

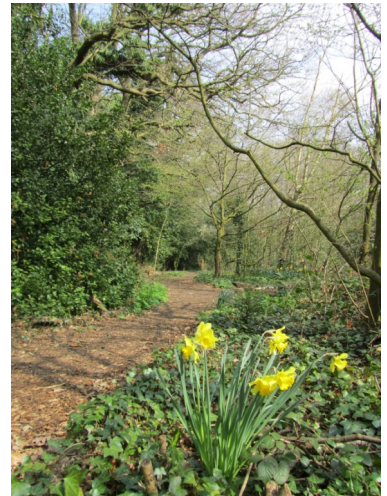
## Newsletter Spring 2014

### Welcome to our Spring Edition of the Martineau Gardens' Newsletter.

The start of the growing year brings good news for Martineau Gardens. We've received a significant donation from a grant making trust, which will enable the Gardens to continue to offer the Therapeutic Horticulture project to those in need and to keep Martineau Gardens open, for free.

In these harsh economic times, when small, local charities are struggling to continue to offer the vital work they do, we need your support more than ever. Please do support Martineau Gardens and the volunteers who care for these beautiful gardens by becoming a Friend. Log onto <http://bit.ly/1bsoAfO> or sign-up when you next visit.

*Caroline Hutton, Director*



*Spring colour at the entrance to the wildlife area*

To receive your newsletter electronically, and reduce our costs e-mail us at [info@martineau-gardens.org.uk](mailto:info@martineau-gardens.org.uk).

### Diary Dates

Wed 16 April, **Bat Walk** \* (8.30pm) with BrumBats.

Sun 11 May, **Spring Event**

Sat 21 June, **Storytelling Festival** with the Traditional Arts Team

Sat 28 June, **The Herb Patch Course** \*

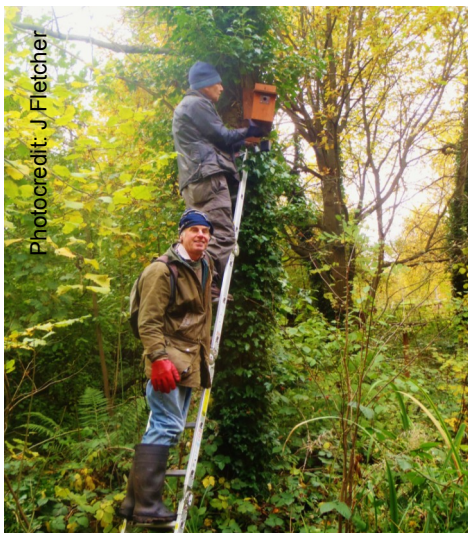
Sat 12 July, **Bee Keeping Course** \*

Sun 10 August, 2pm, **The Taming of the Shrew** \* with Folksy Theatre

\* Booking essential. Full details at: <http://bit.ly/1igpH6N>

#### Spring holidays opening times:

Open Mon to Sat 10am—4pm, except bank holidays. Open Good Friday (18 April), closed Easter Monday (21 April), May Day (5 May) & Spring Bank Holiday (26 May).



Photocredit: J Fletcher



Photocredit: B Perry

*Volunteer wildlife surveyors checking nesting boxes in Autumn (left) and a Jay (right), feeding at the bird table in the wildlife area of Martineau Gardens. The Jay is a shy bird with striking colours.*

### Birds-eye view

As custodians of this precious green space, close to Birmingham city centre and surrounded by urban sprawl, we take our role in looking after the wildlife who visit here seriously. Over the winter, our volunteer winter working parties work hard to coppice trees, conquer ivy, pull out brambles and keep the woodland area a well managed biodiverse area. In recognition of the variety of species who visit, the wildlife area is designated a SLINC (a site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation). Pictured here, our volunteer wildlife surveyors are running annual checks on our bird boxes— we clean the nesting

boxes once they are no longer in use, to reduce the risk of parasites infesting young birds in the nesting season. Thanks to the generosity of a Friend, who has supplied us with a regular delivery of bird seed for a number of years, the birds at Martineau Gardens are fed throughout the year. They enjoy a wild bird seed containing black sunflower, red millet, white millet, canary seed, naked oats, rape seed and wheat. We also provide fatballs and peanuts. Sounds delicious!

If you'd like to get closer to nature and find out more from the experts, book a place on our Bat Walk, in the company of BrumBats, on Wed 16 April. See <http://bitly.com/1mcERPG>



Seedbombing at the Big Dig



## Corporate Support Welcome



We're delighted to announce that Martineau Gardens has been selected to be the chosen charity of the year, by Ernst & Young's Birmingham office for the second year running! Last year staff volunteered their time on a number of projects to bring new life to the Gardens, including restoration of the children's Shipwreck play area, woodland maintenance and trench digging for fruit trees. Staff are also supporting the Gardens with dress-down fundraising days. We appreciate all the hard work and generosity of staff in 2013 and look forward to their support in 2014.

York Supplies in Kings Heath, is a small local business that specialises supplying garden goods and ironmongery. Over the years, the business has supported Martineau Gardens in a number of ways, from repairing and gifting us tools to displaying our leaflets. If you're work for a local business and you think you can support the Gardens, please get in touch. Contact Caroline on 0121 440 7430.

## Garden Report

The last few months have seen a mix of weathers in the Gardens. Despite waterlogged areas at the start of the year, our volunteers turned up for 'duty', through all that rain! There was plenty to do including mulching the woodland paths, scrubbing the greenhouse panels and shelves, and by use of stepping stones and small boards, the team has been able to keep up with garden tasks.



Most of the plants we sell are propagated by the Garden Volunteer Team, with profits being ploughed straight back into the running costs of the charity. Pictured here on a warm sunny day, the volunteers are potting on cuttings of Jasmine and Geraniums.

## Connect with us ...



## Ready, Steady ... Grow!



*Hands fresh from seed bombing (left) and a keen gardener with her sage cutting (right)*

Muddy hands was the order of the day at our first event of the year, the Big Dig which was aiming to inspire people to 'grow your own'. Stewart and Rachael led a series of family-friendly gardening workshops. Children made wildflower 'seed bombs' and learned how to take herb cuttings.

## What's On in 2014

In 2014, we're hosting a range of events and courses, including a bat walk, our family friendly fetes (the Spring and Autumn Events), the Honey Show and two Storytelling events. There's a new course, the Herb Patch (learn about herbal treatments). And we're hosting our first ever open-air theatre production of Shakespeare which we hope you will support. Gather your picnic rugs, hampers, friends and family and come and enjoy Folksy Theatre's production of 'The Taming of the Shrew' for a performance on Sunday 10 August. Tickets went on sale in April. Buy them in person from Martineau Gardens or on-line at [www.folksytheatre.co.uk](http://www.folksytheatre.co.uk).

## Honey News



*Selling honey, jams and jellies at the Big Dig event.*

Every September, we sell honey made by the Martineau Gardens bees, the honey goes like 'hot cakes' and by November it's largely gone and it seems a long wait until Autumn. Good news for honey fans, we're now selling locally produced honey, made by bees living less than six miles from Martineau Gardens. Why not pop in for a jar?

### How to contact us

Martineau Gardens, 27 Priory Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham B5 7UG

T: 0121 440 7430 E: [info@martineau-gardens.org.uk](mailto:info@martineau-gardens.org.uk)

[www.martineau-gardens.org.uk](http://www.martineau-gardens.org.uk)

### Opening Hours

For visiting: Mon - Sat, 10am - 4pm

Volunteering: Mon - Thurs, 10am - 4pm

Volunteering for women: Fri, 10am - 4pm