**Lytchett Minster and Upton Gardening Club**

www.lmugc.org.uk



**February 2020 Newsletter**

**Welcome** Welcome back everyone, a belated Happy New Year, and a special welcome to our speaker, Paul Sturgess.

Please note all of the following information:-

a. Please remember that subs are due if you haven’t already paid.

b. Your committee meets on Monday 9th March, so please email or talk to a committee member if you have any suggestions etc. We would particularly welcome suggestions on how you would like the club to go forward

c. Please note that our annual **Spring Plant Sale** is on **Sat. 16th May**, so get planting and pruning as we are always short of plants!

**Website** Don’t forget to check the website. It has past newsletters, and other information about the club. Thanks to Peter for keeping it updated.

**Garden Tips for March**

Keeping the Garden Healthy

* Aphids of all sorts will be on the increase this month. Before summer predators such as ladybirds and wasps are ready to eat them, use hand picking/squishing to control an infestation build-up, rather than resort to toxic sprays.
* Flowers in all parts of the garden will attract beneficial predators, such as hoverflies, and thus avoid the need for harmful pesticide sprays. The poached-egg flower, *Limnanthes douglasii* (pictured) will provide an early feast. The sooner you fill your garden with the pest-eaters, the sooner you'll get the pests under control.
* Insects to encourage are ladybirds (will eat aphids), beetles (will eat slugs) and wasps, which will devour hundreds of grubs and flies in the course of a summer. A healthy garden is filled with a huge range of wildlife, ugly and beautiful, a balance that keeps the garden flourishing.
* Cut out any branches showing signs of coral spot and clear away dead plant tissue where this disease can take hold. Dieback appearing on woody plants after the cold season should also be cut out, down to healthy growth.

* Put out slug traps (pictured) a week or two before making new sowings and plantings and check them regularly - especially in damp weather - to keep topped up with bait such as beer or formulated bait.
* Make sure your greenhouse is clean and washed down.
* Hang sticky traps to catch flying pests such as whitefly and sciarid fly. Temperatures are too still too low for biological control, so traps will keep pest levels down until predators can be introduced. Squash or rub off aphid colonies as they arrive.

**Out and About** I hope you have been able to see the lovely snowdrops, and now the spring bulbs. We have the 2020 ‘Great Gardens to Visit’ book if you want inspiration! If you want to organise a trip somewhere Moya will help with car sharing etc. Gardens open for the NGS in the next few weeks include Herons Mead Wool BH20 6HF on 22nd March 2-5pm, and 22 Holt Rd Poole BH12 1JQ on 15th March and 12th April, both 2-5pm

**Our next meeting.** On Thursday 26th March at 7.30pm Bob Ayres will present ‘The Hidden Gardens of London.’ Last year Bob gave us an amazing talk on ‘The Rivers of Dorset.’ His photos and knowledge were inspiring and we are looking forward to his presentation about ‘The Hidden Gardens of London.’ He has knowledge that is not available anywhere else as he has researched it himself!

**Other meetings this year**

Moya had now taken over the bookings from me and has planned an interesting year. Please see her if you have any comments or suggestions about the programme

Thursday March 26th – Hidden Gardens of London – Bob Ayres

Thursday April 23rd – Bulbs of the Cape – Ben Turner

Thursday May 28th – Wild Flowers at your Doorstep – Eric Watson

**Saturday May 16th – 10am – 12 noon – Annual Spring Plant Sale –**

Thursday June 25th – How to re-cycle your waste

Thursday July 23rd – The History of Bournemouth Gardens – Chris Evans

August – no meeting

Thursday September 24th – Travels with a Camera – Mike Read

Thursday October 22nd – Birds of Poole Harbour – Paul Merton

Thursday November 26th – AGM

**If you require information on any of the above or other aspects of LMUGC, please phone Tessa on 01202 625953 or email secretary@lmugc.org.uk**