

Little Waltham Gardening Club - report on September meeting.

Drawing on his 50 years of horticultural experiences, our speaker Andrew Babicz gave us a widely informative presentation on 'Seasonal Containers'. As a person to whom plants and colour are very important, Andrew gave us many examples of how to achieve pleasing planted containers throughout the year. We picked a number of useful tips, such as: the purchase of terracotta pots at the Garden Centre - if they are displayed outside throughout the year, the implication is that they will be frost proof. To prevent ants and other unwanted beasties climbing in the bottom of a pot, put a piece of J cloth or muslin in the base before adding crocks and compost. To remove a very large plant from a valuable large pot, place the pot on its side and use a strong jet of water via a hose to loosen the compost and consequently the plant.

For best results Andrew recommended the use of JI number 3 compost and a regular feed of seaweed extract six weeks after planting up the pot (for summer). With an eye to our budgets, it was suggested that the best time to find bargains in the garden centres was just as the Halloween merchandise was being put on display, as that's when plant feed etc would be available at cut price to make way for festive stock.

Slugs and snails are permanent enemies of all gardeners, Andrew included. Like most of us, he has used copper tape, broken shells and wool pellets with varying success. Beer traps were also considered to be worthwhile. Apparently, slugs and snails need to be taken 30 meters away from the garden to ensure they won't return! Persistent pests indeed .