

RHS Hampton Court 2016 highlights Climate Positivity in Warming World

In the same week that NASA reported January 2016 is the warmest January on record, the RHS announced today (18th February) that a Conceptual Garden at this year's Hampton Court Flower Show will engage visitors with climate positivity about the future.

Near Future Garden takes its inspiration from rapidly changing weather patterns that are seriously affecting the growing cycle of plants and impacting on the design and maintenance of UK gardens.

The RHS are aware that climate change is a serious issue for its 449,000 members. In 2014 they announced the results of a survey which confirmed that gardeners are already dealing with climate change in their own gardens. Four fifths of respondents reported that they paid more attention to the weather in recent years. In addition, 87% believed that climate change is happening now and 62% reported they were optimistic about adapting to the challenges that climate change is already delivering. <http://press.rhs.org.uk/RHS-Science-and-Advice/RHS-Survey-Finds-Gardeners-Willing-to-Adapt-to-Cli.aspx>

The reality of these challenges means many plants now flower out of season and suffer from extremes of drought or long periods of heavy rain. During December 2015 daffodils in UK gardens began bursting into bloom 4 months early as the Met Office reported temperatures were 4.1c above the long term average for the UK, closer to those normally experienced in April. As a result, UK gardeners must diversify their plant selection as shifting seasons bring new challenges to normal growing patterns as well as a big increase in serious pests and diseases that thrive in warmer temperatures. <https://www.rhs.org.uk/science/gardening-in-a-changing-world/climate-change/potential-diseases>

This rapidly changing climate scenario was the inspiration for Arit Anderson who designed Near Future Garden:

"As a gardener and a designer, I am aware of the impact that extreme weather is having on plant selection for my garden designs. Working with Climate Gardens I understand how plants are challenged by different growing cycles as a result of shifting seasons caused by a warming planet as we continue to take carbon out of the ground.

Near Future Garden inspires visitors to reduce their carbon foot-print using carbon enriched, peat free soil such as Biochar. The design features three wooden structures depicting the natural elements of sun, wind and water which are crucial for our gardens but which also reduce carbon footprints by switching to renewable energies.

Gardeners care about the weather, it affects their plants and soil and everything they grow. This is why I am optimistic that Near Future Garden can influence the carbon footprint of 146,000 visitors to RHS Hampton Court Flower Show in 2016."

NOTE:

2016 was not only Earth's warmest January on record, but also featured largest warm departure from average for any month, according to two separate analyses released this week. The first month of 2016 started with a global temperature departure of 1.13 degrees Celsius above the 1951-1980 average, according to NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies. NASA's analysis found this was the largest monthly warm temperature anomaly in their database dating to 1880, topping a record set the previous month.



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