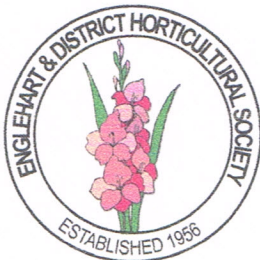




'Through The Garden Gate'

The monthly newsletter of the Englehart and District Horticultural Society
January 2014



Englehart and District Horticultural Society was formed in 1956.

General meetings:

3rd Wednesday of most months at 7:30 p.m. in the Anglican Church basement

- *Speakers, workshops, demonstrations
- *Civic Improvement
- *Youth Involvement
- *Displays and Competitions
- *Environmental Stewardship

President: B. Wilson
Bulletin Editor: E. Fisher
Website:
engleharthort.weebly.com

A Word From The Editor

As we look forward to another new year of horticulture, perhaps this is the time to review what our current constitution says about the objective of our society. "The object of this society is to encourage interest and improvement in horticulture" in several ways, the first of which is "by holding meetings for instruction and discussion on subjects with the theory and practice of horticulture." This we do very well. Our Programme convenors do their best to bring us interesting speakers, workshops, and demonstrations on a wide range of horticultural/environmental topics. If you have any suggestions for topics which might be of interest, or know someone who would make an interesting speaker (including yourself), please let our Programme Convenor know. Our current convenor is Carrie Anne Field, and she would love to hear from you.

Mark It On Your Calendar:

January 22: Annual Meeting: 6:00 p.m. Pot Luck Supper/Elections
February 5: Director's meeting
February 19: General Meeting 7:00 p.m

Those who contemplate the beauty of the earth find reserves of strength that will endure as long as life lasts. There is something infinitely healing in the repeated refrains of nature- the assurance that dawn comes after night, and spring after the winter. ~Rachel Carson

Looking Back:

- *Our November meeting with Amber and Patsy was a great success, as 30 members learned what was new in decorating/floral design for Christmas. The top picture shows Amber with a beautiful winter hanging decoration .
- * Our Christmas Workshop, organized by convenor, Rosemary Campbell, was a wonderful start to the Christmas season. Rosemary prepared months in advance for this annual event. She demonstrated how to make a Christmas Centerpiece, which could be used as an insert for a Christmas urn, using evergreen boughs, cones, dogwood, and ornaments. A great round of thanks goes to Rosemary for her hours of work. The lower picture shows Nancy Peever, a regular at our Christmas event, with her centerpiece.



Hints and Tips

Winter Bird Feeding

Experts suggest that we shouldn't buy bags of mixed birdseed. They contain a lot of filler, such as red millet. Most birds won't eat it. It gets kicked onto the ground, where it stays until it rots. Mixed birdseed is not a bargain, so buy the seeds you know your birds want. Many birds love suet. It's the solid fat rendered from beef. It provides concentrated energy to help birds make it through freezing winter days and nights. Suet is the way to attract woodpeckers to your feeding operation. You can buy suet cakes in many stores for a reasonable price. Always hang suet, so as not to attract mammals.



OHA/District 12 News:

Regarding the annual OHA Convention which will be held in Cornwall, with the theme 'A River Runs By It': plans are being made regarding speakers, workshops, etc. If you check out the OHA website at www.gardenontario.org you will find that the competitive classes for Creative Writing, Photography, and Art have been posted. If you are interested in entering the competitive classes and don't have a computer, please contact Secretary Bonnie Warner for further information. Perhaps you would consider being one of our delegates and attend the convention from July 18-20.

Reports from Your Directors:

Programme: The election of Directors and Executive will be held at the Annual Meeting on January 22; the Constitution of the Society will be discussed and proposed changes will be voted on. Programme Convenor Carrie Anne Field reports that after the business part of our Annual Meeting we will be entertained by Joe Muething with slides of his second trip to Viet Nam. For those who were lucky enough to see his slides from his first trip, you'll know how interesting and entertaining this evening will be.

Social: Convenor Mary Skippers reminds members to bring along their favourite main dish, salad, or dessert (or bread, butter, buns, pickles, etc.) to share at the Annual Meeting on Wednesday, January 22. Supper starts at 6:00, set up at 5:30. Joyce Marie Smith will bring the gift.

Membership: Ginny Montminy reports that we now have 49 members for 2014. It would be wonderful to return to our past high of over 100 members. Remember, a membership in the Englehart and District Horticultural Society provides many benefits: *First, you will receive 11 bulletins (which I hope people will find informative and worthwhile); you will be able to attend meetings where we do our best to provide educational and entertaining presentations, workshops, etc.; you will be able to enter in contests such as those at the Festival of Flowers; you will get that great feeling that comes from giving back to your community through community beautification; you will learn about environmentally friendly ways to garden; you will enjoy the companionship and social interactions with a lot of great people.* These are just a few of the reasons to renew your membership in our Society. They are also great reasons to give a membership as a gift to someone you think might like to become a member. It's only \$10.00 for a year of fun and education.

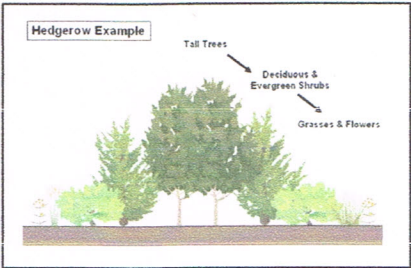
Website: Convenor Rick Heaslip reports that 2013 was a very successful year for the society's website. There were almost 3000 hits on the site from October to December. During 2013, there were 10158 unique visits to our website, averaging 847 visits per month. This is a 90% increase over the stats from 2012. Rick reminds us to check out the pictures posted from the Christmas Workshop, and don't forget, if you've misplaced your copy of 'Through The Garden Gate', you'll find it on our website. In fact, you'll find all of the Bulletins from the past 3 years on our website. Don't forget to visit it at engleharthort.weebly.com .

Nominating Committee: Chairperson Carol Heaslip and her committee are responsible for presenting names of members who may be interested in becoming a Director or member of the Executive for the coming year. The committee met recently to contact people and to prepare the list of members who have agreed to let their names stand. These names will be presented at the election which will be held at the Annual Meeting on January 22. Remember, the Society cannot function without people who are willing to take positions, so if you are interested in getting more involved in the running of the Society, please let us know.

- Between now and August, we plan to run a series of hints to help out people who are interested in showing in our annual Festival of Flowers. This month's hint is aimed at the Potted Plant exhibitor:
- *Flower Show Hint #1: When showing a potted plant, make sure the pot is clean, in good shape, and not too ornate- the plainer the better, to ensure it does not detract from the plant itself.*

Going Green

One of the interesting things I found about driving through England is the fact that many of the secondary roads are lined with hedgerows. A hedgerow is an area created by planting a mixture of shrubs, trees, vines and flowers. Hedgerows are helpful to the environment in several ways. They provide food for wildlife. Planting a variety of hardy native plants, such as fruit and nut-bearing trees and shrubs (pincherry, hawthorn, hazelnut, etc.), evergreens such as cedars, and perennials such as wild strawberries, goldenrod, and pearly everlasting helps to feed and shelter birds, insects, reptiles, and mammals. Hedgerows also provide safety and protection from predators and inclement weather for wildlife, and act as snow barriers for drivers. They provide beauty when planted with plants which provide colour and interest in different seasons. They can also act as sound barriers along roads, and help to put oxygen back into our atmosphere. It may take a few years, but building a hedgerow would be a great project to take on for many reasons.



The picture above, from the Maryland Dept. of Natural Resources, is an example of the building of a hedgerow. It is a more formal approach, but does give an idea of one type of hedgerow possible in Ontario. You don't have to live in the country to enjoy a hedgerow... a back lane is a great place to build one.

Plant of the Month

Phalaenopsis Orchid

The Phalaenopsis (Butterfly or Moth Orchid) is the most common orchid used as a house plant and is perhaps the easiest to grow. Many people are afraid to try this orchid, but it is not a difficult plant to grow at all if you follow these few suggestions:

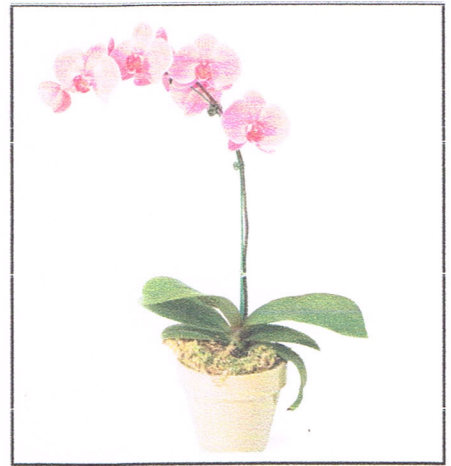
*Water once a week with luke-warm water, allowing the water to drain away. The plant may require more frequent watering in hot weather. (It has been suggested that 3 tbsp. water is enough for each watering)

*Light-Phalaenopsis require low light, either in a north or east window, or behind a sheer curtain in a south window. Once the plant is blooming, it can be moved anywhere in the house.

*These orchids are comfortable at temperatures that you will be comfortable in. Plants on windowsills will experience more extreme fluctuations which can cause bud drop.

*A balanced fertilizer, such as 20-20-20 is quite adequate for a phalaenopsis. Feed it at half strength weekly. It has been suggested to flush the bark with clear water to remove any chemical build-up once a month.

*When the flower spike has finished blooming, it can be cut back, leaving 2 nodes (where the flowers were) on the stem. The plant will probably rebloom from there. Continue watering and fertilizing as usual after it has bloomed.



Poetry and Prose

Thought For a Cold Day

*A little bit of blowing,
A little bit of snow,
A little bit of growing,
And crocuses will show.
On every twig that's lonely,
A new green leaf will spring:
On every patient tree-top
A thrush will stop and sing.
(author unknown)*



The Hilliardton Marsh Gardens

Deb Murray of Haileybury and I will be working on building an environment that is friendly to hummingbirds at the Hilliardton Marsh this year. Deb has been busy working on plans and obtaining some perennials and shrubs that will provide food for the 'hummers'. We will be starting to work on the actual gardens when spring returns. Until then, I will add information about these tiny acrobatic flyers in a few upcoming bulletins, starting now:

The hummingbird which we are most familiar with in the north is the Ruby-throated. Occasionally, people have reported seeing either the Black-chinned or Rufous Hummingbird in Ontario, mainly in the south. However, if the hummingbird in your garden has an emerald green back and tail with a deep V notch, and a bright red throat, then you have a male Ruby-throat. The female is a bit larger than the male, with a green back, but a white breast and throat, a shorter tail that is more rounded, and a longer bill. The immature birds, both male and female, look more like the adult female, lacking the red throat. The ruby-throated hummingbird is the only hummingbird known to breed in Eastern Canada (*great news- a Rufous hummingbird was banded near Charlton in November! Bruce Murphy says it's their most incredible banding yet! Picture to come in a later bulletin*)

Published 11 times a year
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Printing: Courtesy of Englehart &
District Hospital