



Compost mentors newsletter

Winter 2011



Spread the word: mentors now wanted in East Cornwall

We are now looking for mentors in the Bodmin/Wadebridge area for workshops on the 1st and 10th March, and from March onwards we will be looking for mentors in Liskeard and Launceston. So if you know anyone from these areas who may be interested, please let them know about the scheme! Thank you.

Free food growing courses

Cornwall Neighbourhoods for Change (CN4C) can support you with the training to learn how to grow your own food at home and provides the tools, seeds, compost and compost bin to get you started... all for free! For more information please contact Ruth: 07974 224 615/ruth@cn4c.org.uk.



Compost mentors lucky dip

Here is your chance to win a free Green Johanna... and our chance to learn a little bit more about you as a compost mentor! All you have to do to enter the lucky dip is to send us the following (by email or by post):

- A photograph of you in your garden next to your compost bin.
- Your favourite composting tip.
- Your favourite mentoring tip. (For example: "I like to focus on the environmental side of things to engage people" or "I work in a school so I have been talking about composting to the parents there" etc).

The winner will win a free Green Johanna (with a retail price of £100), and the two runners-up will win the book "How to make and use compost – the ultimate guide" by Nicky Scott (See review on p.4 of the newsletter).

The closing date for entering the lucky dip is Monday 28th February. Good luck!

Note: for those who do not win, there are still some Green Johannas available at a discounted price: see on p.5.

Tamar Organics vouchers: Make sure you get yours in time for the Spring!

Well done to all the compost mentors who have completed over 20 hours of mentoring in the last few months and have received their reward! We hope that you have bought – or will soon buy – a few packets of seeds to grow exciting things this Spring. And if you cannot wait for the Spring, you could order your seeds now and start a mini garden on your window sill (see article below).

And for those who still haven't quite made it to 20 hours... keep spending time spreading the word about composting and mentoring, and send us your timesheets; as soon as you reach 20 hours you will be rewarded with a £5 voucher to spend at Tamar Organics (as well as their catalogue). For more information about Tamar Organics, have a look at their website: www.tamarorganics.co.uk

So keep the effort going and soon you could be looking at scores of exciting green shoots, full of promises of tomatoes, courgettes and runner beans... all earned by your efforts as a mentor!



Winter growing idea: Start a window sill garden

It is still cold outside, but there are a number of things you could easily grow in pots on your window sill (try to choose a south-facing window). You could grow salad greens such as lettuce, land cress, pea shoots, rocket, purslane, oriental greens or ready-made mesclun salad mixes; or herbs such as chives, basil, lavender, parsley, mint and thyme.

You could also use this seasonal downtime to choose what you will grow in the Spring (and start stocking on seeds) and plan your vegetable patch!



Winter to do's in the garden: help your local wildlife

For a sunny moment a couple of weeks ago it felt like Spring was here, but it now seems that winter will keep its hold for just a little longer... but how about braving the cold to give a little help to the freezing and hungry wildlife in your garden? Here are some things you could do:

- **Top up your bird feeders.** Keep your bird feeders full of seeds and nuts, and spread some more on the floor for ground feeding birds such as blackbirds, robins, thrushes and wrens. Add a fat ball every now and then. The birds will love this nutritious treat that will help them stay plump and warm.
- **Prepare a home-made treat for the birds:**
You could make your own bird treats using this recipe:
 1. Melt some lard or suet in a pan.
 2. Leave the fat to cool down until it turns into a pasty substance.
 3. Mix in things that birds will like: nuts, seeds, dried mealworms etc.
 4. Put a hole in the bottom of a yogurt pot, thread a piece of string through it and tie a knot with the string at the bottom.
 5. Fill the yogurt pot with the mix and pack it down firmly.
 6. Leave it in the fridge for a few hours.
 7. Cut away the carton and hang the treat.
- **Plant a tree/bush for wildlife.**
Winter is the ideal time for planting trees and shrubs, as the trees are dormant and can be moved to their new environment without too much damage. It is still time to purchase very cheap bare root trees and bushes - or you could take your own cuttings.

Trees and shrubs beneficial for wildlife include those who produce berries or seeds enjoyed by insects, birds and small mammals; those who produce flowers with nectar for butterflies and bees; and those who provide good shelter for nesting birds and other creatures. Native species are best as they will be suited to the local wildlife. Here are some ideas of wildlife-friendly trees/shrubs you could plant now: bird cherry, wild cherry, holly, elder, guelder rose, dogwood, hawthorn, wild plum, buddleia, crab apple. You could also plant an English oak or holm oak if you have the space (and patience!) to grow one.

- **Provide shelters:** make piles of logs and/or twigs to provide shelters to small creatures.

Furniture Now! An inspiring composting scheme

Furniture Now! is a re-use, recycling and training charity based in East Sussex. They have just launched a food composting scheme in partnership with Transition Town Lewes, East Sussex County Council and its French partners SMEDAR.

The pilot phase of the project involved installing an in-vessel composting system at the Council, as well as distributing caddies to the Council's canteen and offices. Food waste is collected on a daily basis, and taken to the vessel where it is mixed with the same volume of partially rotted woodchip.

The project is now entering its next phase, with two new clients: The Cafe at the Needlemakers, and Le Magasin on Cliffe High Street.

You can read more about it here: http://www.furniturenow.org.uk/composting_pilotphase.html



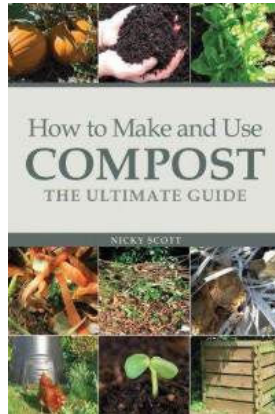
Book review:

How to Make and Use Compost: the Ultimate Guide – by Nicky Scott

This guide is packed with information about composting: from “choosing the right composting system” to “community composting” via “how to use your compost”, it covers all the aspects of composting in a style that is very clear and engaging. The simple layout and lovely illustrations and photographs make it a pleasure to read, and Nicky Scott’s enthusiasm is contagious.

You will for example find detailed instructions on how to make your own wormery, as well as “recipes” for making good potting mixes with your compost.

It is about 200 pages long, so you can be pretty sure that any questions you may have about composting will be answered. For example, did you know you could purchase “Zoo Poo” from Paignton zoo, and add it to your compost bin to give it a boost? (It is made from elephant, rhinoceros and other herbivorous animals’ poo!).



Interesting websites for keen composters and environmentalists

Don't let Devon go to waste: www.recycledevon.org

Lots of useful information about recycling and composting, written and presented in an engaging way. This site is a resource for Devon residents to find out about sustainable ways to manage resources and waste. You will find precious information under each of the 5 headings: reduce, reuse, recycle, compost, education. The education section offers good resources to teach children about environmental issues, including printable activity books and fun mini video games such as “The 3R’s challenge”.

The Community Composting Network (CCN): www.communitycompost.org

A great website for aspiring community composters. Based in Sheffield, The Community Composting Network supports and promotes the community management and use of waste bio-degradable resources.

They provide information, support and consultancy services to community composting projects, promote composting, and have a network of over 230 members. They produce a quarterly newsletter, directory of members, annual conference and training events.

Environmental event at the Poly in Falmouth on 15th February: Everyday Futures Forum

An evening of talks and stands offering advice on how to reduce personal and household carbon emissions.

Come and listen to author and activist Tristram Stuart (Waste: Uncovering the global food scandal) and Dr Bridget Woodman (expert in sustainable energy systems), discuss the everyday things we can all do to reduce carbon emissions.

You'll also be able to browse the Everyday Futures Market with information stands supplied by Cornwall Council, Cornwall Development Company, Cornwall Waste Action (Yes, that's us! See you there!), Eco House, Penryn College, Slow Food and the University of Exeter amongst others – while nibbling on local produce and sipping the finest Cornish beverages – all for free!

The Everyday Futures Forum will be held at the Poly on Tuesday 15 February. Doors open at 5.00pm, talks at 6.30pm.

(The Poly: 24 Church Street, Falmouth, Cornwall TR11 3EG)

For more information follow this link: <http://www.thepoly.org/#/february-i/4547654236>

Or contact: info@everydayfutures.org.uk; Everyday Futures, University of Exeter, Cornwall Campus, Treliever Road, Penryn TR10 9EZ.



Limited offer: Discounted Green Johannas still available

Green Johannas are still available to Cornish residents at a discounted price of £25 (instead of £100), including a free caddy. The bins are available to collect at the following outlets:

- **SOFA** in Redruth: <http://www.sofawestcornwall.org.uk/findus.htm>
Unit C3, Pool Business Park, Dudnace Lane, Pool, Redruth, Cornwall. TR15 3QW; Tel: 01209 719733
- **Cornwall Scrap Store** in St Austell: <http://www.cornwallscrapstore.co.uk/locations.php>
Goonmarris, St Austell, PL26 7QX; 01726 821161
Open 10am to 5pm - Wednesday and Thursday
- **Re:source** in Bodmin: <http://www.myresource.org.uk/contact-us.html> Bodmin Business Park, Launceston Road, Bodmin, PL31 2RJ; 0800 321 3356

Free compost bins (without lids) available

CWA has a number of 230 litre compost bins to give away to people in Cornwall. Unfortunately they are without their lids, however it is possible to improvise and re-use a piece of old carpet or some timber to cover the bin and still make usable home compost.

If you would like on of these bins, please send an email to: info@wasteaction.org.uk with your name, contact details and postcode.

Please note: you will be required to collect your bin from Redruth or Penzance.

Cornwall Waste Action
63 West End
Redruth TR15 2SQ
Cornwall

t: 01209 210883
w: www.wasteaction.org.uk

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