

Indoor - Outdoor

Brush up on woodwork

A DRY spell in September is an ideal time to paint fences, sheds and other wooden garden features with a water-based preservative which is kind to the environment.

As temperatures start to fall, greenhouse shading paint should be removed and any blinds lifted or removed as light levels are steadily decreasing. Don't deprive your plants of light once the risk of overheating is over. Replace any broken glass panes in the greenhouse and also take the opportunity to check for lost glazing clips or worn putty.

Cleaning the greenhouse is best done before bringing in all tender plants for the winter.

Pests and diseases can hide in tiny nooks and crannies, only to come back to life the following spring. Hose down the structure with a forceful jet of water and use a safe cleaning product and a non-abrasive scourer specifically recommended for cleaning glass.

Conservatories should be ventilated during the remaining warmer days to prevent soaring temperatures, but reduce ventilation once the cooler and gusty autumn weather sets in. Other priority tasks during the next month or so include cleaning patios and all hard surfaces to get rid of moss and algae and fixing leaky shed and/or garage roofs.

Celebrating 90 years with Halcyon range



STYLE DESIGN:
Blendworth Artisan

BLENDWORTH Fabrics is celebrating its 90th anniversary with the engagingly charismatic Halcyon collection, due to be launched in September.

Inspired by original designs recently discovered in the Blendworth archive, it combines delightful retro images, eclectic romantic florals and modern colour stories to create an updated vintage look with 'playful' elements

One of Halcyon's quirkiest features is 'Chirpy,' the budgie pattern created by Ann Cassey in the mid 1950s – eye-catching and right on trend.

At the heart of the collection are fabulous florals: Paradiso, produced using new digital printing techniques; Fabienne with its impressive impasto effect; and Artisan, which, through special printing techniques, captures the essence and the vibrancy of the original delicately sketched watercolour artwork.

The ribbon-striped Maypole offers a delightful contrast to the florals, as does Daisy Chain which has a small-scale pattern that makes it ideal for use in homes with smaller windows or as a trim to a contrasting fabric.

Daisy Chain works particularly well with the embroidered natural linens of Dragonfly and the embroidered appliqués of Lotus Blossom.

Halcyon's colour palette is a combination of bold pinks and reds, cool blues and greens, black and white, yellow and gold and the ice-cream shades of the 1950s. While this collection is unique, the Blendworth handwriting is distinctive and Halcyon's colours and textures work well with those of previous collections.

Help at hand for the DIY 'dunces'

A COMBINATION of increasingly hectic lifestyles – and laziness – is turning us into a nation of DIY 'dunces'.

Many homeowners are helpless when faced with even the most basic jobs, from changing a lightbulb to replacing a fuse.

Research by the leading practical website, Comerco.com claims 3.5m men admit to finding it difficult to put up shelves, while 3.7m wouldn't know how to bleed a radiator.

Bal Mattu, the site's founder, says while our dads and grandads would have willingly rolled up their sleeves to get the job done, many of us would now rather call in a professional than carry out the work ourselves.

The main advantage of Comerco.com is that it removes the need to hunt around for the best tradesman and at the same time protects you against rogue traders.

■ For more information, visit the website: www.comerco.com or phone 0121 454 9707.

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