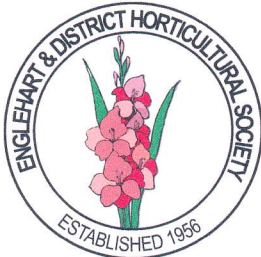




'Through The Garden Gate'

The monthly newsletter of the Englehart and District Horticultural Society
February 2020



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

General meetings:

3rd Wednesday of most months
at 7:00 p.m. in the
St. Paul's Emmanuel
Community Church

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

President: Jean. Bott
Bulletin Editor: E. Fisher
Website:
engleharthort.weebly.com

A Word From The Editor

Mea culpa...I must admit that there was a bit of an error in the January bulletin, as my husband pointed out. I used Jean Bott's lovely quote about thorns having roses and when Len read it he pointed it out to me (of course!). He and I enjoy a programme called QI (Quite Interesting) which is shown on a streaming service called Brit Box. It is a comedic quiz show and one night there was a question about roses having thorns. Now, we all 'know' that roses have thorns. But...they don't. *"Technically speaking, roses do not have thorns, but they do have prickles. A prickle is a superficial spine-like outgrowth from the stem. On the other hand, thorns are a branch of a plant that has become hard, woody, and pointed. Locust trees and cactus plants have thorns, but roses do not have thorns."* Who'd a thunk it? Now we know the scientific truth but I know that I will always refer to rose 'prickles' as thorns.

Programme

This month Bonnie Warner and I will be speaking about and giving hints for **'Starting Seeds Indoors'**. Come along...bring a friend. Don't forget that we meet in the basement of St. Paul's Emmanuel Community Church.

Mark It On Your Calendar

February 19: Monthly meeting
March 4: Directors' meeting

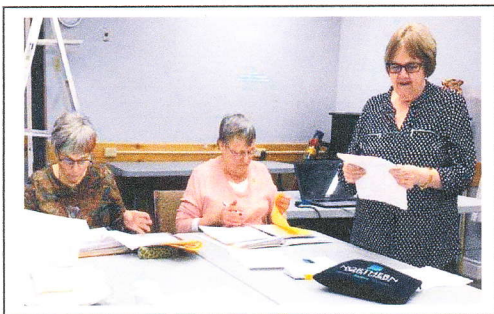
2624 Year-Old Bald Cypress Discovered in North Carolina

"Now that's an historic plant! According to scientists from the University of Arkansas, a bald cypress (*Taxodium distichum*) growing in North Carolina is 2624 years old, making it the oldest living thing east of the Rocky Mountains and one of the oldest trees in the world. And it isn't alone. "There are hundreds of 1,000-year-old trees throughout the Black River swamp forest," says scientist David Stahle who used core samples and radiocarbon to date the cypresses. "We think there are older trees out there still." Awe-inspiring in their own right, these ancient trees also offer a precipitation record in their tree rings that's "amazingly accurate and detailed." It not only shows modern droughts, says Stahle, but also "the severe multi-year droughts of 1587-1589 associated with the disappearance of the Lost Colony of Roanoke Island, and the drought of 1606-1612 concurrent with the hardships suffered during the early years of the Jamestown Colony." (From Friends of Old Bulbs Gazette)

This is an interesting article I borrowed from another Horticultural Society's newsletter. I thought it went along with something I heard on the news earlier this year- that trees are the only living things which have the ability to live forever!

Annual Meeting

Our annual Meeting in January was a busy one, with reports, elections, a delicious pot luck supper, and a slide presentation of 2019 events. Thank you to the Executive - Jean Bott, Evelyne Nemcsok, Ginny Montminy, Carrie Anne Field, and Bonnie Warner for allowing their names to stand for 2020 and to all of the Directors who will work hard for our society. The list of executive, directors, and committee chairs will be found on page 5 of this bulletin.



Looking Back

I wish I could remember the year this photo was taken. I hope someone remembers. It was a banner year, as we recognised four long time members for their years of service to the Society and to our community by awarding them with Life Memberships. Marie and Clint Hack, and Elsie Elyea, were very active members, holding positions as Directors of the Society for years. Jean Wallace was a Director as well and also assumed the role of President of our Society, and was District Director of District 12 in 1982-83.



Reports From Your Directors

Membership: It's that time of the year when we ask you to pay your annual membership. A cheque in the mail for \$10.00 to Ginny (address on page 4) will renew your membership for 2020 and ensure you continue to receive this newsletter, or you can renew and pay at the next meeting.

Bulletin: If you ever come across an interesting article or have ideas to improve our monthly newsletter, please let me know.

Nominating: Our thanks go to Carrie Anne Field and her committee and to all members who agreed to assume a position as a Director or on the Executive. We are grateful to the members who have allowed their names stand for election, and who are willing to take on an important role in our group. Thank you, also, to Twyla Wilson, who conducted the elections last month.

Programme: Please let Evelyne Nemcsok know if you are able to present a programme of interest to the Society or know someone who would be willing to share their knowledge of a horticulturally-oriented subject at a meeting.

Website/Facebook: Webmaster Rick Heaslip has updated the website for 2020. Remember that this site is a great place to keep up with what's going on in our society. We now have 333 people who use our Facebook page, from as far away as New Zealand. Check us out on the website and Facebook.

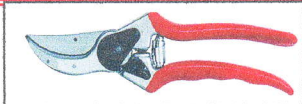
Social: Convenors Joyce Marie Smith and Bonnie Warner are looking for volunteers to help handle the social aspects of our monthly meetings. If you can help out, please let one of them know. Duties include setting up the materials used in the social time after our meetings- ie. making tea/coffee, putting out the snacks, and cleaning up after.

Some information for members: Committee convenors are always looking for members who would be willing to help them out with ideas, suggestions for improvements, or just plain helping out at events. If a convenor asks you to be a committee member, we hope that you will say yes. Just remember the old adage "*Many hands make light work.*"

The Importance of Healthy Soil (cont. from January)

Mulch: Organic (straw, hay, grass clippings, shredded bark) cover the soil and insulate it from extreme heat and cold. Mulches reduce water loss through evaporation and deter the growth of weeds. They break down slowly, enriching the soil with organic matter. Inorganic mulches (pebbles, gravel, black plastic, landscape fabrics) will prevent rapid evaporation and keep weeds down just as an organic mulch does. Unlike organic mulches, they do not need to be replaced every year and will not attract insects and rodents. However, inorganic mulches do not benefit the soil by breaking down and adding organic matter which improves soil structure and nutrient content. If you're looking to improve your soil structure, use a clean, seed-free, high-quality garden mulch.

Fertiliser: Dry or liquid fertiliser can add nutrients to the soil that might not get there any other way. Organic garden fertilisers work a little slower than their synthetic counterparts, but they release their nutrients over a longer time frame. Additionally synthetic fertilisers are bad for the environment and can make the soil worse in the long run as beneficial microorganisms are killed off. Organic dry fertilisers are mixed into the soil according to the directions on the label and then watered. They work more slowly than liquid fertilisers, but last longer. Fertiliser blends contain different amounts of nitrogen, phosphorous and potassium. The ratio is listed on the label (for example 5-10-5). Other fertilisers may contain bat guano, rock phosphate, molasses or other ingredients. There are dozens of recipes for making your own organic fertiliser. Most are variations on nitrogen-phosphorus-potassium theme with added nutrients that come from seed meals, ash, lime, greens, and or other mineral dusts and additional organic materials, often kelp, leaf mold, or cured manures. Liquid fertilisers are sprayed directly on the plant foliage or onto the soil. Popular organic liquid fertilisers include fish emulsion and seaweed blends. Compost teas are another liquid fertiliser that are easy to make and take advantage of the compost you have piling up in the yard. If you are using a foliar spray, be sure to wet the underside of the leaves. This is where the stomata, the microscopic openings that take in gases, are located. As they open to let in carbon dioxide and release moisture, they will quickly absorb the fertiliser. Read the labels of the liquid fertiliser you choose as some could burn crops and should be applied only to soil. Cover crops are a temporary planting, usually sown in the fall, which help protect the soil from wind and erosion, and add valuable organic material. They also establish a dense root structure that can have a positive effect on soil texture. Cover crops also suppress weeds, deter insects and disease, and help fix nitrogen in the soil. When the crops are turned into the soil, they become green manure. Rye and alfalfa are common cover crops. *(I imagine this is important mainly for people who plant large vegetable gardens)* Cover crops are planted at the end of the growing season (winter cover crops), or during part of the growing season itself (summer cover crops).



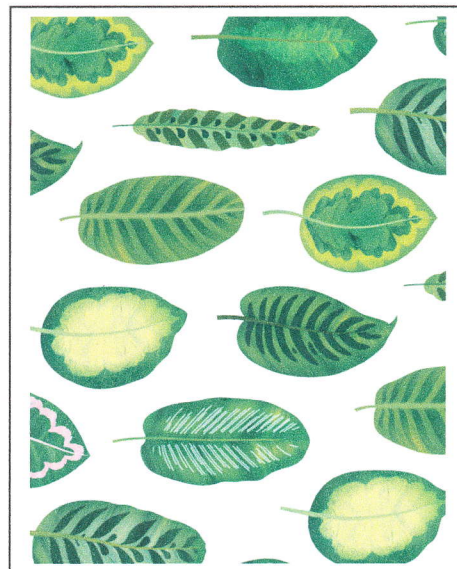
Garden Tools Pruners/Secateurs



Hand pruners come in two styles: **bypass** and **anvil**. In bypass pruners, the two blades meet in the middle and pass by each other. Anvil pruners have only one blade, which closes onto a flat surface. Unlike bypass blades, it can be sharpened from both sides and remains reliable when slightly blunt. Anvil pruners are useful for cutting thick branches; you can bite into the stem from one direction, swing the handle around and bite further through narrowed wood from another direction. Bypass pruners have a top curved blade that passes next to the lower blade, making a cleaner and more complete cut. Gardeners tend to prefer bypass pruners for this reason. You'll reach for pruners over and over again in the garden, especially for woody stems. Choose those that open and close smoothly, with padded or rounded handles for comfort. Good pruners should lock shut when not in use. Keep them completely free of rust, and have them sharpened every year or so as needed. I like to add a bit of oil each spring and fall to my pruners.

Plant of the Month

Calathea is an interesting family of tropical plants,(related to the Prayer Plant), which we can grow as a houseplant as long as we provide the right conditions. They are highly sensitive to cold, drafts, and sudden temperature fluctuations, grow best in warm, humid, and well-lit conditions, but not in direct sunlight. They prefer dappled light indoors and prefer both tropical humidity and tropical temperatures above 15C (60F). Calathea do well in a light, porous potting mix that retains water but drains well. It's best to keep the soil continuously moist throughout the spring and summer, but you should reduce watering in the winter. Keep a close look-out for spider mite, especially in the winter. The plant should also be fed regularly with liquid higher nitrogen fertilizer throughout the growing season. Calathea can be propagated by division at repotting time. The plant should be repotted every year or every other year into fresh potting mix. There are many species of Calathea and many have beautiful colourful leaves with intricate markings.



The Amazing Cucumber

What an amazing fruit the cucumber is we treat it like a vegetable and rarely use it for more than pickles or in a salad, although I must admit that as a child I loved a cucumber sandwich on soft white bread and butter. But there is more to the cucumber than meets the eye. Here are some interesting cucumber facts...

1. Cucumbers contain most of the vitamins you need every day; just one cucumber contains vitamin B1, vitamin B2, vitamin B3, vitamin B5, vitamin B6, folic acid, vitamin C, calcium, iron, magnesium, phosphorus, potassium and zinc.
2. Feeling tired in the afternoon? Put down the caffeinated soda and pick up a cucumber. Cucumbers are a good source of B vitamins and carbohydrates that can provide that quick pick-me-up.
3. Tired of your bathroom mirror fogging up after a shower? Try rubbing a cucumber slice along the mirror; it will eliminate the fog and provide a soothing, spa-like fragrance.
4. Are grubs and slugs ruining your planting beds? Place a few slices in a small pie tin and your garden will be free of pests all season long. The chemicals in the cucumber react with the aluminum to give off a scent undetectable to humans but drive garden pests crazy and make them flee the area.
5. Looking for a fast and easy way to remove cellulite before going out or to the pool? Try rubbing a slice or two of cucumbers along your problem area for a few minutes, the phytochemicals in the cucumber cause the collagen in your skin to tighten, firming up the outer layer and reducing the visibility of cellulite. Works great on wrinkles too!(I have to admit that I haven't tried all of these promises yet but I intend to!) More on the cucumber next month.)

Poetry and Prose

February

*The sun is higher every trip,
The sidewalk shows,
Icicles drip.
A snowstorm comes
And cars are stuck,
Though road salt flies
From the old town truck,*

*The chickadees grow
plump on seed
That mother pours
Where they can feed.
And snipping, snipping
Children run
To cut out hearts
For everyone.*

John Updyke

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Society
Box 677, Englehart, ON P0J 1H0
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Secretary: Bonnie Warner
Treasurer: Ginny Montminy
Editor: Eileen Fisher
Copying: Ginny Montminy
Mailing: Joyce Marie Smith

Results from the January 2020 Annual Meeting

At our Annual Meeting held on January 7th, the Executive and Directors were elected. The following people will serve as Executive and Directors in 2020:

Executive

President: Jean Bott
1st Vice: Evelyne Nemcsok
2nd Vice: Carrie Anne Field
Secretary: Bonnie Warner
Treasurer: Ginny Montminy
Auditors: Twyla Wilson/Darcy Hebert

Directors

Claudette Black	Barbara Curran
Eileen Fisher	Rick Heaslip
Marg McMurray	Bruce Wilson
Mary Schippers	Ruth Webb
Joyce Marie Smith	Kim Inglis
Jean Donaldson	Anna Regele
Irene Bond	Elaine Lush

2020 Convenors

Christmas Workshop: A. Regele/C.A. Field
Youth Garden Competition: B. Warner/E.Fisher
Civic Planting: M. Schippers/B. Wilson
Social: J. Smith/B. Warner
Membership/Cards: G. Montminy
Plant and Bake Sale: B. Curran/J. Bott
Constitution: B. Wilson
Service Certificate: C. Black
Ad hoc: District 12 Planning Meeting: B. Warner

Bulletin and Facebook: E. Fisher
Website: R. Heaslip
Publicity: C. Black
Programme: E. Nemcsok
Prizes and Awards: G. Montminy
Horticultural Week: E. Nemcsok
Nominating: C.A. Field
Ad hoc: Hilliardton Marsh: E Fisher

Dates To Remember

Board Meetings

February 5
March 4
April 1
May 6
June 3
July –no meeting
August 5
September 2
October 7
November 4
December No meeting
January 6, 2021

General Meetings

February 19
March 18
April 15
May 20
June 17
July 15 (bbq)
August 19
September 16
October 21
November 25 (Christmas Workshop)
December no meeting
January 20 Annual Meeting

Special Events

Plant and Bake Sale May 23

Horticultural Week: 7-13

Christmas Workshop November 25