

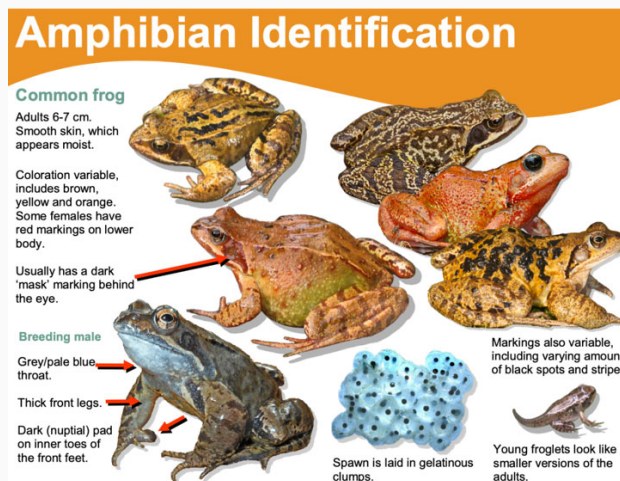
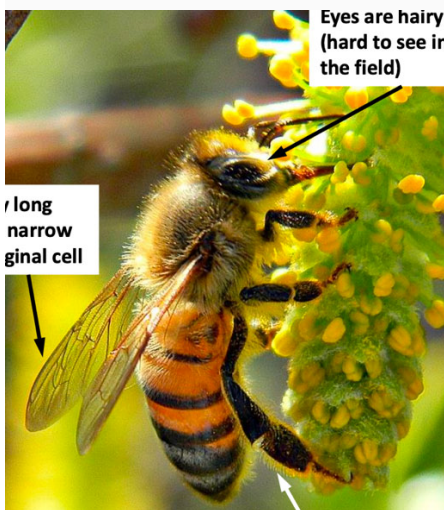


HAA Spring newsletter

Encouraging wildlife session at our AGM

Our AGM this year will take place at Highgate Primary School (entrance in Storey Road N6 4ED) on **Saturday 27 April** from 1.30 for a 2pm start. If you would like to stand for the Committee, you can find a Nomination Form, as well as last year's minutes and accounts on our [website](#) (scroll down to AGM 27 APRIL 2024 PAPERS). Nomination forms must be returned to highgateallotments@outlook.com or the letterbox on the outside of the Shed Shop by 6 pm on **Friday April 19**.

We are pleased to say that - after the AGM business - we will have a session on identifying and encouraging pollinators and amphibians on our allotments. This will be led by [Heath Hands](#) but we will all have a chance to contribute and there will habitat examples on show, as well as guides for you to take back to your plot.



Capital Growth

Appropriately enough, our AGM takes place in **Good to Grow week**. This is run by [Capital Growth](#) and Highgate Allotments Association has joined their network. You can check out their open gardens and training sessions on their website and we will have some of their materials on display at the AGM (see above). In the meantime, you might like to check out the [Buglife video](#), the [Butterfly Conservation website](#) and the [Garden Organic website](#) for tips on gardening for wildlife. Please email [Maggy](#) if you would like us to email you guides to amphibians and pollinators and their habitats.

Summer Plant Sale and Picnic

Our annual Plant Sale and Picnic will be held by the Shed Shop on **Sunday 23 June** - Plant Sale from 11.30am and please bring food to share from 1pm - it's a great chance to meet and socialise with your allotment neighbours.

This year will have the added bonus of an **exhibition in the Shed of the work of our current Artist in Residence** Sophy Wollaston - there will even be cards to buy! All proceeds from these and the Plant Sale will be split between local charity Harington and the HAA. Pics below are of Sophy at work in Sue Cakebread's allotment (Sue and John will be running the Plant Sale as usual) and the resulting painting.



Bonfires and BBQs

As usual, as of 1 April bonfires are not permitted on the site. The ban is in place until 1 October each year. BBQs are allowed as long as they are properly managed, do not disturb neighbours and are extinguished before your departure from the site.

Allotment Inspection

The first of our two annual inspections will be undertaken by Vicky Stone, Allotments Co-ordinator, Haringey Council in the next few weeks. Please ensure that your plot meets the required standards detailed in the Haringey Council Cultivation Guidance May 2023. This can be found on the HAA website <https://www.highgate-allotments.org/documents>

If you cannot commit the time necessary and are struggling to keep your plot cultivated for whatever reason please contact Sally Jones, Site Secretary via highgateallotments@outlook.com for help and advice.

New Shop Hours

The Shed Shop is now open as usual from 12-2pm on Sundays and additionally from 5-6pm on Wednesday evenings.

Equipment Hire

If you wish to hire one of our mowers (petrol or manual), strimmers (petrol or battery) or woodchippers, please email HAAequipment@outlook.com, giving some times and dates when you will be available to use the kit.

Dan's Spring Gardening Tips



Now is a busy time for our allotments with spring weather and a forthcoming plot inspection due sometime in May. At some point in the next month, **tender plants like courgettes, pumpkins, outdoor cucumbers and sweetcorn** would be appropriate to plant out. Over the last few years I've had some luck getting these plants established successfully by creating ridges up to a foot high, facing north south and planting in the furrow after adding a good dollop of compost. This tactic is to improve the microclimate, that is, moisture, sunshine, soil temperature and lower wind-speeds. The effect can be enhanced by placing hoops over too, forming plastic cloches with polythene sheet (preferably with holes in), to be removed when the plants gets bigger and the weather is reliably warm.

At this season **trees on your plot** or the neighbouring plot are leafing up. You may notice they are shading your plot. In my experience, apple trees are extremely tough and you can lop boughs off, within reason, even now - they will recover, especially if you paint the cuts with sealant. After all, trees higher than 3m are difficult to pick and there is a guidance on a height limit for fruit trees in your terms of occupancy.

Ornamental trees might also be lopped or removed since they are not productive of crops and cast shade, taking nutrients and moisture out of the soil in the process. But you will probably be too busy to deal with them, unless there is a sort of emergency!

Hazel bushes yield stakes for your climbing beans, saving you a bit of cash for bamboo canes. There are several places where, after permission from the plothead, these might be obtained.

Moving on from the subject of tree issues, **weeds** will also have to be brought under control for the sake of your crops. Spare a thought for nettles at the edge, since five species of butterfly can breed on them. You don't need a whole patch of them - a large pot with a single plant in it, set in the ground in the right position could allow caterpillars to develop successfully. If you like seeing Orange Tip butterflies, leave a Garlic mustard plant or two- that is the food plant.

You may have noticed a bright yellow butterfly on the allotments lately. That will be the Brimstone which needs Alder buckthorn to breed. If you're interested in introducing that bush, contact me to discuss butterfly matters further. **Look out for**

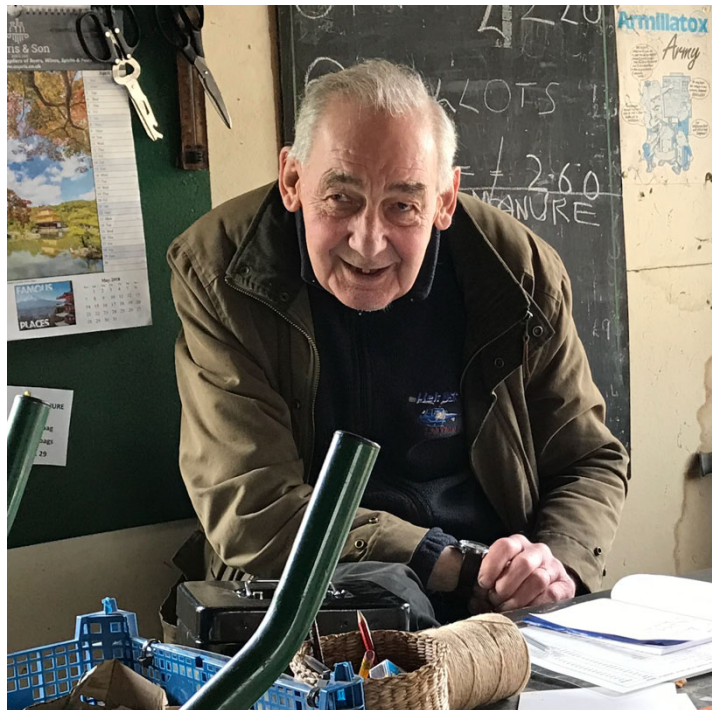
a “bug walk” led by me provisionally on 19 May.

Dan Hackett

This newsletter is dedicated to the memory of our much missed 'Chairman Jim'.

Jim Greenhill was the kind and dedicated steward of our allotment site for as long as even the oldest of tenants can remember. Even when he was no longer able to do much active gardening, he continued to preside over the Shed Shop and dispense advice and good humour in equal measure. The allotments will simply not be the same without his distinctive laugh resounding around the site and his greeting of "Well, what do we know?" as we entered the Shed. RIP Jim.

(Photo courtesy of Chrissie Nicholls)



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Our mailing address is:
highgateallotments@outlook.com