

## Garden Diary

### 1st August 2020



We have quite a large fruit cage in the garden, built about six years ago when we got sick of the birds getting the lion's share of our currants and gooseberries. The first few years after planting our soft fruit bushes, they grew undisturbed, then a few birds started to realise what was there but it wasn't too bad until they told the magpies, then we had to take action!

Each year we get around to harvesting one good big batch from each fruit bush but after that, a lot of the left-over fruit goes uneaten. I'll walk past the fruit cage each day and think, "I should get a few black currant and gooseberries for the shops this week" but some other job presents itself and I miss the chance.

This year was different! My five-year-old boy heard me chatting about all this fruit not being eaten in the garden and quickly volunteered himself for a visit. We made a day of it and recruited a couple of friends who had kids a similar age, all equipped with fruit punnets and waterproof trousers, there was a sense of purpose in the air!



It was amazing to see the joy of two five-year olds and two three-year olds surrounded by red currants, black currants and gooseberries, all at eye level and nothing else to do that day than fill their boots! Remembering how enjoyable it is for kids to pick fruit, fresh from the bush with their mates was just the tonic I needed.



The truth was the kids didn't bring much out of the fruit cage with them other than a few sore tummies, but my wife did a good job fill a few tubs. Stewed fruit and ice-cream in the evenings followed by red current, muesli and yogurt for breakfast. Can't beat the summer!

# GROWING BASIL

## 1ST AUGUST 2020

Getting the best  
from your basil

Basil and tomato are such a good combination and we are harvesting plenty of each at the moment. Basil is something lots of people grow but few people harvest it in the correct way to let it become the plant it wants to be!



Basil will grow into a bush if harvested correctly.

Harvest the growing tip from each section of your plant, cutting the stem just above two new shoots.



The tips are the sweetest leaves and doing this will encourage two new branches to grow to replace that one stem you have cut.



After a few weeks, your spindly plant will soon grow into a strong bush.

A video of Dougal pruning basil can be seen [here!](#)