

Gardening tips for November

This is my second anniversary of writing the gardening tips for the Rudgwick Magazine, has anyone still got a copy of the magazine from November 2020? No, excellent, in that case I can copy what was written two years ago. You can check if I have or haven't by visiting our website (www.gardenreg.org) where previous gardening tips are available.

The Kitchen Garden

Getting the most from the kitchen garden makes all the effort worthwhile. To help with your endeavours you may like to consider crop rotation, the aim being to reduce a build-up of crop-specific pest and diseases by growing specific groups of vegetables on a different part of the vegetable plot each year. One also needs to think about the nutritional requirements of the different plant groups. Here I will concentrate on the 4-year crop rotation. You can choose a minimum of a 3-year rotation or 5 or even 6-year rotations, if choosing a 6-year rotation, you may want to study for a degree in crop science before getting stuck in! In every case, don't forget to write down what you have planted and where, particularly if you have gone for a 6-year rotation, the chances of remembering what has been planted last minute let alone 6 years ago will fade quickly when the weeds have taken over again.

Crop Rotation	Bed 1	Bed 2	Bed 3	Bed 4
Year 1	Potatoes, Courgette, Squash (Plant Leeks or Lettuce after lifting potatoes)	Roots	Brassicas	Legumes
Year 2	Legumes (any pea and bean variety)	Potatoes	Roots	Brassicas
Year 3	Brassicas (Cabbage, Broccoli, Cauliflower, Sprouts, Kale)	Legumes	Potatoes	Roots
Year 4	Roots (Carrots, Beetroot, Swede, Onions, Parsnips)	Brassicas	Legumes	Potatoes

The Flower Garden

The herbaceous borders will be starting to look a bit tatty. Before reaching for the secateurs, do any of the dead stems look structural and/or provide food or habitat for wildlife? Dead leaves however should be collected and put into the compost or piled separately to create leaf mould if you have enough dead leaves and space to indulge.

The Water Garden

Has anyone noticed a very persistent heron eyeing up their fish pond this autumn? It is surprising how big they are seeing them up close standing on the patio table looking through the French window. The heron soon flies away when asked politely to clear off but soon returns. Make sure you cover your pond with suitable netting, as well as keeping the heron at bay it will also catch a lot of leaves from falling into the water. Those that do get through should be picked out of the water as soon as you notice them.

Lawns

Keep clear of fallen leaves and consider aerating the lawn by spiking with a garden fork, this will improve drainage. If the lawn has an uneven surface use a mixture of soil and sand to lift the surface, a bit like sweeping dust under the carpet, cut back areas of turf that need to be raised, apply enough soil/sand mix and replace the turf – instant flat lawn guaranteed!

For membership details and to ask garden related questions please go to our website www.gardenreg.org

Keep gardening.

Richard Haigh EGRGA Chairman