

'Through The Garden Gate'

The monthly newsletter of the Englehart and District Horticultural Society
March 2019



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

President: Jean. Bott
Bulletin Editor: E. Fisher
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engleharthort.weebly.com

A Word From The Editor

March is a month of considerable frustration – it is so near spring and yet across a great deal of the country the weather is still so violent and changeable that outdoor activity in our yard seems light years away. (Thalassa Cruso) To me, March is a promise and a trickster ... it gets our gardening blood flowing on those sunny March days as we watch the snowbanks begin to rot and puddles form on the street, only to blow up a nasty storm, dumping fresh snow and producing those howling winds. But, yes, the first day of spring comes in March, the days are noticeably longer in March, and many of us start seeds or at least start to plan for our gardens. So, hooray for March... spring is on the way!



Mark It On Your Calendar

March 17: St. Patrick's Day
March 20: General Meeting
April 27: District Meeting

Programme: The programme for March will be "House Plants - A to Z" with Bonnie Warner and Eileen Fisher. Hope to see you there!

Planning Your Vegetable Garden Part3 (con't from February)

STEP 5: How large will your garden be?

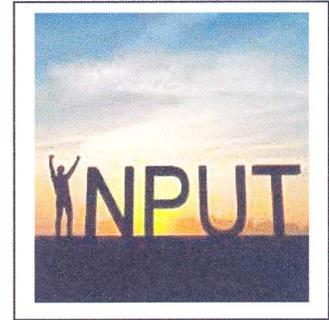
This step applies to both an existing garden and a new garden build. If your garden currently exists, but you would like to add to it, consider the current existing size and how much larger you would like it to be. If you don't have a garden, consider these questions: What size were you thinking of? Will it be one large bed, planted directly in the ground? Will it be a square or rectangular shape? Maybe it will be a collection of smaller beds. If that's the case, how many garden beds would you like to have? Consider all of these questions when planning out your future garden. Another option is to build raised beds. If that's the case, draw out the raised beds in the configuration that you would like. Feel free to be creative when designing your garden beds. You may design a kitchen garden layout with a circular bed for herbs, add other beds for lavender and flowers, plant dwarf fruit trees within the beds and even create a beautiful design reminiscent of a French castle garden. There is no limit, so feel free to be creative and have fun. (cont. on page 3)

District 12/OHA News

Mark it on your calendar that this year's District 12 Annual Meeting on April 27 will be held in Porcupine. The theme for this year's meeting is "The Art of Gardening". The Annual Meeting is always educational and a lot of fun. Besides the business/planning part of the meeting, we also enjoy interesting speakers and discussion of current trends/horticultural news. Our Society is able to send and pay for two delegates but anybody may attend if they choose to pay their way. Check the District 12 website for news about the District.

Looking Ahead

I wonder what 2019 will bring to the Englehart and District Horticultural Society. It's hard to believe that 20 years ago we were in the last year of the 1900s and looking forward to the new millennium. Looking at our new executive and directors, it promises to be a great year. We are already meeting and planning meetings and special events for the coming year. However, we would like to hear from you...what would you like to do/see/learn about?. If you have any ideas or suggestions, please contact Programme Convenor, Joyce Marie Smith.



Competitions for March

This month's competitions will be photography. Each 4" by 6" print should be mounted on white Bristol Board or cardboard. Come a bit early to fill in your tags. You are allowed 2 entries per class. **Classes are:**

- 1:** "Symbiosis"- a picture of an insect(s) on a bloom **2:** "A Frosty Day"- a photo of frost
3: "Winter Wild Thing"- photo of a wild animal in winter **4:** "Seedhead(s)"- photo of seedhead(s) in winter.

Reports From Your Directors

Bulletin: Just a reminder that if you have not renewed your membership, (\$10.00) this will be the last bulletin you will receive. Please contact Ginny Montminy or attend the meeting to renew. We would hate to lose you!

Social: The Nemcsok family will be the hosts for this month's meeting and also bring the gift for the free draw. Others are asked to bring along a small snack to share with others.

Plant and Bake Sale: Convenors Barb Curran and Jean Bott remind people that if you are starting seeds within the next 2 months to start a few extra to sell at our May sale. If your houseplants have got a bit 'leggy' over the winter months, why not take some cuttings now for potting up for the sale as well? Barb and Jean will appreciate any and all donations.

Programme: Convenor Joyce Marie Smith asks that if you or someone you know would be able to speak about or demonstrate a horticultural topic or activity, please let her know. She and her committee have already met and made some plans for the year but are always open to suggestions. We want to provide interesting, educational, and entertaining topics at our meetings but we do need your help and input.

Youth Garden Competition: It's way too early to be working on a garden but perhaps you have a child, a grandchild, or a neighbour's child who may be interested in gardening. Some of you may be starting seeds this month or in April and perhaps you may think about including an aspiring young gardener when you plant. Teaching and encouraging a youngster right from the beginning of the operation would be an experience they'll never forget.

Does Lichen on a Tree Indicate It's Dying?

Last year I had a call from Jean Bott regarding lichen on a maple tree. She and Jim were concerned that the lichen may indicate that the tree was sick or dying. I put out an all call to some horticultural friends and received an answer that I was pleased to give to Jean. It made me wonder if others had a similar concern so was very happy to find this answer from an experienced horticulturalist who has given me permission to use the following article.

"Many people think the blue-green growths on trees are mosses but they are actually lichen, which can be gray, tan or green in color. Lichen is very common on dead trees which will get covered over time. It is no wonder people believe the myth that lichen is killing the tree. Lichen can grow on completely healthy trees even though it does tend to grow more on trees that are sick. It can even grow on metal garden furniture. Lichen is made up of two types of organisms. One is always a fungus and the other is either algae or blue-green bacteria. These two organisms live in a symbiotic relationship where the algae/bacteria produce food through photosynthesis and the fungus provides support, physical protection, moisture and minerals from the atmosphere. Lichen has no roots to penetrate the bark which explains why it does not harm the tree. It just clings to it for support doing no damage to the tree. Why do dying trees have more lichen? Lichen needs light to survive. Healthy trees shade their bark, making it difficult for the lichen to grow. As tree health fails, they produce fewer leaves, allowing lichen to grow better. Lichen may indicate a health problem with a tree but it is not causing the problem.

*Lichen can harbour insects which are mostly harmless. An exception to this rule is the western hemlock looper (*Lambdina fiscellaria*). It lays eggs on moss and lichen, and the hatched larvae can cause severe defoliation of the tree. In addition to the western hemlock this insect attacks the western red cedar, true firs, Douglas fir, western white pine, and spruce. Squirrels use lichen to make nests and it is a natural food source for many animals and birds. It is not a good idea to physically remove the lichen from the tree because you will damage the bark in the process. Some people report using lime sulphur or copper sulphate to chemically remove the lichen. These chemicals will kill algae; however it is not clear how well they work on lichen. In any event, it makes no sense to use chemicals to solve a problem that does not exist. Learn to appreciate the lichen and think of it as a natural patina on the trees."*

(Written by Robert Pavlis, author of two books, Garden Myths and Building Natural Ponds)

Planning Your Vegetable Garden Continued... Part 3

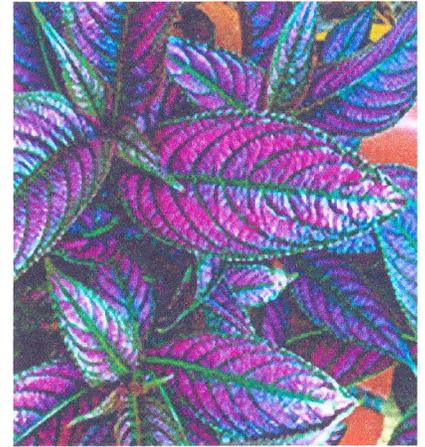
STEP 6: What do you want to grow? Do you have a vegetables wish list? Depending upon the size of your garden, you may only have room to grow your kitchen staples. Perhaps you have extra room to try a new crop every year. In creating your plan, list your "must have" vegetables from most to least important. For some people, tomatoes may be at the top of the list, while onions may be at the bottom. The benefit of a fruiting crop is the more you pick it, the more vegetables your one plant will produce. Root vegetable crops only produce one root vegetable per seed. Decide how you would like to use your space, then add it to the plan. If you only have limited space, it might be more effective to leave your space for your favourite fruiting crops and purchase carrots and onions from the farmers market. You may also want to leave a patch in the garden for unusual crops or ones that are difficult to find at the grocery store. Is your goal to preserve your harvest for the winter? If so, then consider the space needed to grow enough crops for storage. Finally, consider leaving a spot to try a new crop every year. Consider all these ideas when planning what you will grow.



Plant of the Month

Strobilanthes

Strobilanthes, also called Persian Shield, is grown for its beautiful leaves which are usually purple with iridescent markings on the top. Leaf margins are usually scalloped. The plant does flower, and in fact, will flower year-round under good conditions, but most people remove the flowers. It's also best to pinch off the growing shoots to keep the plant compact and bushy. Strobilanthes does well in part sun but too much direct sun may fade the leaves. The plant requires regular moisture throughout the year, but drainage is important for a well-grown plant. Do not allow the plant to sit in water. Regular potting soil is fine as a growing medium. A half strength fertilizer throughout the growing season is helpful. You can propagate by stem tip cuttings. There are several varieties but Strobilanthes dyeranus is the most common. Why not give this lovely plant a try?



African Violets- An Old And New Favourite

(cont'd from February)

Transferring from Water to Soil

To make the transfer from water to soil with the least possible danger and best possible results to the plant, try this suggested system: Use a small butter tub containing a small amount of water. Place the rooted leaf in the vessel, spreading the roots. Sift fine soil (moist not wet) around them until all the water has been absorbed. Then both the soil and leaf may be lifted out with the aid of a spoon. Expect some little setback from water to soil transfer while roots are adjusting to the new medium. Propagation time varies. The leaves of some varieties root very quickly, while other varieties take their time. No leaves can be depended upon to produce roots quickly as long as the parent leaf remains healthy and does not soften and decay; the growth of roots and new leaves will eventually occur. Sometimes it takes months before you see the leaves sprouting from the small plant. When quite a cluster of new leaves appears, cut the parent leaf away. Remove the parent leaf sooner if it shows signs of deterioration but often it is not necessary to discard it for a long time. If a variety is scarce or your supply limited, you may be able to grow a second or even a third crop of Saintpaulia from the same treasured leaf. Each time you will, of course, be working with a shorter, sharply cut petiole until a third planting is made perhaps with no petiole at all and only the leaf base to insert in the soil. Even so, you can expect success as many have found from experience that the same leaf will produce as fine a third crop as it did a first. In less than five months, however, you will have well-established plants which should in less than a year produce flowers.

(PS- just to add interest to this topic...African Violets are not violets!)

Poetry and Prose

*"I wonder if the sap is
stirring yet,
If wintry birds are
dreaming of a mate,
If frozen snowdrops feel as
yet the sun
And crocus fires are
kindling one by one:
Sing robin, sing:
I still am sore in doubt
concerning Spring."*

Christina Rossetti

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ENGLEHART & DISTRICT HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

2019 CONVENORS

Bulletin/Facebook.....	E. Fisher
Christmas Workshop	Carrie Anne Field/ Anna Regele
Civic Improvement	Mary Schippers/ Bruce Wilson
Service Certificate	C. Black
Horticultural Week.....	E. Nemcsok
Membership/ Cards	G. Montminy
Nominating.....	Carrie Anne Field
Prizes/Awards	G. Montminy
Program	J. Smith
Publicity.....	C. Black
Social	B. Warner
Plant & Bake Sale	B. Curran/ J. Bott
Youth Garden Competition	B. Warner/ E. Fisher
Website.....	R. Heaslip
Constitution.....	B. Warner

2019 Dates To Remember

Board Meetings

February 6
March 6
April 3
May 1
June 5
July 3
August 7
September 4
October 2
November 6
December- no meeting
January 8, 2020

General Meetings

February 20
March 20
April 17
May 15
June 19
July 17
August 21
September 18
October 16
November 27 (Christmas Workshop)
December- no meeting
January 15, 2020 (Annual Meeting)

Special Events

Plant & Bake Sale	May 25 (tentative)
Horticulture Week	June 9-16
Christmas Workshop	November 27

External Events

District 12 Annual Meeting, Porcupine	April 27
OHA Convention	July 19-21, Windsor
Charlton Fair	August 31
Englehart Fall Fair	September 5-7 (tentative)
District 12 Fall Planning Meeting (KL)	September 28

Competition Classes for 2019 Program

March:

Photography

- Class 1 "Symbiosis"- a picture of an insect(s) on a bloom
- Class 2 "A frosty Day"- a photo of frost
- Class 3 "Winter Wild Thing"- photo of a wild animal (can include bird) in winter
- Class 4 "Seedhead(s)"- photo of seedhead(s) in winter

April:

House Plants

- Class 1 African Violet,
- Class 2 Foliage Plant
- Class 3 Flowering Plant (no African Violets)
- Class 4 Cactus or succulent,

May:

Spring Flowers

- Class 1 Tulips, 3 specimens
- Class 2 Daffodils, 3 specimens
- Class 3 Blooming perennial, 1 specimen
- Class 4 "Spring Beauty"- a floral design using 3 blooms, accessories permitted

September:

Vegetables/ Photography

- Class 1 Pumpkin, 1
- Class 2 Squash (other than pumpkin), 1
- Class 3 Carrots, 3 specimens
- Class 4 Potatoes, 3 specimens
- Class 5 Any other vegetable or fruit, 1 or representative specimen

Children

- Class 1 Pumpkin, 1
- Class 2 Carrots, 2 specimens
- Class 3 Beets, 2 specimens
- Class 4 "Fantasy Creature"- made from fruits & vegetables

October:

Seasonal Wreaths

- Class 1 Wreath- any occasion
- Class 2 "Everlasting"- a design using dried and/ or treated natural materials
- Class 3 "Fall Beauty"- a fall photo