



Countryside Jobs Service Weekly Special Edition 23 May 2005



Horticulture and Organics Supplement

In association with Henry Doubleday Research Association

This is the busiest time of year for HDRA, the organic organisation, which promotes organic gardening, farming and food. Not only are visitors starting to flock to our three wonderful display gardens in Warwickshire, Kent and Essex, but we are preparing for a hectic summer of shows that will kick off with the RHS Chelsea Flower Show on May 24. This year, we will be trying to encouraging a whole new generation of vegetable growers by promoting our latest project, Organic Food for All. This project aims to train 100 mentors across the country, so they can help complete beginners to have a go at growing their own organic vegetables and fruit.

Organic food is becoming an increasingly topical issue. It would seem many of us can understand the need to protect our bodies from harmful chemicals. But HDRA is also committed to promoting the importance of keeping our environment organic. We depend on land for so many things: for growing food, supporting homes and other buildings, providing wildlife habitat, holding water until we need it, providing us with leisure space and so on. Caring about the environment is of paramount importance if we are still to have all these things in future.

There have been policy changes at government level in recent times, moving towards more sustainable living. A range of incentives have been introduced to put these into action, e.g. the landfill tax, climate change levy and Environmental Stewardship scheme.

Organic growing is about caring for the land we live on in a sustainable manner, ensuring that the land is capable of providing the needs of the generations to come. Organic methods are all about working alongside natural processes, enhancing rather than dominating or disrupting them. Farmers are users of large areas of land and many have already turned to organic growing methods.

There are other large land users who could benefit from using the same techniques. Country estates, private and public gardens and parks, open green space or municipal plantings could all be maintained according to organic principles. Hotels and conference centres could aim towards providing more natural surroundings, catering for those who wish to avoid contact with synthetic pesticides. Horticultural training or therapy schemes using organic methods could provide a more stable, balanced and species diverse environment for study.

At HDRA we are contacted by people in all walks of life, wanting information or advice on organic or sustainable food, farming, gardening and related issues. Increasingly we have been contacted by those working in professional landscaping and horticulture concerned about such issues as:

- meeting environmental obligations, especially in sensitive or delicate areas such as designated nitrate vulnerable zones or conservation areas
- harming wildlife and damaging ecosystems by use of inappropriate chemicals or practices
- polluting water courses, ponds and lakes
- personal health and safety with regard to chemical sprays
- maintaining ecological balance to combat disease and pest infestation
- species diversity especially in conservation areas.

HDRA is aware that organic methods can tackle these issues. In response to the increase in demand for information and support from landscapers, horticulturists, local authorities, ornamental nurseries, retailers and land managers of all sorts we have set about adapting organic methods as developed for farming to other land uses. As our knowledge and skill builds we want to share it with others. Accordingly we have designed a category of membership to assist. The Commercial and Professional Membership scheme offers the following:

- the opportunity to support research and development in areas of relevance
- the potential to assist in the knowledge gathering process
- advice by phone, or by email to facilitate contact where working hours can fluctuate
- a dedicated newsletter to flag up new developments and point to potentially useful information sources
- access to pertinent publications, such as manuals and fact sheets
- seminars, workshops and site visits appropriate to the membership
- the opportunity to let like-minded people and potential customers know about the member's business or area of work
- the potential for knowledge exchange.

Development of the scheme is being guided by its membership. The idea is to support sustainable land use in as wide a context as possible.

For more information about the scheme visit HDRA's website: www.hdra.org.uk. A downloadable application form is also available from the website. Membership costs just £55 per year. Alternatively contact helpline@hdra.org.uk or phone Sandra Bywater on 024 7630 8206.

By: Sandra Bywater, Research Officer, HDRA, the organic organisation



Gardening is never more centre stage than during the week of the annual RHS Chelsea Flower Show. If you want to be seen that week, you've got to be green or at least have a horticultural theme as the media focus on the floral extravaganza along the Embankment.

The hype helps to promote some of the top talent from the world of horticulture – designers, growers, contractors – but it masks a grave problem facing the sector – an acute skills shortage.

Gardening has never been more popular; RHS membership has grown from 185,000 to 360,000 members in 10 years. There are an estimated six million keen gardeners in the UK today and this number is increasing as more people tune in to TV gardening shows, visit garden centres and ultimately take up gardening as a hobby. Yet very few pursue horticulture as a career or take the necessary qualifications. Research commissioned by national environmental and green space agencies has highlighted that the professionals who plan, manage and maintain parks and green spaces are nearing retirement and there aren't enough skilled young people to step into their shoes. This is just the tip of the iceberg though. Across the board the UK is facing a dire 'green skills' shortage: from higher education where applications to study Botany at university have fallen by 30% since 1996; to a lack of youngsters working their way up within production horticulture.

In April this year the findings of a report about the future of Britain's botanic and heritage sector, was presented at a Green Skills seminar held in London. The report was initiated by English Heritage and jointly commissioned by the RHS, Lantra and The Royal Parks among others. The seminar brought together individuals and organisations spanning the entire 'green sector' to develop an agenda to tackle the skills gap. Both the report and seminar highlighted several problem areas, but underpinning many of these appears to be a lack of understanding and clear information about what horticulture is, and what a career in horticulture could be.

For many people it simply means being a gardener, and probably an older male one at that! If young people are to be encouraged into the industry we must dispel this perceived image. Horticultural qualifications can lead to a range of promising and fulfilling careers – parks manager, nursery owner, environmental scientist, botanist or landscape designer, the list is endless.

Poor salary is often cited as the reason that careers in horticulture are declining in popularity. Greater professional recognition of skills, which are reflected in salary would help. At the same time though there is a need to focus on the other benefits of a horticultural career, such as the freedom to move within different sectors, travel and job satisfaction. Many career changers seeking a better quality of life choose horticulture as the antidote to the stresses of city life.

While the Chelsea Flower Show puts some of the best that horticulture can offer in the limelight, the RHS is working just as hard at the other end of the spectrum to encourage new generations to enjoy horticulture professionally and personally. As part of its charitable purpose, the Society aims to share practical knowledge and information with people whatever their age, level of knowledge and depth of interest. Getting people onto a horticulture learning path at an early age is essential if the green skills gap is going to be reversed. In the past five years, over 3000 schools have signed up to the RHS' hugely popular schools membership scheme; which offers a termly newsletter, advice on school gardens and support and ideas for teaching about plants in the National Curriculum.

The RHS is also building a Bicentenary Glasshouse and Learning Centre at RHS Garden Wisley in Surrey. The world-class structure will have a purpose built classroom, 'Growing Lab' and outdoor teaching garden so that all visitors, from primary age upwards, can get hands-on experience of growing plants.

For school leavers and beyond, the RHS offers a range of horticultural qualifications from the (Level 2) Certificate of Horticulture, which is offered at around 160 colleges nationwide up to the Master of Horticulture (Mhort), a degree equivalent qualification for those looking for senior level employment within the industry.

All four RHS Gardens offer training for young students and career changers. The training programmes offer unrivalled opportunities to study in an environment where there is an extensive and varied collection of plants. Additionally, trainees learn from working horticultural staff who have vast expertise and knowledge.

Past RHS trainees include Chelsea medal winning garden designer and writer Dan Pearson, broadcaster and gardening columnist Anne Swithinbank and Chelsea medal winning garden designer and florist Stephen Woodham.

The green skills seminar held in April is just the beginning. The organisations and industries involved must now agree on and implement an action plan to address the skills crisis. With green space and vocational learning at the top of the Government's agenda, the timing has never been better to get the message across that horticulture matters if we are to have the green spaces, parks and gardens that we aspire to.

For more information please visit the website at: www.rhs.org.uk

What is organic food?

Food and animals from organic farms are grown and reared as naturally as possible. Organic crops are produced without the use of unnecessary artificial pesticides or weedkillers. Animal welfare is paramount: all organic animals are kept free-range, and the routine use of antibiotics and vaccines is not permitted. Even organic processed food is different as many of the food additives that may be harmful to health, such as artificial sweeteners and hydrogenated fat, are not allowed. Organic standards prohibit the use of genetically modified ingredients, in food as well as animal feed.

Organic is a term defined by European law: it is therefore illegal to claim that food is organic that hasn't been independently assessed. A number of organisations in the UK are allowed to certify organic farms and food. The Soil Association (through its certification division SA Cert) licenses around 80% of all organic food sold but thirteen other organisations are also approved by the Government to carry out organic inspections – the next largest are Organic Farmers & Growers and The Organic Food Federation. Look for the symbol of one of these organisations when you buy organic food, or check for a code number, for example UK5 for the Soil Association and UK2 for Organic Farmers & Growers.

You may also occasionally see the symbols of European certification organisations, such as the French organisation AB (Agriculture Biologique) or Demeter, based in Germany. Organic food that is imported from outside the EU must meet the same high standards as food produced in the EU. Checks can be carried out in a number of ways and may involve sending a Soil Association (SA Cert) inspector abroad.

All organic farms and food processing companies are inspected at least once a year to make sure that they are adhering to the law and spot checks are also carried out. These checks also apply to companies that sell organic food that is prepared out of sight of customers. As a reassurance to the public, a major infringement of organic standards can result in the suspension of a licence and withdrawal of products from the market.

To avoid any confusion with non-organic produce, a lot of organic food, particularly in supermarkets, is sold pre-packaged. Where produce is sold loose, proof of certification must be available, by law, to consumers. If the retailer cannot prove to your satisfaction that the food is genuinely organic, you should be able to ask who their supplier is and be able to contact them to find out about their certification.

There are currently no legal standards for non-food items such as organic beauty products or textiles. The Soil Association and some other organisations have developed guidelines and it is hoped that as these products become more popular, the legal position will be tightened. In the meantime, beware of mass produced brands that appear to make organic claims – and call the Soil Association, the company concerned or your local trading standards office if you want to check out their credentials.

To ensure that organic farmers and food companies meet these requirements – which are laid down in law – they are inspected at least once a year by an organisation such as the Soil Association.

The Soil Association is the largest promoter and certifier of organic food in the UK and was set up in 1946.

As a charity, the Soil Association provides information about organic food to the public and organises training events and advice for farmers. We also run a network of organic farms that are open to schools and the public and we encourage people to get involved in their local farms through our Community Supported Agriculture initiative. Our Local Food Department helps schools and other organisations to source local and organic food.



Soil Association
the heart of organic food & farming

To continue this work, we rely on donations and the support of our members. For more information about what we do, or to find out how you can help the Soil Association, please contact us at: Bristol House, 40-56 Victoria Street, Bristol BS1 6BY. Tel: 0117 314 5000, Email: info@soilassociation.org or www.soilassociation.org.



So you want to be a gardener?

Interview with Callum Pirnie, the Head Gardener at Crathes Castle, owned and run by the National Trust for Scotland.

The post of Head Gardener at Crathes is to manage the Walled Gardens and Grounds with maintenance, conservation and sympathetic development as active objectives.

A typical day would start by planning the daily work with the first gardener and dealing with any specific operational tasks or staff issues on site. I would then go to the main office to get mail and in tray then on to the garden office to deal with telephone messages, E. mails, process orders and etc. Back down to the garden to cascade on all relevant paper work and then get round to see the staff on site and ensure that everything is up to standard. Then probably on to Plant Sales to deal with any problems, confirm deliveries and etc. Later in the day, ideally I would aim to be hands on doing specific horticultural tasks on site. However, often this is constrained by meetings, paperwork and administrative demands, tours, visitor requests and a host of property linked issues which can arise at any time. The choice paper work such as garden planning, plant records and selection of plants from catalogues etc. is generally done out of hours when I can get peace to focus.

How does your job vary with the seasons? My post is demanding all year. Much of the planning and ordering is done in winter to be ready for spring. This is the busiest time when we have to have the garden up to a high standard but also programme in all the planting. The gardens team are busy all year, even in winter, because this is the only time when major new developments and changes can be implemented. In summer the public relations aspect is a priority. I have garden introductions and tours on a regular basis, while the garden team tend to have more daily interaction with the casual visitor. During the season I deal with a range of specialist requests from plant names and sources to information and even interviews on the gardens from magazines and other media.

For you, what's the best aspect of your job? Seeing long term plans for the garden and grounds implemented. For example, the Upper Pool Garden herbaceous border has just been replanted to a new design and this has taken at least two years to set up including the preparation, formal plan and sourcing of plants. I am lucky to have such a good horticultural team who can turn my plans and designs into reality on the ground.

And the worst aspect of the job? As a charity, money is very tight and budgetary constraints can impact on front line delivery which is compounded by an increase in administration workload.

What sort of background do you come from? A time served horticultural background

What training and qualifications did you need? Seven years of practical horticultural training including five years in structured courses at diploma level.

Was it easy to achieve these qualifications? It was difficult to gain entry to these specialised courses and extremely hard work both physically and mentally to achieve the qualifications.

What is the best advice you could give to someone hoping to start in a similar job? Get a good grounding in practical horticulture in one or more good horticultural establishments while working towards the academic qualifications which are becoming an essential requirement of garden management posts.

For more information about the work of the National Trust for Scotland or for general information about Crathes please visit: www.nts.org.uk

Classified: Training

COURSES IN ORGANIC HORTICULTURE

The Welsh College of Horticulture offers the following Organic Courses:

- HND (2 years at 2.5 days per week)
- HNC (2 years at 1 day per week)

The college located in NE Wales, close to Chester, the Wirral and Wrexham, has the benefit of 10ha stockfree organic holding. This provides a teaching resource and supports both a commercial enterprise and organic research and development.



Contact:
Tel: 01352 841000 Fax: 01352 841031
www.wcooh.ac.uk Email: info@wcooh.ac.uk
Welsh College of Horticulture, Northop,
Mold, Flintshire, CH7 6AA




Warwickshire College (Moreton Morrell Centre) offer an extensive range of full and part time courses. These courses are aimed at anybody interested in leisure or professional gardening. We also offer a full range of Urban Forestry and Arboricultural courses including chainsaw and climbing certification. Further details contact enquiries @ warkscol.ac.uk or phone 01926 318348

Cozenton Nursery Horticultural Training, Rainham, Kent provides NVQ Level I horticulture training and work experience to people disadvantaged in the labour market. If you receive incapacity benefit, JSA, income support or other benefits you may be eligible. To find out more contact Rob Owen at 01634 232504.

Shuttleworth College, Bedfordshire, offers a range of courses from Foundation Degrees to National and First Diplomas. Subjects include Countryside, Fisheries, Horticulture, Agriculture, Arboriculture, Animals, Equine, Outdoor Education, Floristry & Design. Short courses also available. Contact 01767 626222 or email enquiries@shuttleworth.ac.uk web site www.shuttleworth.ac.uk

Lantra works to boost skills levels and productivity in UK environmental and land-based businesses. Contact Lantra for information on training, qualifications, apprenticeships, careers and business development opportunities. Lantra's CourseFinder service will help you source training and put you in touch with your local training provider. Tel: 0845 707 8007 Email: connect@lantra.co.uk



**NOTTINGHAM
TRENT UNIVERSITY**

Courses in Countryside and Landscape Management

Landscape Management This dynamic area covers the designed natural environment: the development and management of small scale gardens, large scale parks and landscapes.

- Craft level courses in professional Horticulture
- Vocational Foundation Degrees in Garden Design/Landscape/Horticulture Therapy
- BSc (H) Landscape Technology

Countryside Management Our programmes offer a rich blend of hands-on skills and problem-solving techniques enabling management of diverse habitats for wildlife and recreation purposes.

- Craft level courses in Countryside Management
- Vocational Foundation Degrees in Countryside Management/Wildlife Conservation
- BSc (H) Countryside Management/BSc (H) Wildlife Conservation

We have courses to suit all ages and experience.
Contact Student Administration telephone 01636 817099 or email are.enquiries@ntu.ac.uk
www.ntu.ac.uk

Permaculture and Sustainable Land Use courses. Permaculture deals with every aspect of ecological sustainability on the land. Our courses, held on a working permaculture farm, give you the skills to put it into practice. 2-week and 9-week courses. For information: 01458 832317 ka.tonga@virgin.net

For more courses please see the **CJS Events Diary** on the last page.

Your career in gardening, professional horticulture, tree care, floristry, conservation or farming could really take off following a home-study course with the HCC. Established as The Horticultural Correspondence College in the 1930's the HCC is accredited by the ODLQC. Our organic gardening course carries the Soil Association Registered Certificate. We prepare individuals for the RHS examinations and also the Royal Forestry Society exams. All of the courses lead to our own HCC Certificate. Do check out our website www.hccollege.co.uk or e-mail : info@hccollege.co.uk or phone FREE 0800 378918 or mail us for our FREE prospectus of courses : The Horticultural Correspondence College, FREEPOST, 16 Notton, Lacock, Chippenham, Wiltshire SN15 2BR.

Low-impact Living Initiative (LILI) run residential weekend courses at Redfield Community in Buckinghamshire. Topics include straw-bale building, how to make biodiesel, low-impact smallholding, sustainable water & sewage, natural paints & lime, and many more. We also provide information sheets, books, and products. www.lowimpact.org or 01296 714184 for more information.

Duchy College. Cornwall's College of the Countryside www.duchy.ac.uk
Courses at all levels in Horticulture New foundation degree stream in Landscape and Construction Management Also available: Design and Plantsmanship Other specialisms include organics, global plant use, medicinal plants, smallholding and more t. 01209 722100 e. rosewarne.enquiries@duchy.ac.uk

Events:

Saturday 19th June, Cromford, Derbyshire: BTCV are running a one-day Wildflower Identification training course, a fun and informative day open to all - no experience necessary. For more details on this and other conservation activities, such as grassland restoration, woodland management and traditional countryside crafts, please call 01629 826711.

Earthwise Festival, Dorset. 18th - 21st August; wind and sun powered, a family friendly platform of sustainability, awareness education and entertainment in a safe fun environment. Earthwise promotes sustainable lifestyles, natural health and social justice through live music, fair trade markets, children's areas, youth stage and workshops. 0845 3304340 www.earthwise-uk.com.

Volunteers Needed:

EcoDysgu BRIDGEND 01656 728137. ecodysgu@ecolearn@aol.com. <http://www.cobwebs.uk.net/Ecodysgu>
5 long term volunteers required with a holistic approach to life to join our team for three to six months to help us develop our sensory, music and vegetable gardens. Opportunity to develop personal skills in horticulture and organic gardening. Training allowance plus expenses. Experience of working with children. Placement will be subject to a CRB check. start 1st June 2005.

Stourbridge College, Leasowes Park Centre Halesowen, West Midlands.
The College offers a wide range of courses to suit all interests. Courses include NVQs in Horticulture and Conservation, RHS Certificates in Horticulture, Pesticides, Chainsaw Use, and numerous leisure courses. For more information, please contact Angie Cartwright 0121 602 4900

The Sustainability Centre, Hampshire. Courses include Natural building and green DIY, 4 / 5 June Herbs for healthcare and home remedies, 16 June The living landscape, 9 / 10 July Natural dyes for wool and silk, 16 August. Accommodation available. Phone 01730 823166 Email courses@earthworks-trust.com Earthworks Trust Charity No.1079866 www.earthworks-trust.com

Shipleigh College in Saltaire
A wide range of courses in horticulture, the environment and gardening for school leavers, work-based learners and part time for adults. Courses include Horticulture NVQs, BTEC, Environmental Conservation NVQs, Gardening and Garden Design, Floristry, Hanging Baskets and Flower Arranging. Website www.shipleigh.ac.uk Tel: (01274) 327222.

New Training Programme Denmark Farm is the longest running farmland restoration project in Wales - a rich and varied mosaic of wildlife habitat on what was once degraded farmland. We offer a range of low cost training based on this long running case study. For more details and to book your place on line go to; <http://www.shared-earth-trust.org.uk/en/train.htm> – or contact 01570 493358 set@denmark-farm.freereserve.co.uk for a brochure.

Sites to visit:

The Birmingham Botanical Gardens & Glasshouses www.birminghambotanicalgardens.org.uk
Four glasshouses take visitors from Tropical Rainforest to Arid Desert conditions with insectivorous plants, giant 'cacti', tree ferns and cycads, orchids, sugar cane, bananas and citrus fruits.
Outside, 15 acres of beautiful landscaped, historic and themed gardens including our Organic Garden. The Gardens use organic methods of pest control and promote sustainability throughout. Adventure playground, Discovery Garden, walkabout trails, exotic birds, Gift Shop, Plant Sales, Gallery, Restaurant.

Volunteers Needed:

'Capability' Brown's first landscape park needs volunteers. Croome Park, 9 miles south of Worcester, needs garden volunteers to help with restoration work. Recent work has included tree planting, pruning, clearance work and even bench 'planting'! Weekdays and/or the first Sunday of each month. Call 01905 371006 for details.

The international development charity, VSO is looking for volunteers to join its Natural Resources programmes in some of the world's poorest countries. From Malawi to Mongolia, you could have the skills to change lives and help bring a brighter future. For more details, visit www.vso.org.uk/environmentjobs or call the Enquiries team 020 8780 7500.

Thinking about converting your project to organic methods?



Cockington Demonstration Organic Garden at Cockington Court, Torquay is run by Torbay Coast and Countryside Trust. Organic methods have been used in the garden since it first opened in 1992. The Trust took over management of Cockington in 2000 and soil association guidelines have been followed during the past two half years.

Why did you convert to organic methods? As a demonstration garden we wanted to promote organic, wildlife friendly gardening in a practical way and encourage people to have a go and growing their fruit and vegetables.

Was conversion difficult with regard to the measures that you had to take and the costs involved? Conversion required good planning and vigilance with regard to pest and disease control, using methods such as netting to combat pest attack instead of chemical pesticides. Initially we received free seeds and netting from Sutton Seeds in Paignton, which helped reduce the cost of gardening organically. To expand our range of organic produce we now source our seeds from Tamar Organic Seeds, who offer us a 50% discount in return for publicity.

We also make our own compost and take leaf mould from the park to reduce costs.

Were you able to secure funding to aid the conversion? Green Fingers was the Trust's first funded project to develop the organic garden. In 2001 we received £19,050 from the government's Environmental Action Fund and recruited a Sustainable Horticulture Officer to promote organic gardening and composting in Torbay.

Following on from this, the Trust was awarded a £48,000 grant from the SEED programme to run the Cockington Organic Kitchen Gardens Project in October 2002. This grant came through the New Opportunities Fund and it helped us employ an Organic Garden Manager to carry out a wide range of improvements including better interpretation, workshops, events, volunteer days and a Compost Doctor. This funding also helped create a Community Garden to the rear of the Organic Garden for local community groups and schools. Each group adopted a plot to cultivate and grow their own fruit and vegetables along organic lines (not fully organic)

This project came to an end in late 2004 and the garden is now maintained by John Austin, the Organic Gardener and a team of dedicated volunteers. Recently the Trust has teamed up with Four Seasons Horticultural Training, who provides training for people with disabilities and helps maintain the community plots. They have funded seeds for this year's planting in the organic garden. All funding was not specifically to convert the garden, but to develop the garden and provide educational courses and events.

Have you had any particularly difficult problems, pests or diseases to overcome? We have an ongoing problem with potato blight that restricts the amount of potatoes produced throughout the season and have yet been unable to combat organically. Aphids also cause problems and are sprayed with a water jet. In the past month we have begun experimenting with copper tape to protect some of the more fragile plants from slugs and snails. The copper gives off a small electrical charge, giving the pests a shock when they cross it. **Are you ever tempted to pick up the chemical spray?** No. John has never used chemicals in his gardening.

Would you say it has been beneficial to be recognised as organic? Very much so. The Organic Garden at Cockington is fairly unique, being one of the only demonstration organic gardens in South Devon. Furthermore, the organic garden forms an important part of the Trust's ethos to protect and conserve Torbay's coast, countryside, heritage and wildlife through sustainable management. The Trust is also currently building an organic demonstration farm at Ocombe, Paignton which will expand on our work in the organic garden. And Soil Association certification is imminent as we have just completed the two year conversion period.

What advice would you offer to another site thinking about converting? To find out what is required to be classified as organic contact the Soil Association who will provide the necessary guidelines. Become a member of HDRA (Henry Doubleday Research Association) as they offer excellent support for both novice and experienced organic gardeners and their website is full of up-to-date information and fact sheets. Be organised and plan ahead.

Like to know more, want to help us? If you are green fingered and would like to learn more about organic gardening, Torbay Coast and Countryside Trust is running a volunteer day on Saturday 28 May from 10am – 4pm. No previous experience is necessary and all equipment will be provided. Please book a place in advance.

For further information about the Cockington Demonstration Organic Garden and to book a place on the volunteer day, please call 01803 606035 or email info@countryside-trust.org.uk.

Classified - Organisations:

Soil Association Scotland was established in 2002 and campaigns for affordable, locally produced, GM-free food in Scotland. Based in Edinburgh, Soil Association Scotland provides an organic food and farming information service for members, schools and the general public, and organises an annual conference on organic food and farming. Organic farmers, growers and food manufacturers are offered support through training events, a Scottish Organic Farming magazine and a telephone advice line. The organisation promotes the expansion of organic food and farming by working with the Scottish Executive.

Permaculture design for sustainable living – research, education, networking, courses, project support, events, info and opportunities. To find out more contact Permaculture Association (Britain). BCM Permaculture Association, London, WC1N 3XX T: 0845 4581805 W: www.permaculture.org.uk

CIWEM is an environmental charity raising professional standards and educating the public. We run conferences and events, promote environmental innovation, and advise government on policy matters. For details of free 'Environmental Partner' membership see www.ciwem.org or e-mail press@ciwem.org. The Chartered Institution of Water and Environmental Management. Registered Charity No. 1043409

Join the **Centre for Alternative Technology** and enjoy quarterly editions of our magazine Clean Slate, full of positive and practical ideas on renewable energy, organic gardening, green lifestyles and ecological building. 10% discount on other CAT publications. Further details: www.cat.org.uk/membership, 08453304593. CAT, Machynlleth, Powys, Wales, SY20 9AZ.

English Nature is the independent Government agency that champions the conservation of wildlife and geology throughout England. There are more than 15 million gardens in the UK which provide important homes for wildlife. English Nature helps people to get actively involved in conserving wildlife by giving advice about wildlife gardening. Visit our website and take a look at our range of wildlife friendly gardening leaflets and find out how you can help wildlife thrive. www.english-nature.org.uk/Nature_In_The_Garden/

Buglife-The Invertebrate Conservation Trust is the first organisation in Europe committed to the conservation of all invertebrates. Our aim is to prevent invertebrate extinctions and maintain sustainable populations of invertebrates in the UK, One of our aims is: promoting sound management of land and water to maintain and enhance invertebrate biodiversity. www.buglife.org.uk

GreenSpace is a registered charity set up to promote the regeneration of public parks and public spaces in our towns and cities. Visit GreenSpace Online at www.green-space.org.uk for the latest news, features, publications and information from around the sector.

Thrive is a national charity whose aim is to enable positive change in the lives of disabled and disadvantaged people through the use of gardening and horticulture. Thrive runs a wide range of training and education opportunities, for more information call Susan Twigg on 0118 988 5688, or email susan.twigg@thrive.org.uk

Miscellaneous:

Willow bundles and Cuttings
Live willow supplies for sculpture, tree planting, weaving and erosion control. Contact John on 01453 811537 or visit the website on www.slimwetwillows.co.uk

Projects:

A new project 'Wild About Gardens' is being launched by the Royal Horticultural Society and The Wildlife Trusts. The project aims to increase understanding of local wildlife, celebrate what garden owners are doing to support wildlife and build on existing research into the wildlife potential of domestic gardens. Visit: www.wildaboutgardens.org

The Magdalen Project is an organic farm and education centre conceived as a landscape for learning. We welcome all kinds of visitors from playgroups to senior management teams, for a wide variety of workshops, courses and eco-adventures. We seek to preserve traditional rural and farming skills and promote a deeper understanding of sustainable development. www.themagdalenproject.org.uk telephone: 01460 30144 email: admin@themagdalenproject.org.uk

The Country Parks Network is a free resource for green space practitioners, hosted by GreenSpace on behalf of the Countryside Agency. Creating opportunities to raise and respond to issues and will soon launch a unique website providing essential information for professionals. To sign up to the network please contact: cpn@green-space.org.uk and for more information visit: www.green-space.org.uk/countryparks/index.htm

Magazines and information:

Reckless Gardener Magazine
An online gardening magazine for the UK enthusiast. Includes garden designer database and products pages, together with news, shows and events, design features and garden advice from the professionals. Extensive collection of gardening books, DVD's and software also available, at discount prices.

Some Exhibitors at The RHS Chelsea Flower Show this year.

SHOW GARDEN The Wildlife Trusts Lush Garden Show Ground Location: RGB9
Sited on a gentle slope, this garden is designed to nestle into a mature landscape of orchard & wildflower meadow, The garden has been designed with biodiversity in mind, & incorporates wildlife habitats of decaying logs & tree stumps including a rootarium arch & hibernaculum wall, providing potential hibernation quarters for wildlife.
A gravel path with stone steps winds its way past a stream, a pool & a curved garden seat which is set into swathes of floriferous planting. The path leads up to a wooden educational building covered by a tumbling green roof of sedum, which is designed to promote aspects of wildlife gardening.
Beyond the building is a small area of flowering grasses & wildflowers. An old fruit tree supports a climbing rose. By the garden gate, there is a composting enclosure to help recycle the garden's waste.
The Wildlife Trusts, The Kiln, Waterside, Newark NG24 1WT 0870 0367711 enquiry@wildlife-trusts.cix.co.uk
www.wildlifetrusts.org

SHOW GARDEN The Trailfinders Recycled Garden Show Ground Location: MA8
Television gardener Chris Beardshaw has teamed up with the Recycle Now campaign to create a stunning new approach to gardening at this year's Chelsea Flower Show, with an environmentally sound Recycled Garden sponsored by international travel company Trailfinders.
Chris has designed the Trailfinders Recycled Garden to highlight the use of recycled & recyclable material & green waste organic compost in the garden. The planting scheme focuses on an exciting range of British indigenous plants & flowers. The use of recycled materials highlights that everyday items, which we would otherwise throw away, can be recycled into a wide range of attractive & practical items for the garden.
The garden supports Recycle Now, an advertising campaign that was launched in Sept 2004. Created & managed by WRAP (the Waste & Resources Action Programme), which was set up by the Government to improve the UK's recycling record, the Trailfinders Recycled Garden aims to get more people recycling more things, more often.
WRAP, The Old Academy, 21 Horse Fair, Banbury OX16 0AH 0845 3313131 info@recyclenow.com
www.recyclenow.com

SHOW GARDEN The Real Rubbish Garden Show Ground Location: RS3
The concept behind this contemporary garden is to demonstrate a viable, attainable & practical space for the present which indicates a direction for a sustainable future. All the materials used in the garden are reused, reclaimed or recycled & the construction has been

carried out in an environmentally sensitive way. The design offers inspiration to gardeners & encourages everyone to consider what they can do to reuse or reduce their waste. The garden is visually exciting & full of original ideas about recycling in the home. A side wall represents the house & it's kitchen window. Beyond the house, many elements have been included to encourage native wildlife into the space whilst remaining attractive & practical. Encouraging wildlife, especially birds, into gardens can provide entertainment, joy & wonder.
By taking care of our environment, each of us can do our bit to ensure the diversity of wildlife remains for future generations to enjoy. RSPB & SITA Environmental Trust work together to help people understanding their impact on the world & appreciate nature.
RSPB/SITA Environmental Trust, RSPB Headquarters, The Lodge, Sandy SG19 2DL 01767 680551
enquiries@rspb.org.uk www.rspb.org.uk

COURTYARD GARDEN Beyond the Pale by Brinsbury Campus, Chichester College, North Heath, Pulborough RH20 1DL 01243 786321 stephen.firth@chichester.ac.uk Show Ground Location: RM6

CITY GARDEN The Crystal Cobweb Garden by Bridgwater College, Cannington Centre for Land Based Studies, Cannington, Bridgwater TA5 2LS 01278 655091, martinm@bridgwater.ac.uk www.bridgwater.ac.uk Show Ground Location NR2

SUNFLOWER STREET GARDEN Gem's Jubilee Garden by Pershore College, Pershore, Worcs WR10 3JP 01386 552443 dave_feaver@pershore.ac.uk www.pershore.ac.uk Show Ground Location: GPC8

SUNFLOWER STREET GARDEN Garden of Night by Capel Manor College, Bullsmoor Lane, Enfield EN1 4RQ 020 83664442 Show Ground Location: GPC10

Stands: The Great Pavilion - Lifelong Learning in the Garden

1. **Our subconscious Savanna** University of Reading, School of Plant Sciences, PO Box 221, Whiteknights, Reading RG6 6AS 0118 3787960 abqpitma@rdg.ac.uk www.reading.ac.uk Pavilion Location: GPLL15
2. **Good companions, the science behind companion planting** Rothamsted Research, Rothamstead, Harpenden AL5 2JQ 01582 763133 www.rothamsted.ac.uk. Pavilion Location: GPLL7

NB: one lucky staff member is off to the Show, we hope to have some photographs of these gardens on the website.

Events Diary 2005. All one day courses unless specified. Details of all these events and much more are available on our website at: countryside-jobs.com/Training/Training_Courses.htm

4 June Wildflower Identification 2 days in Ayr run by BTCV Scotland. Details and bookings: 01786 479697, scotland-training@btcv.org.uk

11 June Wildflower Identification (Entry level) by BTCV Derbyshire contact them on: 01332 348591

13 June Grassland management for nature conservation, Week long (5 days) course at Losehill Hall. To book call Losehill on 01433 620373 or email: training.losehill@peakdistrict.gov.uk

14 June Basic wildflower ID by Shared Earth Trust at Denmark Farm. Details from: 01970 493358, set@denmark-farm.freereserve.co.uk

18 June Wildflower Identification, 2 days at Oatridge College run by BTCV Scotland. Contact as above

19 June Art of nature photography – Spring by Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust at Gibraltar Point NNR. For details: 01754 762677 , gibpoint@lincstrust.co.uk.

21 & 22 June Wildflower ID 2 one-day courses at Stave Hill Ecology Park, Surrey Quays run by BTCV. Tel: 020 78434286

22 June Creating wildlife rich grasslands and **23 June Recording changes in grasslands** Both by Shared Earth Trust. Details as before.

23 June Collecting and propagating woodland wild flowers Flora locale in Berkshire. Contact: 01488 680 458, info@floralocale.org

24 June Introduction to Herbalism Low Impact Living Initiative 3 day course in Winslow, Bucks. For details or to book: 01296 714184 or email lili@lowimpact.org

Organic Gardening Weekend, 3 days at the Centre for Alternative Energy in Machynlleth, Powys. For more details please call: 01654 705981 or email courses@cat.org.uk

25 June Grass & Rush Ecology & Identification and **29 June Bumblebee Identification - field & workshop** both by Essex Wildlife Trust at Abbotts Hall Farm. To Book: 01621 862960.

5 July Introduction to creating flower-rich grasslands, Flora locale in Bath. Booking as before.

Identifying Grasses, Sedges & Rushes, 3 days by Shared Earth Trust. Details as above.

7 July Bringing back wild flowers to agricultural grasslands, Flora locale in Yorkshire. Booking as before.

26 July Collecting and propagating grassland wildflower seed, Flora locale, in Berkshire. Booking as before.

5 August Introduction to Beekeeping Low Impact Living Initiative, 3 days. Booking as above.

21 August Plant identification - where to begin? Gibraltar Point NNR. Information as previous

2 September CAT Members Conference, 3 days at CAT. Contact as above.

14 September Collecting and propagating seed from native trees and shrubs, Flora locale in Surrey. Booking as before.

17 September Creative Willow, 2 days at and by Green Wood Centre in Coalbrookdale. For information contact the Centre: 01952 432769, courses@greenwoodcentre.org.uk, www.greenwoodcentre.org.uk

21 September Collecting and propagating seed from native trees and shrubs, Flora locale in Perth. Booking as before. **Gardening for wildlife**, by Shared Earth Trust. Details as above.

12 November Hazel Hurdles, 2 days at & by Green Wood Centre. Contact the Centre as above.

15 November Working with Waste at and by The Bishops Wood Centre, Worcester 01299 250513, courses@bishopswoodcentre.org.uk

21 November Green Sanitation & Organic Waste Management, Week long at CAT. Contact as above.