE EVENT** will be the first major date in the 2021 gardening year, taking place from 22 - 25 April at the Great Yorkshire Showground. Flower Shows are ‘sowing the seeds of hope’ for the UK gardening calendar with plans for a special **Spring Essentials event in April**.

Due to social distancing requirements, the number of visitors will be limited each day and tickets must be purchased in advance. E-tickets with timed arrival slots must be purchased online and will be on sale from Monday 9 November 2021

at [www.flowershow.org.uk](http://www.flowershow.org.uk) priced **£15 until 28 February 2021** and **£18 from 1 March**.

Q: Why are A’s like flowers?

A: Because bee’s come after them!

Q: What do you call a fly without wings?

A: A walk.

Q: How does a bee get to school?

A: On a bzz!

Q: What do you get if you throw butter?

A: A butterfly!

Q: What do you get when you eat caterpillars?

A: Butterflies in your stomach!

## Darrington Garden Club Calendars

**Thanks, Vera, for managing the compilation, production and sale of our first club calendar. 55 Sold. Terrific!**

**Final 5 available. £3.50 each.**

**Interested? Email/phone me and I’ll ensure you don’t miss out. (Contact on page 4)**



The vorpal blade went snicker-snack...

....."And hast thou slain the Jabberwock?  
Come to my arms, my beamish boy!  
O frabjous day! Callooh! Callay!"

Indulge me! I couldn't resist including another 'Jab' into this month's newsletter! Lewis Carroll's sharp and honed Vorpal Blade (also appearing in 'Dungeons and Dragons') sounds like a Super Vaccine that destroyed a very dangerous monster. Currently... everything's crossed that our 'Vorpal blades' are as effective!

### FEBRUARY GARDENING JOBS

- Divide clumps of snowdrops and replant to spread them out
- Prune late-summer flowering clematis, cutting back stems to healthy buds about 30cms from the base.
- Transplant deciduous plants (*They look bare in winter, put out new leaves every spring and then drop them in autumn*) that are growing in the wrong place whilst they are dormant
- Pot up containers with HARDY spring bedding such as primroses, wallflowers and forget-me-nots
- Prune winter-blooming shrubs such as mahonia, winter jasmine and heathers once they've finished flowering.
- Cut back wisteria side shoots to three buds from the base, to encourage abundant flowers in spring
- Sprinkle slow-release fertiliser around the base of roses and other flowering shrubs



Thanks, Hazel, for these cheerful, chilly snow-creatures created by your daughter (clearly, too much time on her hands!)  
 Q: At what time do ducks wake up?  
 A: At the quack of dawn  
 Q: What is big, grey and covered in bumps?  
 A: An elephant stung by lots of bees  
 Q: How many tickles to make an octopus giggle?  
 A: Ten

### DARRINGTON INFO

For those of you receiving this newsletter by email, click on the link below to a very interesting, useful, interactive map of Darrington

[http://map.wakefield.gov.uk/connect/analyst/mobile/#/main?mapcfg=WMDMap&x=448338&y=420250&overlays=Tree%20preservation%20orders,WMD\\_C\\_Boundary&zoom=8&showMarker=5%20Park%20Avenue%20Darrington%20Pontefract%20WF8%203AY](http://map.wakefield.gov.uk/connect/analyst/mobile/#/main?mapcfg=WMDMap&x=448338&y=420250&overlays=Tree%20preservation%20orders,WMD_C_Boundary&zoom=8&showMarker=5%20Park%20Avenue%20Darrington%20Pontefract%20WF8%203AY)

### **Optimism**

In my garden I learned how to sow,  
tiny seeds laid all in a row.  
Then I wait for the pests,  
snails and rats never rest,  
hoping one day *something* might grow.

### **Bumblebees**

I picked the first daisy of spring,  
Was that such a terrible thing?  
The pink and the white  
- such a wonderful sight  
But the bumblebee threatened to sting!

### VALENTINE'S DAY

It's said that Valentine was a priest who served in 3rdC Rome. Emperor Claudius II thought that single men made better soldiers than those with families and wives and outlawed marriage for young soldiers.

Valentine disagreed with this and started performing secret marriages for young lovers and although he came to a 'sticky end', his efforts have increasingly been remembered over the centuries.

In the midst of this current Covid crisis, let's look to the future when we all may once again travel the world. A major study concluded that the new and unfamiliar situations encountered during **travelling** keep our **mind** sharp. For the moment, we can only travel in our imagination so here are a few International romantic traditions....

**France**.... It is believed that the first-ever Valentine's Day card was originated in France, when Charles, the Duke of Orleans, sent love letters to his wife from the prison in 1415. The French village called "Valentine" turns into the epicenter of romance between 12th and 14th February. Beautiful yards, trees, and homes are decorated with love cards, roses, and proposals for marriage. It probably is the most beautiful Valentine's Day tradition in the world.

**Best Places For A Romantic Dinner:** NoLita, Benoit  
**Places To Visit:** Paris, Eiffel Tower, Bordeaux, Marseille

### Denmark – A Celebration Of Love

The country celebrates the day of romance on 14th Feb with a twist. In Denmark, Valentine's Day is not limited to roses and chocolates. Friends and lovers exchange handmade cards with pressed white flowers that are called **snowdrops**.

**Best Places For A Romantic Dinner:** Restaurant Grønnegade, Chez Bruno  
**Places To Visit:** Copenhagen, Bornholm, Aarhus

### Romania – An Unusual Celebration

If you're looking for some very romantic and unusual celebration of valentine's day around the world, then Romanians won't disappoint you. The day is celebrated on 24th Feb as the day when young couples get engaged. It is basically a mix of Valentine's Day and the celebration of spring season. Young men and women go to the forests to pick colorful flowers, while other couples wash their faces with snow as a sign of good luck.

**Best Places For A Romantic Dinner:** Zexe, Aubergine Restaurant  
**Places To Visit:** Sibiu, Bucharest, Brasov

## ROMANTIC GARDENS

OK! Although it's more than likely that we'll not be traveling abroad anytime soon, there's every likelihood that travel within Great Britain will be possible later this year. I've found some romantic gardens well worth a visit for a stroll – when it's safe to do so!

### Stourhead, Wiltshire



A rambling 18thC garden described as a 'work of art with a focus on water – a sinuous lake surrounded by trees and classical buildings

### Crook Hall, Durham



Each of the 15 gardens at Crook Hall in Durham has its own style. Duck into the walled garden to see blowsy roses, enjoy sculpture in the Shakespeare garden and visit the silver and white garden, which honours a 25th wedding anniversary.

### Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal



A park of the late C17 probably with earlier origins, a water garden and pleasure grounds of c 1718-30 laid out by owner John Aislabie which were extended to include the ruins of Fountains Abbey by his son William Aislabie from 1768 onwards. The site has been described as 'one of the most spectacular scenic compositions in England' (Hussey 1967) and 'the finest formal water-garden in the country'

### Newby Hall and Gardens



One of Val and my favourite places!  
A fantastic family day out. Amazing Adventure Playground, Spectacular Gardens and Elegant Georgian House.  
Dollhouse Exhibition, Teddy Bear House, Sculpture park, Restaurant & Shop.. the perfect place to meet up with friends and family

## Flower names



**Jamie Oliver/Jules Norton** – Poppy Honey Rosey, Daisy Boo Pamela, Petal Blossom Rainbow  
**Hayden Christensen and Rachel Bilson** – Briar Rose  
**Beyonce and JayZ** - Blue Ivy

Loads of Boys names with Flower links: Anthony (sounds like Anthos – Greek for rose), Ash, Basil (no, I've not got that wrong!), Jared (Hebrew for rose), Oliver

## DARRINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

*We're holding monthly meetings by phone! All Residents welcome to participate/ask questions*

(Next meeting **Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> February, 7pm**)  
Tel: Vice Chair: 01977 797644 who explain how to join in by phone.

**Be a GOOD NEIGHBOUR.**

## Please don't be too proud to seek help and advice!

**St Marys Centre**, Chequerfield 01977 705341.

Email: [denisepallett@stmaryscommunity.co.uk](mailto:denisepallett@stmaryscommunity.co.uk)

WMDC is supporting this Community Centre as a key friendly, advice + help 'Hub' for Pontefract.

### Wakefield Samaritans

Call: 116 123 (free to call – no code needed)

<https://www.samaritans.org/branches/samaritans-wakefield-and-district>

Offering a safe place to talk any time you like, in your own way – about whatever's 'getting to you'.

### Live Well Wakefield

Supporting healthy living for the people of Wakefield District, providing information, advice and support in coping with everyday life. 7 Bank St. Castleford

Call: 01924 255363

Website: [www.livewellwakefield.nhs.uk/](http://www.livewellwakefield.nhs.uk/)

### Age UK Wakefield District

Age UK Wakefield District is a local independent charity working with and for older people across Wakefield District.

Call: 01977 552114 email: [admin@ageukwd.org.uk](mailto:admin@ageukwd.org.uk)

Website: [www.ageuk.org.uk/wakefielddistrict/](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/wakefielddistrict/)

Maybe email me/phone and suggest something for the next edition – **Due March 10th**. If you've received a printed copy and you have an email, please share that with me for next time. Thanks.

**Be Safe. Be Well. Be Kind**

Andy Tagger:

[andytag@hotmail.com/07985676324](mailto:andytag@hotmail.com/07985676324)