



# 'Through The Garden Gate'

The monthly newsletter of the Englehart and District Horticultural Society  
October 2018



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  
Presbyterian Church basement

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

President: R. Campbell  
Bulletin Editor: E. Fisher  
**Website:**  
englehartort.weebly.com

## A Word From The Editor

### Gardening Advice

I'm going to start a new project in the bulletin about gardening advice- what's wrong, what's right, what works, what doesn't. These days, gardeners are inundated with advice from many sources- tv, the internet, Facebook, your next door neighbour, etc. It's hard to know what's right, what works, and what's an old wives' tale. I'm not saying that what will follow is the honest truth as scientifically tested by me but it will come from what seem like reliable sources. Perhaps some of you will disagree, some will agree, and some will possibly give the advice a chance to see if it works. First edition can be found on page 3 of this bulletin.

## Youth Gardeners Recognition

At our meeting this month we will recognise the hard work of our young gardeners. They have been invited to attend this meeting to receive their well-deserved awards. ***"Why try to explain miracles to your kids when you can just have them plant a garden?" (Robert Breault)***

## Mark It On Your Calendar

October 17: General Meeting and Youth Gardener Awards  
November 28 Christmas Workshop (**note- no regular meeting in Nov.**)

## Programme

October's programme will be another great evening with that famous award-winning giant vegetable grower, our own Jeff Warner of Aidie Creek Gardens. Jeff will be talking about his trip to Pumpkin Fest and building his corn maze. This will also be the Awards Night for the Youth Garden competitors. We hope to see them all out for a great evening. **Competitions this evening will be- Class 1: Wreath (any material and occasion) Class 2: 'Everlasting' a dried arrangement Class 3: Photograph- 'Fall Beauty'.**

## Looking Ahead

November's meeting (on November 28<sup>th</sup>) will be our annual Christmas Workshop. Convenor Carrie Anne Field has a great evening planned for all of us. This meeting is open to members and the public so feel free to bring along a friend. The doors open at 6:30 and since only 50 kits are made, it doesn't hurt to get there early. It's a great evening of fun and fellowship, getting into the holiday spirit, and enjoying a delicious luncheon.

### Looking Back

We're not looking back very far, in fact, only to last month's meeting. What an interesting time it was. Our guest speaker, Evelyne Nemcsok, spoke to us about her experiences growing and using herbs-wild and domesticated and gave suggestions on how others may enjoy growing and using these plants. We all took home some interesting handouts and I'm sure many of us will be not only growing but also foraging for wild plants to include in our gardens and in our cooking.

### District 12/OHA News

Our delegates, Barbara Curran and Ginny Montminy, attended the Fall Planning Meeting in Cochrane on September 29th. Plans were made for the 2019 Annual Meeting which will be held in Porcupine on April 27. The theme for this meeting will be 'The Art of Gardening' and speakers, presentations, and competitions will be planned around this theme. Mark this on your 2019 calendar as some members of our society will be attending this meeting and you may want to join us. It's always a fun-filled, interesting day. Thanks to delegates Barb and Ginny for representing us and for the great report.

### Reports From Your Directors

**Social:** Kelly Brownlee will be the hostess and bring the gift for the October meeting.

**Civic Improvement:** Some members will be busy cleaning beds, in the next few weeks. Thanks to Kelly Brownlee and Mary Schippers for their efforts on this committee.

**Christmas Workshop:** Convenor Carrie Anne Field reports that plans are well underway for next month's workshop. She and her committee will be meeting to put together the kits soon. Mark November 28<sup>th</sup> on your calendar!

**Membership:** Ginny Montminy reports that we have 70 members this year and 2 already for 2019.

**Facebook and Website:** We now have 225 people enjoying our Facebook page- sharing ideas and suggestions, asking questions, etc. Rick Heaslip reports that there were 378 unique visits to our website during the past month. Be sure to check both of these out for all the latest information and photos.

### Preparing Your Gardens for Winter

Time to rake up the yard, deadhead the perennials and till the vegetable garden? Not so fast. Popular opinion is swinging toward letting things stay just as they are through winter — decayed and drab but serviceable. Displaying a messy yard may not win any good-neighbour awards, but entomologists say our vital but dwindling insect pollinator populations would be much better off. "People are increasingly recognizing the value of having good habitat throughout the seasons," said Deborah Landau, a conservation ecologist with the Maryland/D.C. chapter of the Nature Conservancy. "Sometimes it's hard to make the connection with the insects you see in the garden in the warm months with the dried litter remaining when it cools, but it's important to keep that structure going through winter," Landau said. Such structure includes standing stalks of dead plants, especially under flower heads, where butterflies seek shelter. It also includes layers of leaf litter that collect to protect larvae, egg masses, hibernating wild bees, dormant spiders and many other beneficial insects. "Cavity-nesting bees may have made their home in old canes of raspberries and perhaps some ornamental grasses," said Rebecca Finneran, a consumer horticulture educator with Michigan State University Extension. (continued on page 3)

“These two items usually are not cleaned up until spring anyway, but they also can be preserved by placing them (upright) in an out-of-the-way location such as behind a compost pile, and the larvae will still hatch. “The main thing is not to destroy the stems,” she said. Pollinator cautions aside, which autumn landscape chores are most important, and which can safely be left until spring? Build a priority list.

1. Giving your yard at least one last soaking before reeling up the hoses for winter.
2. Planting a cover crop and adding new perennials including bulbs, trees and shrubs at a time when fall moisture can help establish their root systems.
3. Removing ailing plants to help with disease control during the upcoming planting season.
4. Not disturbing bare soil where many wild bee species, including bumblebees, overwinter in small nests. “Many of our ground-nesting species will not be bothered by a general clean-up, but I will tell you that I had bumblebees working my late-blooming coral bells up until frost,” Finneran said.
5. Delaying tilling. Put nature to work through winter with earthworms.
6. Postponing pulling up your summer annuals and chrysanthemums until spring. They’ll trap whatever leaves blow by, creating their own enriching mulch while shielding insects.

“What I tell people concerned about how things might look is just clean up in the front yard and let things go in the back,” Landau said. “Remove any layers of material from the garden that might have fungus in it. But if it’s simply dead, leave it alone.” *(I personally think this is great advice partly because I find that I don’t have the energy or positive attitude in October that I do in the spring. I enjoy my spring clean up job.)*

Next month will be our last get together in 2018. We are looking forward to continuing our work and fun in 2019. With that in mind, we hope that some of our members will consider taking a position on the Board of Directors or the Executive. We will be looking for a new Vice President and always welcome new Directors. Why don’t you consider joining the Board in the new year. Just a thought!



### Gardening Advice

Here’s the first installment of ‘Gardening Advice’ (and it’s something I was advised to do years ago as my yard is solid clay):

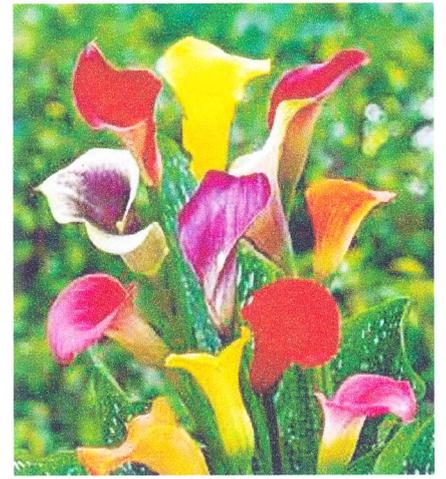
#### **You should add sand to clay soil to improve drainage...*WRONG***

It’s easy to understand why many gardeners would think adding sand to clay soil makes sense. Clay is very dense and heavy. It doesn’t drain well. On the other hand, sand is light and drains quickly. So, why wouldn’t a combination of the two types create the ideal blend? The truth is the clay particles fill the space between the sand particles, so you end up with soil composition similar to concrete. It will be more dense and compact than the clay soil you began with. **Solution:** Improve drainage in clay soil by adding organic materials – like compost. The organic matter provides some immediate drainage benefit, but the benefit increases over time. Microorganisms in the soil go to work on the compost and the clay, resulting in a richer, loamier soil. The more organic materials you can add, the faster you will see improvement.

## Plant of the Month

### Calla Lily

It may seem strange to feature the Calla Lily in October but I am going to tie this beauty into the article below about the fall care of this plant. The calla lily (*Zantedeschia*) is not really a lily at all. This gorgeous plant, available in many colours, actually grows from rhizomes, not bulbs, as true lilies do. The calla is a great plant in gardens or containers. Callas should be planted in loose, well-drained soil and prefer to be located in full sun or partial shade. They are typically planted in the spring but we must wait until the threat of frost has passed and the soil has warmed sufficiently before planting them outside. Calla lilies should be planted so that the top of the rhizome is about 5 cm (2") below the soil surface, and spaced approximately a foot apart in the garden (closer in a container). Once planted, the area should be watered well. They enjoy being kept moist but not wet and will also benefit from a monthly dose of fertilizer. When planted in containers, be prepared to bring pots in or cover if a late frost threatens. Remember- don't confuse these beauties with the larger plants sharing a similar name...canna lilies, which, to make things even more confusing, are also not really lilies! Isn't gardening fun??



### Fall and Winter Care of Calla Lilies

If you grow calla lilies in containers, stop watering and either dig the rhizomes or bring in the pots to be stored in a cooler area in the fall before total freeze up and shake off any soil. Rick and I both have been successful storing the rhizomes in dry vermiculite in plastic tubs (no lid!!!) but I must admit that I have sometimes stored the rhizome in the original pot of soil in my cold room.) Callas can also be stored in peat moss and located in a cool, dry area, preferably dark, until warmer temperatures return in spring. However you choose to store them, you must allow them to dry out for a few days before storing the rhizomes for winter. Don't store them damp as they will rot or mildew will occur. If they have multiplied, calla lilies can be divided when you bring them in but I prefer to do this just before I replant the rhizomes when they are still dormant. Here in the north it is advised that you start your calla lilies indoors during late winter and transplant them outside in spring after frost danger has passed or be prepared to cover them. This may seem like a lot of work but I can assure you that these plants are well worth the effort.

### A Bit of Horticultural Latin

Flora... flower	Anthos... flower	Lepto... slender
Micro... small	Poly... many	Platy... flat/broad

### Poetry and Prose

*There is no season  
when such pleasant  
and sunny spots  
may be  
lighted on  
and produce so  
pleasant an effect on  
the feelings,  
as now in  
October.*

*Nathaniel Hawthorne*



Published 11 times a year  
Englehart & District Horticultural  
Society  
Box 677, Englehart, ON P0J 1H0  
President: Rosemary Campbell  
Secretary: Bonnie Warner  
Treasurer: Ginny Montminy  
Editor: Eileen Fisher  
Copying: Ginny Montminy  
Mailing: Joyce Marie Smith