

November 2023

Tip of the Month: peat free compost



‘For decades environmentalists have warned that digging up peatlands for use in gardens is devastating for wildlife and a huge source of carbon emissions. Monty Don, presenter of the BBC show Gardeners’ World, has described using peat as “an act of eco-vandalism” and said there is no justification for gardeners to use it”.

Gardeners often complain that peat-free compost is just not good enough, and that for certain plant types only peat will do. So is it just too hard? Professor Alistair Griffiths, director of science at the RHS, said nurseries specialising in every single plant group have now shifted entirely away from peat, showing it is possible. He compared the shift from peat to the switch from petrol and diesel to electric cars. “There are changes that you have to make, and that is what is happening, but the industry needs support to do it,” he said. The RHS has published a [list of nurseries that have gone peat free](https://www.rhs.org.uk/advice/peat/peat-free-nurseries) (<https://www.rhs.org.uk/advice/peat/peat-free-nurseries>). “Gardeners want to be responsible in what they are doing.” ben.spencer@sundaytimes.co.uk

The RHS website offers extensive advice on how to choose and use peat free compost and even how to make your own using leaf mould and other organic material (<https://www.rhs.org.uk/advice/peat>).

Gardeners World online also offers comprehensive advice on choosing peat free compost (<https://www.gardenersworld.com/product-guides/growing/best-peat-free-composts/>).

There are such a lot of keen gardeners in the community that many of you may be able to share further tips and advice on this important subject.

If so we would love to print them in this section of the Holbeton News.

Anna West