

Lavant Horticultural Society

'Arundel Castle Gardens' *Martin Duncan* Wednesday 8th March 2023

As well as studying Commercial Horticulture and Landscape Construction and Design, Martin has built up a wealth of experience both in the UK and abroad. In 2018 he was awarded the Kew Guild Medal.

He is Head Gardener and Designer of Arundel Castle Gardens and gave a brief description of the many different types of garden there (*listed here with a few notes of some of his comments*):

Rose garden

Soak bare root roses for 8 hours before planting.

Don't put bonemeal together with mycorrhiza as they negate each other.

A small amount of Epsom Salts around the base of each rose helps reduce blackspot.

White garden

He has taken out the low box hedges that previously surrounded the beds so that flowers can arch over paths.

He particularly recommended the Fan flower (*Scaevola*)

Collector Earl's Garden – now 15 years old.

The bulb labyrinth

The first of its kind anywhere, made of 14,000 tulip bulbs together with white narcissus '*Thalia*'.

Throughout the gardens they plant 120,000 – 150,000 bulbs a year, of which 70,000 are new tulips bulbs.

English herbaceous borders

25-26 different alliums.

Yew is very versatile – very easy to shape.

Cut flower garden

Featuring many varieties of Dahlias, among a wide selection of flowers.

Organic Kitchen Garden

Split into 4 beds for rotation.

Grow onions and carrots together, 3 rows of each alternating – the carrot fly doesn't like the smell of onions and the onion fly doesn't like the smell of carrots.

Vine house – still the original from 1853.

New Tropical Garden

Trachycarpus fortunei – a very reliable palm as it is hardy down to minus 17°C. There are many other tropical plants, particularly Ensete bananas and Cannas – there is even a paw-paw..

Stumpery

Stumps of yew, oak and sweet chestnut used, as these do not rot.

Wildflower Garden

Uses annual varieties, as these can be sown in normal soil; perennial varieties would need very poor soil.

Yellow rattle should be sown in November as it needs the cold to germinate.

The seed that they use is 'Classic Mix' from Victoria Wildflowers.

Phacelia – a real magnet for bees.

Sump Garden

A new project that has transformed a very wet part of the gardens into 3 ponds with many water and bog plants. The design has been enhanced by two small buildings of traditional wood construction with thatched roofs.

In general, grass is not mown very much – instead paths are just cut through it, allowing the grass to grow and wild flowers with it.