

## Garden Ramblings

There must be an improvement in the warmth of the weather as I only have two jumpers on. Hopefully there have been enough frosts to break down the soil and help certain seeds to germinate. It seems likely I might need to cut the grass as it doesn't like to be cut or even walk on if it is frozen. Despite the chilly wind I have managed to have spent having an after lunch nap in the sunny space liberated from all that creeper and I have managed to plant some iris (or is it irises?) and some tall grasses. The bamboo looks and feels dead.

There are some plants that cause pain and very sensitive skin, and I speak from experience from both. The sap from Giant Hogweed and Rue will damage your skin and sunlight will continue to activate the problem for ages with very sore, itchy patches. The Hogweed should not be grown. Once I had a chicken, Matilda, who had gape worms- worms in her throat. The ancient remedy was to poke stems of Rue down her throat which would dislodge and upset the worms. However not having Rue at the time I thought Sage would probably do until it was pointed out she might think she was being made oven ready. Trip to Vet did the trick.

I have been buying loads of plants recently - chorus of groans and hands upheld in horror from family. For grasses and interesting plants do try The Plantsman's Preference at South Lopham. I will make a great effort to keep the labels with the plants or even write down what they are so that I recognise them as they come up. Some plans are recognisable at an early stage but that doesn't help when considering pruning. Clematis is my greatest concern, never knowing if they are pruned in Spring, Summer or Autumn or even never.

The raised vegetable garden now has cabbage, shallots and rhubarb doing well . early peas grown under glass are hardening off before planting out, as are the broad beans. The carrot bed is warming up nicely under fleece and the potatoes are sitting on the washing machine, sprouting nicely. They are waiting for the potato bags to get soil in.

I find the bags better as potatoes in the ground so often get left in when I harvest. I did have a great crop that was left in a strawberry bed and despite the fact they were bad companions they both did well. I will not be planting my potatoes on Good Friday as Easter is so early and I for one would not like to be covered in cold wet soil.

