

# Garden Newsletter – Summer 2025.....



## Echo Eternal Curriculum Garden



### A challenging summer.....

It is probably stating the obvious, but this summer has been extremely challenging in more ways than one – heat wave after heat wave with little or no rain at all. Reservoirs drying up to almost puddles, farmers talking about grain harvesting three weeks ahead of normal coupled with very poor yields. Farmers also talking about lots of root crops being ruined plus livestock having to be fed with grain and straw that is earmarked for the winter because there is no grass growing due to the extremely hot and dry conditions... All in all, it seems like there could be some problems ahead plus there will be a real need to look at alternative crops and better ways of conserving water if the hot dry summers become the norm.....

### Sunflowers are looking stunning.....



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# Hot weather has accelerated autumn.....

With the number of heat waves we have experienced this summer, the hot dry conditions have not only brought forward farmers harvests but there are also some tell - tale signs that autumn has arrived very early too.....

Many trees and grassy areas have suffered significantly this summer with trees showing signs of stress with drooping leaves and now there are lots of leaves already changing colour and falling - down. Also, another significant indicator that autumn is early is that there are lots of acorns already falling from oak trees – this usually happens late September almost into October..

Here you can see what we are talking about..



Here is some photographic evidence showing the effects of the hot, dry weather that we have been experiencing this year.....

Effectively the hot dry spell started back in late spring and has continued ever since.....



# Fallen acorns – August 2025.....

# More signs of autumn.....

Aside from the bare ground and the early sight of acorns on the ground, there are plenty of other signs that signify that autumn has arrived early.....

Hawthorne Trees have lots of red berries on their branches plus there are plenty of Elderberries starting to ripen. Also, there are lots of Rowan berries too – indeed, this time of the year is a foragers delight.....

Also, plenty of food for the birds too.....



**Hawthorne Berries.....**



**Rowan Berries....**

# Elderberries.....



## **Woodland Trust Fruiting Hedge.....**

The Woodland Trust fruiting hedge that was planted five years ago is now really beginning to establish itself – on the one side of the long pathway there is predominantly Dog Rose that produces beautiful white and pink flowers followed by large rose hips and Blackthorn that produces Sloe berries, indeed the Sloe berries are in abundance this year. See below.....



**Sloe Berries are too bitter and sour to eat raw but when they are preserved they have many uses. You can preserve them as sloe gin, sloe wine and sloe jelly.....**

## **Sloe Berries.....**

## Rose hips looking great.....

Here you can see some of the Rose Hips that are growing in the fruiting hedge alongside the pathway leading to the original Bridge Garden.....

Rose hips provide a rich source of Vitamin C, indeed it is thought that they can provide 20 – 40 per cent more Vitamin C than an orange.....



**ROSE**

**HIPS.....**

A natural source of food that is found in lots of hedges all around the countryside, literally a forager's dream. Caution needs to be exercised though because depending on where the hedgerows are, they could be contaminated with pesticides, so best to be sure where you are picking them from. Frost will enhance the flavour too, but you run the risk then of the birds getting to them before you do. Again, a word of caution about using Rose hips because they can have some serious side effects.

Always seek professional help before using too.....

## Another example of a lack of water.....

Here is another example of what happens when plants are “starved” of water – these are pumpkins which you would normally expect at this time in the growing season to be much bigger than these pumpkins shown here, indeed this variety is called Atlantic Giant, they are certainly not giants by any stretch of the imagination. More like dwarfs! .....



**Certainly not Giant Pumpkins.....**



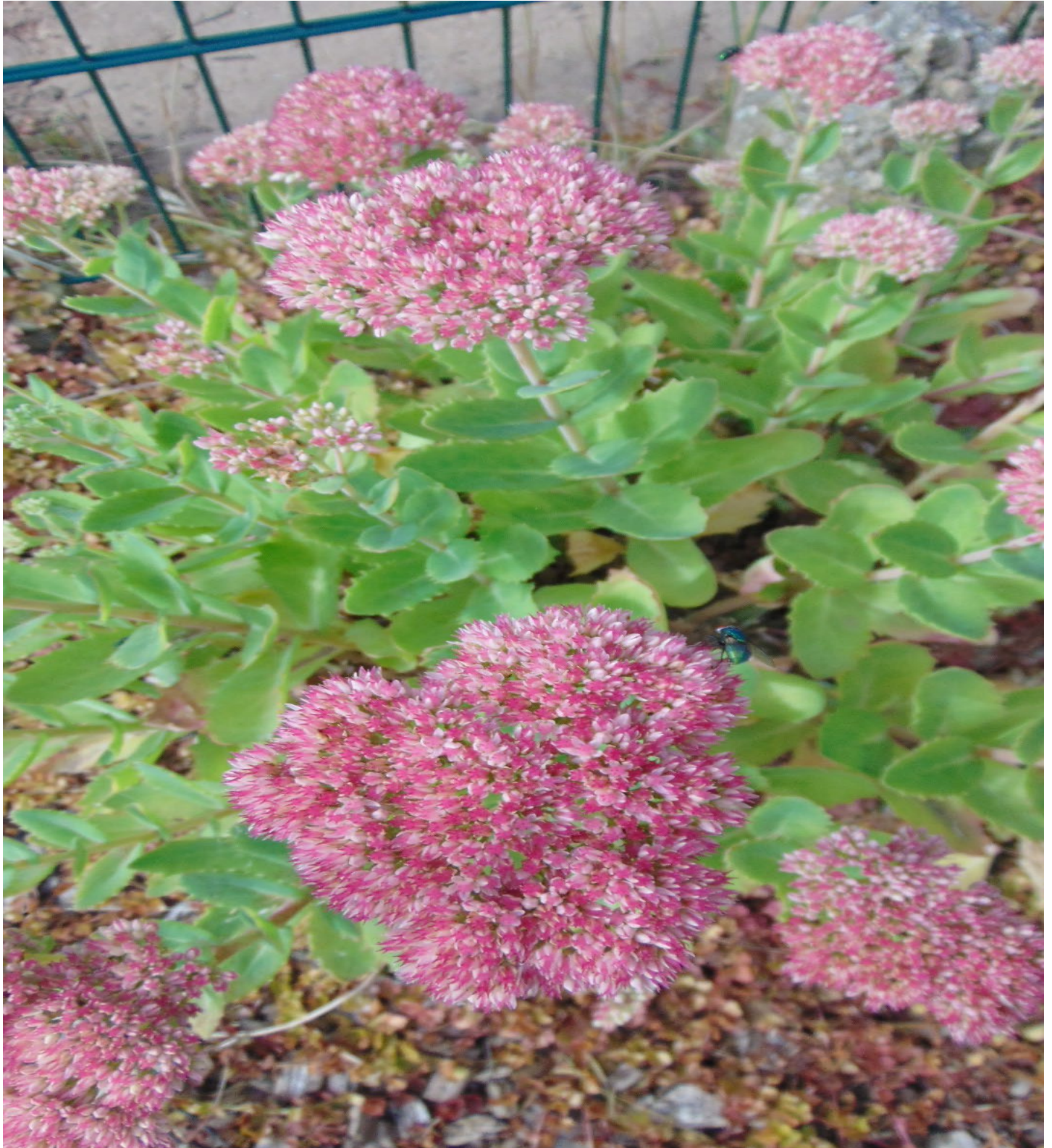
## **Sedums are thriving.....**

**With the ever - changing weather patterns in this country, there will be a need to look at plants and crops that are drought resistant.....**

**One group of plants that fit into this category are succulents.....**

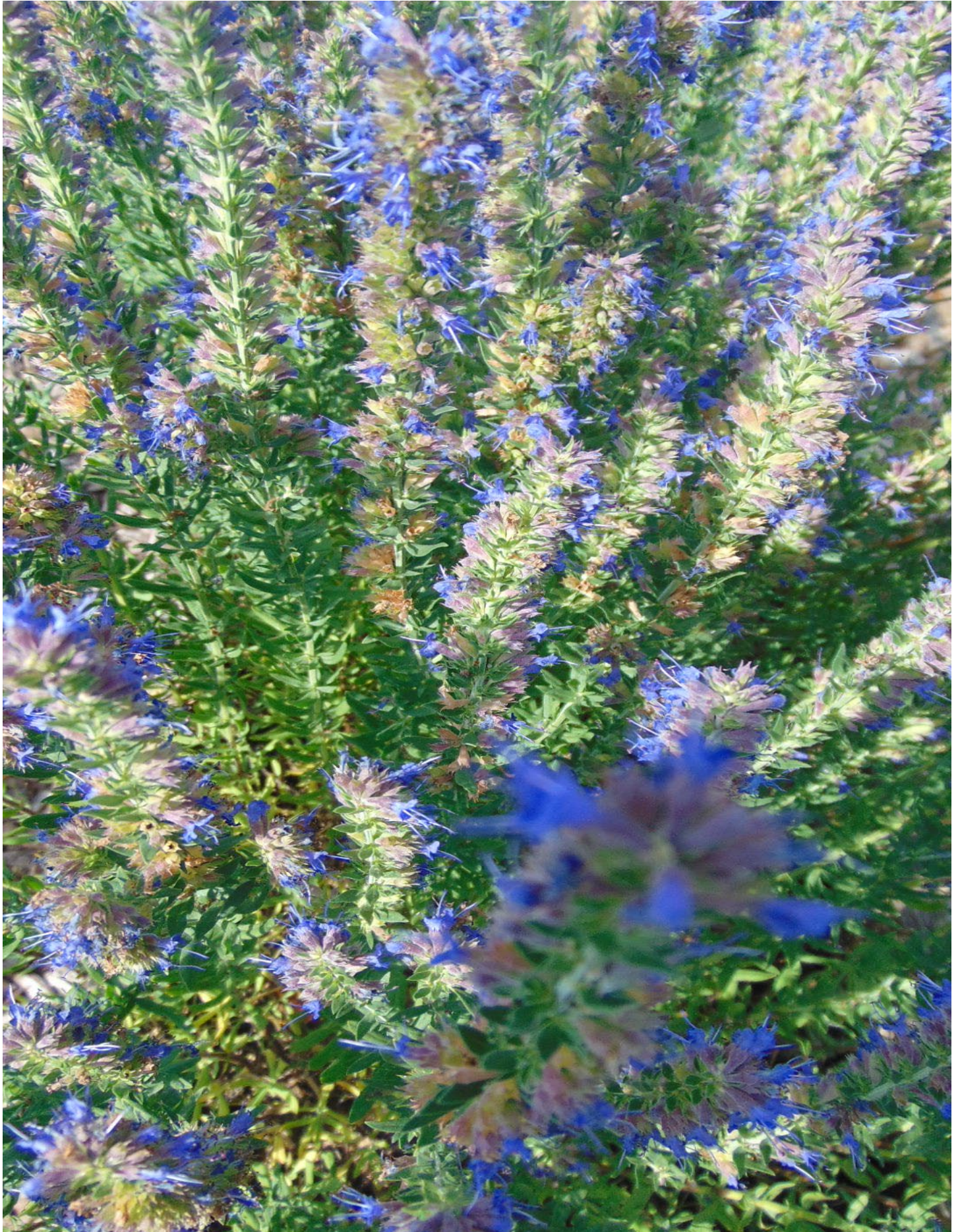
**Now, some succulents are edible although extreme caution needs to be shown because some succulents are extremely toxic! .....**

**Succulents are drought resistant because they store water in their fleshy leaves – we have some succulents growing in the school garden which are photographed below.....**



## Hyssop growing in the garden.....

Here you can see our Hyssop in full flower – an absolute magnet for the bees particularly as we edge ever closer to autumn, its delicate blue flowers provide a rich source of food for the oh so important pollinators.....



## **Fennel seeds nearly ready to harvest.....**

**We have many different herbs growing in the Echo Eternal Curriculum Garden, both culinary and medicinal herbs. One such herb that we have lots of plants growing is fennel – this is a herb that has so many different uses both culinary and medicinal. Below, you can see some of the fennel plants that have flowered and have now turned to seed, once all of the flowers have turned to seed, we will look to harvest the seeds and then dry them off ready to use them for all sorts of different things.....**

**Fennel which has a strong aniseed aroma is a versatile herb that is great for the digestive properties it contains, plus it is a good source of vitamin c and minerals such as potassium and manganese which helps in immune support. As well as the seeds, fennel bulbs are also very tasty – you can cook the bulbs or you can eat them raw.....**

