

**NEWSLETTER****DECEMBER 2018****NEXT MEETING: WEDNESDAY 12 DECEMBER  
QUIZ & POT LUCK SUPPER**

Venue: Christchurch Wesley Hall, Oxford Street, Marlborough.

**Doors open 7.15 for 7.45 p.m.**

For our December meeting, Jan Lillywhite has offered to organise a garden-themed quiz (last year's was very entertaining) and there are prizes for the winners. We are asking members to bring a contribution to the Pot Luck Supper; last year the delicious finger food and home made mince pies were much appreciated. The committee will provide mulled fruit juice as usual, so come along and finish the year on a high note with your gardening friends.

**PROPAGATION**

Tricia Hayllar writes: Carl Gill gave a very informative talk on different methods of propagation, bringing various samples of plant material to demonstrate the preparation of cuttings.

**Hardwood cuttings** are taken anytime between November to March, but are most successful if taken in November as the leaves fall. The cuttings should be the current season's growth, the thickness of a pencil, about 30cm long and cut just under a node. The bottom third can be placed in soil outside or compost in a long pot and he recommended placing at least three cuttings in each pot.

**Softwood cuttings** are best taken in April/May and should be up to 10cm long, with side shoots removed. Many softwood cuttings benefit from some base heat.

**Semi-ripe cuttings** can be taken from August to October.

Most cuttings do not require rooting powder.

He noted that when teaching propagation methods to horticulture students, the course took up one morning a week for a whole year, thus his talk to us only scratched the surface of the topic!

**YOUR GARDEN IN WINTER**

Vita Sackville-West writes: I have recently regretted that I did not plant more honeysuckles in my garden. For winter flowering, I have already got *Lonicera fragrantissima* and its perhaps better fellow, *Lonicera Standishii*. They do not flower very exuberantly, in my experience, but even a couple of sprays picked in January are welcome and will scent a whole room...

Frost jumps suddenly upon us, and takes us unaware. We should not be unaware; we ought to know our climate well enough by now to be only too well aware of the dangers that may leap upon us between a sunset and a dawn. Yet how many gardeners take this threat in time? How many cover up their tender plants in time?

What should one do for one's plants in pots? Generally speaking I would say this: repot any plant which has become pot-bound. You can easily determine this necessity by seeing whether its roots are coming through the hole at the bottom.

If this does not seem necessary, scrape away the top-soil and give some fresh feeding, compost or bonemeal.

(Extract from V. Sackville-West's *GARDEN BOOK*)

Organised by Swindon Allotment Society  
in conjunction with Pennard Plants

**"GROW YOUR OWN"  
and Seed Potato Day  
Saturday - 12<sup>th</sup> January 2019  
(10.30am to 1.30pm)**

60 plus varieties of Seed potato, all for sale by  
the single tuber, plus Onion and Shallot sets,  
planting garlic bulbs, our own range of  
heritage seeds, fruit trees, soft fruit,  
kitchen garden plants  
& so much more!

Free entry &  
Teas & Coffees available.

Come along to  
Gorse Hill Community Centre, Chapel Street, Swindon SN2 8DA

**IN YOUR GARDEN IN DECEMBER**

- ★ Prune overgrown shrubs by removing some of the older branches and cutting the others back .
- ★ When the weather is fine, vigorous climbing plants (Fuchsia, Plumbago, Abutilon, Rose and Honeysuckle etc.) should be thinned and pruned.
- ★ Apply grease bands to fruit trees and finish pruning apples and pears.
- ★ Continue planting deciduous trees and shrubs when weather permits.

**MERRY CHRISTMAS  
AND A HAPPY NEW GARDENING YEAR  
TO ALL OUR READERS**

Please send contributions to the January Newsletter to the Editor  
by Friday 28<sup>th</sup> December: [anne@unicorn9.plus.com](mailto:anne@unicorn9.plus.com)