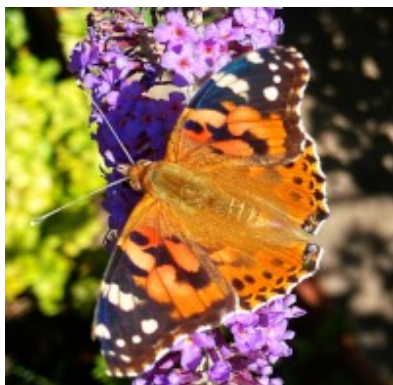


The Potting Shed August 2026 No. 92



**Our next
Sales Day
will be Herit-
age Day on
12 Septem-
ber, 10:00am
to 4:00pm**

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Editorial

Welcome to Potting Shed No. 92 which comes after a long spell of hot weather with blast furnace temperatures. In spite of the heat work has been carrying on at the Nursery. We have had a series of volunteer groups doing great work. The Nursery's sign at the station has had a refurb and the heat has brought a butterfly with one of the great animal migrations to the Nursery.

Station adoption

We have managed to keep most of the bedding plants alive during the many drought periods we have experienced recently by doing some extra watering and of course moving much water by bowser to the station. The geraniums in particular have done their best for us and the roses have survived! The station therefore looks passable presently.

We have begun exploring and digging out one of our concrete planters to see what is in it and if it is fixed at the base but that is still work in progress at present because it is very deep! We will be reporting our findings to Northern with that and all the affected box shrubs when we have fully established the extent of our fairly sizeable problem!

Darren and Dave have done a super job in providing the station with a smart, refurbished and repainted notice board (see picture) which can be used again for advertising the Nursery's events. They are really very good and we hope their talents get used for other work from the community too.



Colin Wood
Team Leader, Friends of
Poppleton Station

Sales days

We had our usual stand on the village green for the Poppleton Show on 15 August and had a steady flow of customers. Herbs were quite popular, and we did well selling perennials, especially those in flower, and some of our more unusual plants including fig trees.



Our next sales day will be our Heritage Day Sales on 12 September, 10:00am – 4:00pm. We will be celebrating the 85th anniversary of the Nursery's arrival in Poppleton. The royal red carpet will be out and our new brake van will be on display.

Volunteering

Since the last issue of The Potting Shed there have been two volunteer groups from Network Rail and much useful work was completed even though the last group consisted of only two people. Particularly useful was the clearing of the shade tunnel at the Harrogate end of the side and the clearing of items from behind S10 and relocation into the shade tunnel.

We have provisional visits booked from Network Rail monthly until November. These visits are great value to the Nursery and it always surprises me the works these volunteers do in such a short time. See photos at the end of this issue.

Horticulture

With the completion of the summer bedding sales, attention has turned to our perennials, with volunteers putting in a lot of effort in taking new cuttings and re-potting those taken earlier in the year, as well as plants grown from seed. The general lack of rain has meant regular watering has been needed so the recent downpours have been quite

helpful. The hot weather brought on a predictable surge in growth, both in our existing stock of plants which have needed pruning and tidying up, and in weeds which have sprung up everywhere but especially in the outside frames. The visiting groups have helped in dealing with some of these but there is more to be done (any offers of assistance welcomed!). The succulents have been moved to G1 for a good sort out and propagating more and the resident big *Opuntia* cactus which had collapsed has had some necessary surgery. Meanwhile repair work to the benches in G3 has restarted.



Railway and building group

The group has been affected by illness/holidays and the need to supervise volunteer groups. Work continues on the new brake van. We continue investigating the rough engine on Terry Stanhope. The fault on the strimmer has been fixed which will be useful with volunteer groups in the coming weeks.

Ten Years Ago

Potting Shed 36 from September 2016 was 3 sides of A4. The edition looked forward to the 75th anniversary of the arrival of the Nursery in Poppleton which was to be celebrated at the Heritage Day.

The railway group were re-roofing and fixing the gutters on the Potting Shed. The Narrow Gauge Society had visited the Nursery in July and a Network Rail group had visited and painted the Poppleton sign on the station.

The £9,000 per person Royal Scotsman Grand Tour of Great Britain rail-tour was photographed passing the Nursery. The current intensive timetable on the Harrogate line precludes the use of the line for such charters.

Painted Lady butterfly

As well as being at times blisteringly hot it has been a bumper year for butterflies. The Painted Lady butterfly (*Vanessa cardui*) has been seen at the Nursery (see photo on page 1).

The species occurs in all continents apart from Antarctica and South America. It undertakes an epic 9,000-mile multi-generational round trip from tropical Africa across Europe to the Arctic Circle. No single butterfly makes the entire journey; instead, up to six to ten successive generations complete the continu-

ous relay wave of migration north and south.

Key Migration Facts

- **Distance:** Up to 9,000 miles (15,000 km) total round trip, nearly double the length of North American Monarch migrations.

- **Speed and Altitude:** Can fly at speeds hitting 30 mph and reach altitudes over 500 meters, riding high altitude winds.

- **Generations:** Involves 5–10 generations per year; each generation hatches, flies a portion of the route,

breeds, lays eggs, and continues the cycle.

- **Timing in the UK:** Millions arrive in waves during late spring and summer (with major influxes peaking around August), boosted by warm continental winds. Tracked locally via conservation organizations like Butterfly Conservation.

Behaviour along the route

- **Continuous Breeding:** Unlike some migrating species, painted ladies mate, lay eggs (on host plants like thistles, mallows, and

nettles), and reproduce continuously during both northward and southward legs.

- **Population surges:** Numbers fluctuate wildly year-to-year. Favourable weather conditions across Europe and Africa occasionally trigger massive “painted lady summers” where populations multiply dramatically.

Network Rail group visit

The visit of the Network Rail group volunteers on 23 July



Network Rail Group



Clearing the shade tunnel



The cleared area behind S10



The tidied shade tunnel