

# The Driftwood Garden Diary

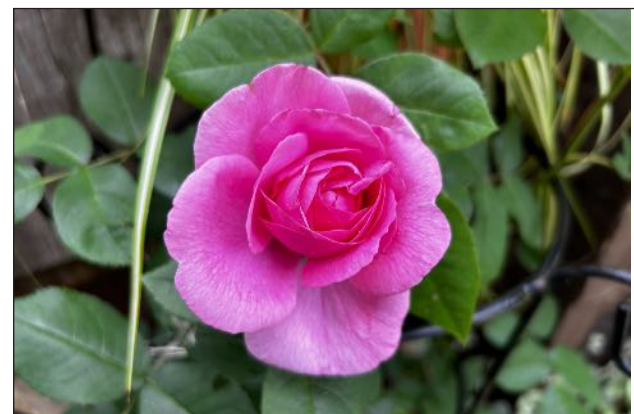
with Geoff Stonebanks



Floral display at Driftwood



Loosestrife



The new King Charles Coronation rose

## The King Charles rose will keep going into the autumn evenings

**E**ARLIER in the year my mum bought me the King Charles Coronation rose. I am amazed it has already grown really well and produced three very pretty flowers. It is planted in a large container.

Make sure you plant it where you can enjoy its lovely light fragrance, that will keep going all summer, and well into the short nights of autumn. Along with being a memorable flower, the good news for new gardeners or those with very little time on their hands is that this particular rose is also generally hardy, more robust and more disease resistant than other rose types.

They really are one of the easiest types to grow and perfect for most garden situations, including containers like mine.

Many years ago, I planted "Love In A Mist" along the drive and now it grows everywhere in my beach garden, normally flowering earlier in the year, I spotted several new, pretty blue flowers this week popping out of the gravel.

It is a very easy to grow hardy annual flower that originates from the Mediterranean and North Africa. It grows quickly and easily from seed.

Flowers are borne in summer on slender, upright stems clothed in feathery green leaves, and are followed by decorative, large, inflated seed pods.

Opening both days this bank holiday weekend for the National Garden Scheme between 2pm and 5pm is Butlers Farmhouse in Butlers Lane, Herstmonceux, and there will be live jazz to listen to in the garden as well.

This is a lovely rural setting surrounding a 16th century farmhouse, with views of the South Downs.

It is quite a quirky garden with surprises round every corner including a rainbow border, small pond, Cornish inspired beach corners, a poison garden and secret jungle garden.

For this event, you can also take picnics and chairs or rugs to sit and enjoy the jazz.

On Bank Holiday Monday why not drive up to Lindfield and visit two gardens for the price of one? Number 47 Denmans Lane opens

along with the Lindfield Jungle at 16 Newton Road. Combined entry is £7. The latter is a surprising, intimate garden, 17 x 8 metres. The plot was transformed in 1999 into an atmospheric jungle oasis, planted for tropical effect.

It is lush and exuberant with an emphasis on foliage and hot colours. From the planter's terrace enjoy the winding path through lilies, cannas, ginger and bamboo, to the tranquil sundowner's deck over hidden pools. The former is a beautiful and tranquil one-acre garden.

Created by the owners over the past 20 years, it is planted for interest throughout the year. The garden also has ponds, vegetable and fruit gardens. Both open between 1.30pm and 5.30pm with full details on all three gardens available at [www.ngs.org.uk](http://www.ngs.org.uk).

A good old favourite and reliable plant in my garden is an alstroemeria Indian Summer. It is native to South America and its vibrant blooms appear like flames above the dark green-bronze foliage from summer right through until the first frosts, so you won't be short of flowers in your garden.

The trick to extending flowering time is not to deadhead, but remove tired blooms by pulling the stem, the resulting wound then initiates further flowers.

Ideal for planting in both borders and containers, the flowers make a long lasting and dramatic addition to your indoor floral arrangements too.

With so many exotic-looking blooms produced you may be forgiven for thinking that this alstroemeria is not hardy but winter protection will only be required if temperatures dip below -10 C.

Another favourite at this time of the year is lysimachia vulgaris (yellow loosestrife).

It is a perennial wildflower, with hairy green leaves and clusters of bright yellow summer flowers. It does best in boggy soils such as the edge of ponds, and is considered a marginal plant. It spreads by creeping rhizomes and can be invasive – in countries where it has been introduced, including North America, it's considered a problem plant.



Geoff shows off the Indian Summer blooms

As the summer progresses, some plants in the garden begin to fade, especially if you have had difficulty watering in the early part of the season.

This year at Driftwood, along the side of the old railway sleepers, I have placed a number of smaller containers with a selection of plants providing some striking colour, set against the dark shades of the sleepers.

Fortunately, they are still looking good. There are the dazzling flowers of the hydrangea Vanilla Fraise, pretty, red-pink geraniums, a striking pink dahlia and a pretty fuchsia, Lena.

The colour has lasted well and the pots really set off that corner of the patio.

Read more of Geoff's garden at [www.driftwoodbysea.co.uk](http://www.driftwoodbysea.co.uk)



Love In A Mist