

the thistle gardener's notes

September

Harvest

The garden volunteers and I are busy extracting the seeds of the native *Clematis tangutica* from their fluffy seedheads and sowing them to make plants for next year. We leave plenty of these highly decorative seedheads for the birds to enjoy, too.



Bright flowers and fluffy seedheads on *Clematis tangutica*

The hedge along the long boundary is planted with a wide mixture of plants to provide birds and insects with shelter and food for most of the year. We mostly leave the berries for the birds. In September they enjoy the Guelder Rose, *Viburnum opulis*, a must for any wildlife garden.



The scarlet berries of the Guelder Rose make it a must for the wildlife garden

Plant of the month: Sea Buckthorn

Sea Buckthorn, *Hippophae rhamnoides* is a tough native plant often found growing near our coastlines. It has silver green leaves and orange berries produced on the female plants only. We have several growing as part of our mixed wildlife hedge. With its vigorous suckering habit it can get a bit out of hand. Here, the competition from other hedge plants growing right next to it means it hasn't outstayed its welcome - a good way to keep it within bounds.



Keep sea buckthorn in check by growing other plants nearby

The fruit are high in vitamins A and C, and can be used in marmalades or fruit juices. They are used in the treatment of cardiac disorders, and are being researched as a treatment of cancer.

Propagate from seed sown in the autumn into seed trays set into cold frames. Otherwise dividing and replanting the suckers should provide new plants.

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