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very!

POSITIVE FEEDBACK

By Deborah Barnish BSc(Hons) DipPSGD

Thanks to everyone who came to see us at Whittington Country and Craft Fair ♦ near Lichfield♦ Yes, it poured down. But that did not stop dozens of green-finger'd gardeners dropping by for free tips and advice. Our special 'Gardeners' Question Time' went down a storm as well as outside the heavens continued to open. On the 'experts bench' with me were Diana Muir (from the Plant Plot Garden Centre) and Simon Roberts (from landscapers, Beautiful Gardens).

Topics on the tips of people's tongues turned our minds yet again to this summer's wet and humid weather. The mysterious sicknesses they said were blighting so many of their plants were nearly all attributed to fungal growths which are flourishing in this year's damp and gloom.

Gardeners should begin fighting back by getting rid of every scrap of diseased material they can. Nothing should go into the compost - it should all go straight in a bin, or on a bonfire. Using with a fungicide early next year will reduce the chance of reinfection.

Slugs also slithered into focus. My fellow experts recommended beer traps (which really do work!). Organic slug pellets were also on their list of remedies. They believed one brand, 'Slug Clear', although not organic, was particularly good as it killed the adult slugs and their eggs too.

On a tastier note the audience asked what produce they should be planting this month. Well, potatoes can be planted in pots now and will be ready for Christmas. Spring cabbages planted out now will grow on through the cold. Hardy winter salads such as the Oriental mizuna can still be sown given some protection



10% OFF! Show this newsletter at the Plant Plot garden centre, Lichfield, and get 10% off trees and shrubs (offer open until October 10, 2008).

Talking shop

Reducing garden maintenance has been a big priority for people this month. Some because coping with a large plot is becoming more difficult as the years go by. Others say hectic lives leave no time for the task. But there is no need for anyone to lose out on a lovely garden. These ideas should help you keep on top of garden jobs without resorting to wall-to-wall (or fence-to-fence) gravel:

- stop feeding! Too much fertiliser encourages lots of floppy growth, less food means smaller and sturdier perennials;
- weed your borders and then mulch with bark or gravel to stop them coming back. You could also put weed-control membrane between plants and under the mulch (avoid areas with bulbs).

Enrolling NOW

There's been fantastic response our proposed Garden Angel Design Sessions.

Due to start later this autumn, they will comprise a series of tutorials held at a location near you.

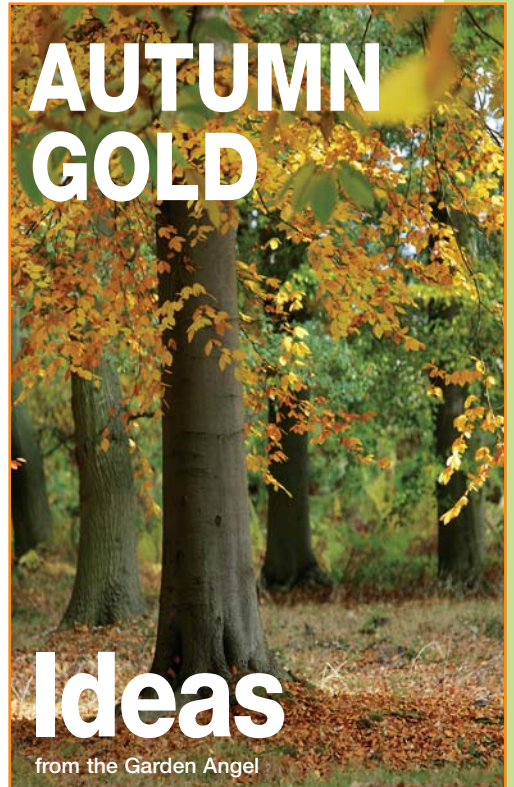
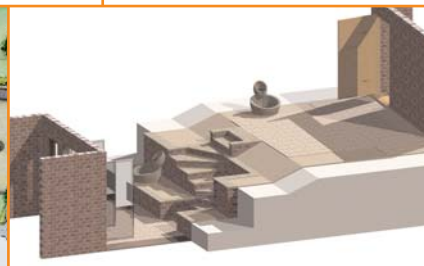
The friendly and informal sessions will cover a wide range of topics. Among the things you will learn will be how to set out your own planting and landscaping schemes.

You can try your hand at designing for colour, structure, year-round interest and even the 'Good Life' - growing for the table is a topic whose time has truly come.

YOUR OWN GARDEN DESIGN

Other features could include tips on designing for flood tolerance, drought resistance, attracting wildlife, security, children's play and entertaining.

So why not come along and meet like-minded people who share a love of gardening and want to find out more. Let us know if you would like to take part and we will forward you the details of courses in your area. For information ring 0800 587 4409, or e-mail: info@angeltomney.co.uk.



AUTUMN GOLD

Ideas

from the Garden Angel

If you have not done so already, spike your lawn today!

Grass drowns if left waterlogged too long - so push a fork or aerator deep into the soil to allow the lawn to drain. A good sprinkling of lawn dressing, or horticultural sand, afterwards will help puddles created by future downpours soak away more easily. Your lawn should be spiked every three years or so. And it is a job best done in the autumn.

Useful lawn care chores to carry out at the same time include removing moss patches and applying an autumn feed to promote growth.

PLANT A TREE FOR AUTUMN COLOUR

here are a few of my favourites with glorious hues: **small** - Acer griseum, Sorbus commixta Embley, **larger** - Acer rubrum October Glory, Liquidamber styraciflua Worplesdon.