

## Gardening

**T**HIS SHORT PIECE is a reminder of activities we have talked about many times. Life is full for many of us and we occasionally need a nudge to keep control of our shrubs.

Flowering shrubs, especially those that bloom in the early part of the year, should be pruned soon after flowering has finished. Cut out all the growth that has flowered so that new growth may develop during the growing season and provide bloom for the next spring. The shrubs that you are most likely to be concerned with are forsythia, kerria japonica, philadelphus (mock oranges; sometimes erroneously called "syringas") and diervillas (weigela). With this last mentioned it is advisable to cut back almost to ground level leaving the young shoots that are sprouting from the base.

Ramblers and climbing roses need attention.

With ramblers, cut back the flower spikes after blooming to two or three buds, and climbers should have all the spent flower heads removed and the new growth that is developing tied in nicely.

If you have not already done so, please sow biennials immediately. I am talking about, among others, wallflowers, sweet williams, forget-me-nots and polyanthus. Sow the seeds in a bed of good soil and, when the plants have grown to a reasonable size, plant them out in rows at a spacing of about 6 inches to develop, after which they may be replanted in the autumn in their flowering positions. Some of you may prefer to sow your seeds thinly in rows and then thin out as necessary.

And you have done all this so that you may have a lovely colourful garden next spring.

Good gardening.

A V Mitchell

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## Let's Get it Right!

Can I just correct the statement that there are only 2 people working on the Ascott allotments. As well as the two men (who I assume are the people referred to here) there are also three women with allotments on the Ascott site. I can understand that we may have been overlooked as our sites are weedy and less productive than the men's, of course, but we *are* beginners and doing our best while working and raising young children, and it would be nice to be acknowledged! I am the newest of the three and have had an allotment there since last September!

I would be glad if you could correct this at some point, as it might encourage other women to take the plunge.

Clare Shaw.