

# Godmanchester Garden Club Newsletter

## March 2026



### News from No. 10

At this time of the year, we have to make the most of the warm sunny days and thankfully I was able to spend most of last Thursday tidying up the borders in our garden. I disturbed a lot of ladybirds but left enough old foliage behind for them to hide in if necessary. I was happy to be up close to the hellebores and enjoyed the sweetly scented *Daphne odora* 'aureomarginata'. The bitterly cold wind has put me off going into the garden this week but hopefully it won't be long before I can complete the grand tidy of the spring garden.





Another of our garden club members, Annie Wilson, was a Happy Bunny last month, enjoying the most beautiful scent of Sarcococca (left) and Lonicera Fragrantissima as she also began clearing up the garden after the winter.

Annie sent in her photos to share with you. Don't forget that we are *always* happy to include your photos in our newsletter! Please send us photos of your favourite plants as they come into flower or maybe photos from a garden that you have enjoyed visiting?

**Happy Gardening,  
Sue**



## **Geoff Hodge: Colour all year round – The 12-month garden**

Having once worked in a garden centre, Geoff gave a description of shoppers' actions once the weather improves and how the garden centre guides customers to buy plants. They want to sell certain plants and so place them in a prime position, showing to advantage. We want to buy plants and only afterwards wonder where to plant them. We should look at the garden, decide what we need and the conditions where it is to be planted, what it might look like in three, six or nine months, then go shopping!

When planning his garden beds, Geoff thinks in different groups of plants: tall to give height and structure, smaller to fill in and lastly ground cover plants and bulbs. Brown soil is just an invitation to weeds.

He now does most of his planting in autumn, as climate change means plants can establish over winter and grow well in spring.

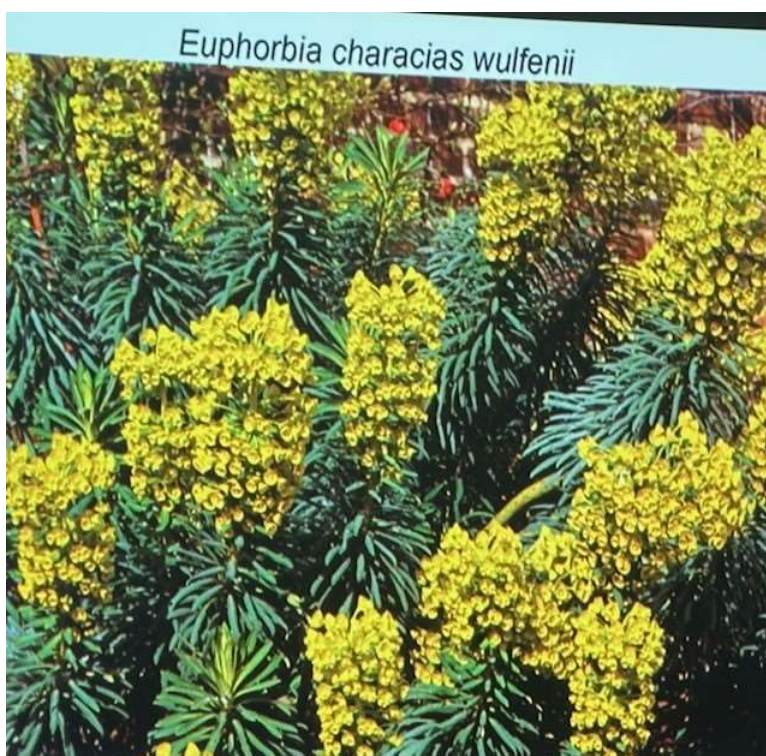
Geoff gave so much information about plants that I could hardly keep up, but fortunately he sent a list of the plants he showed and recommended for year-round interest, which I will include.

His main point was that plants should have interest throughout the year, in terms of leaf colour, flowers, berries and shape when bare-leaved. He prefers variegated and silver-leaved plants, as silver leaves are better adapted to deal with drought. Plants with long flowering periods are recommended, or ones that can be cut back, fed and encouraged to put on a second display.

For those bare patches when plants fail, Geoff prepares pots of bulbs or bedding plants, that can be dropped onto a hole and covered over, then replaced later.

It was a lively and informative talk, with lots for us to think about during this busy time of the year.

### ***Josephine***



## COLOUR ALL YEAR ROUND

Plants suitable to help give colour, form & interest all year round

### Evergreen shrubs

Most, but especially:

Ceanothus esp. 'Zanzibar'

Choisya ternata

Convolvulus cneorum

Elaeagnus x ebbingei 'Gilt Edge'

Euonymus

Hebe

Ilex

Lavandula

Leucothoe Scarletta

Nandina domestica 'Firepower'

Photinia davidiana 'Palette'; P. fraseri 'Red Robin'

Pieris 'Flaming Silver'

Pyracantha

Santolina

Skimmia

Vinca minor

Conifers & heathers



### Deciduous shrubs with more than one season of interest

Acer palmatum

Amelanchier lamarckii

Berberis thunbergii 'Rose Glow'

Buddleja

Ceratostigma willmotianum

Cornus (dogwoods)

Cotoneaster horizontalis

Hamamelis mollis

Hydrangea quercifolia

Spiraea japonica 'Goldflame'



## Long-flowering shrubs

Fuchsia

Lavatera

Penstemon

Phygelius

Potentilla

Rosa

Viburnum tinus (for winter)

