

A.W.S.L.G. TRADING CENTRE NEWS
ADDISCOMBE, WOODSIDE & SHIRLEY LEISURE GARDENS LTD
GLENTHORNE AVENUE, CROYDON. CR0 7EZ.
www.awslg.org.uk

POISON ALERT

Recently there has been spate of dead animals, here on the allotments and Shirley Oaks Village where several foxes and a domestic cat have also been found dead. The remains of 2 foxes, 1 cat and 1 hedgehog were sent to DEFRA for post mortem and toxicology tests. These animals died on row 1 of the annex. It was found that the animals died from rat poison, 4 times over the lethal dose so this raises grave concerns. It is illegal to use poison to kill foxes and one of the worst methods as proved by the other dead animals that have been found; poisoned meat left around is indiscriminate. A much loved cat killed along with a hedgehog which are in sharp decline. Please consult Peter the ground steward before using any rat poison on your plot or if you have poison in your shed, he will advise on its use or disposal. A specialist pest control team may be called to deal with rat extermination. Evidence of inappropriate use of rat poison will result in your tenancy being terminated.

DO'S, DON'TS AND THANKS

Do be careful about using the blue slug pellets, these have been banned from sale since 30th June and will have a total ban from Spring 2020. If you have a supply to use up, use very sparingly, 4/5 to a plant is more than adequate. Metaldehyde poses an unacceptable risk to birds and mammals. Make your own eco-friendly slug bait from raw oats or bran, either small heaps or scattered around vulnerable plants. The greedy slug bloats itself up on it, leaving it dehydrated and easy pickings for the birds.

Don't leave equipment and hoses on the main paths, **do** be mindful that obstacles such as these make it very difficult for mowing the paths; I am sure no one would like to have their hose shredded or their equipment damaged but this will happen one of these days.

Thanks to Chris Hewson who gave up a lot of his time to manage the trading centre for more than 5 years. Always full of knowledge about our products and gardening advice he was a valuable asset, as well as feeding and looking after our allotment cat.

Thanks to the polytunnel team for their plant sale and to all the volunteers who turned up for the Big Tidy up day and the team who provided a lovely lunch.

Newsletter

September 2019

ANNUAL STOCKTAKING

**THE TRADING CENTRE WILL BE CLOSED
ON SUNDAY 31st SEPTEMBER FOR
STOCKTAKING**

Volunteers are needed for the yearly stocktaking. The start time is 9.30am. Please can you put aside a few hours to help with this annual task. Please add your name to the list in the trading centre.

CFAGS COMPETITION 2019

We are delighted to announce that AWSLG was awarded first place in the CFAGS Amenities competition for 2019. This competition judges sites within Croydon and the prize is awarded to the best managed and maintained site overall. Judges tour each site and award marks for a number of different categories including facilities, cultivation of plots, general tidiness, variety of produce grown and pathways. A huge thanks goes to our working party, wildlife field volunteers, and all volunteers who work so hard keeping our site in such good order, also to "Tractor Malcolm" for our perfectly mown main pathways and to the committee whose remit it is to ensure good management of the site. This award recognises the countless hours of hard work, effort and dedication of all those parties. However, the good news doesn't stop there.... Congratulations to Mr and Mrs Warner who were awarded first prize for the best half plot in the competition. The plots were viewed and scored by an RHS judge who visited 9 sites overall. For our site to win both the Amenities and best half plot competition is truly outstanding.

CFAGS will also be celebrating its 100 anniversary this year and our site has been chosen to host this event. There will be quizzes, games, BBQ and a number of other events taking place on our site on Sunday 15 September 2019 from midday to 5pm. Tickets will be available on site shortly and the event will include the presentation of awards for the Amenities competition, so we would encourage everyone to try and be there to help us and CFAGS celebrate.

THE LAST WEDNESDAY OPENING IS 25TH SEPTEMBER.

The canteen is open Saturday and Sunday mornings 9.30am - 11.30am

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JOBS TO DO IN SEPTEMBER

FRUIT CARE:

Cut out fruited canes of summer raspberries and tie in new canes that will fruit next year. Select strong, healthy canes and cut out weak, forked or misplaced ones.

Blackcurrants can be pruned once they have finished fruiting but wait until the leaves have fallen, sometimes it is better to prune the plants while dormant during the winter.

Continue to pick blackberries, they freeze well if the fruit is dry frozen first on trays then use boxes as this will help to keep the fruit intact. According to traditional folk lore you should stop picking the fruit on 30th September as on this day the devil flies over and claims any berries left for his own.

This is the last chance to plant out new strawberry beds as they need to get established before the cold sets in.

Remove apples, pears and plums infected with brown rot, the same advice for disposing of blighted matter ie. tomato or potato debris applies.

Prune out any dead, dying or diseased shoots on fruit trees that are affected by diseases such as bacterial canker, cherry leaf scorch, powdery mildew or other problems that can overwinter or continue to worsen. Avoid pruning stone fruits (e.g. cherries or plums) once they are dropping their leaves, as this can make them vulnerable to silver leaf. Peaches and apricots can be sensitive to cold, so for this reason are best pruned in spring and summer.

By the end of September, start fixing **grease bands** around the trunks of fruit trees in order to deter the wingless female winter moths from climbing up the trunks to lay their eggs in the branches.

New trees can be planted once the autumn sets in. The soil will still be quite warm in September even if the weather is cool, and the roots of new plants will benefit from this. This is particularly important for peaches and nectarines.

VEGETABLE CARE:

Dig up potatoes before slug damage or blight becomes a problem. Leave them out to dry for two to three hours before storing. Only store sound tubers in paper sacks or boxes.

Remaining outdoor tomatoes should be picked by the end of the month and ripened indoors. The whole truss can be cut off to allow the fruits to ripen 'on the vine', perhaps under a cloche or on a windowsill. Any green fruits can be used in chutneys.

Because of the ban on blight control products it is even more important to do all we can to check this fungal condition. Outdoor tomatoes are more vulnerable than greenhouse ones. Be careful not to splash the plants when you water, it will make easier if the bottom leaves are removed first. Blighted potato haulms can be cut off and the tubers can still be harvested if you catch them quick enough. this qualifies as diseased material, seal in a plastic bag to minimise the spread of fungal spores, ideally this should be removed from the allotments but if this is not possible cover and burn when bonfires are allowed. **On no account compost.**

Harvest marrows, squashes and pumpkins, leaving them in the sun to dry and harden the skins off, then store in a cool, dry, dark place.



When asparagus foliage turns brown, it is time to cut it down. Take care of the spines, and give the plants a good mulch afterwards. Any new asparagus beds can be prepared at the same time, adding grit if your soil is poorly drained (e.g. heavy clay).

Plant overwintering onion sets in late Sept. Don't forget to use the **insect netting** which helps prevent the Allium Leaf Miner which has been devastating both leeks and onions.

Cover all brassicas with **bird netting** to stop damage by pigeons.

FOR SALE

Nearly New Ark, suitable for bantams, rabbits or guinea pigs. Original cost £100 Would accept any reasonable offer. Will deliver. Contact Janet Macdonald 020 87778262

Free greenhouse to anyone who would be prepared to dismantle and take away. Contact Doris 020 86566436

HOURS OF OPENING

Saturday 10.30am -12.15pm. 2.30pm - 4.15pm.

Sunday 10.30am - 12.15pm.

Wednesday 2.30pm - 4.00pm April—end of September only