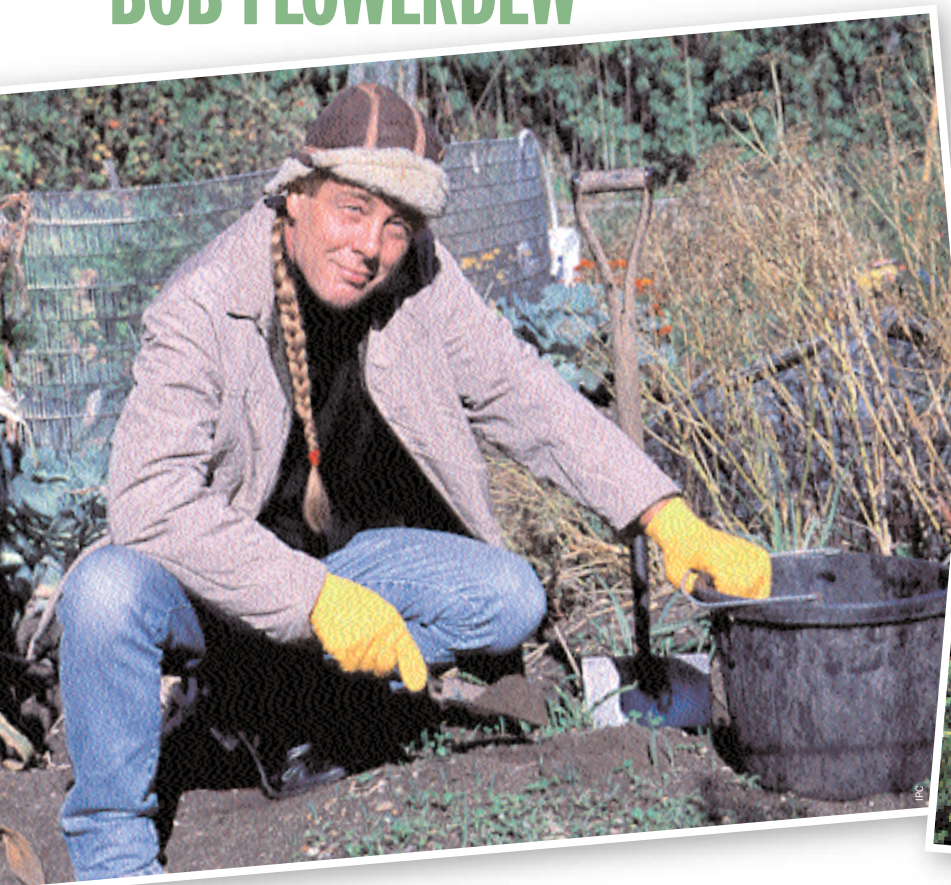


BOB FLOWERDEW



Never chuck in the trowel!

It was a long, hard search but our Bob's quest to find a replacement for his favourite hand tool has finally paid off and now he's glad he didn't give up

ALTHOUGH I LOATHE pushing products, just occasionally something comes along that is such an improvement it really deserves some discussion.

I have long lamented the lack of a good trowel. For years I had an old one with a thin steel blade so light and strong you could chop through tree roots with it. The handle sat comfortably in the palm and the offset of the blade was at just the right angle. Modern trowels have mostly

been poor things by comparison – soft, thick, heavy blades, poor offset angles and dull edges. Fine for moving potting compost or gardening on sand but tiring to use for long and incapable of digging holes in tough turf to plant bulbs.

But last year, I saw a new design and material of trowel in this very magazine. I was initially lured by the copper colour – it was bronze, in fact, as I'd read of weird experiments with copper and even gold-plated ploughs! Claims have been made

“I have long lamented the lack of a good trowel”

Bob Flowerdew is a renowned organic expert, a garden writer and regular panellist in BBC Radio 4's *Gardeners' Question Time*

that the copper can even discourage slugs and snails. And when I tried it, I was impressed – it really is excellent!

This trowel is easy to use as its curved shape plunges into the soil very satisfyingly and the edges stay incredibly sharp. It is also light and comfortable. It was rather expensive but so good, I bought a second one – for when I can't find the first! **S**

♦ **If you want a trowel like Bob's** ☎ (0845) 330 3148 or visit www.implementations.co.uk



Gardeners' Question Time

Anne Swithinbank, Matthew Biggs and Tony Russell join Gill Pyrah in the chair in Gloucestershire at 2pm on Sunday, 20 February (repeated at 3pm on 23 February)

PLANT OF THE WEEK

CALLA LILIES ARE popular with gardeners of all levels of expertise and Anne Swithinbank has a recommendation for everyone to try. *Zantedeschia elliottiana*, better known as the golden calla, has yellow flower spathes and striking white spots on its dark green leaves.



SPECIAL FEATURE

CLEMATIS IS ONE of the UK's favourite climbing plants and is grown for its showy flowers and decorative seed heads. These climbers can, however, succumb to problems such as the dreaded clematis wilt. Tune in for a guide to growing successful clematis.



Anne



Matthew



Tony



Gill