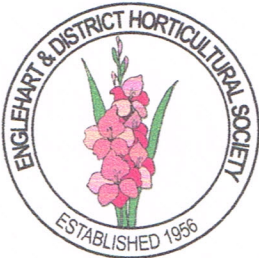




# 'Through The Garden Gate'

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



**Englehart and District Horticultural Society was formed in 1956.**

**General meetings:**

3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of most months at 7:00 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

Healthy soil is the basis of healthy plants and a healthy environment. When garden soil is in good shape there is less need for fertilizers or pesticides. As author and respected gardener Frank Tozer writes, "When building soil you not only improve your plants health, but you can also improve your own." Organic soil is rich in humus, the end result of decaying materials such as leaves, grass clippings and compost. It holds moisture, but drains well. Good organic garden soil is loose and fluffy – filled with air that plant roots need – and it has plenty of minerals essential for vigorous plant growth. It is alive with living organisms – from earthworms to fungi and bacteria – that help maintain the quality of the soil. Proper pH is also an essential characteristic of healthy soil. So, how do you know if your soil is healthy? And what do you do if it isn't? Back to high school- we're turning from Latin lessons to Chemistry. Different plants require different nutrients, but all require nitrogen (N), phosphorous (P), and potassium (K). These are the letters you will also see on a container of fertilizer. (More about this next month) *Thanks to 'Planet Natural'*

## Mark It On Your Calendar:

- June 8-14: Horticultural Week
- June 14: Town Planting-Meet at cenotaph at 9:00a.m.
- June 18: General Meeting
- July 16: Summer BBQ
- July 18-20: OHA Annual Convention in Cornwall

## *Using Colour In the Garden (final)*

**9. Try using some interesting colourful containers,** even placing them right in the garden. A bright blue ceramic pot with yellow pansies or marigolds will make a lovely splash of colour.

**10. Patches planting:** Think of small gardens within a larger garden and plant in 'patches' of complementary colours- perhaps a pretty pink rose in front of taller white phlox, with some pale blue petunias, didiscus, annual phlox, etc. in front.

**11. Monochrome gardens:** Use plants in the same colour family to make a bold statement. Try planting a bed or part of a larger garden in shades of a single colour- think lower mauve annuals such as petunias in front of purple alliums, in front of a purpleleaf sandcherry, with some lovely heuchera such as 'Frosted Violet' or 'Midnight Rose' worked into the bed.



*I hope you'll think about trying some of the ideas on Colour in the Garden in your own yards. I know I'm going to try a couple of them. I think I'll use some succulents in a bright blue container in a garden.*

### Looking Back/ Looking Ahead

Last month's meeting was a wonderful opportunity to learn about a new way of gardening. We took a field trip to member Karen Watchorn's house and garden to learn about gardening using a tower which holds plants, water, and nutrients. We also enjoyed a social time in her lovely house and toured her large yard and garden. Thank you, Karen, for your hospitality.



Programme convenor Carrie Anne Field also reminds people of the programme for **June's meeting**. Our topic will be how to choose and prepare cut flowers for the Festival of Flowers. We will meet in the beautiful backyard of our own Bonnie Warner at 39 First Avenue North (across the tracks). Bring your shared snack. In case of rain, we will meet at the Anglican Church as usual.

### Hardening Off

Hardening off is the process of acclimating plants to outdoor conditions. Your plants are like your children. They need to adapt to conditions outside the home. Timing is important. Many books will tell you that plants started indoors are ready to go out when its roots have filled the container. But if outdoor conditions are still too cold or wet, your tender plants may be set back. When you first bring plants outside, try to protect them from direct sun and winds. Leave them out only a few hours a day to start and make sure the soil they're in doesn't dry out. Gradually increase the time the plants stay out. After a week (or more) they should be ready. Remember that plants need to adjust to the heat as well as the cold. Some gardeners use cold frames and hoop greenhouses to assist their plants when first set out. I usually start mine out under a tree so they don't get full sun at first. Again, attention is important. Make sure the cold frame is properly ventilated so that your delicate green things aren't exposed to too much heat. Good luck!

### Reports from Your Directors

**Horticultural Week:** Horticultural Week runs from June 8 to 14 and is a busy time for the Horticultural Society. We will be doing some planting of town beds this week and Convenors Len and Eileen Fisher will be visiting classes in both elementary schools, doing some fun horticultural activities with students. Listen to CJBB for gardening hints this week, and perhaps take a look at the displays in the Library, the Museum, and the window of Northern Variety.

**Plant and Bake Sale:** This venture was another great success this year, with many people going home with a great variety of plants and delicious baking. Convenors Jean Bott and Les Peever were very pleased with the outcome and extend their thanks to all members who brought in their plants and baking to help us with our biggest fundraiser of the year. Thanks also go to the members who helped price and place the plants and baking on Friday and worked the tables and floor at the sale. A last thank you goes to the people who donated articles for the draws we held at the sale.

**Civic Improvement:** Convenor Carrie Anne Field reminds members that civic planting will take place on Saturday, June 14. We will meet at the cenotaph at 9:00 a.m. Bring along your trowel and the sunshine. Some sad news for us- two very dedicated and active long-time members are moving to Nova Scotia. We will miss Joe Muething and Kathy Martin so much! Help us say goodbye to them on Saturday after the civic planting as we will head to the Centennial Park after the planting for a provided lunch (by Twyla Wilson, so we know it will be delicious.)

**Social:** This month's hostess is Mary Schippers and Ginny Montminy will bring the gift for the free draw.

**Website:** Rick Heaslip reports that our website was visited 1151 times this past month, which is a 53% increase over May 2013. We have had 6000 visits to the site this year to date.

**Festival of Flowers:** Convenors Rick, Bonnie, and Eileen report that plans are well under way, and we hope that you're happily working in your gardens, planting specimens that you'll win prizes with in our August show. (Follow Hint #6 below and you'll be well prepared.)

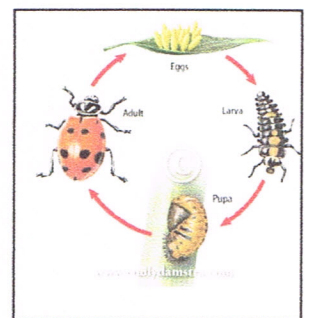
Our own Website Convenor, Rick Heaslip, has assumed the responsibility of establishing and maintaining a website for District 12, the division of the OHA to which we belong. He has set up a site that will include not only information from our District Executive but also from each of the six Societies within the District. It will include info on upcoming District Meetings and news from our District Director as well as calendars of events for each Society, e.g.- dates of Flower Shows, etc. Check this new site out at [district12hort.weebly.com](http://district12hort.weebly.com) Great work, Rick!

I've come across a couple more Facebook pages you might enjoy (if you participate in Facebook). It seems there are plenty of pages that are full of helpful hints and great gardening ideas. A few good ones are: **Garden Natural**, **The Gardening Club**, **Gardening Know How**, and **Vegetable Gardening**. Just type the name in the blank 'search bar' on your Facebook page, and spend some time on a rainy day or a cool evening learning about ways others garden, and hints and practices that they are willing to share. **Garden Natural** also has a website, and although it is a site that sells natural pesticides, composters, etc., it is jammed with ideas and hints of how you can garden naturally using materials you probably already have in your kitchens.

**Festival of Flowers hint # 6:** Get as much done ahead of time as possible. Get your tags early and at least fill in the bottom part. Clean your plant pots and saucers, clean your pails with a few drops of bleach, and make sure you've got everything you need if you're going to do a floral design- oasis, tape, sharp clippers, etc. If you're new at this, don't be afraid to call on an experienced exhibitor for advice. We'd love to help you.

### Going Green

*"Ladybug, ladybug, fly away home"...* to my home, hopefully! We'll soon be seeing some of these helpful little beetles in our gardens, we hope. The more the merrier, I say. There are ways to help these beneficial little critters come to our gardens. Plants that attract lady bugs include dill, fennel, yarrow, cilantro, caraway, angelica, and dandelion. (Dandelions-who knew they'd be helpful!) These plants are also good places to look for lady bugs that might be in your garden. You can also buy lady bugs and a lady bug attractant to use in your garden or greenhouse as well. When an infestation of juice-sucking aphids strikes any plant, lady beetles will feast, making quick work of the pests. A single lady beetle will eat up to 60 aphids a day, some 5,000 over the course of its life. There are at least ten types or genus of lady beetles and each will feed on insects harmful to plants. Finding a cluster of bright yellow lady beetle eggs in your garden is a great sign. The lower picture shows the hungry larva- don't hurt him!



## Plant of the Month

### Alchemilla mollis (Lady's Mantle)

This clump-forming, herbaceous perennial is equally effective as individual plants in a perennial or mixed garden or as a summer ground cover. The medium sized, lobed pale green leaves are attractive by themselves, and are beautiful after a summer rain or when they catch the morning dew drops which they hold like sparkling diamonds. It will grow in full sun to shady areas and isn't fussy about its soil. The feathery sprays of tiny chartreuse flowers are a pretty bonus in early and mid summer. This hardy plant grows to a height of about 12-18 in. (30-45cm), and usually stays in a low, circular mound. Self-sown seedlings may become a problem as they can be very prolific, and may even germinate in the lawn. However, I enjoy the beauty of the foliage, as well as the lime-yellow blooms held above the leaves enough to make it worth my while to try to remember to dead head (remove the spent blossoms) before it drops its seeds, or I share the babies with friends and neighbours. This is a plant which can also be used as a ground cover if you have a tough spot to cover.



### Soaking Seeds

Soaking seeds, both vegetable and flower seeds, will help swell and soften them, getting a jump on germination. What seeds can you soak? Try big seeds, wrinkled seeds, and seeds with hard coats. (Think bean, pumpkin, sweet pea, nasturtium). Seeds with hard covers, such as castor bean, can actually be nicked or filed a bit to give them a head start. Place your seeds in a small container, even a baggie, with warm, not hot water, and soak them from 8-24 hours. Don't leave them in too long as they may start to rot, so just long enough to soften up that hard casing is fine. It's a good idea to have your gardens ready to receive them so you can get them into the ground quickly. Some people even allow their seeds to begin to germinate between damp pieces of paper towel and simply lay the sprouted peas or beans into the furrow and gently cover them with soil. Up here in the north, every little trick helps us to be able to get a good harvest.

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If you know a young person interested in plants, please try to encourage them to grow their own garden. We sponsor a youth Garden Competition, with trophies and prizes, and would love to have more kids involved-from Grade One to Grade Twelve. Information is available from Eileen Fisher, Bonnie Warner, and also from their school's office. Even if they don't want to enter the contest, please encourage them to get gardening. It's good for everyone!



### Knee Deep in June

*Tell you what I like the best  
'Long about knee-deep in June,  
'Bout the time strawberries  
melt*

*On the vine, -- some afternoon  
Like to jes' git out and rest,  
And not work at nothin' else!*

*(James Witcomb Riley)*



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