



JUNGLE NEWS

February 2006

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CLOSING DOWN AUCTION - 4TH FEBRUARY!

CHEAP BARE-ROOT FRUIT TREES, 10 DIFFERENT VARIETIES OF ORGANIC POTATOES AND ORGANIC SEEDS FOR £1 PER PACK FOR SALE!

SATURDAY February 4th 2005

2.00 - 4.00pm at Mary St

- Don't worry! Jungle is not disappearing for ever. We are going to start **working in a different way** and we will probably no longer have a shop and meeting room.
- We want to discuss our **long-term future** with you, our members, and we'd appreciate it if you'd complete the enclosed questionnaire as well as come to the event.
- We still have available a limited number of fruit **trees and bushes** for sale at very cheap prices to our members. Please look at the enclosed list to see what we've got. Come on down on the 4th Feb and bag yourself a bargain
- If you're planning to grow **potatoes** this year, now's the time to start!! Jungle has **TEN** different varieties of organic seed potatoes ready to chit. They will cost £2 per kg (20% off for members and associates in B11 and B12, 10% off for Friends of Jungle) You can read all about the different varieties on our website at <http://jngl.editime.com/Potatoes>. We are happy to sell these varieties in mixed bags so come and get yourself a spud for any occasion!
- On 4th February we will be having a clear-out of some of Jungle's accumulated wealth and possessions. Come and join in the **auction at 3pm**.
- Members will bring **vegetarian food** along to share from 2pm and there will be a **children's activity**.

Bird Flu

There has been some worry that birds coming into gardens could carry bird flu. Most garden birds are not the kind which travel long distances and the biggest worry is with water birds and sea birds. In Birmingham we have quite small numbers of these and very few farmed birds which they could infect. Humans are not in close contact with the birds in their gardens anyway. Garden birds **do not pose a risk** to humans from bird flu.

The real risk comes from farming birds for food although government sources say that eating chicken is still safe. The World Health Organisation has said that chicken and eggs should be well-cooked to be extra safe.

Caring For Our Feathered Friends

Balsall Heath has many hidden areas in which a wide range of garden birds can and do live. Birds on the endangered "red" list including house sparrows, tree sparrows, song thrushes and starlings have all been spotted by members in Balsall Heath's gardens and open spaces. Alongside these endangered species you can also spot great tits, blue tits, robins, wrens, green finches, pied wagtails, blackbirds and many more. One of our members has even seen a lesser spotted woodpecker in their garden!

We can all do our bit to help Balsall Heath keep its populations of garden birds happy and safe. Plant something that will provide shelter or nesting spots or try some of the following to help.

1. Introduce a **bird table** and **high-energy seed mixes**. You can also use the table to put out kitchen scraps such as baked potatoes and soaked dried fruit.
 2. Put out hanging feeders of **black sunflower seeds** and **unsalted peanuts**.
 3. Ensure a **supply of fresh water** every day. If it is very cold use warm water but **DON'T** add anything to prevent it from freezing
 4. **Food bars** or fat hung up or rubbed into the bark of trees will help shy garden visitors, such as wrens.
 5. Put up **nest boxes** to provide roost sites for the smaller birds. They might then be used for breeding later in the year.
 6. Plant berry-bearing plants in your garden, such as **hawthorn, holly, cotoneaster** and **berberis** to help birds in the coming years.
 7. Make sure you keep your feeders and bird tables clean - using small amounts of **mild disinfectant** and **warm water** and rinse well!
- For more information visit www.rspb.org.uk

HAPPY NEW YEARS

ISLAMIC NEW YEAR (1427 A.H.) is on 30 Jan. It is the 1427th anniversary of the Hijra, when Prophet Muhammad p.b.u.h. migrated from Makkah to Madinah. On this day, we are told, Muslims will think about the general meaning of Hijra, moving from a bad place or state of affairs to a good one, and regard it as a good time for "New Year Resolutions". We wish all our Muslim readers a happy new year.

13 Feb is Tu B'Shvat, the JEWISH NEW YEAR FOR TREES, a traditional tree-planting time. In European Jewish traditions, a tree planted at Tu B'Shvat for a baby was used to make the Chuppah (canopy) for their wedding.

YOUR GARDEN IN FEBRUARY

MORE INFO FROM
WWW.GARDENORGANIC.ORG.UK

❖ Believe it or not, it is time to start planting and sowing again. In late February **broad beans** can be planted in double rows with 20cm between the rows. Leave 60cm between these double rows and the next crop. Seeds should be 5cm deep with 20cm between each plant. It is supposed to improve germination if the "scar" on the seed is placed downwards when planting.

❖ **Round-seeded peas** can be sown in February, but the wrinkled kind need warmer weather. If you want to start some off in a warmer spot then use old guttering filled with compost, spacing 5cm between each plant and planting the seeds 5cm deep.

❖ If you have a warm sunny indoor position (or a heated propagator) then start some **radishes** and **winter lettuce** off. They will need "hardening off" or placing somewhere not too cold before they are planted out. If you have a cold-frame then this is a good place to put them.

❖ **Potatoes** can be chitted in February for planting in the Spring. Place the potatoes in a light cool place with the end with the most "eyes" pointing upwards. It is best to do this in old egg boxes or trays. Tubers should be washed and dried very carefully first to be sure that no diseases are present in soil. Always use seed which is certified disease-free and not old potatoes from a supermarket which are treated to stop them from sprouting. Jungle is selling ten different varieties of organic potatoes this year. You can buy as many or as few of each kind as you want.

❖ Start to **mulch new growing areas** for use in the Spring. Place a layer of opened out cardboard boxes or sheets (about eight thick) of newspaper over new ground and weight it down with bricks or stones. Make sure there are no gaps between the pieces of mulch. You can cut holes in the cardboard or paper later on and plant into these holes. This is a very good way to grow potatoes because they can be grown without any digging. Cover them in a thick layer of straw, leafmould or compost and then pull back the layer at the end of the year to reveal a crop of tasty spuds.

❖ If you need help and advice with **winter pruning** of fruit trees and bushes then please ring us at Jungle or come and visit us. Pruning can be used to get more fruit from plants, but it has to be done in the right way.

Stir-Fried Cabbage with Noodles

Ingredients

Chinese noodles

3 tablespoons white wine or rice vinegar

1 teaspoon cornflour

2 tablespoons sugar

1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper

1 teaspoon stock powder mixed with a little water

1/4 cup onion, chopped

500g cabbage cut into 5cm squares

1 cup water

Method

Combine vinegar, cornflour, sugar and cayenne paper

Stir fry onion in broth

Add cabbage and vinegar mixture to onion. Stir fry for 2-3 minutes, adding water as necessary.

Boil noodles (only takes 3 minutes)

Either stir noodles into cabbage or serve cabbage over the noodles
4 servings of 1/2 cup cabbage and 1 cup noodles
This recipe reheats well.

JUNGLE EVENTS at 100 Mary Street

Saturday 4th February 2-4pm: JUNGLE SALE. See top of newsletter for details.

Monday 13th - Friday 17th February: Jungle will be CLOSED for half term.

Saturday 4th March 2-4pm: ANNUAL MEMBERS MEETING. We are planning to register as a charitable company, so we will be asking you to approve changes to the constitution. See www.jngl.org.uk for constitution, or contact us for a copy.

Thursdays, 10am-2.30pm: Women's Gardening Group. Good food, good company, lots of chat and informative discussions about gardening in a women-only environment.

Tuesdays, 10am-3pm: Drop-in Centre. Come and tell us about your garden, get advice, buy gardening supplies and share lunch.

Tuesdays, 12-1pm: Shared Lunch. Bring some vegetarian food, share a meal and chat about growing food.

OTHER "GREEN" EVENTS

Friday 3rd February: Critical Mass Bike Ride. Meet at St. Phillips Cathedral to ride around the city at 6pm. The ride is to celebrate cycling and promote human-powered vehicles as an alternative to cars. Some people come on unicycles, skateboards or rollerskates.

Wednesday 15th February: Tree Walk and Survey. 11am start at the Nature Centre, Cannon Hill Park. Call 464 1044 for details.

Wednesday 18th February: Birmingham Organic Gardeners. 7.15 - 9.30pm - Dame Elizabeth Cadbury Hall, Bournville. Open to anyone.

Sunday 26th February: Conservation Workday. 11.30-3pm. Help Park Rangers with practical conservation work. Meet at the Wildflower Meadow, Cannon Hill Park.

JUNGLE'S FUTURE: WIN A PRIZE!

Jungle has been in existence since 1999. Since then the organisation has gained in strength and now has over 150 members mostly living in Balsall Heath. During the last two years we have benefited from a grant from the Big Lottery Fund which has allowed us to do more work supporting people in Balsall Heath who want to grow their own food. This grant ends in February. At present the staff and management committee are looking at ways to raise more funds in order to enable Jungle to continue to work to support people in Balsall Heath who want to take care of the natural environment and continue to make our area a greener place.

We want to know what you, the members, think of our plans. We would also like to find out from you what sort of support you need. In order to do this we are asking all our members to fill in and return the enclosed questionnaire. Please take the time to fill this in as it will give the staff and committee the information we need to make Jungle better for us all. As a thank you for filling it in, you can enter a prize draw so you could be lucky and win vouchers to spend at Jungle in February.

1st prize: £25 vouchers

2nd prize: £15 vouchers

3rd prize: £10 vouchers

**Fruit Trees & Bushes available
as of 30/01/06
20% discount for members**

APPLE TREES Bare root, 1 year old, (MM106 rootstock)

RF1 Apple, Red Falstaff, Self-fertile. High yield. Can be stored. Pick in October. Pollination group 3. £12.00 2 available

SS1 Apple, Sweet Society, similar to Cox. Pollination group 4 £12.00 2 available

RL1 Redcurrant, Red Lake. 7 available

SW1 Cherry, Sweetheart. Pick fruit late September. Self fertile. Pruning in late July is recommended to stop tree getting too big. £16.00 3 available

LA1 Grapevine, Lakemont Seedless, in 3 litre container, for planting outdoors or in a greenhouse etc. Resistant to mildew and downy mildew. Thinning the fruit gives larger grapes. £12.00 1 available

PM1 Grapevine, Polo Muscat, in 3 litre container, , £12.00 2 available

CO1 Pear, Conference: this is the standard supermarket variety. Pick fruit in September. Pollination group 3. Self-fertile. £12.00 4 available

AB1 Raspberry, 10 canes, Autumn Bliss, root-wrapped. Fruits in the Autumn. £12.00 2 available

GC1 Raspberry, 10 canes, Glen Clova, early summer, root-wrapped. £12.00 1 available

GC1 Raspberry, 10 canes, Glen Magna, early summer, root-wrapped. £12.00 1 available

We also have NATIVE TREE and hedge species, including HAZEL and SILVER BIRCH.

COMPOSTS:

LAKELAND GOLD, 40L made from cow manure, straw and bracken. Excellent for growing fruit & vegetables. Mix with other compost or soil, or use as a mulch. £6 per bag, or £5 for members.

DANU, 20L, excellent multipurpose compost for containers, from composted barley grains. Retains water and nutrients well. £2.50, £2 for members.

SEEDS PACKETS ALL £1.

CHILDREN'S PICTURES BOOKS BY LOCAL AUTHOR MANDY ROSS, a long standing member of Jungle. One of the books, the Gardens of Stanley Street, was inspired by Jungle. Another was inspired by the Friends of Balsall Heath Park. £5 or £3.

We have some organic seed potatoes on sale, for £2 per kg (20% off for members and associates in B11 and B12, 10% off for friends).

We are selling the following varieties:

Ambo, Charlotte, Colleen, Maris Peer, Orla, Record, Remarka, Robinta, Valor, Verity

Some information on the varieties:

	Particularly Useful As:	Resistant To:	Shape:	Skin:	Flesh:
1st Early					
COLLEEN	Boiled	Tuber Blight, Virus Y	short oval	yellow	yellow
ORLA	Boiled	Blackleg, Tuber Blight, Foliage Blight, Virus Y	oval	cream	cream
2nd Early					
CHARLOTTE	Salad	Slugs, Blackleg	long oval	yellow	yellow
MARIS PEER	Boiled, Salad	Powdery Scab	short oval - oval	white	white
Main Crop					
AMBO	Baked, Boiled	Slugs	oval - short oval	white with pink	cream
RECORD		Powdery Scab, Tuber Blight	round - short oval	yellow	light yellow
REMARKA	Baked, Roast, Mashed		oval - long oval	cream	cream
ROBINTA			round	red	cream
VALOR	Baked, Roast, Chips	Tuber Blight, Leaf Roll Virus	oval	white	cream
VERITY	Baked	Foliage Blight	round - short oval	white with pink	cream

"Early" potatoes are a bit more tolerant to the cold, and grow quicker, so they can also be planted late!

Potatoes can be kept in a cool, dry, fairly light, frost-free place, not in direct sunlight, to "chit". This means they sprout and get a head start before planting. Careful with the sprouts: you don't want them to drop off! The safest planting time is April. All potatoes can be grown without digging.