



STREETSVILLE BLOOMS

Streetsville Horticultural Society

Proud to be a member of the Ontario Horticultural Association

Volume 19, Issue 7

APRIL 2013

NEXT MEETING: TUES., APRIL 9

**CHRISTIAN REFORM CHURCH
2630 Inlake Court**

Meeting starts at 7:30 p.m.

Speaker: David Antcliffe

Topic: "The Beauty of Water"

Speaker Bio: David Antcliffe spent most of his career in corporate Canada and in 2003 he turned his hobby into a business. In 13 years of business in design, construction and servicing water features, his company, Ponds in the City, has constructed over 275 water features. These water features may consist of ponds, streams, pondless waterfalls, in-ground hot spas and rainwater harvesting systems.

Those of you wishing for a water feature in your backyard won't want to miss this presentation.

Sue Harshman, Program Chair

VOLUNTEER HOURS

We know there are members out there volunteering hours for the Streetsville Horticultural Society. Make your hours count towards our year-end totals. Send your total hours and activity on a monthly basis to gattescohouse@rogers.com

Prefer to hand in your totals to Eleonora in person? Jot them down and drop them off at the SHS meetings Refreshments Table – you'll find her there.

How do you know you are a Master Gardener? There is a decorative compost container on your kitchen counter. You would rather go to a nursery to shop than a clothing store. You prefer gardening to watching television. You plan vacation trips to arboretums and public parks. Dirt under your fingernails and calloused palms are matters of pride.

President's Message

There are so many ways to acknowledge and celebrate spring. In the south, many of the flowering trees have already peaked and the azaleas are giving way to lush vegetation. With higher temperature's, they probably only have a couple of more weeks of easy gardening time before the heat overwhelms.

It's different "up north," though. Normally, we would probably just be seeing the sprouts of plants that are already fading away "down south." This year, we are still facing cold and frozen snow banks. It's always a challenge.

While we share many facets of spring, we also experience many differences. The light is different. The birds and plants are different. All are glorious. Having experienced spring in both climates, I'd be hard pressed to say which is more beautiful. Nature has special treats for us no matter where we are. Anyone who has ever tried to garden knows the lessons that come with the project of spring clean-up and the rewards. It's that type of project: the value of patience and of a sweaty brow, the understanding that if you take care of the plants they will take care of you. But there are other types of spring rewards – witness to the spring progression, hitting every garden center in your immediate area and beyond, commiserating with your friends and neighbours about what approach is best for the garden this season.



Something new that is picking up speed is garden upcycling, or the art of re-purposing household items for use in the garden. The photo above was a pallet and now a table feature. Check out www.dishfunctionaldesigns.blogspot.ca or <http://themicrogardener.com/20> creative-ways-to-upcycle-pallets-in-your-garden just to name a few. Makes you start looking at things differently!

Sue Hutton, President

BUTTERFLIES IN YOUR GARDEN

If you want Butterflies, plant Milkweed. Golden Milkweed or *Asclepias* sp. has clusters of pure golden-yellow blooms and attracts butterflies all summer until frost. Plants thrive in hot weather though upwards of 95 degrees will make anything wilt. It is the host plant for Monarch and Queen Butterfly caterpillars. A South American native, Silky Golden Milkweed grows 30-36" high on average; likes light shade to full sun; grows in average soil with average water. Milkweed (*Asclepias*) is a nectar source for many other Butterflies as well. Swallowtails, Painted Ladies, American Ladies, Red Admirals, Fritillaries, and Hairstreaks. Milkweed also draws Hummingbirds and Clearwing Moths to your garden. Sugar-seeking ants feeding on this golden Milkweed is a good sign! It means nectar is collecting in the crowns already. Plant in full sun and treat as an annual. Save the seeds and start them yourself the next year (this milkweed is easy to grow from seed).

John Powers, Butterfly Man, who spoke to the membership in November, donated a container of Golden Milkweed seeds for the benefit of our gardening community. I am inviting members who are interested in committing to this project, nurturing these seeds and spreading plantings throughout the community to pick up a container from me at the April meeting.

Sue Hutton

"To own a bit of ground, to scratch it with a hoe, to plant seeds and watch their renewal of life -- this is the commonest delight of the race, the most satisfactory thing a man can do."

-Charles Dudley Warner, author, editor, and publisher (1829-1900)

OHA DISTRICT 15 ANNUAL MEETING – APR. 27

Theme: "Gardening for Healthier Communities"



Please join us at the AGM for a full, interesting and enjoyable day, including a Flower Show.

Guest Speaker: James Graham, 1st Vice Pres. of the OHA, Topic: "A Walk Down the Garden Path".

Registration is \$25.00 per person (includes breakfast buffet, beverages, lunch with dessert and free parking). SHS is subsidizing the cost of \$15.00 per person— **making the cost to SHS members \$10.00 for the day!**

Breakfast begins at 8:00 a.m.; meeting at 9:30 a.m. To register contact Lynn Merritt at (905) 826-3281 or lynnc.merritt@sympatico.ca. Final deadline to register is April 9th. Bring \$10 registration to the April meeting. Please try to bring cash and save us the extra step.

Full details, including Agenda, directions, Flower Show Schedule and Flower Show Entry Form will be forwarded by email in pdf format. (Hard copies available for those without email).

HARDY PLANT SALE

Toronto Botanical Gardens Floral Hall
777 Lawrence Ave. E., (Lawrence & Leslie)

Sunday, May 5th noon until 4:00 p.m.

Choice Shrubs

Select Perennials

Alpine Treasures

Color for Shade & Sun

Fabulous Foliage &

Vendors, Vendors, Vendors

Check out: www.onrockgarden.com/plantsale

For vendors list and plant details

Presented by Ontario Rock Garden &
Hardy Plant Society

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Apr. 20** 8:30 am Potting up for Plant Sale*
Apr. 27 8:30 am Potting up for Plant Sale*
Apr. 27 District 15 AGM
May 4 8:30 am Potting up for Plant Sale*
May 5 8:30 am Potting up for Plant Sale*
May 5 Hardy Plant Sale at TBG
May 11 **SHS PLANT SALE** – 8:30 am
Portuguese Cultural Centre

*All potting up to be done at 6065 Montevideo Rd.

A SPRING SONG

Old Mother Earth woke up from her sleep,
And found she was cold and bare;
The Winter was over, the Spring was near,
And she had not a dress to wear.
“Alas” she sighed with great dismay,
“Oh where shall I get my clothes?
There’s not a place to buy a suit,
And a dressmaker no one knows.”
“I’ll make you a dress,” said springing
Grass, just looking above the ground
“A dress of green of the loveliest sheen
To cover you all around.”
“And we” said the dandelion gay,
“Will dot it with yellow bright.”
“I’ll make a fringe,” said forget-me-not
“of blue, very soft and light...”
Old Mother Earth was thankful and glad
As she put on her dress so gay,
And that is the reason, my little ones,
She is looking so lovely today.

Anonymous



"If you have 2
loaves of bread
Sell one and buy
flowers...
For although bread
nourishes the
body...

Flowers nourish the soul"....

FLOWER SHOW – APRIL

DESIGN

- Class 1 “Space Odyssey” – a 3 dimensional
SUSPENDED design – fresh and dried
material (dowels and fishing line will be
provided if needed)
Class 2 “The British Are Coming” – red, white and
blue design using fresh flowers

MINIATURE

- Class 3 “April in Paris” – using fresh flowers

FOR MEN ONLY

- Class 4 “Octopus’s’ Garden” – a submerged (in
water) flower arrangement – [hint – use
waxy flowers]

NOVICE

- Class 5 “My Best
Friend” – an

arrangement of
flowers that looks like
(shaped) your favorite
animal or pet (include
photo or drawing of
animal ON your ENTRY

TAG) TIP: use wet oasis to carve out the form



CULTURAL

- Class 1 Cactus – excluding Christmas cactus
Class 2 Forced flowering branch – less than 36”
Class 3 Haworthia plant (genus of rosetta old
world succulent)
Class 4 Herb garden in an unusual container –
no bigger than 18 x 12” footprint –
accessories allowed
Class 5 Herb plant in a pot – named
Class 6 Houseplant grown for its leaves
Class 7 Ivy in a pot – any genus
Class 8 Orchid – in bloom
Class 9 Poinsettia – any color
Class 10 Terrarium or bottle garden

All cultural exhibits and houseplants to be grown by
the entrant and must have been in their possession
for 90 days.

For further information consult the SHS Flower
Show handbook (on our website) or call Nicky Hall
(905 858-2553) or Lynne Sereda (905 819-1287).

REFRESHMENTS

"Man does not live by coffee alone. Have a Danish."

Thanks to all who helped out at the refreshment table at the March meeting, and thanks for your patience waiting for the coffee to brew – Eleonora didn't have access to the building 'til later than usual. Donations from **Nicky Hall, Joyce Giddings, Mel Allcock** and **Eleonora Roberts** were welcomed by all. If you'd like to donate goodies for our next meeting please give Eleonora Roberts a call at 905-302-4491. Remember, we are in a nut free facility.

Thanks also go to **Heather** and **Philip Walker** for helping with the clean up of the refreshments table after the March meeting – much appreciated!

PHOTO CONTEST

Just a reminder pertaining to the photo contest. You will be submitting your masterpieces at the September meeting, so get out there and hunt for that perfect picture.

A few helpful tips and ideas in photography.

- Flower photos - Look what is going on around the flower-background, busyness, streaks, out of focus branches etc. - try to keep it clean so that there are no distractions to take away from center of interest.
- It is "usually", but not always better to have people walking toward the camera rather than a back view going away.
- If a category has a "color" in the title it is important to show that color as the main area being presented.

Again, here are the classes:

Class 1	Fall Harvest
Class 2	Winter Photo – black & white
Class 3	Explosion of Color
Class 4	Flower (close up)
Class 5	Blossoms & Butterflies
Class 6	Shades of Blue
Class 7	My Oasis
Class 8	Waterfall

Henry Schouten, Photo Contest Chair

PLANT SALE

For those who missed signing up to volunteer for the plant sale, the lists will be posted again at the April meeting. The lawn signs will be available at the meeting as well as the information package and flyers.

As you start your spring cleaning there are a few things to look for that will be of use for the plant sale. If you have any old PLASTIC blinds for the labeling of the plants, 4" and 6" pots or plastic trays please bring these (washed) to the April meeting.

Our goal this year is \$6,000 so we need EVERYONE'S HELP! For further information contact Debra at 905-567-4803

SPRING – THE BUSIEST TIME OF YEAR

April is finally here. The air smells crisp, the afternoon breezes are gentle and the sun feels warmer on your cheek. Gardens are springing back to life after a cold, snowy winter.

Now is the time to set aside well-thumbed seed catalogues and the winter dreams of beautiful flowers. This is the busiest time of the gardening year. April means it is time to roll up your sleeves and prepare for another stimulating season of gardening. If you take time to clean up your garden now, it will pay big dividends later.

Once the sun comes out and the temperatures reach around 8°C, almost all of us race to our gardens. Make sure you are dressed in layers, apply sunscreen and top off with a hat. You will need to prioritize your spring garden clean schedule.

THE BASICS

- Get your garden tools and potting area ready: gloves, rakes, pruning shears and wheelbarrow. If you didn't clean and oil your tools in the fall, now is the time to do it.
- Get your flower boxes out of storage, clean and refill them with fresh soil;
- Clean up debris and broken branches off trees and shrubs;
- Remove your winter mulch from your perennial beds and allow the soil to warm up;

- Remove protective covering from roses and prune winter-killed branches to one inch below the blackened area;
- Unwrap your delicate shrubs, but keep the burlap close by for a really chilly night.

PREP YOUR SOIL

- Dig over and prepare growing beds for planting. Weed as you go;
- Work in well-rotted compost, well-cured manure or other additives that your soil may need;
- Spread 2 – 3” of fresh mulch, such as natural, cedar mulch, to help retain moisture and keep out new weeds.
- Start your compost pile using collected leaves, old compost and cuttings;
- Remove and compost any dead annual plants that over-wintered in the garden. Do NOT use early spring weeds that have gone to seed; they may germinate.
- Apply a general-purpose fertilizer to perennial beds and to shrubs.
- Add 5-10-10 fertilizer around bulbs as soon as they flower to maximize bloom time and store energy to bloom again next year.

PRUNING

Many trees and shrubs benefit from annual pruning. It keeps them in shape, gets rid of dead and/or diseased branches and encourages new growth. Once you see an inch or so of new growth at the base of perennial plants, it is time to prune.

- Prune perennials to 4 – 5” and ornamental grasses to 2 – 3” if you did not do it in the fall;
- Spray dormant oil on fruit and ornamental trees;
- Prune dormant shrubs (woody shrubs that bloom after June or later produce blossoms on new growth). Prune and shape as new growth appears.
- Prune early-flowering shrubs, such as forsythia, lilac and spirea, as soon as blooming has finished. They set their buds the fall before on old growth.

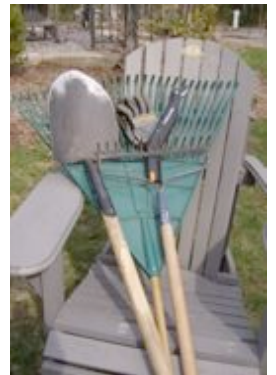
LAWNS

Spring is a crucial time to fertilize. It replenishes the food reserves your yard draws from while dormant in winter and fuels the rapid growth phase of grass.

Stay off soggy lawns as this will compact the soil and kill the grass.

- Allow your garden beds and lawn to dry out.
- Rake up leaves and debris.

- Deep rake lawn to remove thatch. Thatch that is more than ½” thick is excessive.
- Over-seed the lawn and bare patches once the forsythias start to bloom;
- Have your soil tested. Lawns like a neutral pH. The presence of moss, for example, can signify soil acidity. This problem can be resolved by liming your soil.
- Fertilize lawn organically by using compost and mulching movers. For those who prefer chemical fertilizers, apply a light slow-release fertilizer in the spring and a little heavier application in the fall;
- To prevent grassy weeds from germinating, apply pre-emergent weed suppressant sometime between the time local forsythia bushes stop blooming and the local lilac bushes begin to bloom;
- Tune up your lawn mower.



PLANTING

Divide summer blooming perennials, such as coreopsis, irises, Solomon’s seal, perennial lobelia, and hostas etc as soon as the soil has thawed and donate some to our Plant Sale.

- Plant perennials, bareroot trees and shrubs;
- Push frost-heaved plants back into the garden soil. Tamp it down with your foot or dig it in with a shovel;
- Plant cold-weather crops: peas, onions, leeks, sweet peas lettuce, radish, chervil, Swiss chard, spinach and chives;
- Pull out perennial and annual weeds as they appear.

THE FINISHING TOUCHES

- Cut a fresh edge around growing areas to give a crisp look
- Neaten up hardscape surfaces, reset heaved pavers, rake escaped gravel back into walkways, sweep fresh sand or stone dust to refill joints between flagstones. Pressure clean patios, walkways and driveways;
- Clean patio furniture;
- Take a walk around the garden and make note of what needs to be replaced and renewed.

Debra Lemire

DRAW TABLE

Even though it was cold and blustery outside, the mood inside was warm and Spring like!

Our March meeting proved to be very successful for our Draw Table. We had some wonderful gift baskets as well as a useful lawn clipping/leaf collector that was donated by Canadian Tire Corp. (Meadowvale Town Centre).

The table was further enhanced by the addition of three unique shrubs that were donated by our speaker, Darren Heimbacker of Whistling Garden's Nursery.

A special thank you to the many members who have been regularly donating items to be used for our draws. We truly appreciate your help. We are always accepting new items that can be used to further increase the sale of our tickets.

Please feel free to contact me at decoratewithme@sympatico.ca or call (905) 785-9023 should you wish to make a contribution.

Looking forward to seeing you in April!

Marylyne Brown, Draw Table Chair

GET A HEAD START ON YOUR GARDEN

Garden catalogs have a lot to answer for. They arrive during the doldrums of January and offer glimpses of spring and summer gardens full of bright flowers and luscious vegetables. Unfortunately, when you look outside, it seems like gardening weather is still a long way away.

There is hope. You may not be able to hasten the arrival of warm weather, but you can at least get going on a summer flower or vegetable garden by starting the seeds for one. Not only will you save money (a packet of seeds is far less expensive than a flat of seedlings), but you'll be able to grow the exact plants you want, whether exotic perennials or your family's favorite tomato variety, and fill your home with summery greens even when it's cold outside.

WHEN TO PLANT OUTSIDE?

Check the ideal outdoor transplanting date for each plant, then count backward to determine how early to start the seeds. Cool-season edibles and other plants can go outside when the soil is considerably cooler than heat lovers can, but even

so, most plants should not be set outside before the last expected frost. If you start your seedlings too early, you may find yourself with plants that are ready to go outside before the garden is ready for them.

GERMINATING SEEDS

Seeds aren't fussy about where you start them. Any container that is at least 3 inches deep and has good drainage will work. Many people sow seeds in large flats or trays, or even in large pots. Others choose individual plastic or peat pots or cell packs. Still others look outside the garden and use egg and cardboard milk cartons or old tins. The choice is yours.

If you're reusing containers to start seeds, scrub them thoroughly, and then soak them in a 10 percent bleach solution for at least 10 to 30 minutes. Rinse and dry them thoroughly before using.

SOIL

Choose a seed-starting or potting mix for best results. Moisten the mix thoroughly and let it drain. It should be thoroughly damp, with no dry clumps, but not overly wet and heavy. You can do this either before or after you add the mix to your chosen containers.

Tip: Before you get started, check the seed packet for any requirements prior to planting, such as soaking or chilling the seeds. It will also tell you of any soil and light requirements.

PLANTING

Plant 2 seeds per small starting pot, or scatter seeds across the top of the mix in a seed tray. Lightly tamp them in place and cover them with more mix to the recommended depth given on the seed packet. Moisten the soil on top but don't overwater it.

Label the container or tray with the plant name and planting date. You can find plant labels at nurseries and home stores, but Popsicle sticks also work well. Just be sure to use permanent ink that won't fade or run if it gets wet.

At this point you may want to cover the seeds with plastic wrap or a plastic cover to help keep the soil damp and warm, which will speed germination.

Keep soil temperature above 75° F (24° C) for heat-loving warm-season plants by setting them on a heating mat or on top of a water heater or fridge.

Don't let the surface get too hot, though; above 90°F (32° C) is too high. Cool-season plants will be fine with average home temperatures.

Watering from a tray placed under the seedling containers is good way to keep the soil moist but not overly wet.

CARING FOR SEEDLINGS

Once the seedlings start emerging, remove the plastic covering and move the plants into a brightly lit spot with daytime temperatures between 60 and 75°F (16 to 24°C). This may be a warm window in your home, a sunny porch or even a greenhouse. Avoid crowding by thinning your seedlings according to the instructions on your seed packet.

If you don't have a bright spot in your home, a grow-light setup with or without a heating mat underneath will work. Keep the light about 3 inches above the plants, raising it as the seedlings grow.

Plants will need about 12 to 16 hours of light per day for best growth; too little light will result in leggy and weak plants.

Once leaves appear, begin feeding the seedlings weekly with a diluted liquid organic fertilizer or other fertilizer designed for seed starting.

TRANSFERRING TO LARGER POTS

Depending on how big your original containers were and how large your plants are growing, you may want to transfer individual seedlings to their own pots. 4-inch pots are a common size for seedlings that have outgrown their seed trays.

Tempting as this is, especially if the seedlings look crowded, be patient. The first "leaves" to emerge are not really leaves, but rather cotyledons, which provide the first food for the seedlings. Wait until the true leaves form; they will look different from the cotyledons.

Once you have a second set of true leaves, it's OK to transfer plants to new pots. Fill the new containers with moistened potting mix to just below the rim and make a hole in the soil for the plant. Turn the original container upside down and gently squeeze it with one hand while removing the plant and the soil from it. Hold the plant by the leaves and the soil and root ball, not by the fragile stem. If you pull out several seedlings at once, separate them with your fingers, a skewer or a toothpick. Take your time so you don't damage the roots.

Place the plant in the new container and firm the soil around it. Moisten the soil but don't overwater it. Place the pot in bright light (avoid direct sunlight for the first few days) and continue to keep the soil thoroughly damp but not too wet.

Tip: Many gardeners swear by gently brushing their hands over the tops of seedlings as they grow, moving them back and forth. This simulates a gentle wind and helps develop stronger stems.

HARDENING OFF

About 10 days to two weeks before you want to plant your seedlings outdoors, start acclimating the plants to the conditions outside, a process called hardening off. When you're ready to do this, stop weekly fertilizing and cut back a bit on water.

Set the plants outside for a just a few hours each day — even just one hour to start is enough — then gradually increase the time outside. Bring them inside at night or if temperatures drop.

As well as limiting the time spent outside at the start of this process, also limit the amount of sun and wind the plants receive at first. Choose a spot with filtered sunlight and minimal wind, then gradually move the plants into brighter spots until the plants are in direct sunlight all day.

Once the plants have spent several nights outdoors, they're ready for transplanting to the garden or their permanent containers.

Tip: Cover the seedlings with bird netting when you set them out. Birds and other critters find those tender seedlings very tasty.

ALTERNATIVES

You can start seedlings inside your home, but outdoor cold frames, cloches and greenhouses offer alternatives for all or part of the process.

If you're growing in a cold frame, whether you start seeds there or set out the seedlings, once you want to harden off plants, simply open the cover a bit each day and close it at night. Gradually increase the amount the cover is open until the seedlings are ready for planting.

Excerpt from: www.houzz.com

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