



Knoll Gardens Foundation

Summer Newsletter 2016

In the garden

Hello sunshine!

It's June and the warmer weather seems to have finally arrived!

Along with the sunshine is news that the vivid orange Scarce Chaser dragonfly, *Libellula fulva* has been sighted in the gardens. The Scarce Chaser is as scarce as its name implies and can now be found in only six areas of Britain including Hampshire and Dorset where you may be lucky enough to spot one on the wing until early August. This is the first recorded sighting of the year in Dorset and south Hampshire of this distinctive dragonfly, last spotted at Knoll in 2012. Our thanks to Keith Powrie who continues to formally record sightings of Knoll's many butterfly, dragonfly and damselfly visitors. If you are interested in finding out more you can join Keith on a guided butterfly walk in the garden on 30 July, but do book early as his walks are always incredibly popular.

As well as the sunshine and the Scarce Chaser, we welcome three new temporary staff members; Julie Lenthall on production, Jenni Pyett on front of house and Tom Hammer as general nursery assistant.

Our volunteer numbers are also swelling. The Foundation now has more than 20 regular volunteers, three of whom have been with us since our initial launch. Latest recruits are Eric and Andrea Gilham who pop over from Broadstone every week to enjoy some like-minded company and get a bit of a workout in the garden.

Enjoy the summer and do check out the event programme online as it is frequently updated with new activities, workshops, talks and walks.

Hope to see you in the garden very soon.



Coming soon



Plant medicine

Plant medicine walk and workshop with Rachel Heathcote

Saturday 2 July, 10.30am until 1pm, £35, booking essential

Join medical herbalist Rachel Heathcote for a gentle walk to discover the secrets of Knoll's natural medicine chest before joining a herbal remedy workshop. Book on 07968 169064 or heathcoteherbs@gmail.com



Fantastic ferns

Fern Day with specialist grower, Country Garden Plant Sales

Saturday 23 July, 10am until 2pm, free, normal garden admission cost

All you ever wanted to know about ferns from a local wholesale specialist.

Beautiful butterflies guided walk

Saturday 30 July, 11am until 12.30pm, free but booking essential

Join our butterfly expert on this guided walk as you find and identify the many butterflies in the garden.



Beautiful butterflies

The Great Heath Garden Survey

Tuesday 2 August, 10am until 3pm, Normal garden admission price which will be divided between the DWT and the Knoll Gardens Foundation, no pre-booking required.

Help Dorset Wildlife Trust volunteers identify and record all the wildlife you spot in this special one day survey. No experience is required, just a love of gardens and wildlife.



Children's workshop

Children's herb workshop with Rachel Heathcote

Saturday 13 August, 10.30am until 12 noon, £10, (to inc one adult) booking essential

A fun and creative session for children (6 - 12) to engage with nature and learn about the amazing herbs around them, with garden trail, herbal art and safe lotions and potions to take home.

Book on 07968 169064 or heathcoteherbs@gmail.com

Attracting new visitors

This summer will bring new visitors in to the garden. On 2 August we will reveal Knoll's new bee house. Designed and built by Dorset Wildlife Trust the house, with its green roof, will offer a fashionable home for many species of solitary bee as well as a myriad other insects. We are delighted to welcome it in to the garden at Knoll following last year's successful bee day.

The garden's wildlife is also adapting to a new early morning activity this summer. Following a successful 'taster session' two early morning yoga courses are taking place on Thursdays. Book online for individual sessions in June or the full August course.



A note from Neil

Weathering the garden

The results of the mild winter are now becoming more obvious in the garden. Continuous plant growth meant the inevitable cold snap damaged young shoots. In turn this has resulted in shorter stem lengths of the grasses and perennials that all rely on a good spring to put on growth. The *Euphorbia palustris* in the Decennium border are a good example. They flowered in time for Chelsea but are a good foot shorter than 'normal'.



Warm and dry

While the garden has recorded regular -12°C and occasional -14°C the coldest temperature last winter was just -6°C on a few occasions. It was also a lot drier with just over three feet of rain last year - a foot less than in 2014.



Planting news

Last autumn volunteers planted several hundred Alliums which now look stunning in the new area joining the dragon and gravel gardens. Removing one of the large thuya hedges has created a meadow-style feel and Luke has been busy re-shaping the remaining hedges into more informal 'cloud' like shapes. They will take several seasons to mature but already look so much better than the more formal straight lines.

The new *Carex* meadow is now under way with the volunteers undertaking the first mass planting of *Carex arenaria*. The adjacent summerhouse, that looks out across the soon-to-be meadow, is also being updated and will soon house an interpretation board about the new meadow.



Meeting our visitors

Interpretation is increasingly important and many of our team of volunteers now also act as garden guides helping visitors to understand our style of gardening and answering their plant queries. Volunteers also provide an invaluable meet-and-greet service for our public events and open days. Their enthusiasm and specialist knowledge is frequently mentioned by many of our visitors who really appreciate this personal welcome. Our goal now is to extend this meet and greet role to offer a warm welcome to all our garden visitors. If anyone feels they can help out it would be great to have a chat.

Neil Lucas

In the last few months

Hundreds of people visited our spring plant fair



Neville the nursery cat recently took up residence at Knoll



Knoll featured on the BBC's The Instant Gardener on 8th June



Don't miss Neil's interview in Country Homes & Interiors this autumn

Neil hosted Princess Anne at this year's Chelsea Flower Show



Look out for our latest events online: new bat walk on 27 October



The Knoll Gardens Foundation

The Knoll Gardens Foundation is dedicated to refining and promoting a wildlife friendly naturalistic gardening style, using the garden at Knoll as a practical example and base for experimentation. The Foundation relies on donations, legacies, fundraising events and grants to finance its work and welcomes contributions from those who share a passion for gardening and wildlife.

The Knoll Gardens Foundation is Registered as a charity in England and Wales: 1159390.

Board of trustees

Bob Sweet (Chairman); Neil Lucas; Amanda Walker; Ross Humphrey; Andrea Flude; Peter Gear.

Contact us

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Garden opening times

The gardens are currently open Tuesday to Saturday 10am - 5pm with last entry thirty minutes before closing. Please note that we close on Sundays and Mondays, with the exception of Bank Holiday Mondays

The Knoll Gardens Foundation, Wimborne Dorset, BH21 7ND