

No.118

December 2014

# *The Organic Gardener*

Journal of

**M**anchester  
**O**rganic  
**G**ardeners

Local group of Garden Organic



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### Disclaimer

**Please note that the views expressed in this Journal are those of the authors and contributors and should not be attributed to the Editor or Manchester Organic Gardeners unless otherwise stated.**

## MANCHESTER ORGANIC GARDENERS

was formed as a local group of the Henry Doubleday Research Association in order to bring together local members of HDRA (Garden Organic) and other like-minded people to share experiences and further the cause of the organic movement.

MOG applies the aims of HDRA (Garden Organic):

1. The preservation and improvement of the environment.
2. The cultivation of healthy living by the use of wholefoods grown without poisonous pesticides or harmful chemical fertilisers.

MOG produces a journal three times a year, free to members, written by members.

MOG holds monthly meetings, arranges visits to gardens, exchanges or sells members produce, holds a stock of HDRA publications and books, which are available at meetings.

### NEXT ISSUE: Due out March 2015

Please send material for the next issue to me by **31st January** or give to me at any meeting. Please feel free to send articles and cuttings at any time.

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## THE ORGANIC GARDENER

**NO. 118      DECEMBER 2014**

### EDITORIAL

December is a time for looking back and reviewing the current year and planning ahead for next year.

Thanks to those members who have written articles, you can read about :

### Looking back:

- Our visit to Robinson's Seeds in April, one of our most memorable visits and not far to travel. and another in our series on member's garden visits
- Reports of our AGM, and talks on Incredible Edible Ramsbottom and Hellebores
- Reports on fruit growing and veg varieties.

### Looking ahead:

- Wondering what potatoes to plant – visit Calder Valley Organic Gardener's Potato Day
- Thinking of constructing a garden for those with mobility restrictions?.
- Homebaking – what to do with all those apples.
- Can we deter slugs using copper tools?.. How about giving it a try next year?
- Changes to the Journal – for a trial period of two issues you have the option of receiving it as a paper copy or via email. Let me know your preference if you haven't already, and make sure I have your current email address if you want to receive it by email..Do let me know what you think of the alternative format.

### And for the next issue:

You have asked for reports of meetings. But someone needs to write them. Can you offer to write a report or even a few lines, so that we can spread the load. It doesn't have to be long or in great detail, just give a flavour of the meeting or visit.

Hoping that 2015 brings you a productive year in your gardens and allotments.

Wishing you all a Happy Christmas and a peaceful and healthy New Year.



**Margaret Bebbington**

## REPORTS OF MEETINGS

### Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> April, 2014 MOG visit to Robinson's Seeds

Brief reports appeared in the last two issues of the Journal. Here in more detail are some of the varieties grown:

Margaret Robinson's favourite tomato is Tigerella - "strongest tasting". She also recommends Sungold. They grow more than 40 varieties and start sowing in February. Polish Beef Heart tomato has only about 4 seeds per tomato and doesn't cross-pollinate.

Courgettes – Tromboncino is an Italian climbing courgette with curly fruits. Black Forest is a traditional courgette.

For climbing French beans, she recommends Rob Roy and the buttery tasting Kingston Gold. A newly registered runner bean is Liberty (her mother's maiden name) which is long, narrow and fleshy. Purple podded peas can be used as mange-tout. For peas she suggests Ne Plus Ultra which is rarely mildewed, and Show Perfection. Broad beans were flowering in the greenhouse, including Stereo and Martock, a 12<sup>th</sup> century small bean which goes floury and used to be milled into flour.

Nasturtium Pepe adds a peppery flavour to salads.

Lettuce Freckles is recommended for its taste.

Chop Suey Greens are mild and peppery.

The chillies they grow go to the big shows, Gardeners' World Live, Chelsea etc.

A South American cucumber Caigua (pronounced kai-wa) is hollow and good for stuffing. Cucumber King George has long dark fruits and needs to have the male flowers removed to prevent pollination, but has the finest flavour.

Chuckleberry, a large sweet blackcurrant, is very good for jam.

Many different squashes are available e.g. butternut, which likes hot and dry conditions, and Onion Squash and Sweet Mama.

Leeks need to be planted out by mid-July. Leek moth is rife in the Midlands.

Onions are grown on a three-year cycle to produce seed. Pollination in the polytunnels used to be done by bees but they sting, they then tried blowflies but now use "terrestrial bumble bees with white socks" which are more docile. They have grown onions in the same ground for 152 years. Their Mammoth Improved Onions are world famous, as are their Mammoth Leeks, from seed carefully selected over many years. When sending plants and seeds by mail-order, they start with orders for France and the Channel Islands and gradually work northwards.

At the moment they have oil heating but plan to move to biomass. Everything is grown in John Innes Number 2 compost as it promotes better rooting than peat-based compost, and plants do not grow too tall or dry out. The nursery is 100% free of chemicals and they use biological predators.

#### Mike and Margaret Allen

For catalogue and further information contact W. Robinson & Son (Seeds & Plants) Ltd Company Reg. No. 624444

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### Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> October, 2014

#### Annual General Meeting and Harvest

At the AGM the current committee were re-elected.

Following the business part of the meeting we shared each other's company and tried out produce grown by members and sampled various jams and cakes. Duncan had for sale very healthy looking basil plants of several varieties which he had grown.

#### MOG Journal

It was proposed and agreed that members should be offered the choice of having a paper copy or e-mail version for a trial period of two issues. If you have not already stated your preference please let me know. Please ensure that I have your current e-mail address if you want to receive the Journal electronically.

**Margaret Bebbington**

## Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> November 2014 Hellebores – a talk by David Warner.

Hellebores originate from wild varieties such as *Helleborus corsicus*, *foetidus* and *viridis*.

*Corsicus* likes sunshine and copes with dry shade under trees.

*Foetidus* is a short lived perennial but seeds freely so it is relatively easy to get new plants.

*Viridis* grows wild in the UK and is used in homeopathic and other medicines.

There are some named varieties:

*Helleborus foetidus* Wester Flisk, which has red stems

*Helleborus niger* better known as the Christmas Rose

Most hybrid varieties of Hellebore are un-named and do not breed true to type. Hellebores belong to the same family as buttercups (*Ranunculaceae*) and their petals are in fact, not petals, but sepals. Do not move or split them. To produce hellebores for sale using hand fertilisation takes 3 to 4 years and is labour intensive, so plants tend to be expensive. However many of them seed freely and produce new plants which may be different again from the parent plant, so you can build up interesting colonies in your garden.

David showed us a comprehensive selection of slides of Hellebores growing in gardens and in the wild. He recommended the pleasure of allowing them to seed and see what you get.

### Good sources of Hellebores:

Phedar Nurseries near Romiley which sells species and hybrid hellebores along with tree peonies.

Phedar Nurseries, Bunker's Hill, Romiley, Stockport, Cheshire, SK6 3DS

Tel :0161 450 3772 Website [http://](http://www.phedar.com/catalog/)

[www.phedar.com/catalog/](http://www.phedar.com/catalog/)

Ashwood's Nursery, Kingswinford

**Ashwood Nurseries Ltd**

Ashwood Lower Ln, Kingswinford, West Midlands DY6 0AE, United Kingdom

+44 1384 401996

<http://www.ashwoodnurseries.com/>

Margaret Bebbington

## SNOWDROPS IN THE GREEN

David and Anthea Warner will have snowdrops (*Nivalis*) in the green – 100 for £10 and winter aconites for sale in January. You can order through MOG's or contact them direct on 01625 874387

## Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> September, 2014 Talk by Incredible Edible Ramsbottom

Incredible Edible Ramsbottom was started in 2010 by Lynn Leyland Mather due to concerns about food security and food miles and fired by the inspiration of Incredible Edible Todmorden. Public meetings followed resulting in new friendships, a greater sense of community with opportunities for volunteering, participating in workshops, and enjoying community events.. This has involved the whole community, including schools.

### Holly Mount Orchard

A major project has been the restoration of this orchard, which had been the garden of a convent. It is unclear who the land belongs to, if anyone, and the local council gave it to Incredible Edible to rescue. It had been derelict for 30 years, but originally well loved by the nuns.

The first year was spent clearing, burning and digging – brambles covered the entire site. No chemicals were used by the volunteers to clear the land, it was all done by hand. In the cleared areas grass sprang up and flourished. Some areas have been left barren/uncut and wild flowers are returning, including the Northern Marsh Orchid. 55 trees were uncovered, some of the old ones died and new ones were planted. In addition to apples there are plums, damsons and pears.

Flowers and even fruit are only the beginning.  
In the seed lies the life and the future.

Marion Zimmer Bradley



## APPLES ALREADY IDENTIFIED AT HOLLY MOUNT ORCHARD

### •Laxton's Superb (late season)

The definitive late Victorian dessert apple, with a sweet understated taste, the Laxton's Superb represents a high-point in the development of English apples. Named after the Laxton brothers who developed the apple from a 'Cox' and an older variety 'Wyken Pippin', it was first introduced in 1897. With a dull red flushed skin and white-green flesh; eat in slices rather than biting into it – to release the crisp sweet taste!

### •Monarch

First introduced in 1888, the Monarch is a cooking apple which reduces down to a juicy purée and with a more mellow taste than a Bramley Apple. Perfect for apple sauce or pie fillings, the Monarch originates from Chelmsford, Essex (grown by one Mr Seabrook); fruits are large, green-yellow in colour with broken red stripes on top.

### •Bramley (Bramley's Seedling)

The Rolls Royce of the cooking apple world, Bramley's Seedling was only discovered by chance during the 19th Century and is only grown in the UK. Whilst it's very well known as a classic 'cooker', with its sharp taste and good all-round versatility, it's also rather good as a cider apple...

### •Keswick Codlin (early season)

An older and altogether more local cooking apple, the Keswick Codlin was first found growing in a rubbish pile at Gleaston Castle, Lancashire in the 1790s. Ideal for use in jellies, the fruit ripens early to a pale yellow and follows on from a particularly attractive blossom.

### •Newton Wonder (late ripening)

A sweeter companion to the Bramley, this Derby originated cooker provides large apples and was first introduced in the 1870s. With its sweeter edge and red tinged skin, it almost passes as a dessert and when ripe provides lovely juice.

### •Ellison's Orange (mid season)

An early cross from the renowned 'Cox's Orange Pippin', this dessert apple has a real depth of flavour and an unusual aniseed tinge. Developed in Lincolnshire in the 1890s, it is an absolute must for the apple connoisseur: juicy, intense and sweet – best eaten straight from the tree!

Incredible Edible are keen that this community orchard is used. Volunteers come to work on the project, to

learn - taking part in courses, for example, on grafting the existing varieties to produce new trees and there are events to celebrate the rituals of apple growing – Wassail and Blossail events with songs, music, poetry, food and drink. They have an annual Apple Day with apple juicing (even awful apples make good juice) and a Ramson's day to celebrate Ramson's, the wild garlic which gives Ramsbottom its name. This involves giving away plants and serving food such as Ramson's omelette.

The orchard is never locked and the apples are free to anyone.

## Other projects

### 1. Working with schools

Raised beds – the food grown goes to the school kitchens for serving to the children. The youngest children are involved in seed sowing and planting. Older children created a bed of edible flowers for Bury in Bloom competition.

### 2. Fire Station – there are six vegetable beds outside the fire station and these have been really productive and attracted quite a bit of public attention. The fire station now also has a bee hive, several apple trees round the back and a flower bed at the front of the station has been converted into a patch of fruit bushes.

### 3. Eagle and Child pub – The public has been involved in developing a vegetable garden in almost an acre of land behind the pub. This includes an outdoor kitchen (with hog roast/BBQ and pizza oven), polytunnel, veg beds, compost, shed with living roof, fruits and ornamental beds, mini orchard with chickens, giant games chequerboard, children's area and more.

## Workshops

These include: Grafting, keeping chickens, container planting, foraging

To get involved in volunteering, joining workshops, visiting Ramsbottom see <http://incredibleedibleramsbottom.co.uk/>

or contact, Incredible Edible Ramsbottom, Lower Dickfield Cottage, Holcombe, Bury, BL8 4PQ

Margaret Bebbington

## APPLES – VARIABILITY OF CROPPING 2014

The apple crop from the Timperley Allotment Orchard this year has been very variable. There does not seem to be any one reason why this should have happened so I am setting out my thoughts about it.

The local bee man has had a wonderful year with his honey crop and the spring weather was good apart from a short wet period. Yet about two thirds of the trees had little or no crops and the other third had good crops. The two heavy crop yields in the previous 2 years could be blamed for this year being an “off year” but the relative varieties with good or poor yields do not tally with each year.

The following varieties had little or none:

Fortune, Queen Cox, Bountiful, Arthur Barnes, Withington Welter, Lord Derby, Allington Pippin, Ashmead’s Kernel.

But Early and Late Tydeman’s, Lord Lambourne, Crawley Beauty, Laxton’s Superb, Rakemaker, Downton Pippin all had large crops yet again.

A programme on TV had a theory that older varieties possibly needed a cold spring to initiate blossoming, which did not happen after the warmest winter for years. Some of the above varieties are “old” varieties, also my 80 year old Bramley in our garden had a huge crop.

It is all very puzzling and as usual I shall be recording the results to compare with other years.

Perhaps other members would like to compare notes for future reference.



**Mary Eastwood**

### Editor’s Note:

Cropping was very variable in my own garden and as Mary says did not always tally with whether the tree had a heavy crop in 2013.

My very old Keswick Codlin which normally crops in alternate years had a heavy crop in 2013 and a pretty good crop again in 2014 contrary to my expectations. On the other hand Discovery which usually crops well each year, had an abundant crop in 2013 followed by virtually nothing this year. Egremont Russet had an average crop both years.

## MOG VEG VARIETIES

### Some recommendations from Tony Castledine

**ASPARAGUS** – My latest 4 year old patch is ‘Darlisle’ but it isn’t thriving & I’m going to start a new one with the reliable ‘Gijnlim’.

**AUBERGINE** – I don’t grow it any more – a magnet for all pests!

**BASIL** – The standard sweet basil is good enough for me, but Which? Magazine recommends Aristotle & Puck.

**BEETROOT** – Boltardy & Wodan always do well here.

**BROAD BEAN** – I use home-saved seed, from Witkiem Manita originally. This used to be Which? favourite but has now been superseded by Demonica & Karmazyn.

**PURPLE SPROUTING BROCCOLI** – Claret (especially) & Red Arrow out yield others I’ve tried.

**BRUSSELS** – I’m happy with Cascade (good for exposed sites). I don’t bother with early sprouts though Maximus is a Which? recommendation.

**CARROTS** – I only grow Early Nantes in a tall tub – cheap & cheerful.

**CELERIAC** - Ignore everything I say on this – tennis ball size only! Which? recommends Monarch.

**CELERY** - Which? says grow Victoria. I avoid supplying hotel accommodation for slugs!

**CHILLIES** – All the dozens of varieties I’ve tried have been good. Go for anything labelled as an early cropper. Apache is widely available. Hungarian Hot Wax is an organic favourite.

**CORIANDER** – We use loads of this and the ONLY one to grow is Thompson & Morgan’s Calypso. All others bolt early, despite what it says on the packet.

**COURGETTE** – I never bother with anything other than Defender – totally reliable. 3 plants enough for most families!

**CUCUMBER** – Which? suggests Melen, Pasandra & Socrates but if they are better than the half-size Cucino, they must be terrific.

**CLIMBING BEANS** – You can’t go wrong with Blue Lake or Cobra but Moonlight (a French/ Runner Cross) is even more stringless.

**DWARF FRENCH BEANS** – I don’t bother with

these any more. Climbers crop almost as early, more space efficient, more slug-proof, & as you get older, less back-bending to pick!

**GARLIC** – Everyone recommends Solent Wight, good though it is, I stick to Elephant Garlic. Easy to grow, good yield, keeps 18 months. Whatever you use, plant at October half term.

**KALE** – Very trendy & I used to hate it when I picked old, tough leaves. BUT the shoots that form on Black Tuscan/Cavalo Nero after Christmas – they're a different story!

**LEEK** – I only grow late leeks. Which? recommends Apollo & Bandit, but most give a good crop.

**LETTUCE** – We eat a lot of salads in early summer & autumn. I've tried many of the usual varieties e.g. New Red Fire, Simpson's Black seeded, they're all fine but we have settled on Little Gem mixed with red & green Salad Bowl.

**ONION** – as I came next to last in the allotment giant onion competition, I'm not qualified to offer advice! Most of the common sets, autumn & spring, seem to crop well. Just be aware that over-wintering types probably over-winter onion diseases as well!

**PARSLEY** – we do grow the curled & plain types but are moving to leaf celery as an alternative. Hardy, self-seeds in a tidy, not-overwhelming sort of way. Good celery flavour in salads.

**PEAS** – Much as we like them, I've abandoned podded peas for mange-tout. Oregon & the others are good but best of all is Delikett – a snap pea.

**POTATOES** – New, Which? recommends Lady Christl, Casablanca, Red DOY & Vales Emerald. These are all good tasters, though Lady C gets a bit sluggish on our heavy land. Arran Pilot is still good & Accent does well here. I find new spuds a very personal choice!

**POTATOES** – Other, Everyone grows Charlotte now, rightly so. Kestrel(chips) is the other slug-resistant one. If blight is a problem(& when is it not?), you've got to grow Sarpo types. Which? recommends most of these & says Apache is the best for roasting.

**SQUASH** – I can't get butternut types to crop but Crown Prince (big), Bon Bon, Marina di Chioggia and Red Kuri do well. Great flavour & a good way of using spare land after early crops.

**SWEETCORN** – If you've not grown Swift, or its near relative Lark, you'll wonder why you bothered with anything else. 3 or 4 cobs per plant this glorious summer!

**TOMATOES** – Oh dear, where do you start? I mainly grow cherries. We still reckon that Sungold has the best flavour. Gardener's Delight is good, as everyone knows, but Sakura is its equal. Which? says Suncherry Premium has the best flavour but not noticeably better than Sungold to us.

**Tony Casteledine**

## MANAGING CLUBROOT

Every plot has clubroot on our allotment site. It is easy to manage by growing seedlings at home, potting on into large pots, then planting deeply into a lime-lined hole. (I find hydrated lime works better than garden lime). The lime doesn't seem to affect any fertiliser/manure added. The only drawback has been keeping all these pots watered in a warm early summer like 2014.

My mate Frank swears by the new clubroot resistant varieties (cabbage Kilaton, cauli Clapton, Brussel Crispus etc) so I'm trying these in 2015. My reasoning is that I'll be able to plant them smaller, decreasing the watering problem and, possibly, a more wind resistant plant.

**Tony Castledine**

## CALDER VALLEY ORGANIC GARDENERS

**POTATO DAY – 10 a.m. SATURDAY  
28TH FEBRUARY 2015**

**Venue:** Catholic Church of the Good Shepherd, Mytholmroyd. West Yorkshire, HX7 5EA – 1 1/2 miles from Hebden Bridge. The church is alongside Mytholmroyd Railway Station.

This year we will be selling (BY THE TUBER) 31 varieties of potato plus onions and shallots. Although prices have not been finalised we are hoping to keep to last year's price of 14p per tuber

Catering available on site as well as related stalls and a small plant area.

## **CONSTRUCTION OF AREA FOR USE BY PEOPLE WITH RESTRICTED MOBILITY AT HAZEL GROVE ALLOTMENTS, CHESTER RD, HAZEL GROVE, STOCKPORT**

### **Why did we want to create this area?**

Well, some of our ploholders had had to give up their plots when they were no longer able to bend down and cultivate their conventional plot. Moreover, we also realised there are people in the wider community who would benefit from being able to grow some of their own food and be part of our allotment community, with all the health benefits – both physical and social – that brings.

### **Where was the best place on the site for this area?**

Our site has two main entrances: one at Chester Rd and the other at School St. We are lucky in having the use of a car park in front of the School St gate and of having a concreted hard-standing area inside this gate. When a plot became available adjacent to this concreted area, Kieran McDonagh from Disability Stockport visited our allotments, approved the area and gave us invaluable advice as to what would be needed. We also have a Portaloo adjacent to this plot, accessed from the concrete hard-standing – more about loos at the end of this report.

### **How big is the area?**

16 ft × 28 ft, approx. 50 sq yds  
(approx. 5 × 3 m = 15 m)

### **What did we want to provide?**

We decided to provide two trugs so people in wheelchairs/mobility scooters could manoeuvre their chairs under the trugs rather than just alongside. In addition, two brick-built raised beds would be constructed for the use of people who had problems bending.

This area had to be fully accessible for wheelchairs, people with crutches, etc., flat and with no trip hazards.

### **Who did the work?**

One of our ploholders, Peter Whitehead, a retired builder, took on the whole task of planning through to completion with the help of his team of fellow ploholders. This meant there were no labour costs.

### **How did we fund it?:**

We applied to the Stepping Hill Area Flexibility Fund for a grant, they very kindly and generously awarded us a grant for the £930 requested. In addition, we were given £250 from the Stockport Allotment Budget to purchase two wooden trugs (from Wyevale Garden Centre, Marple – these were in their sale at a greatly reduced price!).

### **What size are the raised beds and trugs?:**

*NB All numbers rounded off*

- Raised beds: ledge at top of bed = ~6 ins (140 mm), i.e. thickness of the cement blocks:  
— external (l×w×h): 9 ft × 4 ft × 32 ins (~2.7 × 1.2 × 0.8 m)  
— internal (l×w×h): 8 ft × 3 ft × 32 ins (~2.4 × 0.9 × 0.8 m)
- Trugs (l×w×h): 6 ft × 30 ins × 32 ins (~1.8 × 0.78 × 0.8 m)

### **Materials and Construction**

A full list of all materials sourced from Jewsons is available along with full instructions for constructing the area.

**EDITOR'S NOTE: IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN CREATING A SIMILAR AREA PLEASE ASK ME TO EMAIL YOU A COPY OR YOU CAN SEE FULL DETAILS AT ANY OF OUR MEETINGS**

### **FINALLY!**

- Raised beds: These were filled to a depth of 2 ft (~0.6 m) with brick rubble to allow for drainage, before being filled to the top with some of the soil saved from the excavation.  
Since the tops of the raised beds have quite sharp edges, a loose short length of UPVC external window ledge (approx. 3 ft (0.92 m)) fits nicely along the top of each bed, this can simply be moved along to protect the ploholders' arms.



- **Trugs:** One of our past ploholders in his mobility scooter checked there was indeed enough space to manoeuvre between the two trugs and the adjacent raised brick-built raised bed. They were then filled with soil left over from the excavation.
- **Table:** Another ploholder, Barry Taylor (a retired joiner/carpenter; aren't we lucky to have so many talented people on our site?), is in the process of making a long, narrow table from recycled wood so people have somewhere to put their seeds, plants, etc.
- **Loo:** We are now looking into replacing the Portaloo with a composting loo with disabled access.

• **Total cost:** Building Materials £930.58 + Trugs £250 = £1180.58!

If you would like any advice on constructing a similar area on your site, please don't hesitate to contact Peter Whitehead on 07931 268944.



Finished area showing the two brick-built raised beds and the two trugs. The table (and chairs) will stand along the left-hand side of the area, with sufficient room between it and the raised beds to manoeuvre a wheelchair/mobility scooter.

**NB: the full report contains a full list of materials, construction details and photographs of stages of the work.**

**Report provided by Joyce Davy**

## COOKS CORNER



The refreshments served at the AGM prompted requests for recipes – Anne's apple cake has featured before, but here it is again.

### German Style Apple cake

250g butter/margarine  
250g sugar  
2 – 3 eggs  
425 g self raising flour  
Vanilla sugar or natural essence

#### Method

Beat butter and sugar until fluffy, add eggs gradually and flavouring, stir in flour. It should be a stiffish dough Spread on lined (greaseproof paper sprinkled with ground almonds or semolina) baking sheet – mine is 40cm by 32 cm. Smooth out with damp hand or knuckles.

Sprinkle more almond or crushed dry biscuit on top, then peel, core and slice (or quarter if small) apples. Put them on the base round side up, as close as possible. It always takes twice as many as you think.

Bake at about 180°C (165°C fan oven) for approximately 45 minutes, till cocktail stick put in dough comes out dry. Sugar liberally if to be eaten soon, if to be frozen, leave as it is till you need it, then sugar. Any kind of apple will do, adjust the sweetening according to variety. Sugar also is your choice – soft brown is nice.

#### Recipe supplied by Anne Davis

Next time: Look out for Jane's Apple Cake recipe

## DO COPPER TOOLS DETER SLUGS AND SNAILS?

I have used a copper trowel for many years. It is a beautiful tool to use, comfortable to hold, sharp and doesn't rust. I prefer to use it over any of my other trowels. It came from a company called Implementations. The range of copper tools was inspired by the work of Viktor Schaubberger.

Viktor Schaubberger was an extraordinary man, a visionary with a new, integrated way of understanding the processes of nature. A forester by training, he lived in Austria in the first half of the 20th century. Through observation of the workings of nature in the forests under his care, he developed a view of the Earth as a living entity, with water as her lifeblood, a living fluid.

**“Even in earliest youth my fondest desire was to understand Nature and through such understanding to come closer to truth; a truth I was unable to discover either at school or in church.”**

### Viktor Schaubberger

The Implementations literature explains some of the benefits of using copper tools, one of which is the theory that copper deters slugs. Below is an extract from **Anne's Garden Blog** on the Implementations website. Anne uses and explains how this is thought to work.

#### Science

In many ways, copper is the opposite of iron and steel, the metals commonly used for garden tools. Iron is magnetic, copper is conductive. So, whereas iron tools disturb soil magnetism, copper assists the flow of earth energies to nourish the plants. Iron is a base metal, so it rusts when exposed to air. Copper (along with silver and gold) is a noble metal, which does not corrode easily. Iron is hardened when hot. To harden copper and bronze, it is hammered when cold.

#### Theory

We, and all other mammals, have iron in our blood. That is why our blood is red. It enables each of us to have our own independent magnetic field, anchored on our blood. Slugs and snails do not have iron in their blood. Their blood contains haemocyanin, based on

copper. This means that they do not have an independent magnetic field. As copper is conductive, they are highly sensitive to the Earth's field. As they move along the ground, they are subject to the lines of magnetic force generated by the rotating core of the Earth.

Now, imagine that a diligent gardener has carefully transplanted their lettuce seedlings, using an iron tool. As the tool turned the soil, it left its magnetic signature. When night falls, the slugs and snails start on their slimy way, following the lines of force that they detect on the soil surface. When they reach this disturbance around the transplanted lettuces, they are forced to stop. They do not know where to go – the signal is not clear. They have to wait, and while they wait, they get hungry. And there go the lettuces.



Time will tell, because at the moment, I have a very happy colony of snails in my garden that have already eaten pounds worth of plants over the years. There are ways of getting rid of them, some are kinder than others. Beer did seem to be a happy way for them to go, but have you ever emptied the pot after a few days? Not for the faint hearted. Salt is another, but I don't think salt is good for the soil. The chickens love them and all run to grab the shell, it's a quick death for the snail or slug, protein for the chickens, but I still feel guilty. So to make them unwelcome due to copper in the ground seems like a plan to me".

**Information from Implementations and Anne's Garden Blog** <https://annesgardenblog.wordpress.com/tag/copper-tools/> Catalogue of copper tools and full details of Viktor Schaubberger's work can be obtained from Implementations

**PO Box 2568 Nuneaton CV10 9YR UK Tel: 0845 330 3148**

**info@implementations.co.uk** <http://www.implementations.co.uk/site/home>

**Margaret Bebbington**

# Programme December 13 – Feb 15

## ALL WELCOME

**Saturday, 13<sup>th</sup> December, 2pm : A Talk on Coppicing – Mike Carswell - and our Christmas Social - bring along goodies for the party after the talk and chat with all MOG members and guests on this enjoyable occasion.**

**Saturday, 10<sup>th</sup> January 2015 : Matt Holker From Grey to Green learn about this project set up to encourage and train local people to identify and record wildlife. The project operates across the whole of Greater Manchester**

**Saturday, 14<sup>th</sup> February 2015 : Brian Hallworth - Wildlife in Folk**

**£2.00**

**Meeting Venue: St Elizabeth's Church Hall, Lomond Rd, Peel Hall, near Heald Green M22 5JD**

*Enquiries to Jane Barkess: 01706 211377 / 0796 223 4626 Email : davidlowerclowes@talktalk.net Follow us on Facebook - Manchester*

*Organic Gardeners*

*<https://www.sites.google.com/site/mcrorganicgardeners/>*

## MANCHESTER ORGANIC GARDENERS – Subscription reminder

### MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Subscriptions for 2014/2015 were due in November. To ensure that you continue to receive your copy of the Journal please forward your subscription to:

Hon.Treasurer, Margaret Morris,  
16 Kingshill Road, Chorlton, Manchester M21 9FY.  
Cheques and postal orders payable to Manchester Organic Gardeners.

Subscription Rates: £10 family membership – includes all family living at same address.

Payment by standing order

If you wish to pay by standing order please ring Margaret Morris on 0161 881 1525 for a form.

There is a loveable quality about the actual tools. One feels so kindly to the thing that enables the hand to obey the brain. Moreover, one feels a good deal of respect for it; without it the brain and hand would be helpless.

Gertrude Jekyll

# MANCHESTER ORGANIC GARDENERS

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## PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS AND VISITS

Meetings take place in Heald Green at St. Elizabeth's Church, Lomond Road, Peel Hall, Manchester M22 5JF which is accessible by bus or train. (Nearest station is at Heald Green, a short walk away).  
New A-Z Ref: 2F 179

Meetings are on the second Saturday in the month.  
For more information contact Jane Barkess.

£1.00 donation for members, £2.00 for non-members when we have a speaker

### Meeting format

### Saturday afternoons

Arrive

1.30 -2.00 p.m.

Speaker

2.00 p.m. prompt

Refreshments (nominal 25p charge)

3.00 p.m.

MOG business

3.15 p.m.

Members Question & Answer Session

3.30 - 4.00p.m

## Programme of Meetings and Visits - Winter/Spring 2014/15

See inside

