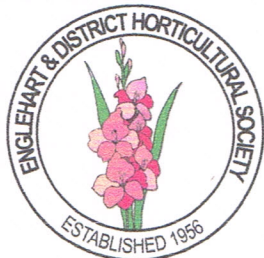


# 'Through The Garden Gate'

The monthly newsletter of the Englehart and District Horticultural Society  
August, 2013



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

**General meetings:**

3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of most months at 7:30 p.m. in the Anglican Church basement

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

President: B. Wilson  
Bulletin Editor: E. Fisher  
**Website:**  
engleharthort.weebly.com

## Society Odds and Ends

\*We were pleased to learn that Jean and Janet Wallace have purchased a home in Barrie and are settling in. Jean reports that there is room for a garden. (Thank goodness.)

\*We were also saddened to learn that Phulo and Deon Ramkissoonsing are moving south. Although it is nice that they will be closer to their family, we at the Horticultural Society will miss them, especially Phulo, who has been a valuable addition to our Board of Directors. Good luck, Phulo and Deon. There will be a get-together on Saturday, August 22, from 2:00-4:00 pm at the Rebekah Hall to say goodbye to the Singh's and all are welcome to drop by.

\*If you are interested in receiving the "Through the Garden Gate" by computer, please let Joyce Marie Smith know at [joyce@ntl.sympatico.ca](mailto:joyce@ntl.sympatico.ca) or at 705 544 7652. (One good thing about getting it electronically is that the pictures are all in colour.)

## Mark It On Your Calendar:

- August 13: set up for Festival of Flowers
- August 15, 16: Festival of Flowers
- September 5-7: Fall Fair
- September 18: General Meeting
- September 28: District 12 Annual Meeting



Ginny Montminy and her sister, Anne, enjoy supper in Mary's garden.

## Looking Back:

July 19<sup>th</sup> found us enjoying the beauty of Mary Pillsworth's garden and the social interaction of members and guests. Thanks to Len and Skip for being the barbeque masters, to all Directors who donated articles for the auction, to all those attending who participated in the auction, to Social Convenor Mary Schippers, for all of her prep work, and to Mary Pillsworth for the use of her beautiful garden for another year. This is one of our few activities that is purely for fun and each year it seems to become more popular. This year we had 43 people attending. We hope to see you there next year.



### Looking Ahead:

Of course, the most important event in August is our Festival of Flowers, being held in the Holy Family School gym. Please consider entering something...flowers, vegetables, photos, house plants, even a floral design. Also, we hope that you will say yes if asked to help out at the show in some way. Make sure you come out yourselves, and bring a guest or two. It really is a great show. It is a chance for our members to show off a bit, and to showcase what we can do here in Englehart and the surrounding townships. The photo to the right is an entry in the youth section of the 2012 show.



### OHA/District 12 News:

The Ontario Horticultural Association held its annual convention in Thunder Bay in July. Bruce Wilson reports: The convention was very good with excellent speakers and seminar presenters. It was held in the Valhalla Inn in Thunder Bay. All accommodations, sessions and competitions were close together, making it very easy to get from place to place. Unfortunately only 215 delegates were registered. The Englehart Society website, produced by Rick Heaslip, received an honourable mention, and on speaking with the judge it could have been in first place, the last four were very close. Eileen Fisher won best in show for her short story. The two resolutions eliminating the second vice president and the past president's council representative were passed by a very large majority. I don't believe either resolution will have any affect on the Society constitution. (Thanks, Bruce.)

We will be hosting the District 12 Fall Planning meeting on September 28. Joyce Marie Smith and Rosemary Campbell are our delegates and will represent our society at the meeting, which will be held in the Presbyterian Church.

### Reports from Your Directors:

**Programme:** Convenor Carrie Anne Field reminds people that there is no general meeting this month, due to the Festival of Flowers. September's meeting will feature a round table discussion of our gardening experiences this past summer...what worked, what didn't, something new or special you did or grew. She asks that you bring pictures you may have taken to view.

**Festival of Flowers:** The plans for our annual show continue to be firmed up. Special thanks to Joyce Marie Smith for agreeing to handle the Tea Garden on Thursday evening, and Marg McMurray and Claudette Black for taking it on for Friday afternoon. What a relief! I hope that your gardens are doing well, and that you're going to enter your houseplants, veggies, cut flowers, photographs, floral designs, etc. Perhaps you've got a grandchild or a young neighbour who you can help put entries in. Don't forget to get your show schedule and entry tags from Bonnie Warner (544 8916). We set up on Tuesday, August 13 and are looking for volunteers to help pick up/deliver tables from EHS and articles from the garage at Ace Hardware at 10:00 a.m. Please call me at 544 8074 or 544 3771 if you can help with this. We'll be setting up the tables, etc. on Tuesday at 1:00 and hope you'll be able to help us with this. Remember the old maxim, "Many hands make light work."



Several members met at Eileen's on August 7 to make beautiful society bookmarks to give out at the door of the Festival of Flowers. Thanks to Irene Bond, Bruce Wilson, Bonnie Warner, Joyce Marie Smith, Jean Bott, and Claudette Black for helping out.

**Membership:** Membership convenor Ginny Montminy reports that we have 81 members for 2013 to date.

**Award and Trophies:** Our busy Treasurer/Membership/Awards and Trophies convenor, Ginny, asks winners of trophies and plaques from last year's show to please bring them to the gym at Holy Family School either the Tuesday of set-up, or Thursday morning, so that they can be displayed at this year's Festival of Flowers.

**Website:** Congratulations go out to convenor, Rick Heaslip, as all his hard work on our beautiful website has paid off. Our E&DHS website received an Honourable Mention in the competitions held at the OHA 2013 convention. Considering there are 278 societies in the province, many with websites and much larger populations, our site did extremely well. Keep up the great work, Rick. Don't forget to check out our website at [engleharthort@weebly.com](mailto:engleharthort@weebly.com).

### Going Green

#### Attracting Beneficial Insects

People may wonder why it is important to attract insects to their gardens. There are several reasons, the first one dealing with pollination. Without pollination, there will be no seeds and amongst the biggest pollinators are flying insects, such as bees, butterflies, etc. Another important reason is that some insects, such as lady bugs, prey on others that may harm our plants. Many insects are beautiful to look at and are an attractive addition to our yards. Finally, a healthy environment is an environment that accepts that the web of life is made up of a variety of living creatures, not just those that are pretty to look at.

There are several things you can do to attract beneficial insects to your yard:

- First, learn to identify those insects that are helpful: dragonflies, ladybugs, lacewings, centipedes are just a few. Don't forget about spiders ... although they're not insects, they are incredibly helpful arachnids that eat large amounts of pests.
- Grow a variety of plants that bloom at different times to attract a variety of insects.
- Keep lots of organic material in your garden beds.
- Avoid the use of pesticides. Even those listed as 'green' pesticides will often damage beneficial insects as well as the bugs you're trying to eradicate.



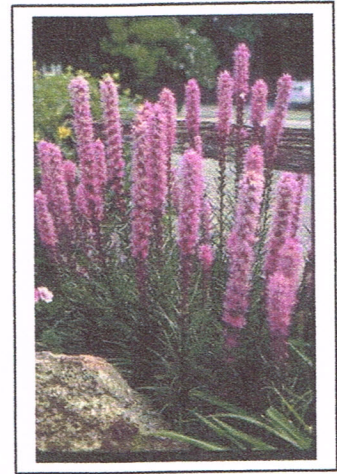
Pictures: #1. lady bugs #2. lady bug larva 3. dragonfly



## Plant of the Month

### **Liatris Spicata**

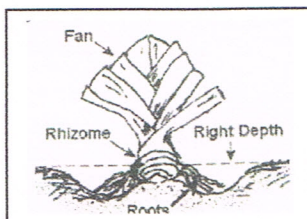
Also known as Blazing Star or Gay Feather, Liatris is a great August blooming plant. In the spring, the plant looks like tufts of grass, so be careful not to weed it out. It usually blooms from late July to September. The tall spikes of pinky-purple or white open first at the tips of the plant. Each spike is made up of many tiny flowers, which are attractive to hummingbirds, bees, and butterflies. The seeds also feed smaller birds throughout the winter, so don't cut them down in the fall. Liatris is an easy to grow perennial, is a 'clumper' and is easy to divide and share with your neighbours and friends. It prefers well-drained soil and full sun. For a tough and drought resistant perennial, give Liatris a try.



## A Word From The Editor

### **In Praise of the Bearded Iris**

In the past few years, I have come to love these stately beauties and look forward to their blooms in June and July. If treated properly, irises are dependable, beautiful to look at, and easily divided for sharing. In our climate zone (2b), bearded irises are best planted in August to give them time to set new roots before winter arrives. They require at least half a day of full sun in order to set the maximum number of blooms. Soil must be well drained, as standing water will cause the rhizomes (the swollen underground stems) to rot. Any fertile, well drained soil will do but before planting, dig in some compost below the root level. Avoid making it too rich in nitrogen, as this will give you a fine crop of leaves next year, with little bloom. Irises don't bloom if planted too deeply. I like to plant my irises in groups of three on a mound in the garden. I place the rhizomes on top of the mound of soil with a 'moat' around the mound to accommodate the roots. I cover the rhizomes shallowly and tap everything down firmly. Make sure all of the leaf fans are facing outwards, as in the picture below. Water well when planted and ensure they are well watered until new roots are established. (In the spring there will be a follow-up article on the spring and summer care of these garden queens.)



## Poetry and Prose

*"Ripe vegetables were magic to me. Unharvested, the garden bristled with possibility. I would quicken at the sight of a ripe tomato, sounding its redness from deep amidst the undifferentiated green."*

*Michael Pollan*

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