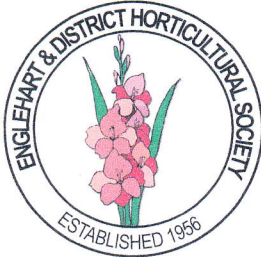




# 'Through The Garden Gate'

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



**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  
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*

I can't believe that I had to type the word 'October' in the box above! What ever happened to our spring and summer? It has been the strangest year and I know that I speak for many when I say I'll be glad to see the end of 2020. However, October is often a lovely month here in the north and I hope we will all enjoy spending time cleaning up our gardens, packing our root vegetables in our cold rooms, and winterizing our garden tools. Speaking of which, now is the time to take some steel wool to the edges of your shovels, spades, and trowels, brush the dirt and rust from them, and plunge them into a pail of oily sand. While you're at it, why not use a piece of sandpaper to sand and give a polish to the wooden handles?



## *Mark It on Your Calendar*

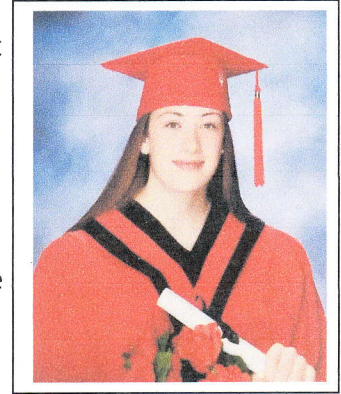
It's hard to say when we will be able to meet again to enjoy listening to a speaker or participating in an activity, etc. However, we will get to spend time in our yards and gardens, preparing them for the coming winter...and next spring. Are you planting bulbs for spring blooms?

## *Don't Let Leaves Accumulate on Your Lawn*

When leaves start to build up, to the point where no light is getting through, they start to harm your lawn. While perennials, shrubs, trees, bulbs, etc. tolerate and even prefer it when their roots are covered with dead tree leaves in the fall, lawn grass is not as accepting. You have to remember that turf is an artificial environment maintained only by considerable human labour. Since grass continues to photo-synthesize right through the fall until the ground freezes, it's therefore important to regularly rake up fall leaves and to keep doing so until the lawn does stop growing. Of course, a scattering of dead leaves is not going to be particularly harmful to a lawn, but when leaves build up to the point where no light is getting through, that also means the lawn is no longer getting its daily dose of solar energy. A build-up of dead leaves also inhibits air circulation and that can lead to lawn diseases. When there are so many leaves you can't see the lawn, you should remove the leaves without too much delay. When leaf cover is thin just shred the leaves into tiny pieces and leave them to fertilize the lawn. If the layer of leaves is relatively thin and patchy, though, rather than remove the leaves, why not use them to "feed" the lawn? Simply run over the lawn with a mulching mower. It will reduce the leaves to tiny pieces that will soon work their way to the ground, in between the blades of grass, thus enriching the soil. (From the Harriston Horticultural Society)

### *District 12/OHA News*

Each year a committee chooses an applicant to be the recipient of the District 12 Bursary Recipient is Courtney Stevenson, of Englehart High School. She is attending Sir Sanford Fleming College in the Fish and Wildlife Technician Programme. This is a two year course. A portion of the program includes the assessments of wetland habitat, of which the preservation is so important. Courtney's plans are to further her post-secondary education to become a Conservation Officer with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry. She plans to continue on to Wilfred Laurier University, studying Environmental Studies. Please check out the District 12 website, managed by our own Rick Heaslip for further information. All our best wishes go out to Courtney!



### *October's Gardening Jobs*

The growing season may be over but the gardeners work is probably not yet finished. Here are a few suggestions to help your gardens at this time of year so you can be ready to get gardening earlier in the spring.

1. Spread a layer of compost on top of the gardens. This will save valuable time in the spring.
2. Cover the compost with a layer of mulch. Use fallen leaves for compost to cover tender perennials.
3. Plant spring flowering bulbs if you didn't get them in earlier.
4. Leave the stems of plants standing as they help hold the snow cover, provide seed heads for birds, and points of interest for winter viewing, as well as holding snow cover.
5. Many perennial wildflower seeds need a period of cold, moist conditions to be convinced that winter is done and it's time to germinate, so most perennial flower seed mixes are best sown in the late fall.
6. Make notes to remind yourself to plant for fall colour next year.
7. Wrap the trunks of young trees to protect them from gnawing by rodents.
8. Collect seeds. They seem to be ripening everywhere when we look around our gardens, fields and forests. It's easy and only takes some paper bags and a pair of clippers to harvest a bounty of seeds.
9. If you're worried about branches breaking on small trees and shrubs, you can use garden twine to girdle the plant and give the branches extra support through the winter. If you think the wind might dry them out, erect a stake and burlap barrier on the windward side of the plant. Small rodents can burrow under the snow and eat the bark off slender tree trunks but there are also flexible plastic protectors you can use to encircle the trunks.
10. If you have plants such as peonies, daylilies, or hostas which shoot up from the ground every spring, you can cut them down to 3 to 4 inches from the soil now. However, this is not essential and the plants don't seem to suffer if you don't. In fact, I find that leaving stems actually helps to hold the snow around the plant, insulating it from the cold and winds. You just have to remember to get out there early enough in the spring to get rid of the old stalks and leaves.

### *Jeff Warner and His Giant Pumpkin*



Once again our thoughts are with our own Jeff Warner as we wish him luck at the Port Elgin Pumpkin Fest. He has several giant pumpkins that he has been growing as well as an assortment of other giant fruits and vegetables. The growing part is tricky enough, but the preparation for harvesting, loading, transporting, and unloading must be a real challenge. This year it will be a 'virtual' contest, with no live crowds. We'll have to watch the news and check Facebook for the latest information. Best of luck. Jeff!

### *Reports from Your Directors*

**Civic Improvement:** Convenor Mary Schippers reports that she and Bruce have cleaned and 'put to bed' the gardens that they planted in June. The beds at the cenotaph, the Legion, and Centennial Park were lovely this year. Thanks to Mary and Bruce for all of their hard work!

**Membership:** Ginny Montminy reports that we have 58 members to date this year.

**Bulletin:** If you are interested in getting your monthly newsletter by email, just let me know at [efisher1951@gmail.com](mailto:efisher1951@gmail.com).

### *A Great Craft for Fall : Cinnamon Scented Cones*

I'm always on the lookout for good cones to bring home to use in fall and winter craft projects such as this one. You might even have some pine cones laying around in your back yard. There are a couple of different ways to make cinnamon scented pine cones. You can make them with or without glue. For the method that doesn't require glue you will need cinnamon scented essential oil. To scent pine cones with glue you will need a bottle of spray glue and a bottle of ground cinnamon and/or cloves. You will want to do this project outside if possible. Take the cones outside and spray them with a good coat of the spray glue. Place the prepared pine cones a couple at a time in a gallon sized ziploc bag and place a tablespoon of spices in the bag with the pine cones. Seal the bag and shake the bag until the pine cones are well coated with the cinnamon or cloves. Set the cones on a flat surface to dry. Instead of using spray glue, you can also use a small paint brush to brush glue like Elmer's glue on the cones and then either sprinkle the cinnamon on them or place them in a gallon sized bag and coat with spices as described above.

### *Preparing Roses for Winter*

The winter weather we experience in the north can make it hard for roses to survive, grow and reach their full potential during the growing season. Depending on location, you will find a variety of ways to protect roses and get them through our cold winters, from covering your rose bushes with leaves, straw, etc., to growing roses in large tree containers and moving them inside for the winter. The key to well-winterized roses is to start early. The time needed to recover from a long hard winter could be the hardest part of rose growing. Some years, winter sets in following a very dry fall. Other times the season arrives with an abnormal amount of snow when the ground is only barely frozen. Then again, a winter season with little snow may have severely cold, below normal temperatures, or there may be any combination of these conditions. When planting roses, always provide a well-drained soil for optimum growth, healthy roots, and protection from diseases roses face. Make sure the rose beds have plenty of moisture before a hard freeze. Do not spare the water. It helps bring shrub roses through varied weather conditions they may experience in northern gardens. Methods of winter rose bush protection can vary. Some gardeners mound the plant with soil, entirely covering it, and then use a light covering of straw. Others hill dirt up around rose plants only 4 or 5 inches from the base, using a greater amount of straw for covering the rest of the plant. Some build wooden housings to cover the plants, fill with dirt, and covering with straw. You can also use a bottomless bushel basket or wire cage as a retainer or loosely wrap the plant with burlap and stuff dried leaves inside, surrounding the rosebush. These practices have been used in rose gardens for many years and all used with varying amounts of success. I like a combination of soil, burlap, and lots of dried leaves. (some information from Plant Care today)



## Plant of the Month

### The Croton

Crotons come in a wide variety of leaf shapes and colors. Leaves can be short, long, twisted, thin, thick, and several of these combined. Colours range from green, variegated, yellow, red, orange, cream, pink, and black to a combination of all these. In general, the more variegated and colourful the croton plant, the more light it will need. Part of the reason that these plants have a reputation for being fussy is because they tend to make a bad first impression. Oftentimes, a person will bring home a new croton from the store and within days, the plant will have lost some and maybe all of its foliage. This is normal, as Crotons do not like to be moved as they can quickly go into shock. This often results in leaf loss. It's best to avoid moving the plant as much as possible but if you must, simply maintain proper care and the plant should regrow its leaves. Because it is a tropical plant, a croton benefits from high humidity, so placing it on a pebble tray or regularly misting it will help keep it looking its best. Croton growing in containers should only be watered when the top of the soil is dry to the touch. Then, they should be watered until the water flows out the bottom of the container. The plant should also be kept away from drafts and cold temperatures.



### Poetry and Prose

*Vividly painted leaves, a yellow moon over the harvest fields, woodsmoke, crispness in the air, and pumpkins grinning with light... these are a few of the aspects of autumn. Mellowed thoughts, a slower pace, the quietness of retrospect, and the wisdom of experience- these are some of the aspects of life's autumntime.*

### Garbage Gardening with Children

Though not the most eloquent name, this is a wonderful way to introduce young people to gardening. Garbage gardening is planting the seeds from fruits and vegetables we already have around the house. Papaya, mango, avocado, or any citrus fruit make excellent garbage gardens. In particular, it seems that each ripe papaya has a million seeds inside, each of which germinates rather rapidly. Work with the child to remove the slimy seeds and place on a paper towel to dry overnight. You may work with the child to count and record how many seeds there are so you can calculate the rate of germination with them. Plant a few seeds in individual peat containers, as they may not transplant well. Water, warmth, and light will produce little trees that will reach the ceiling in one season, although the fruit may not be typical. Coach, encourage, coax, and celebrate each of the stages your would-be-gardeners experience. Even if success is not immediate, there too lies a lesson. I remember a teacher doing something similar with us in elementary school. We loved going to class to see what was happening with our 'crops'. (W. Network Home and Garden article)



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