

What's On Locally is suspended this month, as most gardens are shut for the winter months, even the arboreta. The local exception is Powis Castle garden, which is open from 11am to 4pm on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays until the end of December. The National Trust shop and restaurant are also open when the garden is open, subject always to the weather being kind.



## Christmas Meal



This year's Christmas meal will be the usual wonderful spread, and still costs only £10 a head. I think we can all agree that this is great value, thanks to the unstinting efforts of Avril and the committee to provide us with a truly great start to the Christmas festivities. Please put your name down at this month's meeting if you wish to come as numbers are important for catering purposes. We also intend to hold a Grand raffle to continue Club fundraising, as many of our speakers are charging appreciably more this year than last, and we know how important the quality of speakers is to you. If you are able to help by providing a raffle prize, please speak to one of the committee members at tonight's meeting, or contact Avril, whose telephone number is on the front of every programme.

The competition in December is for a table decoration.

Dull November brings  
the blast,  
Then the leaves are  
whirling fast.

Sara Coleridge



# Meeting report for October 2011

Maurice Everett's talk with slides on autumnal flowers, fruits and foliage ranged far and wide, featuring open gardens in most counties of England and Wales. The Bannut, the Everetts' own garden, also received a mention, though, judging by the leaflets he left at the back of the room, Maurice was being relatively modest. In his address, Maurice worked steadily through September, October and November, pointing out open gardens in which each month's flowers, shrubs and trees can be seen at their best: for example, September's echinacea and rudbeckia at Elton Hall and the National Botanical Garden of Wales at Carmarthen; dahlias at Picton Castle, South-West Wales; and aurelia, crocosmea and lobelia at The Bannut out at Bromyard. October asters can be seen at Old Court Nurseries in Malvern, which accommodates a national collection of asters (along with striking examples of Maurice's favourite geranium, Ann Folkard). Marwood Hill in North Devon has some beautiful trees grown for their foliage and Westonbirt Arboretum, of course, is the place to visit in autumn for trees – especially acers such as the Red Maple – as their leaves are changing colour. November's hydrangeas, for example, Snow Queen, and irises are still flowering; but the deeper we get into the autumn the more the fruit and berry-bearing shrubs and plants come into their own, for example, berberis Jamesiana, whose fruits hang delicately down like small bunches of grapes. Cotoneaster berries are beautiful under pewter skies; but even birch trees are good to look at this time of year, some trunks taking on a tinge of pink, others, a striking white hue. Finally, the good old yew should not be left out with its alluring red fruits hiding some tiny, lethal stones within: pretty but deadly. (Pictures of The Bannut, which looks glorious in the photographs, re-opens in April 2012. Online, look for HYPERLINK "<http://www.bannut.co.uk>")

Mary Comer

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## **Impatiens Downy Mildew - that's rotten Busy Lizzies to you and me!**

Many of you probably grow Busy Lizzies to cheer up that shady spot in the garden, as they tolerate low light levels and bring a good cheery colour to odd areas of the garden. If you lost the plants this year and thought that our grey summer caused them to rot off, don't despair as it was probably not your fault. The UK stocks mostly come over from Holland, where there has been a mildew problem for some years, kept under control by a strong fungicide. This year, that fungicide has been declared unsafe by the EU and is longer available even to professional growers. Stocks were already out in the garden centres by this time, and so if you lost your Busy Lizzies, rotted off at the base or with slimy leaves, Holland may be to blame! If you have any plants left, burn them and their leaves or put the into your black bin bags, and do not compost them. Next year you might like to try the Impatiens New Guinea hybrids, which do not seem to suffer from this problem. A little more expensive but with good sized flowers and the same lovely array of colours.

**REMINDER**

Avril's **Christmas trip** is to Glebe House, Action, Nantwich, Cheshire, the home of Deana Emerton. The trip will take place on Friday December 9th 2011. The house and church next door will be decorated by members of the NAFAS (National Association of Flower Arrangement Societies) into a must see theme of " The Spirit of Christmas".

The profits are to go to Breast Cancer and other Charities. Cost is approximately £15 , to include the entrance fee, coach and light refreshments; lunch can be arranged if required at extra coast.

The coach departs Knighton at 9.15am and arrives back at 6.15pm approximately. Avril



**Music to Garden to**

This unique CD contains a musical range as diverse as classical through to rock and pop and even something for the younger gardeners amongst you. Featuring bands such as ABBA (because they are Swedes) and The Beatles (but only the beneficial ones) Music to Garden to is a must for all. This CD contains tracks.

Classical and Easy Listening

- |                     |                                       |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Holsts              | Plant suite                           |
| Vivaldi             | Four Seasons                          |
| Simon and Garfunkel | The sound of Silage                   |
| Fats Domino         | Blueberry Hill                        |
| Fred Astaire        | I'm putting all my Eggs in one Basket |

Rock and Pop

- |                 |                         |
|-----------------|-------------------------|
| Lulu            | Twist and Sprout        |
| The Beatles     | Lettuce Pea             |
| Queen           | We are the Campions     |
| Paul McCartney  | Pipes of Peas           |
| James Brown     | Soil Man                |
| Rhianna         | The Umbrella plant song |
| Rick Aster(ley) | Never gonna dig you up  |
| Haywoode        | Roses                   |
| Madonna         | Borderline              |
| ABBA            | Dancing Bean            |

Younger Gardeners

- Hickory, Chicory, Dock
- Round and round the garden
- I had a little nut tree
- English country garden
- Hops, skip and jump

The price of this extraordinary CD is one pea, yes that's right for one pea you can own this remarkable CD. Send it to Music to Garden to at Garden Village West Yorkshire LE7 12P

If you can think of any other tracks that could go onto the CD please let us know. Enjoy!

Written by Hannah Taylor, with tongue firmly in cheek one suspects!

**Early Warning!**

The January meeting will once again be the Bring and Share a Plate event. Remember, just one plate per person to share with fellow members please.

## The November garden: tasks and ideas

As the first frosts of the season seem to be getting later and later (18th October in my garden this year), the Autumn clear-up also gets later, leaving us much to do even into December since the leaves are still not all off the trees. Keep raking them off the lawns and take them off small and vulnerable plants like alpines, but otherwise leaves on the garden will soon be pulled down into the earth by the worms and will rot down to make the soil richer next year. If you plan to make leaf mold, black plastic bin liners make good containers as long as the leaves are moist and there are holes in the sides of the bags. After 18 months or so you should be able to spread this lovely enriching compost under trees and shrubs where it will do most good. It is time to lift any tender perennials or tropicals in your garden now and store them in a frost-free place.

### Speaker's Corner

**Competition results.** There were only 5 entries in all, but what a selection was presented, including apples, pears, damsons, blackberries, raspberries, cape gooseberries, strawberries, black and green grapes and a lemon. All clean fruit and perfectly arranged.

**First** place: Brenda Morgan

**Second** place: Marilyn Price

**Third** place: Stella Farrell

Our Christmas Supper competition will be a Christmas Table Decoration

### The garden shed

Another successful evening, with £22.80 going towards the Club funds; thank-you to everyone who has donated and purchased plants, vegetables, books, gifts and other items this year. The plant stall will not be at the monthly meetings in December, January or February owing to the Christmas celebrations or transporting of plants in bad weather. The sale of books and miscellaneous gardening items will re-start at the February meeting.

### Speaker's Programme

Thanks for making your selection and suggestions of the topics you wish to be included in future programmes. Most votes were for ponds and bog gardens, butterflies and bees, followed by planting and design and putting your garden to bed; bookings for these topics are now awaiting confirmation. All the subjects voted for, 23 in total, will be fulfilled over the next few years where possible.

***There is no speaker for the December meeting as it will be our Christmas Supper.***

***Mary Bufton. Speaker Programme organiser. 01547 510285***

In my home this means under the bed in the house as all other options have failed to get dahlias through the last two very cold Winters! If you have not yet pulled up your tomato plants, take them out now before botrytis sets in and sets up breeding spores for next year. Green tomatoes can even be eaten sliced and fried - see recipe in the right hand column. They are very popular in the USA, and it is best to use bigger tomatoes if you have them. At the very least they make a change from chutney!

Houseplants should also all be indoors now after their Summer break, and will need picking over carefully to make sure you have not brought tiny snails or greenfly in with them. Handpick them off, and remove any rotted leaves before giving a very dilute feed and then only watering sparingly, especially for succulents and geraniums which can survive the Winter very well when almost dried out.

### ***Fried Green tomatoes***

*3 medium, firm green tomatoes*

*Salt*

*1 cup plain flour*

*1 Tbsp Cajun seasoning (optional)*

*1/2 cup milk or buttermilk*

*1 egg*

*1/3 cup cornmeal*

*1/2 cup fine dry bread crumbs*

*1/4 cup peanut oil or vegetable oil*

### **METHOD**

*1 Cut unpeeled tomatoes into 1/2 inch slices. Sprinkle slices with salt. Let tomato slices stand for 5 minutes. Meanwhile, place in separate shallow bowls: the flour and Cajun seasoning (if using), buttermilk and egg, and bread crumbs and cornmeal.*

*2 Heat the oil in a frying pan on medium heat. Beat the egg and the buttermilk together. Dip tomato slices in the flour-seasoning mix, then buttermilk-egg mixture, then the cornmeal-bread crumb mix. In the pan, fry half of the coated tomato slices at a time, for 3-5 minutes on each side or until brown. Set the cooked tomatoes on paper towels to drain.*

*Good served with a spicy sauce*

