



Lanark Orchid

Renals

Perth & District Horticultural Society

P.O. Box 494
Perth, ON, K7H 3G1
www.gardenontario.org

District #2 of the
Ontario Horticultural
Association

February 2011 Newsletter

Knowledge is
knowing that the
tomato is a fruit.
Wisdom is
not using it
in fruit salad.

President's Pen

This is coming to you via Charleston, SC, where gardening goes on pretty well twelve months of the year. The ground doesn't freeze, even if they sometimes receive a dusting of snow, so gardeners can get dirty all year. As is obvious by the gardens, planters and window boxes around town, a variety of plants we are familiar with do well in the cooler temperatures, e.g. pansies, snapdragons, cyclamen, asparagus ferns, English ivy. Another popular plant growing abundantly at the moment is kale. It provides a marvellous backdrop for the aforementioned. Spring bulbs are already pushing up their heads: daffodils, crocuses, hyacinths and paperwhites. Camellias and magnolias bloom well into our spring time frame, followed by azaleas. I learned from a Southern gardening magazine that wax begonias are perennials. I had no idea. The problem in our zone is that their root systems will not survive our deep freeze, so we treat them as annuals.

I enjoy attending Charleston Horticultural Society meetings when I am here and learning how they work and what plants are growing in this area. Of course there is discussion about specific plants for Zone 9, but many will also grow in our zone. Some examples include: agava, chicken and hens, hosta, many of the ferns, phlox, some, but not all peonies (they need the cold weather to set their roots for next year's fragrant flowers), iris, coral bells, echinacea, and - are you ready for it? - the Lady Slipper!

For those of you who have visited Charleston, you will know that much like Perth, Charlestonians are not only house proud but also garden proud as well. Nearly every house has a water feature and many gardens include meandering paths, statues, garden gnomes and a little humour, such as the house with the stone cat lying lazily under a tree. Delicate and intricate ironwork, eye-catching and tastefully staggered brick walls allow much needed air to circulate through the garden to help control moss and fungus. It's a wonderful experience.

See you in the garden, *Lynda*



Upcoming Speakers

- **March 8, 2011:** "Fabulous Delphiniums" Speakers: Hazel & Joe Cook, Blossom Hill Nurseries
- **April 12, 2011:** "Gardening through the seasons: planning for continuity of colour and texture" Speaker: Marilyn Light

OHA Show

OHA Successful Gardening Show, March 31-April 3, 2011

The OHA's 19th annual Successful Gardening Show will be held in conjunction with the Toronto Inter-

national Home and Garden Show on the above dates at the International Centre, 6900 Airport Road in Mississauga. The theme will be "JUST ABOUT TIME" where the design portion will have us "Suspended in Time" and the plant and flower exhibits will want us to "Take Time to Smell the Flowers". Miniature designs will be a "Moment in Time". Daily demonstrations, special exhibits and beautiful flowers are the order of the day.

Why not think of entering one or more of the above classes or just take a winter break by visiting the show?

The show schedule and entry



President: Lynda Haddon • 613-267-6754 • haddon@istar.ca

Secretary: Pam Pratt

Newsletter: Pam Pratt, Irene Hofmann

forms are available on-line at www.gardenontario.org or www.successfulgardeningshow.ca. More information can also be obtained by calling 416-512-7777.

Junior Gardener Program

The Perth Hort Society's Junior Gardener Program will be starting up again in April. This is a very popular 6-week program with our local schools and we need your help in providing cuttings of houseplants rooted in small pots. These are given to our young participants to look after for the duration of the program.

In order to have healthy plants for the children to look after, we need you to start the cuttings now so they can root well and be planted by April.

If you don't have containers or soil, then bring them to the March meeting and Janet can pot them.

Please also consider saving plastic strawberry containers with lids and any ceramic bowls you may have for our container garden portion of the program. Bring them to the March or April meetings.

We are always happy to have new volunteers for this program. It is a 1½ hour commitment, once a week, for six weeks. Please see Janet Cain or Kathy Allen if this activity interests you. The children are interested, fun and ask the darndest questions!!

Photographic Competition 2011

While Christmas 2011 seems far away, snowy scenes are not. One of the categories of our annual photo competition, held at the Christmas Social every year, is "Winter Wonderland". Now is the time to get out your cameras and take some pictures to enter into this category at next December's Social. After a few recent snowfalls, there are many opportunities to snag a first prize ribbon for your favourite photo.

All the categories of the photographic competition for 2011 can be found in your new yearbook.

David Archer, co-ordinator of our photographic competition, encourages all photographers to enter the District 2 and OHA Competitions as well. Entries can be found on their individual websites.

Volunteers Needed!

Please consider volunteering for the Perth Hort Society. We need you for everything from baking, telephoning other volunteers and planting the Flag Garden, to helping with our annual Plant Sale.

You can determine the amount of time you have to give to making our society better and you will meet

new people and make new friends.

Fill out the Volunteer Form on the back of this newsletter or on our website (www.perthhort.society.com) or contact Kathy Allen, Volunteer Co-ordinator with your name and phone number.

Peterborough Garden Show

The Peterborough Horticultural Society holds a Garden Show each year and this year it will be April 8 - 10. There more than 150 vendors and exhibitors with displays, floral arrangements, demonstrations and floral competitions. Last year over 8,000 attended the show and they expect the same turnout this year. (I wonder why we haven't heard of this before - sounds like Canada Blooms!)

We are willing to conduct a trip but would have to take private cars as buses are way out of our price range. The show is Friday 6 to 9 p.m., Saturday 10 - 6 p.m., and Sunday 1 to 4 p.m. The entry fee is \$6.00.

If you are interested in going we can pack our cars with at least 4 members. Contact me in person, at claymargo@storm.ca or 613-256-5474 and we will see if enough people are interested to make a trip worthwhile. It would likely take about two hours to Peterborough and I favour Saturday. We could brown-bag lunch when we get there and then tour all afternoon and leave at 5 p.m. and maybe stop for a bite on the way home. *Margo Fulford*

Canada Blooms 2011

A special 15th Anniversary awaits guests attending Canada Blooms 2011. Experience the first Breath of Spring at Canada Blooms: The Flower & Garden Festival, March 15-20, 2011 at the Direct Energy Centre, Exhibition Place, Toronto.

Spectacular features await you including the all new "JUNO Rocks" Gardens honouring the 40th Anniversary of the Canadian JUNO Music Awards with five (5) feature gardens inspired by JUNO Award Winners – Sarah Harmer, Ben Heppner, Homage to Oscar Peterson, Carolyn Dawn Johnson and more and the new Twinings Tea Garden where guests can relax and enjoy the tempo of Canada's largest Flower Show.

Stimulate your Musical Senses in spectacular feature gardens created by Canada's top designers and landscape architects. Explore more than six acres of stunning creative gardens in a dazzling display of colour, texture and fragrance designed by Canada's best landscaping talents.

Meet and speak with the stars of the gardening and horticultural world while enjoying over 200

hours of free lectures, gardening demonstrations and talks where local, national and international experts share their wealth of knowledge and passion for horticulture.

This year's edition is the largest in history and promises to be lots of fun. Ticket prices range from \$18 for adults, \$16 for seniors to many other special offers. Look at the website www.canadablooms.com for all the latest information. Speakers and workshops, accommodation suggestions and tours are easily accessed on a visually beautiful website.

In addition to workshops and free lectures there will be a Master Gardeners Sit Down Sunday on March 20 from 12-3 p.m., which will be a one-on-one session with a Master Gardener. You can bring your pictures, your plant problems and they will help you plan your garden for spring, summer or fall. If you would rather shop, then Canada Blooms will have over 100,000 square feet of green thumb shopping.

Whatever your preferences Canada Blooms 2011 sounds like a fun getaway from winter and a great prelude to spring.

Orchids! Orchids! Orchids!

The Ottawa Orchid Society membership cordially invites you to our 30th annual show, April 23 and 24.

Orchidophilia is one of the largest orchid shows in Eastern Canada with over 600 different orchids from around the world with an International panel of judges awarding ribbons and trophies.

The sales area has more than 23 dealers including international orchid breeders offering a range of outstanding plants and supplies. Expert advice is available at the "Orchid Care" table on orchid growing and suggested remedies for your orchid's ailments.

One of Ottawa's premier flower events is located in the Nepean Sportsplex which is easily accessible from Hwy 416.

Visit our website for show location and details at www.ottawaorchidsociety.com.

The Vanishing Bees

As tenders of the soil in our gardens, we are acutely aware of the vital role played by pollinators in providing the colourful fruits of our labour. At a recent screening of "The Vanishing Bees" by the Lanark Beekeepers' Association, we learned about the precarious situation that our bees are living in. The emergence of Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD) has threatened the survival of bee populations throughout North America and is having an impact on our ability to grow our food.

The pollination of many fruit and vegetable crops in North America and Europe has been commercialized. Beekeepers are responsible for providing hives of bees to pollinate crops throughout the continent. Bees are trucked to California to pollinate the almond crop, to the northeastern states to fertilize the berry crops and back to Florida for the citrus crops. The bees are provided with food and water on their journey as they could spend upwards of 10 days travelling between pollination areas. Once the bees arrive in their location, they are unloaded at bee brokerage farms where they can be distributed to the farms that have booked their services. This pattern of movement has been repeated for decades with hives of bees moving back and forth across the continent to pollinate fruit and vegetable crops.

Recently, a mysterious and disturbing phenomenon has emerged that is threatening this relationship. Entire hives of bees are being emptied out without a trace of the missing bees. Research by local farmers in Florida and California in conjunction with a French scientist has started to link the problem to the spread of monoculture agriculture. Monoculture farming is the practice of growing large amounts of a single crop. This practice has proven to be economically beneficial to the farmers and processors but it creates zones where nectar is only available for a couple of months. These zones cannot support local bee populations as they do not have a year-round supply of food. Other potential theories include the combined long-term impact of pesticide usage, treated seeds and depleted soils on the bees' ability to forage and pollinate. This theory is given credence by the fact that studies have shown that when beekeepers have moved their hives to organic farms that honeybees are able to return to normal activity levels. Noted food commentators, Michael Pollan and Wendell Berry have questioned the long-term sustainability of monocropping practices and they view its increase as a serious threat to future food production.

Phil Laflamme, Lanark County beekeeper and bee breeder, in the after-movie discussion noted that the most serious issue facing Canadian beekeepers is dealing with cold winters and varroa mites. Canada has restricted border access to prevent new diseases from coming into the country. The spread of Roundup Ready soybeans and corn is creating vast monocultures which raises alarms over the potential for Canada to experience its own Colony Collapse Disorder. Creating healthy, pesticide-free areas for native bee populations is one of the easiest ways for gardeners to help out. The security of our fruit and vegetable crops depends upon preserving the free pollination services offered by bees. Our long-term

ability to feed ourselves is linked to maintaining and strengthening the relationship between human and bees.

*By Phyllis James,
member of P&DHS and The Perth Farmers Market*

Queen bumblebees start new colonies each spring

Unlike the colonies of the European honeybee (*Apis mellifera*) which endure from year to year, a bumblebee colony is started new each spring by a single, fertile queen bumblebee. A hibernating queen is signaled from her underground bunker by the longer and warmer days of early spring. Once she finds a suitable underground home for her new colony – abandoned rodent tunnels are ideal – she lays about one dozen eggs in a shallow bowl that she has constructed from wax and stocked with a ball of pollen to feed the larvae once they hatch.

The worker bumblebees that result are all females, and perform various tasks that include helping the queen with brood care, gathering pollen to feed new larvae, guarding the nest from insect intruders, and expanding the size of the nest to accommodate the hundreds of bees that may accumulate over the course of a summer.

As fall nears and the life of the colony is winding down, the queen slows her production of new worker bees and instead produces males and new queens. Soon, these new queens emerge from their cocoons to mate with the waiting males. The newly fertile queens then leave the nest to seek shelter in underground bunkers for the winter. In spring, each queen will begin the process again.

Jaret Daniels, Fine Gardening July/August 1999

A Gardener's Second Best Friend

A rain barrel is a gardener's second best friend. It is an extremely easy, low tech, low cost way to collect water that is so vital to your plants.

If you live on a town water supply, you have to pay for every ounce of water that comes from your tap. In drought conditions, many towns will impose a watering ban that prevents you from keeping your plants hydrated, often when they need it the most. Towns often put additives such as chlorine or fluoride in their water supply that your plants do not like. In the country, your well pump burns a lot of electricity, usually not at the off-peak hourly rate. Lanark County well water is normally very hard and when it comes

directly from deep in the ground, it is very cold, something else your tender plants do not like.

On the other hand, a rain barrel will lower your water bills and save you money. It helps reduce the demand on the local water supply and reduce water runoff. In fact, during the peak summer months a rain barrel can collect about 1,300 gallons of water, depending on where you live. Rain barrels capture and keep water that can be used later. It is an efficient way to use a free resource. They help reduce erosion, storm water flow, pollution and flooding. Rain water is naturally soft and oxygenated and more acidic than tap water. It doesn't have any chlorine, calcium or lime.

The Perth and District Horticultural Society and Lanark County Master Gardeners are offering rain barrels for sale at an outstanding price – \$55 for Horticultural Society members and \$60 for everyone else, tax included. To order online, visit www.rainbarrel.ca/lanark, use the order form in the newsletter or call 613-283-1032.

Oh yes, in case you are wondering, I still believe that a Gardener's best friend is compost.

By Dale Odorizzi

Lanark Rain Barrel Sale

sponsored by

Perth Horticultural Society

&

Lanark County Master Gardeners

April 30, 2011

10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

At Rockwall Gardens



These rain barrels hold approximately 220 litres and come fully equipped with a leaf and mosquito filter basket, an overflow adaptor to connect barrels in series, 1.2m of overflow hose and a spigot.

\$55.00 each for Horticultural Society Members
\$60 for everyone else, taxes included

See order form on next page

PERTH AND DISTRICT HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY
VOLUNTEER APPLICATION FORM

Your PDHS needs your help! Not only do you help yourself by helping us to create a vibrant and interesting horticultural society but our programs and projects are a great way to meet new people, have fun and broaden your own horizons. You never know when an accidental meeting with someone can change your life.

Why not get involved today?

Bring us your ideas, offer us your knowledge and skills (we all have some) and help beautify and educate your community. You can volunteer one hour, one day, one week, the whole year through – the opportunities cover all possibilities.

Please fill out the information below and give to Kathy Allen, Volunteer Coordinator or Pam Pratt, Secretary, or any other PDHS Board Member. Better yet fill out the form on-line and send it to

volunteer@perthhortsociety.com

Feel free to ask about the time commitment for anything that interests you.

Your input is vital to making our Society a success!

Name: _____

Telephone: _____ E-mail (if available) _____

Please note: Your personal information is for PDHS business only and will not be shared with any outside agency or business.

Indicate your interests below or suggest any others you may like:

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Telephone Committee | <input type="checkbox"/> Junior Gardeners | <input type="checkbox"/> Baking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Help with Christmas Social | <input type="checkbox"/> Plant Sale and Exchange | <input type="checkbox"/> Trim Christmas Tree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Plant Floating Gardens | <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter | <input type="checkbox"/> Photography |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Plant, maintain, clean-up of Community Gardens | | |

Suggest an area you are interested in that isn't listed:

Volunteer by time commitment only: Amount of time available _____

Thank you all.

Rain Barrel Order Form

Reserve a barrel now: <http://www.rainbarrel.ca/lanark/>

You can pay online by credit or debit card. Or you can order online and pay in CASH on pickup day.

Or call 613-283-1032 if you wish to prepay by cheque or have a volunteer assist you with making an online purchase.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Number of barrels: _____ Colours: gray terracotta black

Paid by: cash or cheque Total: _____

Mail Order Form to Dale Odorizzi RR # 4 Perth Ont K7H 3C6 Or give to David Archer, Barb Smith, Carol Kenward

Pick-up of rain barrels: April 30, 2011, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. at Rockwall Gardens