

Garden's Newsletter

St Mary's Secret Garden

JULY UP DATE

Welcome to the first e-newsletter from St Mary's secret project. If you are receiving this then you are already a fan of this amazing community garden and I hope you have found the time to come in and see us as the garden this month is in full bloom and marvellous. Check out the website for more information at www.stmaryssecretgarden.org.uk and pass this e-newsletter onto any friends, colleagues and garden lovers who you know haven't discovered this inner city sanctuary

EVENTS, NEWS AND FEEDBACK



It has been a busy time here at the Secret Garden. We have the on going junior 'Grow, cook and eat club' which was generously funded by Hackney community grants. A popular after - school club, getting kids to grow and harvest fruit and vegetables, from seed to the plate. An exciting opportunity to learn how to make simple delicious vegetarian meals and snacks for all the family whilst enjoying the benefits of fresh air, exercise and group work.

The 'Activate your estate' scheme: Field to fork - funded by Hackney PCT and in partnership with Shoreditch Spa, was a huge success. An innovative 'hands on' approach to educate the therapeutic, healthy and delicious benefits of growing your own food. Two estates took part in this pilot scheme, Fellow's Court and Woodberry Down. We provided accredited training to learn to grow from seed & harvest the crops, with the idea that the people completing the course become 'activators' for their estate and pass on their skills. This has just come to its successful completion, people on it have started using their skills with school kids, with their own kids & with neighbours on their estate.



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We are now looking for further funding to continue. If you would like to know more about this scheme or are interested in funding such an incredibly worthy adult education course please get in touch at info@stmarysgarden.org.uk

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Our "Open Your Eyes" art course funded by a National Lottery grant, Awards for All ran for 4 weeks in June and July. This free course for local residents featured painting and drawing in the garden. The workshops were well attended and received excellent feedback.

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UP AND COMING COURSES AND EVENTS

10 July: Design **Places available** **£20**
 What are the principles of design, how to apply these to your own space; whether it be a balcony or garden. Practice the techniques of site surveying, planning and drawing.

17 July: Practical botany **Places available** **£20**
 What makes a plant tick? Do you know what its internal structure does? What is respiration & photosynthesis?
 Learn how to use this new knowledge to help your plants flourish.

24 & 31 July: Planting **Places available** **£40**
 How to choose plants and techniques for planting; shrubs, trees, vegetables, alpines and perennials.
 Contact us on info@stmarysgarden.org.uk

July

St Mary's Secret Garden will have a stall celebrating the theme of 'Earthly Delights', where staff will be running planting workshops. Come along and plant up containers to take away with you.

September

Art Course - September 14th 11am - 3pm, every Monday. **Places available**

We will be running a 26 week course beginning on September 14th 11am - 3pm, every Monday during school term time. The program will combine a variety of art workshops around educational visits to museums and gardens. Numbers are limited so please contact us for enrollment information.

Wednesday 16 September

After all the hard work in the summer, all our volunteers, clients and staff look forward to getting together for the harvest celebration. Family and friends welcome. If you can help out in any way, perhaps by helping to set up on the day and making some food we would be very grateful.

If you are able to attend then please RSVP to info@stmarysgarden.org.uk

PAULA'S SEASONAL TIPS

This month Paula's been out and about in the garden and put together this reminder for us all.

Top 10 jobs

1. Put aside 10 minutes a night for weeding and natural pest control, (11.00pm with the torch for those late night slugs and snails).
2. Conservatory plants can come out now it's warm.
3. Organic liquid feed your container plants. (We sell comfrey plant food at the garden) and keep your pot plants and veggies well watered, but try and be water wise using your water butts in this hot weather.
4. Bedding plants and flowering perennials need deadheading to keep them continually flowering and attract those busy insects for pollination into the garden.
5. It's a busy time for harvesting in the vegetable patch. All your hard labour should be coming into fruition with globe artichokes, salads and spinach, peas, beans, garlic, beetroot. Let us know what's happening in your vegetable plots, containers and window boxes.
6. It's an exciting time to start collecting your seeds from the plants you've grown. If you want more information on seed collecting get in touch to find out when the next course is.
7. It's not just the garden that's busy. Watch out for frogs and toads who will be on the move this month. Keep your pond clear of algae and debris in this hot weather and keep it topped up.
8. Don't think it's time to put your feet up on the planting front, start sowing your autumn and winter salads, delicious lambs lettuce, spring cabbage, Oriental vegetables, turnips, chicory and fennel.
9. Enjoy the fruits of your labour and harvest your herbs to encourage the young shoots to come throughout the summer. Don't waste them, dry them and you'll still be using your own harvesting to spice up Christmas dinner.
10. While the weather is good, get out and do the DIY jobs in the garden you've been putting off. Give woodwork a lick of preserver or paint and sort that shed out! Reap what you've sown and relax with a soothing cup of peppermint tea or a Pimms mint and cucumber, you deserve it!



VEGETABLE OF THE MONTH

Kohlrabi

Wow look at those beauties. What a colour, the shapes are amazing. This incredible root vegetables name comes from the German 'Kohl', meaning cabbage and 'rabi', or turnip. its taste and texture is a bit like a broccoli slashed with a radish rather than either of those. The smaller the bulb the sweeter. So come to the garden and get pulling.



Sarah's salad days recipe

This month scrumptious healthy menu idea is 'Kohlrabi slaw'. With this great weather spell it's hard to beat cooking in the great outdoors and sharing great food with some good company. So light up the barbecue and throw together some quick great tasting salads. Why don't you think about becoming a key holder and use the barbecue facilities at St Mary's secret garden, get in touch and we'll give you the low down on how to join.

I think kohlrabi is delicious eaten raw as well as cooked. It's easy to peel the outer skin with a paring knife and just slice or grate straight into salads. Why don't you try slicing into fingers and dipping into a delicious cool humous instead of carrot sticks. Grated kohlrabi can be added to slaw, try my recipe below it's a winner! I lightly salt it first and let stand for several minutes, wash it down and squeeze to remove any excess water before adding dressing. I even eat the leaves, great in a stir fry just remove the leaf rib as it's a bit tough.



Kohlrabi slaw

- 2 large carrots, peeled and halved
- 2 peeled kohlrabi
- 1 dessertspoon of black onion seeds
- 4 tsp cumin seeds
- 4 tsp lemon juice
- minted yoghurt 200g/7oz Greek natural yoghurt
- 2 tbsp chopped mint
- 1/4 clove garlic crushed to a paste

Easy peasy slaw salad

Just shred the carrot and Kohlrabi into crunchy strips, thick or thin, as you like it. Roast your cumin seeds in a small pan on a medium heat, keep stirring until they are brown, mmm what a great smell and bang them and the onion seeds into a bowl and mix together.

Dress the slaw with minted yoghurt. Mix together the yoghurt, lemon juice, crushed garlic and chopped mint, salt and pepper to taste and stir into the slaw. That's it! A yummy healthy salad that'll have your guests going for seconds.

Email me if your guests love it or tell me your kohlrabi winning recipes you'd like to share with the secret garden community

WHAT'S FOR SALE

Come and have a go at harvesting our delicious organic vegetables and herbs, price competitive and no air miles. It's fun, nutritious and a good opportunity to try our Kohlrabi slaw recipe. On sale this month are; kohlrabi, lettuce, dwarf green beans, garlic, courgettes, Chinese cabbage, a large variety of cut and potted herbs and summer bedding plants.

CROPS COMING UP

Our lips are smacking with the thought of next months crops. Keep a look out for the next 'salad days' recipe. Beetroot, carrots, potatoes.



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VOLUNTEER PROFILE

Name: Philip Nakajima

Volunteer skills: Fund Raising, Administration, Corporate Liaison

Profession: Finance

Time as a volunteer: 6 months

Why do you enjoy volunteering at St Mary's project?

I have had a chance to meet lots of interesting people from varied backgrounds. The garden provides therapeutic and educational sessions for a number of worthy local groups including social services, care homes, hospitals and schools. It has been a pleasure and an inspiration to be involved in the fund raising, promotion and organisation of these activities.

What have you personally gained from your experience as a volunteer as the secret garden?

Satisfaction of helping out a very worthy local cause.

Hobbies

Golf, football and travel



Thank you to all our volunteer, clients and community supporters. Keep those green fingers busy this month and enjoy al fresco eating in this fine weather with good friends and family. Pop in and see us and check out the developments in this amazing space yourself. See you soon.

Sarah PR volunteer