

# Hope allotments blog – May 2022



May was very changeable with a number of sharp showers that were more reminiscent of April! There was no late frost this year and we have planted out our courgettes which had come on nice and early in one of our glasshouses. In our glasshouses we have gone for Tomatillo, (*Physalis philadelphica*) which is used in Mexican cooking and Carosello, a small cucumber with a taste like melon as a change from our usual tomatoes, cucumbers and chillies, so we will have to see how they do.



A full plot of courgettes & winter squash.

A technique for watering courgettes, pumpkins & squashes is to bury a plant pot next to the plant as you put them in. This means that when they get bigger water can be directed to the roots, where it is needed, instead of being wasted. It also means that the plants aren't at risk of sun scorch as the foliage does not get wet.

A fledgling Thrush on a chair outside one of the sheds.

This is great news!

Thrushes have been in decline in part because of the indiscriminate use of slug pellets and it is very encouraging to see a fledgling on the allotments.



### **Looking forward to July.**

July is a truly summer month which can be very hot and dry. This means a lot of watering although there can often be summer thunder storms which supply plenty of free water.

Try to water in the early morning or late evening but remember that if a plant reaches its Permanent Wilting Point (PWP) it will not recover so it is better to water in the sun than not at all.

If you have a glasshouse you will need to be careful and provide ventilation and shade where necessary as plants like tomatoes stop growing if the temperature gets too hot. Some plants, like lettuce, can also suffer from high temperature dormancy so be aware if you are sowing seeds in the heat.

By July most of the crops have been planted and a number are already being harvested so there's plenty of work to do. We rely on volunteers, both individual and corporate, to help us keep the weeds under control, do the watering and harvest the produce. If you fancy a shot give us a call at the Hope centre on 01604 214300.

We are hoping to start our veg box scheme this summer. If you are interested please E-mail us at [gardening@northamptonhopecentre.org.uk](mailto:gardening@northamptonhopecentre.org.uk) for more details and prices.

**Finally,**

Continuing with our explanations of plant names.

The name Floribunda means clusters of flowers or freely flowering.



Malus floribunda or flowering crab apple

Have a happy gardening month and see you in July.

**Joe - the Hope gardener**