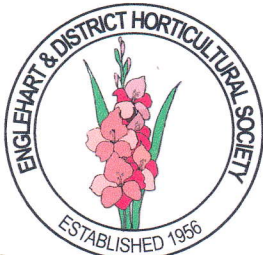




'Through The Garden Gate'

The monthly newsletter of the Englehart and District Horticultural Society
September 2021



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

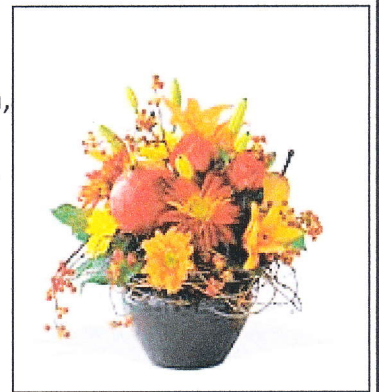
General meetings:
3rd Wednesday of most months
at 7:00 p.m. in the
St. Paul's Emmanuel
Community Church

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

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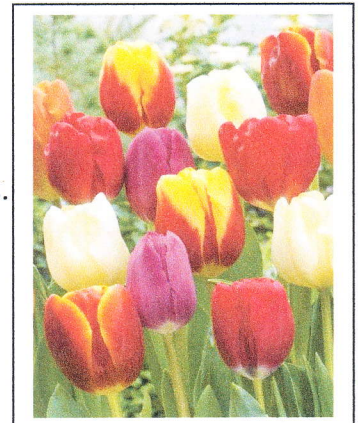
Decorating for Autumn

Autumn floral designers can take advantage of a wide variety of fresh and dried/treated materials to produce beautiful and unique arrangements. The traditional fall colours of orange, yellow and red are beautiful supplemented by the beiges and browns of grasses and wood, but don't hold back from using a variety of colours, such as the pinks of echinacea, the blues of bachelor buttons and the mauves of asters. Take advantage of houseplants which may have been outside and are being cut back before coming back inside. Cuttings of coleus, ivy, etc. add to the variety of textures, colours, and line in fall designs. The vegetable garden and fruit trees also add important elements. A variety of specimens such as gourds, apples, squash, etc. can add interest to any fall design. Walk along a country road or tramp through the bush (wearing brightly-coloured clothing and making lots of noise if it's hunting season!), and gather material such as dock, choke cherries, goldenrod, seed pods, fungus and moss. Traditional fall designs like the overflowing horn of plenty are always lovely, but with the abundance of material, take on the challenge of creating something different- a modern design, an arrangement of branches/foilage, a simple one-bloom design. You don't have to be a top-notch designer, nor spend a fortune on exotic blooms. Just remember, if you're picking wild material, make sure you're not picking rare or protected species and that you leave more than you take, even of common plants.



The Tulip Bubble

Tulips were first introduced into Europe by the Ottoman Empire in the 1550s. The flowers were enormously popular among the upper classes in the Netherlands- so much so that the price of a single bulb reached the modern equivalent of more than \$1 000 and they were sold and resold by traders like today's stocks. The tulip market collapsed in the winter of 1636-37 when interest simply dried up and several people lost fortunes to the suddenly worthless tulip bulb. Many historians call the "Tulip Mania Era", as it is known today, "the first economic bubble-and-burst in modern history." (Uncle John's Bathroom Reader) (Thanks to President Jean Bott for this article and timely reminder that the fall is the time to plant tulip bulbs to enjoy next spring.)



Make Your Own Insecticidal Soap

Last month we learned about the importance of including insecticidal soap in your horticultural life. This month, we'll learn how to save some money and make your own. There are several ways to make an insecticidal soap. The choice depends on the ingredients on hand and the extent to which one wants to use natural ingredients, i.e. those without perfumes or dyes. To make insecticidal soap, simply mix the following horticultural soap recipe ingredients thoroughly: Combine one cup of oil, any variety, such as vegetable, peanut, corn, soybean, etc. with one tablespoon of dishwashing liquid or other "pure" soap. Be sure to avoid any dish washing liquids which contain degreaser, bleach, or those that are for an automatic dishwasher. Mix two teaspoons of this "soap" mixture to every cup of warm water and put into a spray bottle. Mix only what is needed for a one-day application.

Alternate Horticultural Soap Recipe: Homemade horticultural sprays can also be made using a natural soap product without synthetic additives or perfumes, which can be found in local natural food stores. Combine one heavy tablespoon of liquid soap to one quart of warm water. Tap water is okay to use, but if you have hard water you may want to substitute bottled water to avoid any soap scum build-up on foliage. To either of these soapy concoctions, a teaspoon of ground red pepper or garlic may be added to further repel chewing insects. Also, a teaspoon of cider vinegar may be added to assist in the removal of powdery mildew. Bar soap may also be used in a pinch by placing it into a gallon of water and leaving to sit overnight. Remove the bar and shake the liquid well before use. There are few limitations to horticultural soaps. Just be sure to thoroughly wet the insects, and be aware that effectiveness may be limited if the soap solution dries or washes away. Phytotoxicity may occur if applied during hot days, so avoid spraying if temperatures are over 90 F. (32 C.). BEFORE USING ANY HOMEMADE MIX: It should be noted that anytime you use a home mix, you should always test it out on a small portion of the plant first to make sure that it will not harm the plant. Also, avoid using any bleach-based soaps or detergents on plants since this can be harmful to them. In addition, it is important that a home mixture never be applied on a hot or brightly sunny day, as this will quickly lead to burning and death of the plant.

Front Yard Gardening

I recently read an article in the Toronto Star, by Mark and Ben Cullen, called 'How to Grow a Front Yard Garden'. It was actually a review of a book by that name. The article made me think of what has been happening in our gardening lives. When I lived on 7th Ave., my main gardens were in the back. I had a large perennial border, an ever expanding border along the side of the garage, and a smallish vegetable garden behind it. The front consisted of a small border along the side of the driveway and a shady raised bed of mainly hostas and ferns under a window. When I think back to that yard, I see that I really missed the opportunity to provide interest and some beauty for people who lived on or walked down the street. I wish I had been braver. Most of the front yard was grass. Nobody walked on it. It was nothing special to look at. It really only provided us with the exercise we got when we mowed it. I look back and can see it very differently. In my mind's eye, I can see a series of interconnecting brick or stone paths between gardens filled with a variety of annuals, perennials, shrubs, with interesting and ornamental 'bits and bobs (as my mother would say) such as large stones, a bench or two, perhaps some statuary. For too long we have hidden our gardens in our back yards. One of the chapters in the book is called "Front Yard Living... A Return to Being Social in the Front Yard". Apparently it deals with the importance of being social. This spring and summer is going to be very different for us as we wait for the pandemic to be over. Perhaps just waving hello from your front yard to your neighbours or people out for a walk will make us all feel better. I think a good idea would be to start small and see how it goes. Perhaps you can work on beautifying one area of the front yard each year until you're happy. I'm sure it would make other people happy to see something other than a large green lawn and a driveway.

Going Green

SOPFSS...(Save Our Plants from Slugs and Snails)

(This article should have gone into one of our spring bulletins to be of help for this year....make sure to mark it somehow to find it easily next April!!)

Not much is more frustrating to me than to plant gardens for slugs and snails. The following are a few hints to help SOP (Save Our Plants) from the little beasts. Some I have used; some I'm going to try next year.

1. Try to maintain a healthy ecosystem. Attracting slug predators such as birds, dragonflies, toads and frogs, etc., is an easy way to use nature itself against the garden pests. Using ponds, having trees and shrubs for birds to shelter in will help attract the good guys. Avoid poisonous sprays or dusts which will kill the friend as well as the foe.
2. Use gravel paths in the gardens as the slimy critters will not cross them easily.
3. Use beer traps. Fill an old bowl/pie plate, etc., with old beer and place in the garden. Scoop out soil so that the lip of the container is at ground level, allowing ease of entry. Top up/clean out often.
4. Check under any outdoor pots, baskets, etc. for the creatures.
5. Grow plants which deter them, such as rosemary, anise, fennel, wormwood.
6. Create prickly or uncomfortable barriers to special plants or pots.
7. Use copper tape at the top of your outside pots and raised beds.
8. Place a lure plant or container of something sweet and check it regularly. Some people use a saucer with old lettuce, dried cat food, etc. and scoop the little beasts out.
9. Try to use slippery pots. Some people give their outside pots a circle of WD40.
10. I have read of people using a barrier of salt around their outside pots. This would need to be replaced after rain and may not be the best for the environment. Perhaps keep this one for really special plants.

Preparing Roses for Winter (con't)

Various Methods Of Winter Rose Bush Care & Protection: Northern rose gardening employs varied methods of caring for roses through the winter. For example: Some mound the plant with dirt, entirely covering it, and then use a light covering of straw. Others hill dirt up around rose plants only four or five inches from the base, using a greater amount of straw covering. (A hint- don't use hay...I did once and I swear every seed germinated!) Some people build wooden housings to cover the plants after filling with dirt and covering with leaves.

Covering Rose Plants with Leaves: Leaves are another kind of mulch used for winter rose bush protection – but not rose leaves. Many northern rose growers use leaves alone for winter protection. However, it takes a large number of leaves to give ample protection for roses – more leaves than the average rose grower has on their property. When using leaves, place them well around the plants, and put plenty on top, also. The leaves may require some type of material to hold the leaves in place. An inexpensive coarse grade of chicken wire will do the job adequately for many years. Even if some snow falls before the roses are covered, go ahead and cover over the snow. In the spring the removed leaves make excellent material for the compost pile.

Mildew & Mounding Roses: When using earth for mounding on rose plants, some growers experience problems with mildew on the main stems. The mildew damages the stems and slows up the vigorous growth "comeback." The cause and appearance of mildew is rather hard to explain. It is possible that the chief reason for the mildew is not removing the covering early enough in the spring. Unless subnormal weather conditions prevail, remove the covering around the middle to end of April. The rose grower must take each year's weather in stride.

Plant of the Month

Amur Maple

The Amur Maple is one of the few maples hardy in zone 3a. It is a deciduous tree that here in northern Ontario may not reach its full size of 30' and is often considered a tall shrub. It prefers full sun to partial shade, although its colours are brighter in the sun and grows well in sandy loam or well drained clay that is acidic or neutral. It produces small white blossoms in the spring. The Amur maple tree prefers to have moist soil that drains well and is moderately drought tolerant. It prefers cold to heat and grows best where summer temperatures are not high and where humidity is low. If it has too much moisture, it can develop leaf spots and is more prone to disease. Prune and train the tree to have a single trunk if desired by choosing a central leader. If you leave it as a multi-trunked shrub, it can also be pruned and trained for use as a hedge. The green leaves are 4 cm to 10.5 cm long and have three lobes with the side lobes being shorter than the middle. Fall colours can be green, red, or orange depending on the variety.



Succulents

Succulent plants, both for the garden and the home, have become more and more popular the past few years. I was amazed to see some of the very colourful varieties for sale locally this year. Of course, a few found their way to my place! Try the quiz below to see how much you know about these interesting plants.

1. What is the definition of a succulent plant?

- a. A plant that can store and conserve water to protect against drought
- b. A plant with sap which, when the plant gets damaged, coagulates like blood
- c. A plant that has particularly juicy fruit
- d. A plant that uses so much water that other plants cannot survive near it

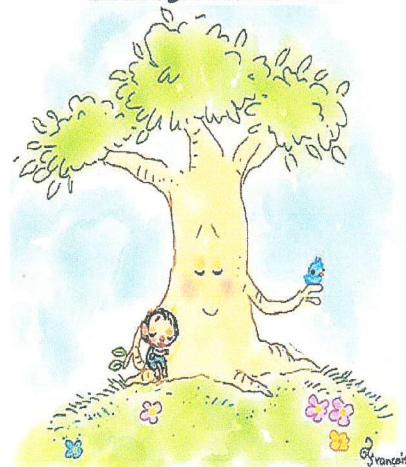
2. What is the relationship between a cactus and a succulent?

- a. All cacti are succulents, but not all succulents are cacti
- b. There is no relationship
- c. All succulents are cacti, but not all cacti are succulents
- d. Cacti and succulents are the same

3. Some of the most unusual succulents have normal seasonal foliage growing out of huge swollen water storage organs. What is the term for the water reservoir of these plants?

- a. Cotyledon
- b. Jatropha
- c. Caudex
- d. Baga (answers in October's bulletin)

Poetry and Prose



"If you are too tired
to speak, sit next to me,
because I, too,
am fluent in silence."
Said the tree.

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