

Bulletin of
The Englehart and District
Horticultural Society

OCTOBER GENERAL MEETING **AWARDS NIGHT**

will be held Wednesday, October 17th, 2012 at Pioneer Hall, Anglican Church (5th Ave) beginning with Shared Supper at 6:00 p.m.
General Monthly Meeting at 7:00 p.m. followed by
Awards and Prizes

For the Dinner: For this Shared Dinner, members are asked to bring something—first course, or salad, or sweet, etc., and Mary Schippers, with the Social Committee will put it all together.

Set-Up: Setting up for dinner will begin at 5:30. If you can come then to help, please do.

Awards Night: After dinner, at 7:00, will be a short General monthly meeting, followed by presentation of prizes and awards, including those to Junior Garden Club members. Please bring your children, especially those who have entered the Flower Show or their gardens.

Awards presentation will be followed by a **Silent Auction** and just maybe there'll be more coffee on hand. We welcome **donations for the Auction**. Can you bring something?

Whether or not you entered the Festival of Flowers, plan to attend and *bring a friend*. Share the good time.

Announcement of winner of Peoples' Choice Award will also take place at this meeting.

Host: Mary Schippers and crew Gift: Jean Bott



WEBSITE for Englehart & District Horticultural Society!!

Rick Heaslip designed and maintains the website, engleharthort.weebly.com. Since its first appearance, the site has been really been changed, and contains much more information about present, past and future doings; links to other sites with information about the Society and, it is very attractive. If you have internet access, look it up and just browse around. Also look up Ontario Horticultural Association website: www.ontariogardens.org and see what you find there. We can show our appreciation to Rick by accessing the site.

"GARDENING: THE ONGOING BATTLE OF OPTIMISM OVER REALITY"

Sent in by President Eileen

NOVEMBER MEETING: Amber Elliott of "Amber's" in New Liskeard will be here to demonstrate "*Something for Christmas*".
Wed., Nov 21st.



CHRISTMAS WORKSHOP Wednesday, November 30th at the Anglican Church Hall. The decoration this year will be a Decorated Pine Bough. Demonstration begins at 7:30. They have enough supplies of cones for the coming Workshop,

SALE OF BULBS: The Ontario Horticultural Association is offering summer blooming *Crocasmia* (also known as Montbretia) bulbs for sale at \$7.00 per package of 10. Our Society receives \$1.00 for each sale. Three varieties are available: Lucifer (Red); Emily McKenzie (Orange-red) and Mixed (yellow-orange-red). Also available Camassia Which, as far as I can find out are not hardy in this area. I am not at all familiar with them. Orders should be received by the time of the October meeting. Contact Joyce Marie Smith, (7652) who will have order forms. Bulbs will be received for spring planting.

MEMBERSHIP: We have a start on 2013 memberships—having 32 so far. This year we were close to the magic number of 100, having enrolled 95 members.

Members can do a lot to help membership numbers grow, by inviting a friend to come along to the monthly Meeting (especially Awards Night) of the Society—always the 3rd Wed of the month. If a friend comes, he/she almost always joins!

If you exhibited in the Festival of

Flowers, your membership for 2013 will be taken out of prize money. Otherwise, pay up at the end of the year when all 2012 memberships expire. Virginia Montminy, Membership Chair [7596]



GIANT PUMPKIN: Jeff Warner of Aitie Creek Gardens has won First place with his 1,347. Lbs pumpkin at the Port Elgin Pumpkinfest. Well done, Jeff.

OWL BANDING: Banding of Boreal Owls in October featured Thanksgiving Week-end when people were invited to attend between 9: and 11: p.m.,. And watch what happens. I have been told however, that banding will take place during the early weeks of October. Go to Hilliardton Marsh Site/Banding Owls for more information. Bruce Murphy of Cobalt is organizing this project.

WHAT'S CROCOSMIA (MONTBRETIA)?

A quote from Harriston Hort Society newsletter will introduce the plant: "A single glance at the plant forms of gladioli and crocasmia leaves no question as to whether these are related. (Absolutely they are) Glads are belle-of-the-ball types, with kaleidoscope blooms and flowers festooned with wild patterns and ruffles. Crocasmia stick to the yellow-orange-red



side of the colour wheel and deliver a concentrated, straight-forward presentation with gracefully arched spray of blossoms.”

Like glads, in this area they need to be lifted in the fall, although they are hardy to Zone 5. Watch for planting instructions next spring in the bulletin.



GARDENING SECRETS: Outside of gardening season we can still get our “gardening fix” by browsing the Public Library’s extensive collection of Gardening books and magazines. One that I find helpful—just full of answers, ideas and natural gardening techniques is a Readers’ Digest volume titled 1,519 Gardening Secrets. There are as well many others on varied horticultural subjects.

ACIDIC SOIL: In environments that would be thick forests if left to their natural state (i.e. Northern Ontario), the soil tends to be slightly to extremely acidic. Leaves, pine needles and fallen trees are all acidic materials, which lead to the formation of acidic soil as they decompose. Where there is also high rainfall acidity tends to be higher because of natural leaching.

To get a rough idea of whether or not your garden soil is acid, take a sample of soil, wet it and add a pinch of baking soda. If the mix fizzes, the soil may be too acidic for many garden plants and vegetables (which generally prefer a neutral or mildly alkaline soil). For a precise soil test I have published before the name and address of one service that tests gardens and lawns soils. Here it is again: Forest Laboratory, Lakehead University, 955 Oliver Road, Thunder Bay, ON P7B 5E1 The charge is, I think, \$35.00. E-mail:

forestlab@lakeheadu.ca

Telephone: 807 343 8639 (Joel Symonds)

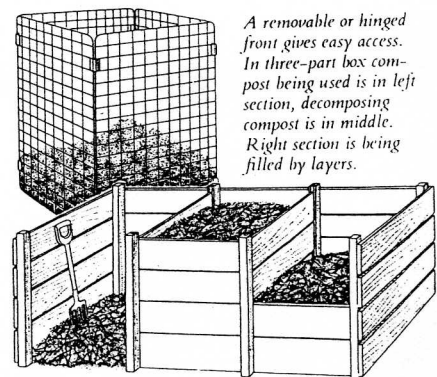
Shopping for Lime: Lime is used in the garden (and elsewhere) to provide calcium, decrease soil acidity and condition heavy clay soil.

- ★ Calclitic lime (calcium carbonate): is the most common and least expensive, made from finely ground limestone rock. Usually available in 50-lb bags.
- ★ Dolomitic Lime: mixture of calcium carbonate and magnesium carbonate, provides both calcium and magnesium—both essential ingredients; available as a powder, in granular or pellet form
- ★ Quicklime was at one time used to wash tree trunks, but modern gardeners do not use it.
- ★ Slaked lime (hydrated lime)—calcium hydroxide, is burnt lime treated w. water. A caustic pesticide and fungicide and must be handled carefully. Not for use on plants—it used to be used in outhouses and latrines.
- ★ Lime-sulphur: a spray used to control diseases of fruit trees—must be applied before leaf buds break—otherwise it would kill the leaves. *With information from Gardening Secrets (above)*

GET THE DIRT! “Garden success starts in the earth. Get your soil in tip-top shape”

If you want food results above-ground you have to pay attention to what’s going on below ground. While we may talk a lot about fertilizing plants, it’s actually well-fed soil that is the key to productive, sustainable gardens, no matter where you live.

COMPOST CONTAINERS



A removable or hinged front gives easy access. In three-part box compost being used is in left section, decomposing compost is in middle. Right section is being filled by layers.

Soil is a combination of minerals (sand, silt and clay), organic matter, micro-organisms, water and air. The type of soil that most gardeners aim for is loam, which has a mineral content of 40% sand, 40% silt and 20% clay. Really good garden soil should also consist of at least 50% organic matter because that's what is responsible for most of the soil's water-holding capacity, much of its nutrient value, improving its tilth and providing food for the millions of beneficial micro-organisms, bacteria, fungi and insects that are all part of a healthy soil. No matter your soil composition, the advice is always: add organic matter.

When organic matter has gone through some degree of decomposition it is called "humus". Active humus is made up of matter rich in nitrogen (from kitchen waste, grass clippings, young [seedless] weeds). Stable humus is from materials high in carbon, such as wood chips, coffee grounds, woody branches, wood ashes.

Stephen Westcott-Gratton, Canadian Gardening Special Growing Guide, 2010

Unearthing the Dirt on Dirt: We have known for years that gardening is a great physical activity, but what you may not know is that getting your hands dirty offers a number of other benefits too. So shed those garden gloves and dig into the soil, because:

1. **A SERIOUS WORKOUT:** Besides keeping your hands strong and nimble, digging holes, pulling weeds and carrying soil helps burn more than 250 calories an hour.

2. **DIRT CAN MAKE US HEALTHIER:** Research shows that people, especially children, who are exposed to microbes found in dirt develop a better immune system, are less likely to develop environmental allergies, asthma and even some autoimmune diseases.

3. **ROLLING IN DIRT COULD MAKE YOU HAPPIER:** According to a paper released in 2007 from the University of Bristol (U.K.) certain bacteria (*Mycobacterium vaccae*) in soil may have the same effect as antidepressants, stimulating the release of the mood-enhancing chemical serotonin.

4. **DOWN TO EARTH:** Children who get close to nature—mixing soil or planting, for example—tend to have a more positive attitude toward the environment. Research has shown that they make better nutritional choices, have more self-esteem and achieve higher grade in science.

5. **WACKING WEEDS HELPS RELEASE AGGRESSION:** It's better to get things off your chest in the garden rather than vent to colleagues or your family.

N.B. In spite of the headlines, don't call your garden "dirt"!

MULCH: a layer of material that covers the soil. Its primary purpose is not to keep the soil warm, but to keep the ground frozen. The cycle of freezing and thawing that often occurs late in the season and the expansion and contraction of the soil lifts the plants closer to the surface, damaging the roots.

For mulch use light airy material such as straw or hay that will not crush or smother the plants. Bark and woodchips work well around the base of trees and shrubs, but are too heavy for perennials. Peat moss dries and blows away. Evergreen branches are ideal. Wait until the ground is frozen before laying the mulch—early applications are a good place for mice and insects to overwinter.

Keep the mulch at least a foot away from young fruit trees, as mice feed on the bark from the comfort of the mulch next the stem. Plants with shallow roots and those recently planted are best mulched.

Remove mulch from perennial beds before growth starts. Around late April is a good time most springs.

Sudbury Hort Society Annual, 1995



PUBLISHED 11 times a year by Englehart & District Horticultural Society, Box 677, Englehart
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Printing: Courtesy Englehart & District Hospital