

APRIL

*"The cowslip hangs a head of golden tips,
And golden drips the honey which the bee
Sucks from sweet hearts of flowers and stores and sips"*

Christina Rossetti, *Golden Glories*

EXPERT TIP "Magnolias flower over a nine-month period and will grow in most soils that retain moisture. Prune shrubby spring-flowering varieties such as *M x soulangeana* after flowering for a neat plant, reducing shoot growth to a few buds."

Jim Gardiner, curator,
RHS Garden Wisley,
0845 260 9000,
rhs.org.uk.



Dibber.
£14.95, Burgon
& Ball, 0114 233 8262,
burgonandball.com.

*Start sowing
crops and flowers
in earnest now,
keeping the less
hardy types under
cover for a while*

IN SEASON PLANT AND SOW

- Pot up peppers, chillies and aubergines under glass. In mid May, find them a sunny spot.
 - On fine days, sow salads, carrots, parsnips, broccoli, sweetcorn, sprouts, leeks, cabbages and herbs.
 - Sow all cucurbits and keep in pots inside.
 - Put tomatoes in the greenhouse at the end of April and transplant salad shoots into the soil.
 - Plant maincrop potatoes (end of April).
 - Divide and replant autumn-flowering plants.
 - Sow hardy annuals under glass at the start of April and half-hardy plants by mid month.
 - Plant summer bulbs, clematis and sweet peas.
- ## PICK AND EAT
- Harvest and thin any crops as they mature.
 - Continue to harvest rhubarb; pick purple sprouting broccoli and kale, and clear parsnips.

EVENTS THIS MONTH

Meadow Gardening course, 14 April.

Great Dixter, Northiam, Rye, East Sussex TN31 6PH, 01797 252878, greatdixter.co.uk
Discover the secrets of creating and maintaining your own meadow, inspired by the beautiful Great Dixter meadows. Refreshments and lunch are included. Cost, £100 per person.

Daffodil Festival, 15-16 April.

RHS Horticultural Halls, Greycoat Street, London SW1P 2PE, 0845 260 5000, rhs.org.uk
100s of fragrant golden, tangerine and blush-coloured daffodils.

EXPERT TASK

"Start dahlia tubers in labelled pots in a cool, airy, frost-free place, keeping compost moist. When shoots emerge, ensure they have ample light. Keep outside if possible; protect from frost, slugs and snails."

Tim Miles, head gardener,
Cotswold Wildlife Park
and Gardens, 01993
823006, cotswold
wildlifepark.
co.uk.



Boot rack.
£129,
Ingarden,
01732
832299,
ingarden.
co.uk.



VISIT... PENSURST PLACE
(shown here) Penshurst, Kent
TN31 8DG, 01892 870307,
penshurstplace.com.

Open Weekends from 1 March;
daily 21 March to 2 November.
Admission Adults, £6; children, £4.50.
A fine Tudor pleasure garden.

DON'T MISS... HOLKER HALL
Cark-in-Cartmel, near Grange-over-
Sands, Cumbria LA11 7PL,
01539 558328, holker-hall.co.uk.

Open Daily (except Saturday),
1 April to 28 October.
Admission Adults, £5.95; children, £3.
Woodland and formal areas.