

The Clifton Compost

Your Clifton Garden Newsletter

June 2026

It's A Bit Warm!

The allotment and gardens were baking this month, as the temperature reached 36 degrees.

Alison, Jason, Steph and their gang of helpers had to work incredibly hard to keep all the plants watered and happy.

Managing the heat has been a big job. Alison had to be careful when pruning. The hot weather can make buds close, and chopping them off can cause damage.

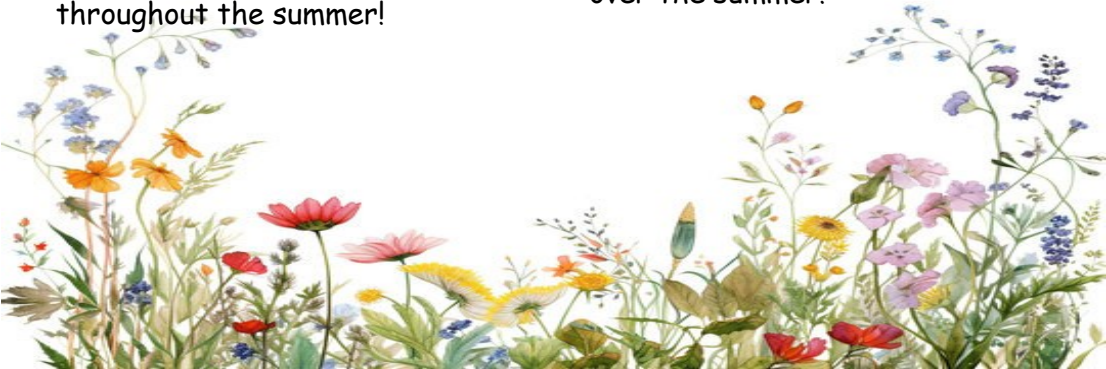
The polytunnel was like an oven! The temperature inside was well over 40 degrees. The watering crew were seen cooling off under the hosepipe!

It seems to have cooled down now, but Alison will be keeping a close eye on the weather reports throughout the summer!



Some special editions of the Clifton Compost have free seeds stapled to the front!

They are wildflower seeds. Throw them around your favourite outside space and watch the flowers grow over the summer!

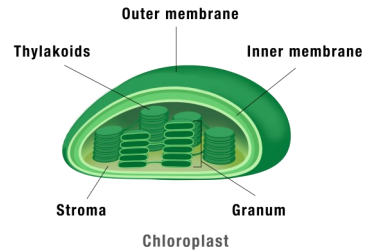
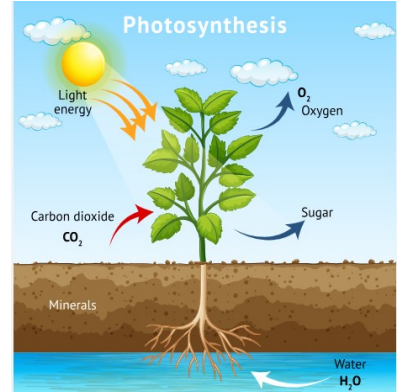


Plants Through the Seasons

Kostas tells us how plants work and how they stay alive!

Plants are remarkable organisms that rely on photosynthesis to produce the energy they need to grow and survive. Using sunlight, water, and carbon dioxide, plants create glucose, which fuels their growth while releasing oxygen into the atmosphere. Although photosynthesis occurs throughout the year, its rate changes with the seasons. During spring and summer, longer daylight hours and warmer temperatures provide ideal conditions for photosynthesis, allowing plants to grow rapidly and produce vibrant leaves, flowers, and fruits.

As autumn and winter arrive, shorter days, lower light levels and cooler temperatures reduce the rate of photosynthesis. Many trees respond by shedding their leaves to conserve energy and water, while evergreen plants continue photosynthesising at a slower rate. Weather conditions such as drought, excessive rainfall, frost, or heatwaves can also affect plant growth by influencing water availability and the efficiency of photosynthesis. Understanding how plants respond to changing environmental conditions helps us appreciate the vital role they play in sustaining life on Earth.



RECIPE OF THE MONTH

ETON MESS

June's recipe is Eton mess. It's perfect for using freshly picked strawberries!

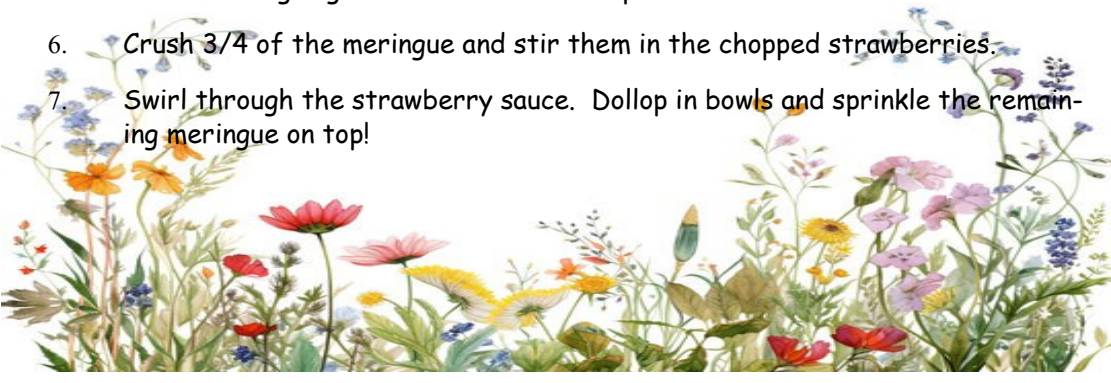
Ingredients

- 2 large egg whites
- 120g caster sugar
- 500g strawberries (hulled and roughly chopped)
- 450ml double cream
- 1 tbsp icing sugar



Method

1. Heat the oven to 120c/100c fan and line a large baking tray with parchment paper.
2. Whisk the egg whites in a clean bowl until they reach stiff peaks.
3. Add the sugar in three lots, re-whisking every time.
4. Scoop dollops of the mixture onto the baking parchment. Cook on the bottom shelf for an hour until they are hard and come off the paper easily. Leave to cool.
5. Blitz 1/3 of the strawberries in a blender to make a sauce. Whisk the cream with the icing sugar until it holds its shape.
6. Crush 3/4 of the meringue and stir them in the chopped strawberries.
7. Swirl through the strawberry sauce. Dollop in bowls and sprinkle the remaining meringue on top!



KADER'S ORCHARD

Kader tells us how to grow your own fruit! It will taste better than anything you can get in a supermarket...



Growing your own fruit is a rewarding hobby that provides fresh, healthy produce right from your garden. Whether you have a large backyard or a small patio, many fruit plants can thrive in a variety of spaces.

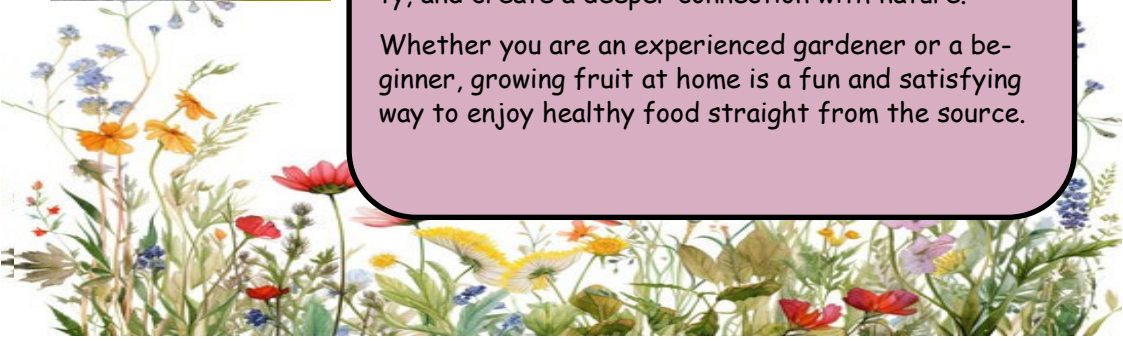
One of the biggest benefits of growing fruit at home is the taste. Freshly picked strawberries, apples, or raspberries are often sweeter and more flavourful than store-bought options. Homegrown fruit is also free from long transport times, helping it retain more nutrients.

To get started, choose fruit varieties that suit your climate and available space. Strawberries grow well in containers, while apple and pear trees need more room. Make sure your plants receive plenty of sunlight, regular watering, and nutrient-rich soil.



Patience is important, as some fruit plants take time to produce a harvest. However, with proper care, you will enjoy fresh fruit year after year. Growing your own fruit can save money, encourage outdoor activity, and create a deeper connection with nature.

Whether you are an experienced gardener or a beginner, growing fruit at home is a fun and satisfying way to enjoy healthy food straight from the source.



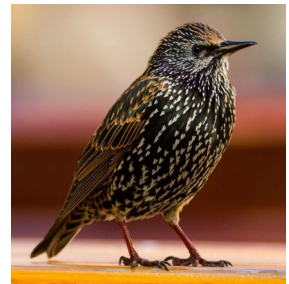
JON'S WILDLIFE WATCH

Jon keeps a keen eye on the many species of wildlife that live around The Clifton Centre. Here is what he spotted this month!



The areas of grass that have not been cut are full of wildflowers such as poppies, clover and daisy. They attract more insects such as bees and butterflies, and also the birds that eat these.

The ground feeding birds such as robins and blackbirds will pick off any beetles and caterpillars. The starling chicks which have fledged (grown feathers to be able to fly) from their nests under the surrounding houses' roofs. They can be seen feeding on the grass in groups. This is the height of summer, meaning days are at their longest, and some smaller birds will be having a second clutch of eggs that will hatch in July.



There have been occasional dragon and damselflies at the pond. They feed on tiny flies and mosquitoes. Hopefully they will become a permanent species by next summer.

PORTACABIN POTTERING

The team down in the portacabins have started growing in their planters!



In Nurture we have decided to grow some vegetables that we can use when we cook. As we are new to gardening, Alison advised us to start with 'easy to grow' vegetables such as potatoes, sweetcorn, radishes, and pumpkins.

The potatoes were easy!

- 1) Put potatoes in a dark cupboard
- 2) After 7-10 days they will grow "chits"
- 3) Chop into pieces with a chit on each piece
- 4) Plant chit side up and cover with soil



For the sweetcorn:

- 1) We planted seeds in a propagator.
- 2) We watered and left them to grow for five days.
- 3) When the shoots appeared,



Watering Schedule

Our garden needs lots of water! This is our current watering schedule. If you would like to help out (staff or students!) please speak to Alison.

Monday	Alison
Tuesday	Amin and Lizzie
Wednesday	Amin and Lizzie
Thursday	Ruth and Jason
Friday	Alison



We always need help in the garden and at The Clifton Compost. If you like the sound of these jobs, please speak to David. We would love to have your support!

If you have any ideas of your own, please let David or Alison know.

Writing

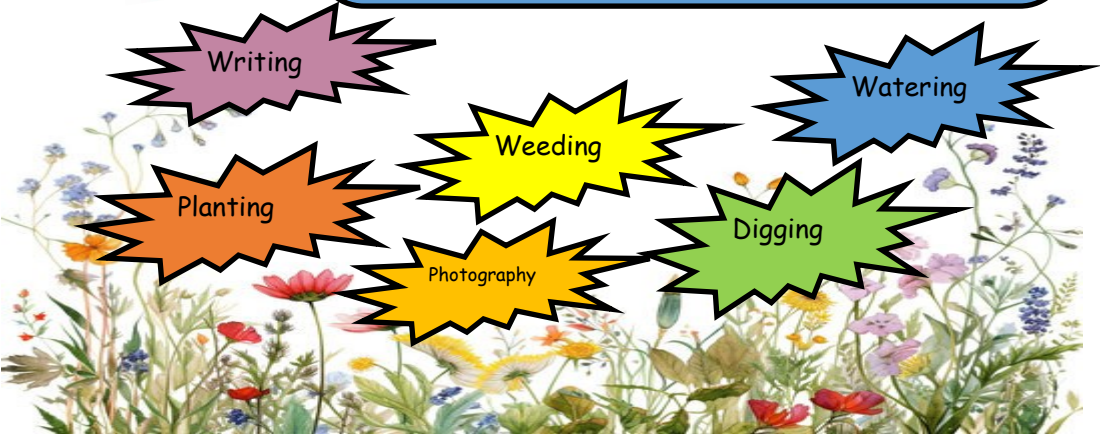
Watering

Weeding

Planting

Digging

Photography



To Be Planted In July



Sow your carrot seeds now if you want an autumn crop!



You can eat the turnip, its leaves and the roots!



Plant blueberries outside, but make sure the ground isn't too hot!

Harvesting in July



Pick some cherries and make a nice pie!



Pick some peas and serve them with mint and butter.



Nothing says "summer" like strawberries and cream!

Our Star Grower

Alisha planted a small area a few months ago. It is now fully in bloom and attracting all sorts of bees to our garden.

