

# Garden Diary

## 23rd July 2020

This week we had a group back in the garden which was just SO good! I only properly realised how much I have missed doing group work after having people back. If anything, I think Covid has made people appreciate the time we spend here even more and really get a sense of how beneficial it is spending time as a group in nature.



Also having people away so long meant there was no end of thing for everyone to explore, from potatoes to onions to tomatoes. When something in the garden was of interest, we all gathered round to discuss. It was interesting to discover people are also interested in all the things that go wrong within the garden as well. I was hearing comments like "Your chillies don't look great, that makes me feel better about mine" and "Not many apples on the trees this year?" As frustrating as that is to hear, there is also a comradeship in sharing. I was so relieved when I heard another gardener talk about their Dahlias suffering the same stem rot as ours, it makes you realise you are not in it alone! Gardeners left to it, discussing how things are growing, could go on all day.



Gardening gives everyone a common language, involving the weather, pests and diseases, new techniques and tools. There is definitely a feeling of togetherness in the process, even though we all seem to want to outdo each other by growing the biggest veg!



After a good feed of comfrey and chicken manure pellets the chillies are looking much better. Many of the dahlias needed cut back due to the stem rot but have started to regrow nicely. Having people back in the garden, and spending time soaking in how it's all growing and chatting about it can really help doing the gardening jobs that might be missed if there wasn't a fresh pair of eyes to keep you right.

Dougal Dorman, Head Gardener, Colebrooke Walled Garden

This week's tutorial is a video about Harvesting Onions: [CLICK HERE](#)

# FANTASTIC MR FOX

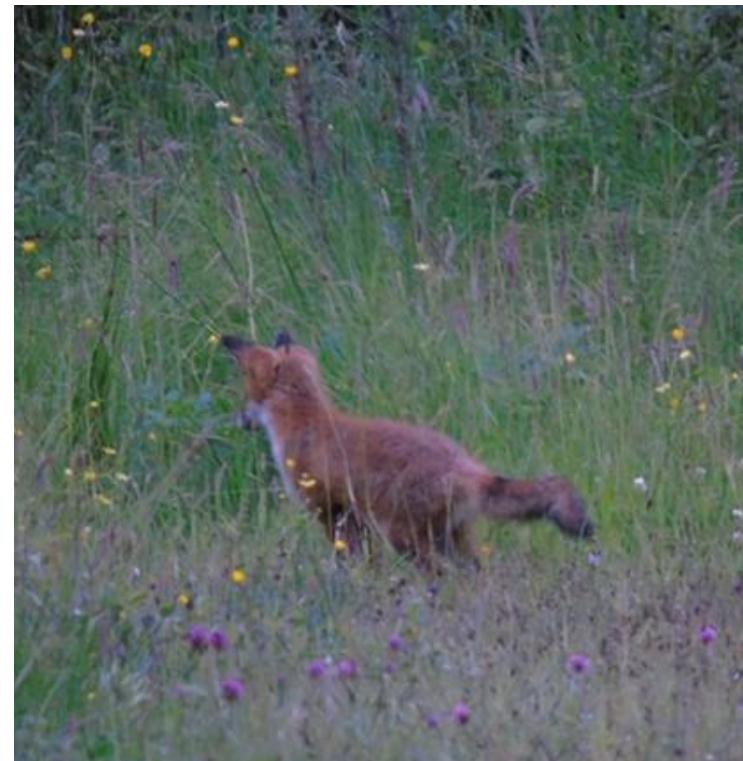
Often viewed as a pest, the witty red fox can be found all over Northern Ireland, in both rural and urban environments. They are omnivorous, and will eat just about anything including small mammals, birds, frogs, earthworms, berries and fruits, as well as scavenging in bins in urban areas.



When we think of foxes we think of sly and clever animals which are solidary, often outwitting humans, when it comes to removing them as a pest or protecting chickens! Thus, the saying 'sly as a fox'!

Red foxes live in a burrow system called an 'earth' or referred to as a den. They scent mark their territorial borders with urine, which creates a very strong, recognisable odour. They also have scent glands on their feet, to mark well-used trails which enable them to follow them in the dark.

Pictured here is a young fox from this year. Fox cubs are normally born in March/April in dens. Foxes only live for two to three years, and therefore grow rapidly. Foxes are in the same family as dogs and communicate in a similar fashion using bark calls. In winter vixens (female foxes) can be heard screaming for other foxes, which is a very distinctive noise.



This week we enjoyed the third of the online nutrition workshops being delivered by Jane McClenaghan, Vital Nutrition. For more information visit [www.vital-nutrition.co.uk](http://www.vital-nutrition.co.uk) and to participant in these workshops contact [robyn@brookehouse.co.uk](mailto:robyn@brookehouse.co.uk)

This week Jane helped to develop our knowledge surrounding sugar and food labels. This recipes is a perfect energy hit without overloading your body with sugar. So simple to make Jane even showed us during the workshop via zoom!

## CARROT CAKE ENERGY BALLS



### METHOD

- Place all the ingredients in a food processor or NutriBullet until well mixed and the ingredients start to stick together slightly.
- Roll the mixture into bite-size balls – about a teaspoonful for each ball.

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 small carrot, finely grated
- 100g dates (without stones)
- 150g cashew nuts
- 40g oats
- Zest of 1 large orange
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp ground ginger
- Grated nutmeg

Lot more of Jane's idea's and suggestions to help you kick your sugar habit can be found at: <https://vital-nutrition.co.uk/a-few-ideas-to-help-you-crack-the-sugar-habit/>