WILD FLOWERS STRIKE GOLD AT HAMPTON COURT FLOWER SHOW

Over 2,000 native coastal plants such as Thrift, Sheep-Fescue, Kidney Vetch, Yellow Horned Poppy's and Scabious have helped the Conceptual Garden ‘A Fable for Tomorrow’ take a gold, RHS medal at Hampton Court Flower Show.

Designed by Sue Radmore, Electra Sanders and Scarlet Wheaton for University College Falmouth the Garden depicts an old, Cornish seed bank. Some seeds have spilled out to germinate around pools while others have colonised the hill itself as they might in the wild.

Linda Laxon, MD of British Wild Flower Plants, the specialist Norfolk Nursery that has custom grown the plants says that many seeds will lie underground for years until they are disturbed and the conditions are right for them to germinate.

“Poppies for example shed their seeds in August and because of the dry conditions fall through cracks in the soil where they remain about one foot down at a constant temperature until the field is ploughed. “When this happens they enjoy light and rain, germinate and consequently flower.”

British Wild Flower Plants have also supplied ‘Fields of Gold’ part of the ‘Home Grown’ RHS central exhibit at Hampton Court. For further information, contact British Wild Flower Plants on Tel: 01603 716915 or visit www.wildflowers.co.uk

Success for Marriott Group

All 10 of Marriott’s UK golf resorts have been awarded “Certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary” status in recognition of the hard work they have undertaken implementing a variety of projects in environmental areas around the golf course.

The Award is an international recognition of environmental excellence bestowed on organisations that are taking a leadership role in conservation.

The Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses helps to enhance wildlife habitats and protect natural resources for the benefit of people, wildlife and the game of golf. The programme is designed to give Course Managers the information and guidance they need to implement stewardship projects and receive recognition for their efforts.

The Golf Programme is part of the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary System. It is administered by Audubon International, a non-profit environmental organisation that spearheads education and conservation assistance programs that promote environmental stewardship and sustainability.

The Program addresses five key environmental quality areas: Wildlife and Habitat Management, Chemical Use, Reduction and Safety, Water Conservation, Water Quality Management and Outreach and Education.

Golf Management Trophy Day comes to Erewash Valley

A Midland Region Golf Management Trophy Day sponsored for the 12th successive year by Scotts UK Professional was held at Erewash Valley Golf Club.

Teams from 15 golf clubs enjoyed a great day on a superbly presented course prepared by Course Manager Graham Arnold and his staff. We were blessed with an unusually warm day, and all players were relieved to make it to the clubhouse for a well earned refreshment, where everyone was made to feel very welcome by all the staff and members; our thanks are extended to all at the Club.

The competition is based on the established format of four man teams playing stableford with the best two points scores on each hole to count. The team from Kirby Muxloe Golf Club, with Course Manager Antony Bindley won the event for the second time with a great score of 93 points; Birstall Golf Club 2nd with 89 points, and 3rd on 88 points Wollaton Park Golf Club.

The Midland Region of BIGGA thanks Erewash Valley Golf Club for hosting the event and Scotts for their sponsorship.

NEW MODEL

Despite lengthy talks with various modelling agencies Sheffield Section resisted temptation and used a model from among their own number! Thanks to Ian Whitehead for attempting to model the new Sheffield Section polo shirts. The shirts are available in many sizes and are at the very reasonable price of £10. The Section has already had a lot of enquiries so far so if you would like to order one please contact James Stevens on 07738716014

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The winning team from Kirby Muxloe Golf Club receiving the trophy, with Antony Bindley centre. LEFT: Mark Rayner presenting the main prize, an Accupro Spreader, to Antony Bindley.
GI NEWSDESK

Sports Ground Contractor Ups The Power

Tractors designed and built originally for use in agriculture are proving an increasingly important asset for non-farming applications as evidenced by the 125hp MF 7465 tractor added recently to the machinery fleet of Hampshire-based sports ground construction and turf drainage specialist, Kestrel Contracting.

Supplied by local Massey Ferguson dealer, Lester Wilder, the new tractor replaced a seven-year old 115hp MF 6265 in spearheading the company’s contrast drainage specialist at sports pitches and playing fields throughout the UK.

“Powering an AFT Wide Wheel 75 wheel-type trencher, the additional muscle and advanced Dyna-VT transmission of the MF 7465 is proving invaluable in sustaining high workrates while promoting consistently good results in a wide range of surface conditions and soil types,” points out Kestrel founder and managing director, Richard Veitch.

“The extra horsepower comes in very useful when laying mains drainage pipes measuring up to 150mm diameter at depths anywhere between 500mm and 700mm below ground level,” said Richard.

The ST2's groundbreaking Trueness Meter was in use at St Andrews during The Open.

The revolutionary new technology played a pivotal role in ensuring all 18 greens were consistent and of an optimal trueness.

Developed in conjunction with Sheffield Hallam University following funding from the R&A, The Trueness Meter is used as an integral part of the ST2 Programme. The technology is being hailed as one of the biggest steps forward in the agronomy industry in 30 years and the only accurate, effective and efficient method of measuring smoothness and trueness of a green.

The perfect putting surface tests the player but also gives the Course Manager a true sense of how well the green is performing. It is a non-invasive test that can be repeated in as little as 15 minutes.

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“The extra horsepower comes in very useful when laying mains drainage pipes measuring up to 150mm diameter at depths anywhere between 500mm and 700mm below ground level,” said Richard.

The GTC and IOG have secured an agreement with City & Guilds NPTC, to have their logos included with both the greenkeeper and groundsmanship, with effect from September 1 this year.

Jack Ward, City & Guilds NPTC’s Chief Executive confirmed he was delighted that an agreement had been reached with both the greenkeeper and groundsmanship bodies and hoped that it would be an exemplar for other land-based organisations to follow.

The new Diplomas have replaced the NVQ’s in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and given industries the opportunity to have a stronger influence in the content of the Diplomas as well as a Quality Assurance in the delivery of the qualifications.

In another development the GTC, in association with the IOG, has created a Groundsmanship Diploma, with effect from September 1 this year.

David added: “The GTC is delighted to ensure a range of qualifications are available through a network of Approved Centres.”

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1: A Customer Service Culture

- BIGGA is a business, and make no mistake – we need to be going where we are now and where we need to be going.
- We need to be informed decision makers, making our decisions based on a business culture.
- A Business Plan and supervises the Board to ensure that the Association and to work with the Board and the HQ team. At the AGM in January the members attending indicated that they wanted me to take an active role in the business and gave me their mandate to work with the HQ team and our hard working volunteers to make BIGGA the best membership organisation anywhere (See my March column).
- If I retreat from this ‘take-up’ challenge through key activities like: the (soon to be updated) BIGGA CPD Accreditation scheme; the (newly updated) Industry Standards, the (soon to be updated) Skills Shortages Survey. This ‘take-up’ challenge of our CPD. I believe that we already have the leadership, the professional HQ team and the infra-structure (populated by really great volunteers) to achieve this goal and I feel the same.
- My confidence that we can achieve this aim was reinforced recently by Tracey Maddison at HQ who kindly gave me an excellent overview on how it’s all done by your Chairman and Board.
- Please also see my March, April and June columns.

3: data driven Strategies

- Three-tiered structure makes access-ible and ensures that we continue to improve the way we offer our services and interact with our members. Our mission statement reads – ‘all-encompassing vision and one that will need continuous effort and attention. However, six months ago I expressed the belief that we already have the leadership, the professional HQ team and the infrastructure to achieve this aim and I feel the same.
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