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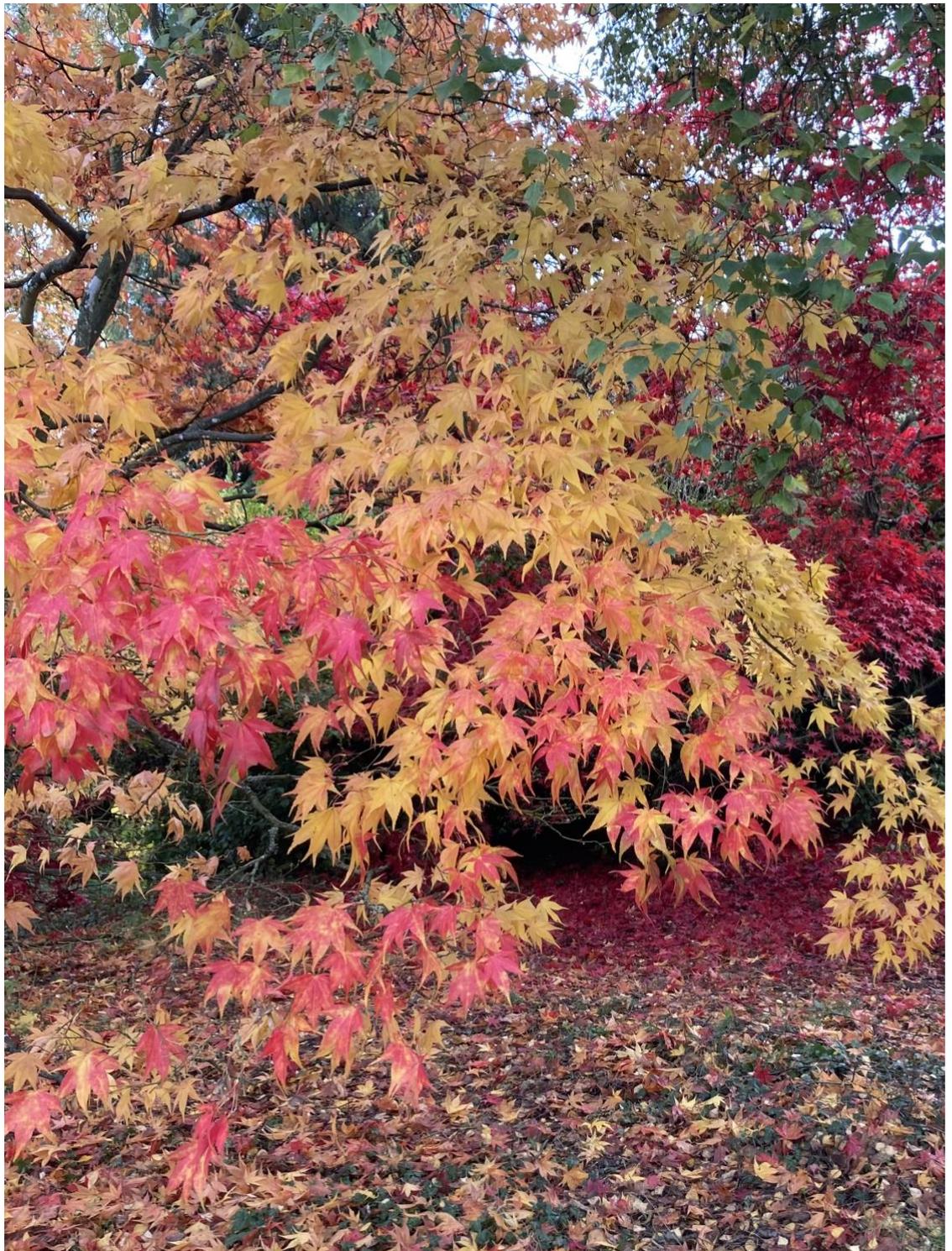
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Autumn

2020

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## WELCOME TO OUR FIRST NEWSLETTER

We are hoping that the BGC can get back to normal absolutely as soon as possible, but in the meantime, this is a way of keeping the BGC members up to date. We hope you find it useful.

~ ideas ~ news ~ advice ~ links ~ information ~



# Bourtons Autumn

Every newsletter we will take a peek into one of the BGC member's gardens.

This is Julie Tomlin's garden at The Barn, late September 2020. The garden is described by Julie as "a perennial garden which uses grasses for structure"

Photo: Julie Tomlin

## ONLINE RESOURCES

THE WEBSITES BELOW HAVE NEWSLETTERS YOU CAN SIGN UP TO WHICH TALK GARDENING AND GARDENS – OFTEN THEY ARE PROMOTIONAL BUT WILL ALSO INCLUDE ADVICE AND IDEAS.

[David Austin Roses](#)

[Garden Organic](#)

[House & Garden magazine](#)

[Gardeners' World](#)

Dan Pearson's online magazine [Dig Delve](#)

[Sarah Raven](#) is good for advice, recipes as well as her online shop.

[The English Garden magazine](#)

[Royal Horticultural Society](#) NB if you set up an account with them (nothing to do with being an RHS member) there is a wonderful area of the website called "MY RHS" where you can list all the plants in your garden/record ideas etc. I find it very useful [ Ann]

[Monty Don's](#) website – no newsletter to sign up for but monthly advice.

## MY ALLOTMENT YEAR by Clare Curnow

This is my first allotment, which I took on in March 2017 when this site opened. It looked very bleak with just rotavated soil, fences and little else. Roll on to 2020 and all the plots are cultivated, lots of sheds, greenhouses, frames, trees as well as vegetable rows, and it looks much more welcoming.

The perimeter hedge is starting to get going too. One thing about this site is that it is very well ventilated! Wind can be quite a challenge.



Bourtons Allotments 2017

After a very wet winter, when it was virtually impossible to do anything, and then lock down looming and not knowing if I would be allowed to go to the allotment, I planted potatoes in March and crossed my fingers as the ground was still pretty wet. I also sowed parsnips. Fortunately, allotments were 'allowed' activity and didn't even count as my exercise. In April and May we had lots of lovely sunshine, wind and no rain and the soil was soon too dry. It was hard to believe that I needed to water things. But then, I wasn't going anywhere so had time to water.

Some seeds grew well - beetroot, runner and French beans, kale, red cabbage and squashes.

Others I struggled with this year - carrots, parsnip. I gained some plants at the plant swap which did well - celeriac and butternut squash, both firsts for me. My competition sunflowers had 4 out of 5

germinate and survived the winds on the plot, but not to win. I'm impressed they stayed up. Their stems are very chunky.

The fruit was mixed. Strawberries were great, as were tayberries, gooseberries and jostaberries. I've discovered that blackbirds adore jostaberries so will need to net them next year – they were being eaten as I picked them! The newly planted blueberries gave a few fruits and the second attempt at a kiwi vine is struggling to get started. Fingers crossed. The fruit trees gave their first crop – a few damsons, and good crop of pears (some huge). The raspberries struggled when it was dry and then again, with the summer storms. The storms also finished off the runner beans, which never recovered, so a short but intense season for them this year.

Now tidying for winter – garlic sprouting as are broad beans and peas. They are always worth a gamble. I just like to have something growing!

And time to look at the seed catalogues and plan for next year



Some of Clare's produce from 2020 - Photo: Clare Curnow

## WHAT MY GARDEN MEANS TO ME – BY JENNY EADON

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*“ Winter is an etching,  
spring a watercolour, summer an oil painting  
and autumn a mosaic of them all”.*

**Stanley Horowitz**



I've always enjoyed gardening: from the creativity of planning and design, the interest of learning about the endless variety of beautiful plants and their suitability for my soil, to the satisfaction of planting and sowing seeds and watching them magically push through the earth. It is a pleasure that I have always taken for granted, but when you are deprived of it you long to go outside and just potter in the open air.

The first time I saw my garden after four months in hospital, I was overwhelmed as I walked through the garden gate. It looked so beautifully fresh and green, the path lined with flowering pots to welcome me, the borders colourful, it looked like paradise - I was home at last.

*“Farm Near Duivendrecht’  
by Piet Mondrian, 1916*

## GARDENING PODCASTS YOU MIGHT ENJOY:



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GQT – BBC SOUNDS  
GARDENERS' CORNER – BBC SOUNDS  
FRESH FROM THE POD  
GARDENING WITH THE RHS  
TALKING HEADS  
ROOTS AND ALL  
GARDENS, WEEDS AND WORDS  
ROOTS, WINGS AND OTHER THINGS

### **My favourite .....** by Peter Fisher

- 1. Favourite garden I have visited within a 40-mile radius of the Bourtons:** Quite a few candidates here but we particularly enjoy the gardens at Broughton Castle, which we saw again when the Antiques Roadshow was there fairly recently.
- 2. Favourite gardening TV programme:** Gardeners World with Monty Don. He presents it well and does not dominate as so many presenters do, particularly in wildlife programmes ( David Attenborough the honourable exception).
- 3. Favourite gardening radio programme or podcast:** Gardeners' Question Time.
- 4. Favourite poem about gardening/wildlife (or similar):** Here I might have to pass, not being a great poetry man, but if pressed would nominate Keats's 'Ode to a Nightingale'

purely because of a hilarious episode at school which still sticks in my mind after all those years.

**5. Favourite vegetable or fruit I grow in my garden:** Favourites are probably Broad Beans and Leeks. Purple Sprouting Broccoli too, but with all the brassicas it is a problem stopping the various pests getting at them. Before they get too big, I find redundant guineapig runs useful! For the first time for many years I have grown Sweetcorn and we really enjoyed eating some earlier this week. Favourite soft fruit is definitely Raspberry, including winter and yellow varieties. There are several varieties of apple, the Bramley being particularly good but sadly the magnificent Conference pear tree which was well established on the South wall of the house when we moved here 50 years ago reached the end of its life and now feeds the stove. I have to mention tomatoes ( never sure whether they are fruit or veg) but like all the greenhouse products they are V's domain. I am sure you know the enormous and very tasty Romanian tomatoes which we have thanks to our gardener Stefan who supplies the plants.

**6. Favourite gardening task:** Believe it or not, weeding.

**7. Favourite place to buy plants locally:** Definitely Farnborough Nursery. It has expanded greatly in recent years and they are always very friendly and helpful

**8. Favourite plant in my garden and which season it is at its best:** Probably the Acers which are at their best now - the autumn colours everywhere are fantastic this year.

**9. Favourite season (or month) of the gardening year:** The early part of the year with the appearance of all the snowdrops we inherited, then everything turns yellow with primroses and daffodils. A little later I enjoy seeing things coming up where I planted vegetable seeds.

**10. Favourite garden I have ever visited:** Exbury Gardens, near Southampton on the western edge of Southampton Water.

## And lastly, greetings from Daventry:

*In our new home in Daventry I have been busy making things for Anne. A raised bed for vegetables, another for herbs, renovating an old garden seat and 6 new window boxes. I am also about to install a new garden shed.*

*Under lockdown restrictions we have visited Wrest Park (Bedfordshire), Baddesley Clinton (Warwickshire), Stowe (Bucks) and we like Compton Verney.*

*Regards to everyone.*

Roger Holdom



**Have you visited a garden recently you would like to share with the BGC group? Please send text and photos to [annbrooks100@gmail.com](mailto:annbrooks100@gmail.com)**

Photo on Page 1: Batsford Arboretum, Oct 2020. Ann Brooks

Many thanks to all of you who kindly contributed.