

January 2015 Newsletter



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

Winter:

*There is a privacy about it which no other season gives you ...
In spring, summer and fall people sort of have an open season on
each other: only in the winter, in the country, can you have longer,
quiet stretches when you can savour belonging to yourself."*

- Ruth Stout



Upcoming Meetings

The planned speaker for the **February 10** meeting is **Trish Thomson** who will be informing us about "Clean Air Plants."

On **March 10**, **Alison Shannon** will be speaking about "Vegetables Old and New."

Junior Gardener Program Prepares for 2015 Season

As the new year 2015 is upon us, we are in preparation for another successful Junior Gardener Program; coordinated this year by Nancy Wiseman & Robin McIntosh. (with Janet Cain's expertise close by!)

All of you with green thumbs are needed to start cuttings of your house plants for the year's program as soon as possible. Start snipping all of your plants & put them in some water now. Once your cuttings have roots, pot them up or bring them to one of our meetings, where Nancy or Robin will arrange to have them potted for you. We only have two more meetings before the program starts and we would like to have

some nice, healthy plants for our Plant Libraries.

Again we will be looking for supplies; all washed please!): Styrofoam meat trays, large yogurt containers and tuna cans. Bring them to our next two meetings.

It would be appreciated if you donated your Canadian Tire money again this year as it helps defray the expenses. Everyone has been very generous in the past!

Volunteer teachers and helpers are always welcome and needed. If you think you would enjoy helping students become gardeners please let us know. No experience needed! It requires a six-week commitment of one scheduled hour per week at a designated elementary school in our district.

If you would like to make a personal donation towards our Junior Gardener Program – Yes! & Thank You!

We have a wonderful supportive Society for our Junior Gardener Program; Thank you and looking forward to another successful program for 2015!

Nancy Wiseman –
newfinances@hotmail.com
Robin McIntosh –
robinandsteve1@gmail.com



President: Jane Law • **Newsletter:** Irene Hofmann

2015 PDHS Executive

- Jane Law - President
- Madeline Archer - Past President/Program
- Barbara Smith - Treasurer
- David Archer - Director at Large
- Kevin Long - Director at Large/Library
- Carolle Anne Armour - Director at Large
- Gerda van Wingerden - Director at Large/Greeter/Share The Wealth
- Janette Wood - Director at Large/ Flower Show Steward

Keep Those Old Yoga Mats

Finished with your yoga mat? They can be recycled in several ways:

1. Fold and use for kneeling when planting or weeding.
2. Place between rows of vegetable garden to help keep the weeds down.
3. Cut and place on icy steps for better grip, and for the dog to climb the stairs.
4. They make good cold protection for plants, e.g. roses, rhododendrons.
5. If you have a greenhouse, place on the floor to cushion your legs for time spent standing and tending to your plants.

Submitted by Lynda Haddon

District 2

2015 Photo Competition

by Linda Bartlett

The PDHS is not having a photo competition this year, but you can submit your best garden shots for the D2 competition. The categories and rules are as follows:

- "Only A Bloom or Two" - a single bloom or two blooms of same flower
- "Stop Bugging Me" - plants and insects
- "Caught In The Rain" - a flower, leaf or garden vegetable after a rain shower
- "So Well Contained" - container garden (one or more containers)

- "Bridging the Gap" - a bridge, arbor or gate featured in a garden
 - "Small Wonders" - a child or pet in a garden
 - "A Pathway in Colour" - a path or roadway featuring our glorious fall colours
 - "The Recycled Garden" - a repurposed item incorporated in the garden
 - "Let's Smell the Roses" - a close-up of a single rose
 - "Nature's Bounty" - your interpretation
- The co-ordinator for the 2015 photo competition is Linda Bartlett.

Rules:

Exhibitors must be a member of a Horticultural Society within District 2.

Entries will be accepted in digital format or print format. They can be mailed to Linda Bartlett, 1060 Ford Road, Perth, Ontario K7H 3C3. Digital photos will also be accepted by email as attachments (one photo per email) to district2photos@gmail.com – Subject line: D2 Photo Competition. Please provide entries in .jpg format with as high a resolution as possible (i.e. do not reduce the size of the file provided from your camera). Photos may be adjusted for lighting and colour balance, but should not be enhanced by adding or eliminating photo elements. Only one entry per exhibitor per class. The same image may be entered only once.

Take care to ensure photos are entered into the correct class so they do not get disqualified.

Identification of entries: Please name your digital entries with the following format: YourName_SocietyName_Class_Number e.g.: `lindabartlett_perth_class1` or `brendasmith_nepean_class3`

Please submit your entries to Linda Bartlett by **March 31, 2015**. If you wish to have your media (CD/DVD, memory stick) or photos returned to you, please enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Better yet, when you take that great photo, why not email it to the coordinator right away. Your photos will be stored in a D2 Photo 2015 folder under your own personal name and entered into the competition.

Photos will be projected in a slideshow format at the D2 AGM. Prizes will be awarded at the D2 AGM in Petawawa on April 25, 2015.

Prizes for each class (if warranted) 1st: \$3.00, 2nd: \$2.00, 3rd: \$1.00. Best in Competition - \$5.00.

Judging Points Scale: Horticultural Value 40%, Photographic Value 40% and Appearance &

Impact 20%.

The Judge's decision is final.

Cleaning Bird Feeders And Other January Gardening Tips

Charlie Nardozi, Horticulturist

Cleaning bird feeders, giving your houseplants proper water, and checking your inventory of seeds and supplies are some of the gardening activities for this month.

It's midwinter, and birds have been visiting your feeder for months. However, unless you've been cleaning your feeder regularly, it could be making some of these wild birds sick. To minimize the spread of disease, empty and disinfect the feeder monthly with a solution of one part bleach to nine parts water. Clean droppings off the perching area and make sure your bird food isn't mouldy. If you don't like to use bleach, a household disinfectant cleaning product such as Lysol works too, diluted half with water. Allow to soak for 15 minutes, then rinse thoroughly.

If your indoor fig (*Ficus*) tree is starting to drop leaves, it may be due to your watering schedule. This includes the common Benjamin fig and rubber plant. Don't over water and don't let the plant stand in a saucer of water for an extended length of time or its roots may be damaged. On the other hand, don't let soil dry out completely either. Try to keep the soil evenly moist, watering thoroughly and then allowing the excess water to drain. Wait until the soil dries out slightly to the touch before watering again.

If your houseplants are growing tall and leggy, they probably need some supplemental light. Use lights to help compensate for short days. You can use fluorescent tubes, or most any spot lamp. Best are those listed as "full spectrum" or "daylight" or similar wording. I like to use light fixtures that clamp onto a bookcase or similar extending surface. Place the lights 4 to 6 inches above the tops of the plants, and keep them on for about 16 hours a day using a timer available at hardware or home stores.

African violets make great houseplants and will flower in winter if given supplemental light as noted above for leggy houseplants. To propagate new plants, take a leaf cutting, dip

the cut end in a rooting hormone powder, and stick the cutting in a pot filled with vermiculite or sand. Cover the pot with a perforated clear plastic bag and keep the soil moist. In a few weeks you'll have new plants.

It's time to dust off the seed-starting equipment. Take inventory of trays, pots, and six-packs from past years and discard any that are cracked. Reduce risk of disease by soaking them in a solution of 10 percent bleach and water, or half-strength household disinfectant, then air dry.

Do a germination test on stored seeds to see how viable they are. Place 10 or 20 seeds between two sheets of moist paper towel and tuck into a loosely tied plastic bag. Place in a warm area, and check every few days. If germination is less than 80 percent, consider purchasing new seeds of that crop.

Winter is the time you'll get seed and plant catalogues in the mail if already on lists, or look for such in magazines and online to order. Looking through these, and through websites online, is a great way to spend many hours during our short winter days and long cold nights. Look for new introductions but, as for any plants, make sure they'll be hardy in your area unless annuals. Most of these sources discuss hardiness and show the hardiness zone map, which you also can find online (www.planthardiness.ars.usda.gov).

(Charlie Nardozi is a nationally known horticulturist, author, gardening consultant, and garden coach; CharlieNardozi.com).

(Ed. note: The Canadian hardiness zone maps can be found at <http://www.planthardiness.gc.ca/>)

Garden Trends For 2015

*Dr. Leonard Perry, Extension Professor
University of Vermont*

Health, nature, and living outdoors are some of the key gardening trends nationwide for this coming year. Each year, the Garden Media Group (www.gardenmediagroup.com) – a marketing firm for the home and garden industry – identifies key trends for the coming season. For 2015 they've pegged nine of these, which you'll no doubt see reflected in products, plants, and advertisements. These relate to a desire in many consumers to "increase their overall well-being,

lead a sustainable lifestyle and make a positive impact on their communities and the planet.”

New consumers: More new gardeners will come from the Millennials (those that follow Gen Xers, roughly those born in the 1980s and 1990s). Millennials are a larger group than the Baby Boomers, comprising about 1/4 of the U.S. population, and spend about four times more on gardening than the national average.

Health: According to the trends report, health is a concern not just for individuals. “People aren’t just gardening for beauty, they are gardening to nourish their communities, the environment, and their own wellbeing.” Edible plants, such as berries, will remain strong. Included in popular products will be those environmentally friendly and safe for pets and children. People will be concerned with the effect of products on birds and bees. Plants will be seen as good for cleansing air, making oxygen, and overall wellness. More will learn that trees absorb 1/5 of carbon emissions, reduce electricity consumption, and increase mental health.

Colour: Look for “pops of exploding colour like pink and teal.” Bubblegum petunia in turquoise planters are an example. Other popular colours should include rustic, natural palettes, light pastels, and worn-in hues such as denim.

Garden-tainment: This means “the party is moving outside” as people enhance outdoor living spaces and personalize them, using them as an extension of indoor living spaces. Look for ready-to-go plants for instant effect in such spaces, grilling and cooking outdoors, and all manner of containers. The majority of younger consumers (Millenials and GenX) rated such outdoor rooms as important or very important.

Compact yet bold: Compact plants and containers with bold plants to make a quick statement will be popular. Larger decorative containers will be seen more. Tiny succulents, being attractive and easy to grow, will remain popular.

Portable gardening: This caters to an increasingly mobile audience. The word “NOwners” has been coined to refer to “those who prize freedom over home ownership” (or perhaps just rent or can’t afford to own a home). Look for more lightweight and adaptable planters with wheels, handles, and moving parts that make them both decorative and mobile.

Neighbourhood rebels: You probably won’t see this trend as much in rural areas, as it refers to residents of neighbourhoods and planned communities rebelling against ordinances that limit their freedom. It’s estimated that over 63 millions Americans lived in over 323,000 such urban communities. These folks are transforming neighbourhoods into “agri-hoods” with urban chickens, bee keeping, clotheslines, food gardens, and landscapes without lawns.

Garden naturally: Increasingly you may see this landscape style which could be termed “anything goes”. It is a casual style, of really no formal style, inspired by the natural landscape. Look for more “meadows and natural habitats using native plants to increase diversity, balance, and ecosystems.” Being adapted to local climates, native plants need less water and fertilizer and pampering, and support healthier ecosystems (like bugs for birds to eat—a main part of their diet).

Growing Houseplants Without Soil

A simple way to fill your house with leafy green plants is to cut a stem from a plant and stick it in a container of water, where the cutting will develop its own root system. There are several plants that readily adapt to life in the water and they include arrowhead vine, Chinese evergreen, dracaena, dumbcane, ivy and philodendron. The main advantage of growing plants in water is ease of maintenance. Once you’ve placed your cutting in water, it needs little attention. The water should be changed weekly and a water-soluble fertilizer should be added to the water about once a month. Generally, plants that have rooted in water will not grow well if they are transplanted into soil, so they should be kept in water even when they mature. For an attractive display, use coloured bottles or clear bottles with coloured pebbles added.

How can those who do not garden, who have no lot in the great fraternity of those who watch the changing year as it affects the earth and its growth, how can they keep warm their hearts in winter?”

- Francis King