

July Gardening By Ewshot Gardener

In July, I mourn the end of the glorious riot of rambling roses on the pergola and get on with pruning out shoots that have flowered and tying in the vigorous new growth. The climbing roses will keep flowering if you keep dead-heading them.

All is not lost, though. July is the month when herbaceous perennials are reaching their best, although they may need support (if you didn't give them the 'Chelsea chop!'). Bedding plants are also in their prime and should delight us until the Autumn if you keep dead-heading.

Talking of chopping; now the birds have fledged their young, you can clip hedges, including privet, cypress, box and yew. Cut back the trailing shoots of wisteria to 5-6 leaves to encourage next year's flower buds to form.

Cypress hedges look better with two clips a year, in July and September.

Lawns and edges need to be kept mown/ clipped because fast growth, if it stays wet, leads to a patchy sward and slugs under the grassy fringe. However, if it is dry, leave the mowing or use a very high setting for the blade

In the vegetable garden, carrots, lettuce, spinach can still be sown and harvesting soft fruit, early potatoes, peas, broad beans and courgettes gives me great pleasure.

I tend to plant out broccoli and other brassicas in the space cleared when I dig up the early potatoes. On the light gravelly soil of my garden, the organic matter left over by the potatoes helps to retain moisture. I add some lime as well, since the cabbage family likes a more neutral soil.

Oh yes, net against pigeons and squash caterpillars... ahhh, the wildlife!

July 15th is the time for the Ewshot Show and they have a produce show – why not contribute an entry? Crondall's 55th flower, produce and craft show is on the 28th.

Gardens open for charity

15th July, 5th August **Diple Mill, Hartley Wintney**

1st & 29th July, 19th August **The Thatched Cottage, and Berry Cottage, Church Rd , Upper Farringdon, Alton (joint entry)**

Our associated society, Dogmersfield and Crookham Village, have arranged a visit to **Whispers, Chatter Alley, Dogmersfield on 4th July starting at 12.30pm.** £6.00 per head. Picnics welcome.