



## Newsletter

### Humble Allotment Tenants Have Human Rights Too.

Our gardening forebears dug for victory but little did they realise that their part in the subsequent victory would, some 60 years later, result in added legal protection for allotment tenants. Their 'victory' included the establishment of the European Convention on Human Rights in 1953. The Convention was initially designed to protect all European citizens from atrocities committed in the name of totalitarianism. Our forebears would perhaps be astonished to discover that the tentacles of the Convention now apply equally to the humble allotment garden as much as they would to a concentration camp. Although UK citizens have been able to take their cases to a court in Strasbourg it has taken a further half century for a UK government to be brave enough to enshrine the fundamental freedoms directly in to UK law. The **Human Rights Act 1998** allows alleged breaches of the Convention by any public authority to be heard in the ordinary UK courts. Higher courts can also declare Acts of Parliament as incompatible with the Convention.

All public authorities must not contravene a person's freedoms. Establishing that a body is public authority is therefore a first hurdle or a prerequisite to claiming a Convention right. Central Government bodies such as the Department of the Environment or county, town or parish councils are well established in law as public authorities. Other bodies however may be classified as public authorities if they carry out public functions. This could well include Allotment Associations who 'manage' sites on behalf of local councils under delegated powers within the Allotments Acts. On the other hand, Railtrack or the Water companies for example, also carry out public functions but providing allotments is a private act that is not derived from state power.

The distinction between public and private function is an important second hurdle to overcome. An allotment association may let plots and evict tenants under a delegated public function but the expulsion of a member will be a private act. The problem arises of course where the tenancy rules require the tenant to be an Association member and therefore the private act of expulsion indirectly affects the public function of allotment provision and is thus a potential breach of the Convention.

Modern allotment tenants are a diverse bunch. They are representative of all sections of any particular local community with perhaps only necessity, obsession, cultural background or even medical advice as common denominators to their shared passion for vegetable growing. And therein lies the rationale of the Convention: to protect diverse communities and individuals from the misuse of state power. The tool used by the Convention is to provide broad 'freedoms' against which the actions of a public authority can be tested. Strict enforcement of inflexible rules and regulations are likely to breach the freedoms. A tenant may raise a freedom as a defence to possession proceedings brought by Associations or local authorities. But which freedoms may allotment tenants rely on?

Double digging on a frosty winter's morning may certainly be classed as torture, slavery and enforced labour but as the spouse under whose direction the digging is done is not public authority no action will lie! Similarly, the constant interference from 'Know-It-All' on the next plot will not give rise to a claim under the right

to respect for one's private life. But compare a local authority who attempt to evict a disabled or elderly tenant for failure to cultivate 75% of a plot (degrading treatment) or an Association 'steward' who constantly interferes because of the particular methods of cultivation used by a person of ethnic descent (respect for private life / religious belief).

Article 6 of the Convention provides for a right to a fair trial. This may seem far removed from an allotment dispute. However, as indicated above, the expulsion of an Association member, if it results in eviction, is a 'civil dispute' that will require a fair trial to be held. An independent and impartial 'judge' or 'jury', a right to defend oneself, and a hearing held in public may all have to be observed to comply with this fundamental freedom if a successful claim for damages is to be avoided. Allotment Associations' constitutions are likely to be incompatible in this respect and will need to be amended as will some local authority practices.

Article 1 of the First Protocol to the Convention provides that the peaceful possession of property is a fundamental freedom. The rationale is to prevent the confiscation of property by the state. Compulsory purchase or leasing of land by the local authorities so as to provide allotments is in effect a confiscation of property from the landowner. Landowners wishing to cash in on valuable land that they currently have to lease to local authorities may claim this right in order to reclaim their land. Local authorities may use it as an excuse not to purchase land for allotments. The termination of allotment tenancies is also a confiscation of property. This is generally permissible providing that a proper scheme of compensation exists. As the present compensation provisions in the Allotment Acts fail to recognise length of tenure and the value of improvements, they may be found to be incompatible with the Convention and are therefore open to legal challenge, even in small claims proceedings. Allotment Associations and local authorities may be well advised to offer a compensation scheme that exceeds the current statutory minimum.

As well as a passion for vegetable growing, allotment tenants also share a general insecurity of tenancy. The new rights provided by the Convention may not improve security of tenure to any great extent but will make rule-makers more conscious of how their rules are formulated, interpreted and enforced. As successive Governments have refused to implement recommended improvements to allotment law they may now be forced to adopt improved practices because of the Human Rights Act. It is up to all of us to use the new law so as to fully achieve the benefits of this hard-won, albeit unexpected, victory of the wartime diggers.

I am pleased to receive comments and suggestions and share experiences for the benefit of all allotment tenants, smallholders and kitchen gardeners.

Andrew P. Baxter LLM, Barrister of the Middle Temple, Lecturer in Law, University of Salford.


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 see pages 2 and 8

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A. Allen

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### The Party Night

The year 2000 saw the Nottingham & District attend more than 7 shows, in which we flew the flag and made ourselves known, they were all a great success.

We rounded off the season with an xmas dance on December 8th, the artist was excellent and so was the buffet and beer. A great night was had by all, we even got our chairman (Mr Knowles) to dance, in fact our secretary (Mrs Dinsdale) would'nt sit down! At the end of the evening I think he had 80% of the people who attended, dancing

The artist 'Tim Sheldon' did a great job entertaining us and he worked hard throughout the function.

During the evening we auctioned off a bottle of very expensive wine (donated by Dorreen) which fetched £19, and it was all in aid of N.&D.A.C.

Bill Maher sold raffle tickets and ran the raffle throughout the evening and did a sterling job. Dorreen catered for all those hungry mouths by doing a most stunning buffet helped by Joe Dyer to set it up.

We all enjoyed ourselves, it was a fantastic night, meeting people who have allotments elsewhere and meeting others who just came along for the event. We hope to repeat the event again this year, but that depends on your support. Why not send a letter to our letters page of the newsletter if you enjoyed it or even if you didn't (I don't think many of you didn't) to see if we can pester the committee into doing it again in 2001. It all depends on you!

Thanks go out again to all who attended the event and those who worked hard before and during the few hours of madness:- the committee for allowing it to happen, Joe and Dorreen for the stupendous buffet, Bill for his hard raffle selling (and running) task, Pat (our treasurer) for keeping his eye on the cash, Reg for his support (and 10 minutes of entertainment) and landlord, landlady and staff at the white horse pub for looking after us all.

Watch this space for this years 2001 show and event dates.

Happy Hoeing for 2001

S. Waterfall.  
 (Publicity Officer)

P.S. If you would like your event entering into our show spot page, why not drop me a line with your details. (address on newsletter).

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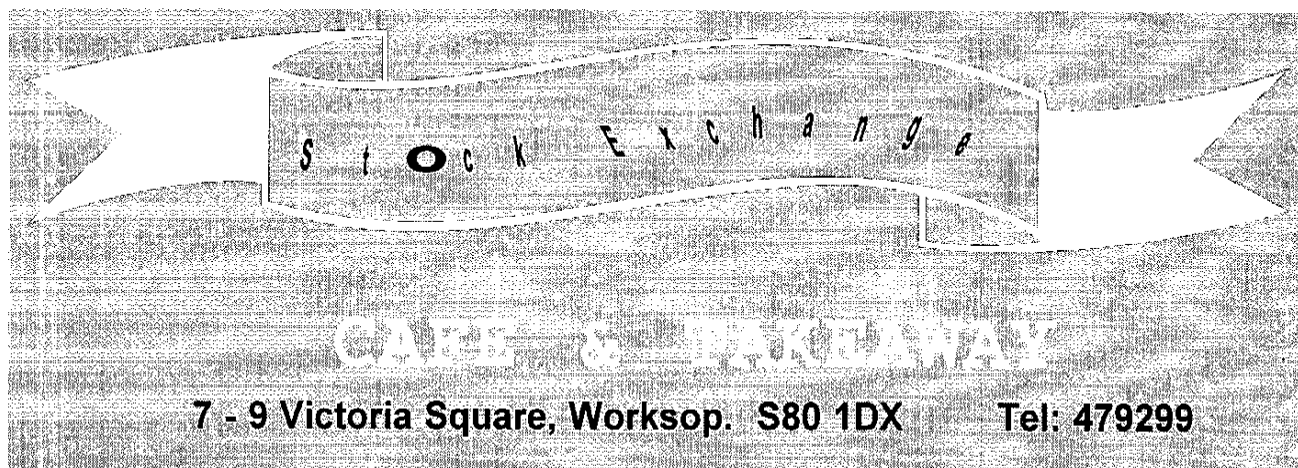
### **THE NOTTINGHAM & DISTRICT ALLOTMENT COUNCIL**

The representative district body for allotment gardens and affiliated association and the adjacent counties

### **SHOW DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

April 15th - 16th	THRUMPTON
May 26th - 28th	WOLLATON PARK
July 14th - 15th	LOCKO PARK
August 4th - 5th	RIVERSIDE FESTIVAL
August 25th	CLIFTON GHA SHOW
September 8th	OLD PARK FARM GHA SHOW
December 7th	N.&D.A.C. XMAS DANCE

If you have any problems or items of interest which you would like to tell the members, please instruct your delegate to raise it at the meeting.



If any members have anything to sell, then why not advertise it in the Allotment Newsletter. The cost will be £3.00 for anything over £10.00, anything you have for sale under £10.00 is free.

Please contact Mr. S. Waterfall or D. Dinsdale for any further information.

If anybody out there has any secret information on how to grow good crops, why not let others share your knowledge. So please ring Reg. Knowles or Doreen Dinsdale. Our phone numbers are in this Newsletter.

**HAVE YOU ANY SUGGESTIONS?**

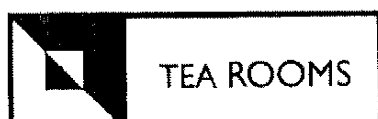
**DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEAS?**

**ALL COMMENTS WELCOME**

IF SO, PLEASE CONTACT:

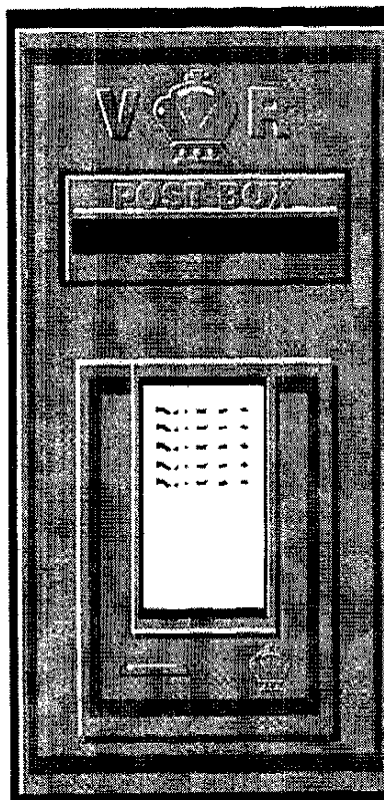
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## PLANT NUTRIENTS

Part -3-

### Introduction

Part one of this series dealt with the chemical symbols used and the percentage composition of some fertilisers. Part two explained the effect on plant growth of the various nutrients indicating the effect of deficiencies. In this third part the effect of nutrients on one another will be indicated showing that this can be supportive or antagonistic.

### Antagonistic Reactions:

Potassium and Magnesium ions interfere with the uptake of each other. This can be avoided when the correct ratio of available Potassium to Magnesium is present in the growing medium. This should be between 3:1 and 4:1 Potassium to Magnesium. Potassium also reduces the uptake of magnesium, Copper, Zinc and Calcium. Magnesium can also reduce the uptake of Calcium, whereas Calcium reduces the uptake of Potassium and Magnesium. Phosphorus uptake can be reduced by the presence of Nitrate Nitrogen. Iron deficiency is induced by the presence of large quantities of Calcium. Deficiency of Iron can also be induced by high levels of Copper, Manganese, Zinc and Phosphorus. The problem can be overcome by the use of Iron Chelates.

Manganese uptake can be reduced by high Potassium, Iron, Copper and Zinc, whilst its availability is greatly increased at low pH levels when it can reach toxic levels. High Phosphorus levels can be used to reduce the level of Manganese in these circumstances.

### Supportive or Enhancement Reactions:

The use of Nitrate Fertilisers tends to enhance the uptake of Potassium from the soil and therefore a fertiliser containing Nitrate is preferable when growing a crop which requires high levels of Potassium for good growth.

Most plants can grow satisfactorily in soils containing widely varying amounts of most nutrients without the risk of serious effects from interactions. However, when a deficiency of a nutrient is indicated it is often helpful to consider whether the problem has been caused by excessive addition of fertilisers containing antagonistic nutrients.

### Conclusion:

This article deals with the interactions that are possible between different nutrients, for example if one should for some reason be present in excess. Part four of this series will deal with the effect of pH on the availability of nutrients.

A. Allen

**THE COMMITTEE WILL NOT PUBLISH LETTERS OR REPORTS OF AN INFLAMMATORY NATURE THAT MAY CAUSE ANY OFFENCE TO THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE NOTTINGHAM & DISTRICT ALLOTMENTS COUNCIL**

## **S.E. Marshall & Co. Limited**

### **A brief History**

S.E. Marshall & Co. limited were founded over 50 years ago by Stanley Marshall, in Wisbech, in the Cambridgeshire Fens. This is still our home today.

Many of our staff have been with us for many years, ensuring a continuity of service to our customers which they value highly.

We sell more potatoes, onions sets, shallots, garlic, vegetables seed and soft fruit to the home kitchen gardener than any other mail order company. All our products are tested to ensure that they are of the highest quality and are sold exclusively to the dedicated kitchen gardener rather than the trade.

One of our latest developments has been the introduction of tree fruit into our range, such as apples, plums and pears - and even more recently walnuts.

### **Wonderful Walnuts**

The walnut has been with us for centuries and its culture in Britain can even be traced back to Roman times. The wood has been crafted into some of the finest furniture the world has ever seen and for this reason alone a mature tree can have a timber value of several thousand pounds - the most valuable wood, prized for veneers, being found just below soil level. Modern strains of walnut are among the fastest of hardwood trees to mature and can be harvested for timber at around 50-60 years so to plant a tree particularly for younger members of the family is certainly an investment for the future.

Most of us though would not wish to plant a tree with the thought of chopping it down and will be encouraged to think that our maturing tree will be cropping delicious nuts in as little as two years from planting. Walnuts, of course, are delicious eaten dried in the traditional way but they are also terrific eaten 'wet', straight from the tree and to many, picked walnuts prepared from the green fruit, is the finest way to eat them. Now scientific investigations suggest that consumption of walnuts can significantly reduce cholesterol. Remember walnuts are magnificent garden trees and will form fine specimens.

### **Gardening Without Digging**

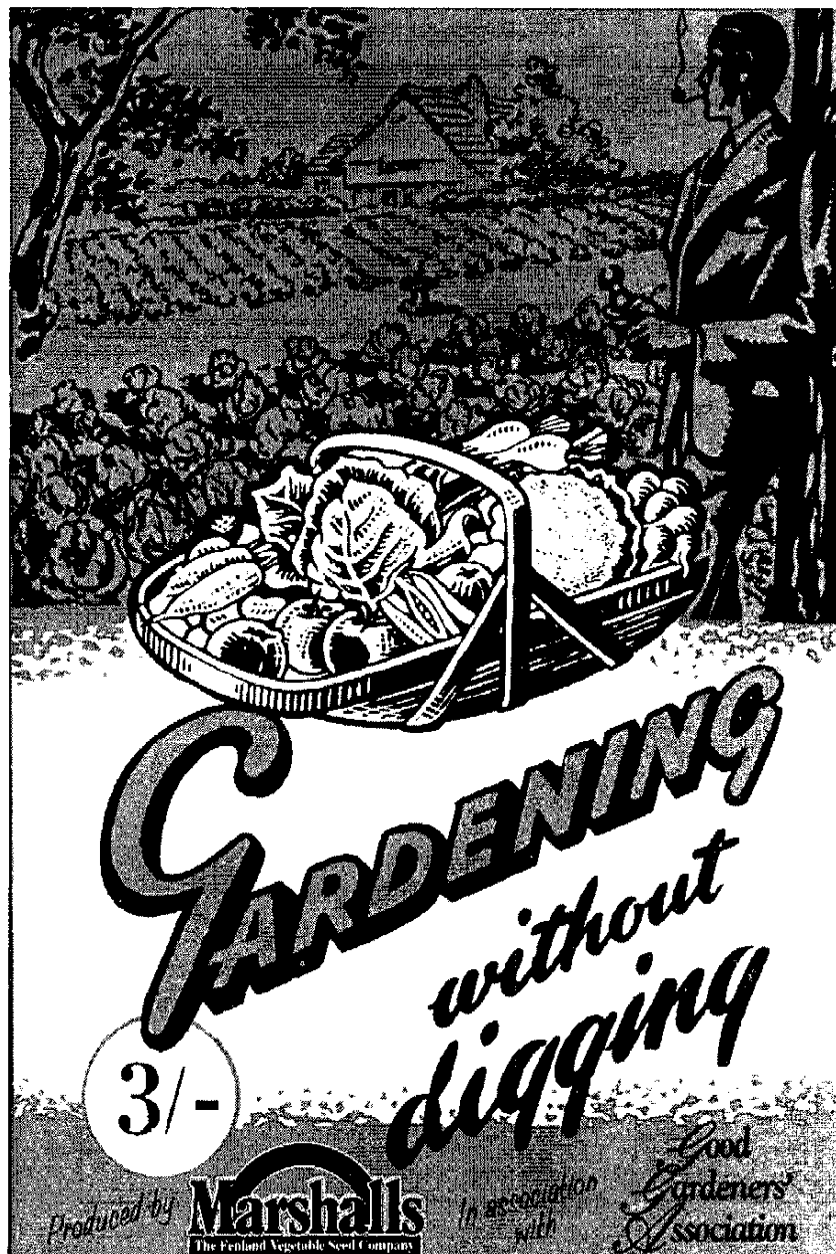
#### **The Gardener's Prayer Answered?**

#### **"Gardening Without Digging"**

##### **By Mr A Guest**

Out of print for over 40 years, this interesting booklet contains many useful gems of information. I am sure that kitchen gardeners everywhere will find it thought provoking - especially those who prefer to grow organically. Whilst the cultural methods mentioned in the booklet are by no means the only way to grow, it does offer a unique slant!

We are delighted to offer copies free to all members of the Nottingham & District Allotments Council. Please send name and address with 20p towards P&P to Marshalls.



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## WOLLATON CANAL

February is the first month of the year when we can start off our early vegetables under glass and actually sow some directly into the earth. Early seed potatoes are now available as well as onion sets, shallots and early peas. The sowing and planting then escalates in the following months.

Sowing under glass enables cropping dates to be pulled forward by anything from four to six weeks. The down side is that some heat may be required on cold nights. If transplanting out early, then cloches will be necessary to ensure the soil maintains a reasonable temperature as well as providing protection from late frosts and high winds. The following crops could be attempted under glass:- Broad beans, French beans, Brussel sprouts, Summer cabbage, Cauliflower, Celery, Leeks, Lettuce, Early peas, Early potatoes (if chitted) and of course, Tomatoes.

Depending on the soil and weather conditions, the following can be sown out of doors. Early potatoes (if chitted), shallots, garlic (which can also be sown in Autumn), and parsnips and onion sets towards the end of the month.

The flower garden also needs to be considered. Under glass we can start begonia, gloxinia tubers and start off dahlias. Cuttings may also be taken from fuchsias, petunias and carnations. Don't forget to keep an eye on geraniums to prevent damping-off.

Anemones and gladioli corm can be planted out and the sweet pea bed prepared. The golden rule to observe is that the soil conditions and weather determine the optimum sowing and planting time, the dates on the packaging are a general guide. The trick is not to sow too early and get caught by inclement weather unless you have protection, or sow too late and so reduce the crop growing season, resulting in smaller produce.

The ladies in the team did extremely well last year with some excellent produce. Anne and Mary enhanced their vegetable plots with some dwarf to half standard fruit trees with some very good results. Jane and Geoff have opted for raised beds for ease of maintenance and quality control. Unfortunately the fox thinks he has a new play ground and does not always keep to the obvious paths.

Missing (two rows of Broad Beans)

We all know how Steve and Pat tried to smuggle a dead field mouse from Old Park Farm to "Dug" Burton's plot, hidden between two drain pipes. Those of us in the know don't see the point, because as everyone knows, "Dug" has live field mice to spare. Anyway, some of them formed an escape committee and invaded the next door plot. They left neat little holes along two rows of broad beans, leaving a trail of chewed up small green tender shoots. Needless to say "Dug" is on half beer rations until he sorts out the problem.

A follow on crop of beans has been sown initially in propagators and will be hardened off for planting out when they are of a size to no longer attract "Dug's" mates.

Bill Maher  
Wollaton Canal Allot. Assoc.



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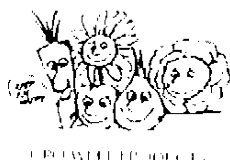
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## THE COOK'S POTATO GUIDE (Part 2)

### **Your Soil and Climate**

**Soil:** Potatoes like a rich, fertile soil. Whatever your soil type, dig over if necessary and fork in plenty of well-rooted organic matter - manure, home-made compost or precomposted manure from a garden centre.

**Climate:** The flavour and quality of potatoes also depends on location. Some varieties grow best in the North or South, or suit heavy or light soils better, or are grown for specific pest and disease resistance.

### **SEED TUBERS:**

Potatoes are grown from small 'seed' tubers, produced by specialist growers to ensure they are free from disease. Organic seed tubers are grown from certified organic stock, using organic methods.

### **CHITTING:**

Before planting, seed tubers must be sprouted or 'chitted', to help ensure good yields. Immature sprouts or 'eyes' are found together at one end of the tuber known as the 'rose end'. Arrange the tubers side by side, rose end up, in an egg tray, and leave somewhere cool, light and frost free for four to six weeks, until they form dark green sprouts about 2-2.5cm long, or until you're ready to plant them out.

### **WHAT TO GROW?**

**\*Earlies:** The first new potatoes of the season, Mature fast - around ten weeks - have the skins, do not store, and are eaten soon after harvesting.

**\*Second Earlies:** Ready from mid - to late July. Grown bigger than earlies and mostly store well.

**\*Maincrop:** Bred to store and keep through the winter months. Biggest yields and largest potatoes: have thicker skins and are harvested in autumn.

**Planting:** Potatoes are planted from early to late spring. They are frost-tender plants, so be guided by the weather and protect the young plants from frost if necessary. In the warmest areas you can plant up to four weeks earlier: further north and east, wait and plant at the latest times. If slugs are a problem, harvest all maincrop potatoes as early as possible, by the end of August.

**Earlies:** mid-March to end of May. Tubers 30cm apart, in rows 50-60cm apart.

Harvest: end of May to end of July.

Second Earlies and Maincrop: mid-March to end of April Tubers 35cm apart, in rows 75cm apart.

Harvest: Mid-July to end of Sept/early Oct.

**How to plant:** In planting in long rows, make a shallow trench, about 15cm deep, place the tubers in the bottom, sprouted end up, and cover with soil. Or make individual holes for each tuber. As the plants grow, to prevent the developing potatoes from greening, earth up the soil around each plant to make a ridge or mulch with grass clippings.

## **Vintage Horticultural & Garden Machinery Club**

**DAVID and BRENDA SMITH**

Collectors & Exhibitors of Vintage Horticultural Machinery

22 Toll Bar Avenue, Bottesford, Nottingham, NG13 0BB

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## **Thrumpton Hall Easter Craft & Garden Show**

**Come Rain, Come Shine,  
A Wonderful Day Out**

Following two successful years thousand's of people are once again expected to attend Thrumpton Hall's Annual Easter Craft & Garden Show which is held on Sunday & Monday, April 15th/16th.

## **BIRD PROBLEMS**

Q What sort of damage do birds cause?

A When they are hungry in autumn and winter, birds feed on the buds of fruits and ornamental trees and shrubs. Larger birds perching on slim branches can break them. Later, flowering, fruit and ornamental plants also have their blooms eaten. Newly sown seeds are at risk from birds eating them or from being uprooted as birds 'bathe' in the dusty seedbeds.

Q Which birds eat flower buds?

A Bullfinches are the master criminals in this respect, but hawfinches, chaffinches, greenfinches, sparrows and tits are also culprits in some areas. Fruit trees, and ornamental trees and bushes, may be stripped of their dormant buds by birds in cold weather when other foods are scarce. Likely victims are cherries, crab apples, almonds, lilacs, magnolias, rhododendrons and wisteria, as well as fruit trees. Large buds, like those found on magnolias for example, may be pecked rather than stripped off. The blooms will often open but will be disfigured.

Ideally, grow fruit in a fruit cage which can be covered with netting in winter before the damage starts. Later, it will keep birds off the ripening fruit.

This can be costly and is not practical for large trees. If this is the case, visual scarers are the only alternative. To avoid birds becoming used to them, they should be changed and moved frequently.

Q Which birds strip shrubs of berries?

A Blackbirds and thrushes feast on autumn berries and fruits, and are sometimes joined by jays and pigeons. Cotoneaster, berberis, holly, pyracantha and sorbus are stripped. Only netting will keep hungry birds off these berries.

Q Which ones strip flowers?

A Tits searching for sweet nectar will peck camellias, sweet peas and rhododendrons. The most annoying damage is done by sparrows which shred flowers of spring plants such as sweet peas, violets, polyanthus and crocus. The birds don't seem to eat the flowers and the reason for the attacks is unknown. Protect vulnerable plants with netting. A dark coloured netting will be less intrusive but is more hazardous to birds as they cannot see it.

Q Which birds eat fruit and vegetables?

A Embryo fruits are grazed by bullfinches and ripe fruit is attacked by tits, starlings, pigeons, collared doves, blackbirds and thrushes.

Peas, beans and sweetcorn are attacked by jays.

Leafy vegetables are eaten by woodpigeons and collared doves, especially in winter when favoured foods like clover are unavailable. In fact, growing clover between your winter brassicas may entice birds to eat these, rather than your precious crop. The clover will often recover and can be dug in later in the year.

A temporary covering of netting over low-growing plants should do the job, but remember that pigeons, collared doves and other large birds can do serious damage very quickly, so act as soon as you see damage being done.

Q Which birds raid seedbeds and peck young plants?

A Newly sown lawns and other seed beds are raided by seed-eaters such as sparrows which can damage large quantities of seed. Even indoor seeds in greenhouses are not safe. Where the seeds have been neatly dug out, mice are likely to have been the culprit. Sparrows are the main seedbed bathers. Young seedlings are grazed by larks, sparrows and pheasants. Low-growing plants and seedbeds can be protected by covering with horticultural fleece. This will keep off birds and boost the plants' growth so they grow out of the vulnerable stage more quickly.

Q Which birds feed in turf?

A Large birds in search of soil insects - ants, chafer grubs, or leatherjackets for example - can tear up turf. However, this is more likely to be the work of badgers or squirrels in search of, or burying, food. Blackbirds, crows, rooks, starlings, green woodpeckers and magpies are the birds usually responsible for damaging turf. If you reduce the insect population of the turf you may reduce the damage caused by birds.

Leatherjackets, a common insect pest of turf, can be forced to the surface by watering the lawn with a dilute solution of washing-up liquid and mild disinfectant. If only a small area is affected, you can soak the ground with water and cover it with a sheet of black polythene. Leatherjackets are grey-brown, legless grubs, up to 5cm (2in) long. Either sweep them off, or leave them for the birds. On a larger lawn, treat the grass with Sybol Dust Soil Pest Killer in autumn or spring. The biological control 'BioSafe' may be worth trying when the soil is warm - April or May. Wireworm and chafer grubs can be dealt with by using a soil insecticide.

Q Which areas are most at risk?

A Bird damage is most likely near trees, bushes and hedges. It is less likely in areas where there is little vegetation. Pigeons are an exception. They will search out greenstuffs anywhere during the winter, and are especially numerous where oilseed rape is grown. Many birds are very shy, so planting new, vulnerable trees near the house may help protect them.

Q Can I control the birds in my garden?

A Birds are protected by law and so only people specially trained and licensed are able to control them. Noisy scarers are only suitable if you live a good distance from other people. These devices are very intrusive, and need to go off, around dawn, when birds are actively feeding. An exception is humming tape which make relatively little sound. However, birds become used to all types of noise deterrents and eventually ignore them. The traditional remedy of theading black, or other cottons, over vulnerable plants is not recommended these days as birds are easily entangled. Coloured threads also spoil the appearance of ornamental plants.

Q What can you do about them?

A Visual scarers like flapping reflective scarers, toy cats, hawk replicas or scarecrows may work for a while, but birds soon become accustomed to them. Netting vulnerable plants works well if the plants are small enough. No gaps should be left in the netting. Again, you should check the netting at least twice a day in case a bird has become entangled. Keeping the netting taut and using a brightly coloured one will help reduce the risk of this happening. Chicken netting is a more costly, but longer lasting solution. It is also tangle-proof. Use a 2cm (1 in) net to exclude small birds, and the cheaper 6.5cm (2.5 in) net to keep out pigeons and other larger birds.

Q Is there anything I can spray on to deter them?

A Vitax Stay Off and Arthur Bower's Scoot claim to deter birds.

Q How can I encourage birds without getting damage?

A Encourage insect-eating birds such as robins and blue tits by putting out food and putting up nesting boxes. In return, they will help keep the pest insect population down in your garden.

Q Will feeding them encourage damage?

A It seems that feeding birds may give them more time and energy to do damage. However, most people feed the birds, and hope for the best.



## VET QUESTIONS

Q. I have Hedgehogs visit my garden regularly. What do I give them to eat and drink? (S. Waterfall)

A. One could buy canned food from some of the local pet shops which I have seen, but I would advice you let them eat the garden pests such as slugs, snails, mice, beetles and caterpillars. They will drink water so leave fresh water out in a dish for them.

Q. How often does a dog need an injection against Parvovirus? (P. McGrath)

A. Your dog should be vaccinated yearly against Parvovirus, especially since we have seen cases in the Nottingham area for the last 4 years.

Ben Berlyne BVM&S/MRCVS/BA

If you have any questions you want to ask the Vet, please submit them along with your name and address to the Publicity Officer or Secretary.

We have also been succesful in obtaining the services of Mr. A Baxter who has agreed to run a Legal column and answer your questions either in the column or if appropriate by letter if you have any questions you would like to put to him please send them along with your name and address to me:  
Reg Knowles, Chairman.

## COMPETITION

Following from a decision made at the A.G.M. by members & committee it was agreed the time had come to think up a Title or Name for our Newsletter. This is where you come in, we are running a Competition where you the member can think of a Name/Title for the Newsletter, this will then give our Newsletter proper identification. Submit your ideas for name/title with your name and address to the Publicity Officer Steve Waterfall 29 Plungar Close, Beechdale Est. Nottingham NG8 3FW entries to arrive no later than Monday 4th June. The name most apt and liked by our judges will be the winner. The winner will not only have his/her suggestion heading our Newsletter they will also receive a tub of Groworganic (value £5) so get thinking .....

..... and get your ideas sent in.

Clifton Garden Holders Assoc.  
Flower & Vegetable Show  
Saturday 25th. August 2001 at  
High Bank Community Centre  
Farnborough Road Clifton Nott'm.  
Contact Mr. H. Grant: 45 Manstey  
Crescent, Clifton, Nott'm NG11 9DT  
Tel: 0115 9215611

## USELESS WORLD INFORMATION!

A bunch of bananas weighing 121 kg. (266.75 lb.) was grown by Les and Ros Buglar of Tully, Queensland, Australia, in 1981.

A pumpkin weighing 513 kg. (1,131 lb.) was grown from Atlantic Giant seed stock by Gerry Checkon of Altoona, Pennsylvania, USA. It was weighed at the Pennsylvania Pumpkin Bowl on October 2, 1999

A total of 17,693 pumpkin lanterns were lit on October 24, 1998, at the Pumpkin Festival in Keene, New Hampshire, USA

John Evans of Palmer, Alaska, USA, grew a carrot weighing 8.61 kg. (18 lb. 13 oz.). The carrot was measured and weighed at the 1998 Alaska State Fair

A loafah measuring 50.8 cm. x 40.6 cm. x 12.7 cm. (20 in. x 16 in. x 5 in.) on November 17, 1997, was grown by Hugh Leonard of Danville, USA.

A bean (commonly known as a "Yard Long Bean") grown by Harry Hurley, of North Carolina, USA, measured 1 m. 30 cm. (4.3 ft.) on September 13, 1997, at the North Carolina State Farmers' Market.

A string of garlic measuring 52.1 m. (171 ft.) was made by a team of women from the village of Cornellá Del Terri, Spain, at the Second Fair of Garlic, in Cornellá, on October 12, 1997.

Hampton Court, London, UK, had 2 million visitors in 1996. It was started by Thomas Wolsey in the early 16th century. The garden has the oldest yew hedge maze in England.

A total of 422 different potato varieties were displayed at the Malvern Show, UK, on September 25, 1998. The total exhibit of 3,500 potatoes, staged by Dave Chappel, Norman Hosking, Morrice Innes, and Andy McQueen, filled a 12.19-m. (40-ft.) stand

An analysis of 38 fruits commonly eaten raw (as opposed to dried) shows the avocado (*Persea americana*) has the highest calorific value, with 163 kilocalories per edible 100 g. (741 kcal./lb.).

A tomato plant grown by Nutriculture Ltd, Mawdesley, Lancashire, England, reached a height of 19.8 m. (65 ft.) on May 11, 2000.

The largest garden is arguably that created by Andre Le Notre at Versailles, France, in the late 17th century, for Louis XIV. Created in what had been a muddy swamp, it covers over 6,070 ha. (15,000 acres).

The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, Surrey, England, had 1,000,015 paying visitors in 1996. Most of the plants on display are wild species rather than garden varieties, with specimen trees dating to the 18th century.

A fuchsia grown by Bernard Lavery of Llanharry, Rhondda Cynon Taff, Wales, in 1995, grew to a height of 4.2 m. (13 ft. 10 in.).

Tim Fuller, of Waterlooville, Hampshire, UK, grew a 2.7 m.(9 ft.) sunflower which bloomed 64 heads, in September, 1999.

In 1986, Martien Heijms of Oirschot, Netherlands, grew a sunflower with a total height of 7.76 m. (25 ft. 5 in.).

**THE NOTTINGHAM & DISTRICT**  
**ALLOTMENT COUNCIL**

The representative body for affiliated Allotment Gardeners and associations in England & Wales

**2001/2002 MEETING DATES**

Meetings of the Council will be held at 7.30 p.m. on the following dates at the  
White Horse Public House Ilkeston Road Nottingham

**GENERAL MEETINGS**

Tuesday 1st May 2001  
Tuesday 3rd July 2001  
Tuesday 4th September 2001  
Tuesday 6th November 2001  
Tuesday 8th January 2002  
Tuesday 5th March 2002 A.G.M.

**COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

Tuesday 3rd April 2001  
Tuesday 5th June 2001  
Tuesday 7th August 2001  
Tuesday 4th December 2001  
Tuesday 5th February 2002

If you have any problems or items of interest which you would like to tel the members, please instruct your delegates to raise it at the meeting.

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**AFFILIATED MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM**

To The Nottingham and District Allotments Council  
7 Mattingly Road, Hemphill Vale, Nottingham NG6 7BD.

We the undersigned, hereby apply to be an affiliated member of NDAC

Name of Society \_\_\_\_\_

Name and Address of Secretary \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
The affiliated membership fee being £1 per member

We enclose cheque for £ \_\_\_\_\_ Number of members \_\_\_\_\_ Made payable to NDAC



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### **ENCOURAGE OUR FRIENDS THE EARTHWORM**

Earthworms are indispensable in the garden because they aerate the soil, pull down and digest decomposing organic matter and create humus. Encourage them to take up residence in your garden by keeping the soil moist, mulched and manured.

### **FERTILITY CHECK**

Dig a spadeful of soil and count the number of earthworms it contains. Six or more indicate a fertile soil in which most plants should thrive. If there are only a few, dig plenty of organic matter into the soil to improve its fertility.

### **PREVENT SCAB**

Enlist the help of worms to keep fruit trees free from scab, a fungus disease that causes black or brown blotches on leaves and fruit of apples and pears. The fungus grows on dead leaves and releases its spores round about Christmas time. Run a mower over leaves in autumn to chop them up small. Worms can then easily pull them underground before scab spores have a chance to infect healthy trees.

### **DRESSING FOR LAWNS**

Leave wormcasts to dry on lawns, then use a long cane to brush them over the grass. They make a nutritious top dressing. Never apply a lawn dressing which contains worm killer. The benefit of worms in the lawn far outweighs the inconvenience of a few wormcasts. If the problem is severe, apply sulphate of ammonia to the lawn to increase the acidity of the soil, cast-forming worms prefer alkaline soils.

### **FOREIGN PERIL**

Everyone recognises the value of earthworms in the garden, but flatworms are foes rather than friends. In fact, while earthworms are invaluable in improving the soil, flatworms actually feed on earthworms. Flatworms arrived in this country from New Zealand. They are easy to identify.

While all types of earthworms have the familiar round profile, flatworms are as the name noticeably flat. They grow up to 18cm (7") long, are dark in colour and have a pale stripe running down each side of their body. They are also rather sticky. Though birds devour earthworms by the million, they shun flatworms. Not only are the creatures sticky and unpalatable, they also tend to emerge at night, when most birds are roosting. There are no chemical controls against flatworms, but you can sometimes trap them by laying down an old carrier bag or polythene sheet in a cool sheltered spot weighing down the corners. Check under every day and if flatworms are in your garden you may well find them underneath. A stamp of the boot usually kills them but make sure the head is crushed. Alternatively, drop them into a bowl of salty water. Flatworms are slowly spreading throughout the UK but you are much more likely to find them in your garden if you live in damp areas such as Scotland, Ireland, Wales and western parts of England, rather than the more drier south and east.

Did you know that ---

Earthworms are the mainstay of numerous creatures, including badgers, beetles, birds, centipedes, hedgehogs, moles and slugs.

Up to 8 million earthworms may live in a hectare of grassland, even more in deciduous woodland.

Worms can live up to 10 years.

There are some 25 species of British earthworms, of which *Lumbricus terrestris*, the most common earthworm, is most often seen. It measures between 9 and 23cm (3"-9") in length.

Worms are sensitive to vibration, which they associate with rainfall.

Drumming on the soil will bring them to the surface in search of moisture.

Charles Darwin estimated that the worms in a single acre will, between them, shift 8 - 18 tons of soil a year.

*Micochaetus microchaetus*, the world's largest species of earthworm, is found in South Africa. It can grow 7 meters (23ft) long.

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