

Gardening Excuses

By Tom McLeod, Member of Buxted Horticultural Society

The only certainty in gardening is that the weather will not be right. It will either be too hot, too cold, too wet or too dry. The weather has always stood the lazy gardener in good stead. And with every month beating some record or other, the gardener has even more excuses.

Books and magazines still refer to "Winter jobs," "Spring jobs," "Summer jobs," and "Autumn jobs," as if the seasons are as reliable as they were fifty years ago. Gardeners have to adapt to working around the weather, irrespective of the season. But hot, cold, wet or dry, the weeds keep growing. But perhaps Christopher Lloyd was right: the time to worry is when *no weeds grow in your garden*.

Because of the hot weather in summer, I had to water my transplants and cuttings more frequently than usual, inevitably attracting slugs and rabbits to those areas where they were least wanted. A small rabbit got in among my pots of seedlings and cuttings.

I ought to have sown the seeds in Spring. But you know what Spring was like. A simple frame of netting would have kept the rabbit out, and a brewery—load of slug traps *might* have reduced the slug population—if I'd had enough containers.

The simple solution is to be prepared for *every possible and impossible eventuality*, like a good Boy Scout.

Whatever the weather, there is always something to be done either in the garden or *for* the garden. There is no such thing as bad weather—only bad gear.

Tomorrow will be a perfect day for gardening.

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