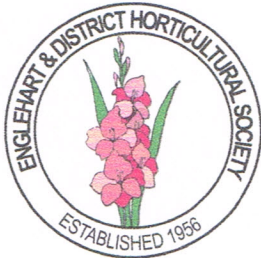




'Through The Garden Gate'

The monthly newsletter of the Englehart and District Horticultural Society
March 2014



Englehart and District Horticultural Society was formed in 1956.

General meetings:

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

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

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A Word From The Editor

Helpful Hint for Exhibitors

Continuing with our flower show hints, here is another one to encourage exhibitors in the summer Festival of Flowers:

Hint #3: When displaying cut flowers or 'specimens', make sure to include leaves. Foliage and stems count when judges are making their decisions, sometimes as much as 15%. Attached foliage is preferred, but some plants (such as glads and certain varieties of dahlias) have very long stems, so simply cut a couple of good, clean leaves and place with the specimen. It is quite permissible to 'clean up' the foliage, removing damaged, browned parts, etc., as long as it does not detract from the overall look of the leaves. Always look for the flower and foliage that is in the best shape.

In keeping with the theme of our February meeting, the EHS Interact Club is looking for donations for their 'Spread The Net' programme. A donation of \$10 will buy a bed net that will help prevent children from contracting malaria. Donations can be dropped off or mailed to Englehart High School.

Mark It On Your Calendar

March 19: General Meeting
April 26: District 12 Annual Meeting, Kirkland Lake
May 24 : Plant and Bake Sale



Looking Back:

Our Society has had a long standing excellent relationship with the Englehart Public Library. For many years, the Society has donated books to the library, often in memory of a deceased member. The picture from 1969-70 shows Assistant Librarian, Rae Fraser (Jean Wallace's mother and long-time Society member) receiving horticulturally-oriented books from Marie Armstrong and President Frank Knapp. Keeping with the topic of the Library, are you aware that our Library has a wonderful selection of books for the horticulturalist on topics such as vegetable gardening, annuals and perennials, trees and shrubs for the north, companion planting, composting, house plants, garden design and landscaping, and much, much more. Stop in and have a look- you'll be sure to find just what you're looking for. If not, the Library staff will be able to help you by borrowing books from other northern libraries.



Looking Ahead:

Our March programme will feature Mike Werner, who has spoken to us before, and was last year's photographic judge at the Festival of Flowers. Mike will be speaking on 'Capturing Nature with Your Camera'. Bring your own camera along as he will be giving us hints to improve our photos.



Think Spring!

For those of you who are on Facebook, take a look at the following pages: **Garden Design by Carolyn Mullet**, **Gardening with Confidence**, **Mark Cullen Canadian Gardening Guru**, and **Garden Guides**. Just type the names in the search box. If you like gardening ideas/photos, they're all worth a look.

OHA/District 12 News:

* Don't forget that on Saturday, April 26, Kirkland Lake Horticultural Society will be hosting the **District 12 Annual Meeting**. This is always a great day for northern gardeners, as there are usually great speakers on interesting northern topics. This day is open to all, not just the elected society delegates, so please contact Secretary Bonnie to register. As it is so close to us this year, we should be able to represent our club in fine fashion. I hope you will consider attending this important meeting. You'll have a great day!

* The **2014 Successful Gardening Show** will be held in the North Building of the Metro Toronto Convention Center from March 6-9. The OHA is involved with this great show.

Reports from Your Directors:

Just a little reminder that we are still looking for a Second Vice-President for the next two years. Would you consider the position? Great salary and benefits. Well, no salary, but wonderful benefits-working with a great bunch of people, 'on-the-job' experience, learning lots, and having fun while you do it.

Programme: The February programme was a great success, with 28 members and guests attending an excellent presentation by Larissa Yantha on her summer spent working with 'Free The Children' in rural Kenya. Larissa asks that anyone interested in learning more about the programme to contact her at larrisayantha@live.ca.

Social: Convenor Mary Schippers is looking for people to act as host/hostess for June and October. This job is simple – it involves making an urn of coffee, a pot of tea, bringing in some milk, and tidying up the kitchen after the meeting. Please give Mary a call to let her know you'll help.

Plant and Bake Sale: Convenors Les Peever and Jean Bott remind people to keep May 24 open on their calendar for the sale. We will be setting up on Friday, May 23. This is our major fundraiser for the year, so we hope you'll not only contribute to the sale, but pass the word on to everyone that it's a great time to save money on annuals, perennials, houseplants, baking, etc. If you start seeds indoors, please consider starting a few extra for the sale. Now is also a good time to start some cuttings of your houseplants. They're always popular at the sale, as are tomato plants.

Membership: Convenor Ginny Montminy reports we have 58 members to date. Just a reminder that if you have not renewed your membership, this will be your last bulletin.

Festival of Flowers: Three of our Directors have volunteered to co-convene this annual undertaking. Bonnie Warner, Rick Heaslip, and Eileen Fisher have agreed to keep our wonderful show going and are hoping that you will respond with a cheerful “Yes, I can” when they ask for a hand with this important committee. There are many small jobs that can be done ahead of time and they have already begun the planning.

If you have email at your home, you might consider having your ‘Through The Garden Gate’ sent right to your email In Box. It comes in colour, takes less time to get to you, can be saved on your computer, and costs less to mail. We have also reduced the size of all of the pictures so they won’t take so long to download. If you don’t use email, don’t worry- count on us to mail your horticultural news to you as we have done for years, thanks to a great bulletin committee!

Ruby-throated Hummingbirds
(Continued from previous bulletins)

Garden Plants to Attract Hummingbirds

Perennials/Bulbs	Annuals/Container plants	Shrubs/Trees/Vines
Bee Balm (Monarda)	Annual Penstemon	Honeysuckle (shrub/vine)
Canna Lily	Fuchsia	Lilac
Cardinal Flower	Impatiens	Some crabapples
Aqueligia (Columbine)	Petunia	
Coral bells	Various salvia	
Four O’Clocks	Shrimp Plant	
Foxglove	Zinnia	
Hosta	Snapdragons	
Agastache		
Lupine		
Pulmonaria		
Liatris		
Bleeding Heart		
Penstemon		

Notice that many of these plants have hollow or tubular blossoms, accessible to long beaks. Apparently these little birds aren’t attracted to the smell of flowers, but by colour and shape. I once watched a poor little humming bird try in vain to get nectar from a red Christmas bulb hanging in a tree.

Going Green



Handy Scoop: Next time you have an empty 1 gallon plastic jug, you can recycle it into a useful tool. Make sure you clean it well, replace the cap, then cut off the lower half of the container. (Cut it on an angle with the handle up and cut a bit less on the bottom side.) You’ll have a scoop that’s perfect for transferring potting soil, bird seed, fertilizer, etc. (Thanks to the KL society for the idea.)

Epsom salt (continued):

In the February Garden Gate I mentioned that Epsom Salt removes product buildup in hair. It can also get rid of soap scum on tile. Use a paste of the salt and a bit of water to scrub bathrooms, sinks, and showers. The Epsom Salt will lift up the buildup without scratching the surface beneath.

Plant of the Month

Shamrock (Oxalis)

We usually see these plants at this time of the year, as they are associated with St. Patrick's Day. These easy-care houseplants actually grow from small bulbs and therefore die down sometime after blooming. Don't give up (as I first did) and throw them out. All they need is a couple of months rest in a cool dark place. Bring them back into the light, repot if necessary, water and they'll grow beautifully again. The green shamrocks will produce small white blooms, while the purple usually have pinkish flowers. Oxalis prefer bright indirect light, as in an east or west facing window, like a not-to-rich soil, and prefer a coolish temperature (60-70 degrees F in the day), so a window sill is great in cooler months. Keep the soil barely moist. Try to not let them dry out, as this may induce dormancy, but never let them get soggy. Water from the bottom when the top inch or two of soil is dry, and drain away any water not absorbed. You can fertilize your shamrock with a half strength basic houseplant fertilizer at half strength when it is actively growing, but not when the plant is dormant. The bulblets can be divided to share with friends when the plant is dormant. Everyone knows that sharing your plants is a great thing, so sharing a shamrock will probably bring you the luck of the Irish!



Lion or Lamb

*March is such a mixed-up month
She doesn't seem to know
If the sun should warm the land
Or should she let it snow.*

*One day I'm wearing just a shirt
The next, my winter coat.
I'm sure we'd all prefer the warmth
If we could have a vote.*

*But March, as always, has her way-
All we can do is wait...
And watch for coming signs of
spring
And hope she isn't late*
Jean Larsen

Happy St. Patrick's Day!!!

Planning and Planting for Colour

Blossoms and foliage can change the atmosphere in a garden through their colour. The use of colour in a garden can create a feeling of excitement and movement, a sense of peacefulness and quiet, or a sense of disjointedness and confusion. Doing a bit of planning in advance can help you have the garden you want. Here are a few ideas to consider:

1. **Repetition** of a colour can give a sense of cohesion in a garden. This doesn't mean one red, one yellow, etc., It means using shades of a colour and placing clumps of this hue throughout your flower beds.
2. **Change with the seasons:** pastels in the spring, warm colours in the summer, autumnal tones in the fall can be interesting, as long as you include contrasting colours for points of interest.
3. **Don't forget your garden at different times of day.** Plant some white or silver plants for a nice glow in the evening light.
4. **Bright colours** can act as focal points, drawing attention to areas of your yard you wish to highlight.

(Continued next month)

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