Clachanburn comment 83

It is now the end of June, and I cannot ever remember weeding at the end of June in warm soil.   The grass is still growing (and weeds too) and yesterday it was 11 deg. so I decided to have a little spray with round up on paths and the driveway, and I am fairly confident it will work. What does concern me though, is that we are best to have our weather in the proper season, the last thing we want is winter at springtime. We are past the shortest day, and as the saying goes the days lengthen and the weather strengthens, so in a way let's hope so.

 A recent visit to Auckland and to stay with a gardening friend was very interesting to me in several ways. She has moved to a town house with a small garden, and wants to make the most of every square inch, so when she showed me her new plan for some modifications, and what did I think, I found it hard to get my head around it, you see we all here, have so much more space, and probably take that for granted. What amazed me more than anything was the fruit she was growing – cherry guava's, persimmons, lemons, mandarins and chillies, so I said you can't get rid of any of them, they are special, and I came home with some – what a treat.

Last week we had an open day here on pruning fruit trees, and Russell the orchardist came and showed us all how to do it. We had a great little crowd, good weather and Russell was able to answer everyone's questions. I thought basically it is not too different to pruning a rose – keep it open in the middle, cut out any dead wood, any wood crossing over each other, and then cut back to the laterals approx. by a third. For home growers I think we need to be mindful of how high you want to climb to pick the fruit. I have a 2m long pole with a small basket on the end, with inclining tines, and a piece of sponge rubber in the bottom of the basket and it is most successful. A good option if you don't want to climb a ladder.

So I haven't begun to read my new gardening books yet, but surely that is not far off.

Keep warm
Jane