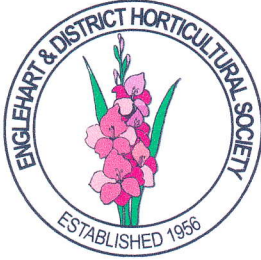


'Through The Garden Gate'

The monthly newsletter of the Englehart and District Horticultural Society
March 2017



Englehart and District Horticultural Society was formed in 1956.

General meetings:

3rd Wednesday of most months at 7:00 p.m. in the Presbyterian Church basement

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

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engleharthort.weebly.com

A Word From The Editor

At the beginning of each new year, our executive and directors draw up a forecast of programmes/events that will be beneficial to our society and to the community at large. This year, these plans include:

- + Encouraging new members to attend meetings
- + Encouraging members to attend local, district and provincial events
- + Promote Junior Gardeners
- + Support the Millennium Garden at EPS
- + Promote horticultural awareness through Horticultural Week
- + Raise awareness of the society through:
 - * Society website and Facebook page
 - * use of media for advertising and coverage of events
 - * continued presence on the Ontario Horticultural Association's web site
 - * informative and fun general meetings
 - * special events-plant and bake sale, Christmas workshop, etc.
 - * civic planting

Mark It On Your Calendar:

- March 15:** General Meeting
- April 19:** General Meeting
- April 29:** District 12 Annual Meeting in Kirkland Lake
- May 27:** Spring Plant and Bake Sale

Looking Ahead

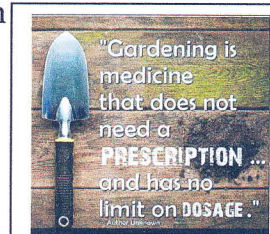
There will be some big changes in our club's programme this year, due to a variety of reasons. Instead of having one large flower show competition, we will be holding six mini-shows/competitions at some monthly meetings. For instance, at this month's meeting we are asking people to bring in photos for the following classes: **Symbiosis (bee(s) on a bloom); A Frosty Day; Seedhead(s) in Winter; Winter Wild Thing.**

Photos are to be mounted on white paper/bristol board/cardstock no larger than 6" by 8" (15 by 20 cm). We will have entry tags and some cardstock available at the meeting so if you need some, come a bit early to get your pictures mounted and tags filled out. In April we'll have competitions for houseplants and spring flowers will be shown in May. August will bring competitions for some annuals/perennials/vegetables. Check out **page 5** of this bulletin for a list of competitions for 2017 and explanations, and keep this safe. This will also be listed on our website.

Quips, Quotes, and Garden Lore

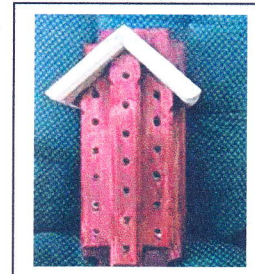
“Whatever level of gardener you may be, truly one of the greatest pleasures comes not from nurturing your creation, but from sharing it with others. Gardeners are by and large a generous lot, and among my most favourite people in the world. They throw open the gates and invite you inside to explore. When you crow your delight over some spectacular specimen, so often they send you away with a piece of your very own, or at least the promise of a 'slip' when the time is right. The pleasure is as much theirs for the giving as yours for the receiving.” (Again, thanks to Jean Wallace, from one of her favourite books, Perennial Gardening Guide by John M. Valleau)

It really is time to start thinking about your gardens. March is a good month to start seeds that take a while to germinate; to get a book from the library on gardening or garden design; to look at some photos of last year's plants; to check your dahlia/glad/calla/canna/begonia bulbs, corms, and tubers if you have kept them over from last year; to check our website or join our Facebook page. It's a great month to start planning and dreaming of what's to come. Spring is just around the corner!



Reports from Your Directors:

Programme: We are all now well aware of the importance of birds and bees in our environment, and how important it is for us to keep our bee population healthy. Our programme this month will be 'Bird Houses and Bee Houses' with Bill Smith. It's going to be a lot of fun, and educational, too. We will be able to make our own Mason bee homes at the meeting. Mason bees are named for their habit of using mud or other "masonry" products in constructing their nests which are made in naturally occurring gaps such as between cracks in stones or other small dark cavities. Some species prefer to use hollow stems or holes in wood made by wood-boring insects. For the low cost of \$8.00, we will be able to make one of these ourselves. The money covers the cost of the wood, screws, etc. If you can, bring along a red Robertson screwdriver please. Don't forget- this will also be the first night of our participating in the **photographic competitions** mentioned in February's bulletin. If you weren't able to attend last month's meeting, you missed a very interesting and entertaining evening. Jeff Warner showed us slides of his giant vegetables, from seed to the largest-we've-ever-seen carrots, rutabaga, pumpkins, and more. We were also lucky enough to get a free giant seed. Thanks, Jeff!



Social: Social convenor Mary Schippers reminds Claudette Black that she is the hostess for the March meeting and also brings the gift for the give-away.

Facebook/Website: Rick Heaslip reports that there were 433 visitors on our website last month. Make sure you check it out for all the latest pictures from our meetings and information about upcoming events. We have 111 members on our Facebook page. If you're interested, please check us out...it's fun just to read and see what others post, but more fun if you share your own experiences and photos with us. Just ask to 'join'...we'd love to have you.

Plant and Bake Sale: It's not too early to start thinking about this, one of our most important events. Are you starting any seeds for your garden? Why not start a few extras for the sale...annuals, perennials, vegies... all are welcome and wanted. More to come from our convenor, Jean Bott, next month. Mark this date down on your calendar now...due to a conflict at the Legion Hall, our sale will be a week later this year, so the set up will be on Friday, May 26, with the sale held on **Saturday, May 27.**

A Seed Primer from Joe (continued)

As the new seed catalogues arrive or become available on line the first thing most gardeners do is look to see what is new. Interestingly in recent years a number of the “new” offerings are actually old varieties that are being made available once again. Most seed companies now list a number of heritage or heirloom seeds. There are an increasing number of smaller seed companies that offer these types of seeds exclusively. If you’re a little confused by these designations, you aren’t alone. Typically the terms “heritage” and “heirloom” are used interchangeably when applied to seeds. What is less clear is what exactly qualifies a seed to be a heritage or heirloom variety. It depends on who you ask.

For some it’s the history behind the plant. The Aricara bean, for instance, was grown by the Native American tribes of the Great Plains. Members of the Lewis and Clark expedition used the beans to help them survive the brutal winter of 1805. The beans were a favorite of Thomas Jefferson who grew them at his home in Virginia.

For others it is more a matter of age. What age you ask? Again opinions differ. Many say the plant should go back at least 50 years. Another school of thought holds that heirloom plants are those that predate the end of World War 2 because it was around this time that plant breeders began turning out large numbers of hybrid varieties.

The one thing that everyone does agree on is that all heritage / heirloom varieties must be open pollinated. Open pollinated varieties are those that come true from seed. Seed saved from these plants will produce the same variety when grown out in future years as opposed to hybrid seed which in most cases will produce a plant that is different from the parent. Seed from open pollinated varieties can be saved by gardeners, shared from gardener to gardener, traded at seed exchanges and passed down through generations. I think this is one of the things that makes growing heirloom varieties so popular.

There are other practical reasons to grow them. Open pollinated plants tend to have less uniformity between plants of the same variety. It is these subtle differences that over time allow some plants to change in response to their local environment or develop resistance to a disease or insect. Growing open pollinated plants promotes diversity. Not only is diversity nature’s insurance policy but it also makes your garden more interesting. (to be continued)

District 12

As noted in our calendar, District 12 is holding its Annual Meeting in Kirkland Lake this year. We were lucky last year that many members from other societies, especially Kirkland Lake, supported us with their attendance at our Annual Meeting. We hope that you will want to go the KL meeting. It’ll be a great day (Kirkland Lake always does a wonderful job on these events) of horticultural learning, lots of networking and exchanging of ideas, and, as always, great food! Please let Bonnie Warner know asap so the Kirkland people can make plans. Check out our website and the District 12 website for more information. Carpooling is available, too.



Membership Convenor Ginny Montminy reports we have 53 members for 2017. We are now in the third month of the year and if you have not renewed your membership, this will be your last bulletin. We don’t want to lose touch with you, so please contact Ginny to renew for this year. As a member, you are able to attend meetings, participate in the business of the Society, enjoy fellowship with like-minded people, learn from interesting speakers and workshops, become involved with the planning of the group, participate in civic planting, and just have fun. PS- we also have delicious snacks!!

Plant of the Month

Scindapsus, also called Pothos or Devils's Ivy, is a lovely, firm-leaved vine in plain green, golden, or variegated with white or yellow markings. It is sometimes confused with a philodendron. It can be grown in semi-shade or strong light but warmth and humidity are essential. Use a good potting mix enriched with compost. Try to avoid cold areas, though double-glazed windows should be alright. Water the plants regularly to maintain lush, firm growth and try to keep the area humid. It should be fed with a general houseplant fertilizer throughout the spring and summer. Mist the leaves occasionally to keep them clean. New plants can be started by cuttings.



House Plant Problems?

Have you noticed brown tips on any of your houseplants' leaves? It is a common occurrence, especially during the winter months. Sometimes our house plants have a hard time adjusting to the dry heat in our homes during the long winter months, especially if they are placed near a heat source, such as a vent or fireplace. Another very common cause of brown tips is using water with chemicals in it. Most towns use some chemicals in their water, which can lead to leaf burn, especially at the tips. One suggestion is to leave your watering can full of tap water for a few hours before you water your plants, allowing the chlorine to dissipate. Tip-browning can also be caused by too much fertilizer. It is a good idea to reduce the amount of fertilizer you use if you notice the leaf burn on your plants. Also, check for insect pests on the plants, especially the underside of the leaves. Pests such as spider mites love the dry conditions in our homes and are often difficult to spot until the damage has been done. Sometimes, it just comes down to the fact that your plants may be just plain dry. Our houses in Canada tend to be hard on plants during the winter months. Rather than overwatering them in response to the browning, increase the humidity of the air around your plants. Try misting them, or setting the pot on stones in a saucer or tray of room temperature water. Remember, don't let the pot sit directly in the water; keep it slightly above the water level, on the stones.



Poetry and Prose

Green

Harmony

Growth

Soothing

Renewal

Self-control

Restores energy

Equilibrium

Refreshment

Reassurance

Relaxing

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Competitions for 2017

One entry per class permitted

March 15 Photography

Class 1: Symbiosis (a bee/bees on a bloom) Class 2: A Frosty Day
Class 3: Winter Wild Thing (bird/mammal/etc.) Class 4: Seed head(s) in Winter

April 19 Houseplants

Class 1: One African Violet Class 2: One foliage Plant
Class 3: Flowering plant (no violets) Class 4: One cactus or succulent

May 17 Spring Flowers

Class 1: 3 tulips Class 2: 3 daffodils
Class 3: blooming perennial (1 stem) Class 4: '**Spring Beauty**'- a floral design using 3 blooms and foliage, accessories permitted

August 16 Adult Classes

Class 1: Petunias (3 blooms) Class 2: Marigolds (3 blooms)
Class 3: Any other annual (3 blooms) Class 4: Gladiolus (1 stem)
Class 5: Lily (1 stem) Class 6: Any other perennial (1 stem)
Class 7: Tomatoes (3) Class 8: Beans (5 pods)
Class 9: Any other vegetable (1 specimen) Class 10: '**Canadian Colours**': a floral design to celebrate Canada's 150th birthday, featuring the colours red and white

Youth Classes

Class 1: Tomatoes (2) Class 2: Beans (3 pods)
Class 3: Potted plant (1) Class 4: Annual (1 bloom or stem)
Class 5: Any perennial (1 bloom or stem) Class 6: Creature made from natural materials

September 20 Vegetables: Adult Classes

Class 1: Pumpkin (1) Class 2: Squash (other than pumpkin) (1)
Class 3: Carrots (3) Class 4: Potatoes (3)
Class 5: Any other vegetable (1)

Youth Classes

Class 1: Pumpkin (1) Class 2: Carrots (2)
Class 3: Beets (2) Class 4: Fantasy creature made from fruits and/or Vegetables

October 18

Class 1: Wreath (any (any material/occasion) Class 2: 'Everlasting' a dried arrangement
Class 3: Photograph- 'Fall Beauty'.