



Green and pleasant

WITH the advent of July, we can hope for long, warm days that continue late into the evening, perfect for those of us who enjoy pottering in the garden after work, maybe hosting barbecues, and more importantly enjoying your beds and borders as they reach their peak. It is essential to keep plants looking good by regularly dead-heading and you'll be able to enjoy a longer display of magnificent blooms. Make sure you keep new plants well-watered, using grey water where possible, and hoe off weeds, which always thrive in the sunshine.

By **Geoff Stonebanks**

This month also heralds the time of year when we are most likely to have to engage in many hours spent watering our plots too. If, like me, you find it therapeutic, all well and good, if not, then it can be a real chore but a very necessary one if you want to keep your blooms in tip top condition. July can also be a holiday month, so remember to take account of houseplants. Most will tolerate a few days' absence without suffering.

National Garden Scheme

There are quite a few gardens opening this month, like *Cupani* in Sandgate Close, Seaford on the 7th July and

Seaford Gardens South comprising eight plots on the 13th. Also, on Sunday the 13th there are two gardens opening in Eastbourne together, from 1pm to 5pm, with a combined entry of £5. The first, 16 Hardy Drive is a small coastal town garden, made private by strategic planting and plenty of work and the second, 36 Jellicoe Close a new front and rear garden created over the last five years on shingle/beach reclaimed land. It is a Mediterranean, cottage style garden with wildlife, ecology and sustainability at its heart. Full details on all gardens at www.ngs.org.uk

The Garden Show

Running until the 13th July in Seaford's *The Crypt Gallery*, prepare to be immersed in a vibrant celebration of nature and art as the Arts Charity *SCIP* transforms the space into a captivating

botanical arts festival, "The Garden Show". Known for their bold and insightful exhibitions, *SCIP* returns with a three-week exploration celebrating all things floral.

Visitors will be treated to a diverse collection of artworks, including the whimsical fine art of Hello Marine, the delicate ceramic creations of Frances Doherty, the intricate prints of Kit Boyd and Lisa Stubbs, and the captivating illustrations of award-winning Graham Carter, each offering a unique perspective on the floral world.

Alongside the exhibition, a range of free, hands-on art workshops for all ages will be offered, including engaging sessions for children and young people. Dive into the world of cyanotype printing or create vibrant Mexican-inspired floral headwear!

The *SCIP Studio* will blossom into an extraordinary paper rainforest, meticulously crafted by the charity's youth group in collaboration with paper artist Lauren Hayes. This immersive installation, co-designed and populated by the young participants with tropical flora and fauna, promises to be a breathtaking spectacle.

Adding a unique touch, community volunteers have spent the past three months crafting fascinating fungi sculptures that will be artfully installed within the stunning medieval undercroft of *The Crypt Gallery*. This creative juxtaposition of organic forms within the ancient architecture, a scheduled monument and one of the UK's oldest of its kind, offers a truly unique experience.

Throughout the exhibition, visitors can also enjoy a selection of films, including *SCIP's* co-founder Alice Carter's film exploring the local community's relationship with gardens which includes an interview with me at *Driftwood* last month too.

With live demonstrations and a dedicated creative kids' corner, "*The Garden Show*" offers a delightful blend of art, hands-on activities, and cultural heritage, making it the perfect destination for all ages to learn, create, and appreciate the vital ecosystems that surround us, all within the atmospheric setting of *The Crypt Gallery*. For more information, please visit www.wearescip.co.uk

July jobs

I don't have a lawn in my garden but I guess many of you do! High temperatures and low rainfall can take their toll on many green plots. Applying a good summer lawn fertiliser following a rain shower or after just watering it can help too. In dry weather mowing less frequently will avoid scalping the lawn. If you have a wisteria in the garden then July or August is a good time to prune after flowering. Focus on the long, vigorous shoots that have grown up over spring and Summer. Cut them back to five or six leaves, or a couple of buds from the base. By doing this you will control the size of the plant and encourage flowering shoots to be produced rather than green leaves.

Pictured in header, pretty trifolium, part of the clover family, at *Driftwood* attracting the bees.

Read more of Geoff's garden at: www.driftwoodbysea.co.uk or email visitdriftwood@gmail.com to arrange a visit before 3rd August.

Geoff is a multi-award-winning garden owner, garden writer & broadcaster. *Driftwood* has appeared twice on BBC2 *Gardeners' World* and was a finalist in *Gardeners' World Magazine Best Small Space*. See the amazing 5-star reviews on TripAdvisor. Read all about Geoff's work for the community, appointment as a Coronation Champion and trips to Buckingham Palace including two Royal Garden Parties, in 2018 and 2023. Read the many published features on the garden in national, local and worldwide media, including TV.