

GARDENING.

OF ALL THE FLOWERS this spring, the best performance has been given by the pansies, whether in beds, window boxes or hanging baskets. They have been wonderful. They are now at their very best and have been in bloom since they were planted in the autumn. The frosts shrivelled them but as soon as the temperature rose they were smiling again within a very few hours. And every year brings us new colours and fascinating faces.

After eight weeks of drought, cold winds and frosty nights and, for good measure, snow and hail, we are now into warmer days and some welcome sunshine. Now we must grab every opportunity to catch up with vegetable seed sowing – I am afraid that the broad beans and peas that I had already sown have been taken by the pheasants, so I shall have to start again. And talking of seeds, please remember that soon it will be time to sow the biennials for next year wallflowers, bellis, sweet williams, Canterbury bells and so on.

I am very fond of ceanothus, that lovely shrub from N. America, chiefly California, which graces our walls with a mass of blue flowers at this time of the year. But, invariably, there are casualties to the frost .

If it happens to you it is worth taking a chance with a replacement.

Much to choose from for I am told that there are over 100 species of this beautiful plant. And another disappointment this year has been the wisterias for the buds became limp and lifeless with the frost.

One flower that really seems to have shrugged off the weather is the alstroemeria known previously as a florists' flower but now hybridised and well on the way to becoming a border perennial. Neither frost nor wildlife have affected mine. They look grand.

Another name to get used to is argyrothemum for the 'new' marguerites now in pink and yellow but only half hardy. The 'old' white ones usually stand the frost.

Strawberries, raspberries and currants have lost some of the bloom but we are hopeful that there may be a little fruit if there is no more frost. Remember to prune the spring flowering shrubs and to sow a second lot of runner beans on 16th June.

I wish you good gardening with lots of sunshine and warmth.

A.V. Mitchell

P.S. Another predator – Muntjac love purple sprouters!

CAT PROTECTION LEAGUE – MIAOW!

My name is Charlie and I have a lot of friends that need help, as they don't have a home like me, or they are ill-treated by their owners. So, we are having a Sale on June 28th at 2.00pm. in Milton Village Hall.

Can you please help me and my friends by giving things to sell, books, crafts, plants, cakes, jumble, good clothes, toys, white elephant or anything we can sell to make our lives a little better.

Please Ring 01993 830444