

# June 2015 Newsletter

"I wonder what it would be like to live in a world where it was always June."

- L. M. Montgomery



## From the President's Pen

### We are so fortunate for our volunteers

Since joining the executive of the Perth and District Horticultural Society, it has really opened my eyes to the amount of volunteers who work tirelessly in the background to make our society a successful entity. So I would like to acknowledge this dedication by saying thank you to the executive who support me throughout my tenor as president. Let us not forget those who help with our communications and web maintenance, the junior gardener program, the plant sale, and past presidents who offer guidance and new ideas. We are truly fortunate to have such passionate helpers who believe in our credo of encouraging and promoting horticultural activities in the town and district of Perth.

I think one of the most rewarding experiences I have seen since joining the society was recently

at our plant sale where junior gardeners gleefully came to one of our members excited and talking so quickly they could hardly wait to tell her what they had purchased. They were rushing home to plant their newest acquisitions. Delightful, what a lovely moment! We all hold in our being a legacy for the next generation. Our younger members will be the next to make our society work. So let us all work together for the common good forging a path of experimentation while remembering our history.

As we take a little break for the summer months to focus on our own gardens let us not forget to ask; what can I do to make our gatherings more meaningful and interesting? Some of you have offered great suggestions and we are listening, so keep on communicating with us.

Have a safe and happy summer.

*Jane Law*



### Upcoming Meetings

After the summer break and the garden tours, our September 8 meeting will feature Dave Nor-

lock speaking on Wildflowers of the Arctic.

On October 13 the planned topic is Passion for Peonies with Lana Taylor-Mills.



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Lanark Orchid

Renals

Perth & District  
Horticultural  
Society

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[www.gardenontario.org](http://www.gardenontario.org)

District #2 of the  
Ontario Horticultural  
Association

## Summer Garden Tours OF PDHS MEMBERS' GARDENS

These gardens are open to PDHS Members from 6:30-8:30 pm

- **July 14, 2015** **Pat Bertrim**  
317 Dufferin Road N, Perth
- **July 28, 2015** **Tineke Doornbosch and Dan Woods**, 422 Lakewood Road, Perth (BurgessWood)
- **Aug. 11, 2015** **Max and Janette Wood**, (organic vegetable gardens) 1380 Bathurst Con. 7, Perth (off of Harper Road, past Kiwi Gardens)

## Flower Show Results

It is always informative to see what various members share from their home and gardens in the Horticultural Specimen section and a pleasure to see what they create for the Design section. Thank you to the participants and judges for their hard work and support of the flower show.

### April:

Two participants in total in one class (due to a very cold late spring)

#### Section I: Horticultural Specimen

Class 3: Best potted foliage plant, named  
1st. Ruth Nelson • 2nd. Marie Amyot

### May:

Six participants in total in five classes

#### Section I: Horticultural Specimen

Class 1: Tulip--3 stems with leaves attached

1st. Barbara Smith

Class 2: Flowering Branch--no more than 24" above table

1st. Robin McIntosh • 2nd. Nancy Wiseman

• 3rd. Barbara Smith

Class 5: Any other spring bloom from your garden--named

1st. Barbara Smith • 2nd. Barbara Smith • 3rd.

Nancy Wiseman

#### Section II: Design

Class 8: "Haggart Island Dam"--a waterviewing design

1st. Barbara Smith • 2nd. Linda Bartlett • 3rd. Janet Cain

Class 9: "Tom Thumb"--a miniature design

1st. Janet Cain • 2nd. Linda Bartlett • 3rd. Nancy Wiseman

Mary Dixon judged in April and Paul Pospisil

judged in May. Our member judges are very helpful in explaining why one entry wins over another; they become educators for the newer participants.

## Junior Gardener Program

Our Junior Gardener Program 2015 has wrapped up once again as a great success with nearly 175 students with 8 classes in 6 local elementary schools including the addition of Glen Tay School. The students thrive on this program and are excited every week for something new to learn and to use their creative side in a weekly activity: be it a floral arrangement or a succulent dish garden. This program is very rewarding to both the students and to all the volunteers who participate in teaching our new Junior Gardeners!

We are very lucky to receive donations from our generous "Community Sponsors" – Thank You to: **Canadian Tire, Home Hardware, Brownlee's Metro, Brown Shoe Company, Barnabe's YIG, Apropos, Sylvia's Plant Place, Images, The Table, Allyn Chapman, Bea Gibson, PDHS Master Gardeners and PDHS.**

### Thank You never end towards making this program succeed:

- Janet Cain – My Mentor - Your knowledge, organization and leadership showed us new coordinators how this program can run so smoothly
- Robin McIntosh – My Co-coordinator – Thank you for being a great partner
- Barb Michie – Your dedication to Seedy Sunday and donating all the proceeds \$399.00
- Linda Bartlett, Kathy Allen, Karen Kristine and Ed Chenard for your help in getting supplies needed
- David Archer, Ed Roberts, Janet Cain, Linda Bartlett, Kathy Allen, Karen Kristine, Phyllis James and Ed Chenard for being our Leaders in the classrooms teaching all your gardening knowledge
- Heather Bowstead-Ford, Suzanne Bullock, Robin McIntosh, Tara Lapointe, Catherine Gallipeau, Cynthia Thompson, Hilary Hodgins, Barb Michie, Rene Saumur, Mary Dixon, Aileen Conboy and Tineke Doornbosch – Our classroom volunteers! Your helping hands are extremely needed and appreciated.

Thank you to all the participating schools and the classroom teachers; your dedication is essential. Thanks as well to all our members who collected supplies needed for the program!

Thank you, everyone, for your participation, commitment and enthusiasm in making this program succeed!

Sincerely,

Nancy Wiseman  
2015 Junior Gardener Program Coordinator

## Monthly Financial Statement

April 30, 2015

**Ledger Balance April 1, 2015** **\$4,310.38**

### Receipts -

Misc. Donation Gen. Fund	\$ 62.00
Youth Activities	402.25
Membership	299.00
OHA Conf/meetings	20.00
Yearbook	<u>50.00</u>

**\$ 833.25**

### Expenses -

Youth Activities	\$ 399.64
Membership	20.00
Community Projects	21.46
OHA Conf/meetings	80.00
Meeting Expenses	24.86
Speakers	75.00
Social	11.76
OHA Dues/Ins	76.50
Miscellaneous	<u>2.50</u>

**\$ 711.72**

**Ledger Balance April 30, 2015** **\$4,431.91**

Reserve fund -

GIC matures July 18, 2016	- \$2,553.92
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## Attracting A Beneficial Army To My Garden

Nancy MacDonald,  
Master Gardener of Ottawa-Carleton

The gardening season of 2014 was a season of discovery for me. Most often, my excitement in the garden revolves around what is blooming now, what is ready to eat and what combination of plants is really striking. I was always excited by the presence of bees and butterflies and less excited examining the effects of slugs and Japanese beetles. When I say season of discovery, in 2014, I became fascinated with the bugs populating my garden. I wanted to

identify them and learn more about them. Gardeners' angst is often due to bad bugs or pests we find in our gardens. What about good bugs or Beneficials? In this article, a Beneficial is one that either feeds on garden pests (predator) or deposits eggs (parasitoid) in the bodies of garden pests where larvae, as it matures, will consume its host.

To learn more, I referenced Garden Bugs of Ontario (Lone Pine, 2008), enjoyed reading Jessica Walliser's 2014 Attracting Beneficial Bugs to Your Garden from the Ottawa Public Library and reviewed online resources at the Canadian Wildlife Federation. I took my camera frequently to the garden and thus I was able to photograph the Great Golden Digger Wasp (*Sphex ichneumonius*) on my *Asclepias* (milkweed). This wonderful beneficial is a parasitoid.

Now that I was looking, I found a mother lode of Beneficials such as damselflies, dragonflies (damers), black ichneumonid parasitoid wasps, ground beetles, ladybugs, soldier beetles, spiders, syrphid and tachinid flies. I still found pests but being a 'glass half full' optimist, I was captivated by the Beneficials thriving in my suburban garden. It was important to recognize Beneficials in their life stages and ensure that my garden activities and plants were complementary. We instantly recognize lady bugs but would we recognize that in their larvae stage they resemble a small alligator with black bristles!

### How to attract Beneficials

- Stop using any chemical control as both organic and inorganic can harm Beneficials.
- Provide a source of water such as a shallow dish with stones to provide a landing area.
- Provide shelter such as planted ground cover, mulch, leaf litter and a pile of branches.
- Plant a diversity of plants to provide bloom and nourishment from spring to fall.

If I do this, what Beneficials will come and what will they do in my garden?

Your garden requires plants to provide nourishment for these Beneficials. You may have noticed that farmers and vegetable growers often plant an insectary border around their crops to attract Beneficials to help control plant pests. We can do the same in our gardens. It does not have to be formal but rather these plants can become part of our flower and vegetable gardens. If Beneficials leave your garden to find nutrition,

they may not return. Ensuring your garden is in bloom from spring to fall with plants which attract Beneficials is a manageable pest strategy. Plant different flower shapes for Beneficials with varying mouthparts to access nectar and pollen. We observe how some bees can open and burrow deep into a flower. However, not all Beneficials have this ability and some need easier accessibility.

In summary, attracting predatory and parasitic Beneficials to your garden is an excellent pest management strategy. Will you occasionally need a sharp spray of water to knock down a pest population or hand pick pests to decrease their population? Yes, but give your beneficial army a chance to assist in pest control. Get out the magnifying instruments and examine visitors to identify and cheer on the presence of Beneficials. Understand that it really is a bug eat bug world! Your garden will become joyfully alive with the activity of Beneficials and you will be supporting a unique eco-system

Visit us at [www.lanarkmg.blogspot.com](http://www.lanarkmg.blogspot.com) and Plan to attend our all-day seminar *Insects in Your Garden* on October 3 in Carleton Place.

## Growing Eggplant

By Dale Odorizzi,  
Lanark County Master Gardeners

Eggplant is the more exotic member of the Nightshade (Solanaceae) family. The ancient ancestors of eggplant grew wild in India and were first cultivated in China in the 5<sup>th</sup> Century BC. It was introduced to Africa before the Middle Ages and then to Italy in the 14<sup>th</sup> Century. It has a long rich history but was not always highly regarded. In fact many people still turn their noses up at a dish containing this beautiful berry—Yes, botanically, eggplant is classified as a berry. Eggplant in the early days held the reputation as causing insanity, leprosy and cancer, all untrue. The plant itself is very beautiful and even if you do not love eggplant, it can be grown as an ornamental.

Eggplant is a delicate, tropical perennial cultivated in our area as a tender or half hardy annual. Depending on the climate, it grows from 40-150 cm tall with large lobed leaves. In our climate, it thrives in a sunny location in a rich soil and warm temperature of 21°-30°C and average

moisture. Eggplant needs a long growing season so start your seeds 8-10 weeks before planting out and transplant out after all danger of frost has passed and the soil is thoroughly warm—early June. Space 45-60 cm X 60-90 cm. Keep in mind this is a very tender annual and must be well protected if the temperature dips close to 0°C. It is a heavy feeder.

Warm to hot weather throughout the season is necessary for good production. Cold temperatures stop plant and root growth, reducing plant vigor and yields. Use hot caps or cloches to protect the plants from cold condition. Black plastic mulch with a soaker hose underneath can greatly increase yield and hasten maturity. When the plants are 15cm high, pinch back the growing tip to encourage branching.

Eggplants or Aubergines, as our friends in the U.K. call them, come in a number of forms. The kind we see most often at grocery stores is the large, dark purple pear shaped (simply called Eggplant). It has a hefty feel but the larger it gets, the less flavorful it becomes. There is also a smaller version of the pear shaped fruit that is called Italian or baby eggplant. These have a more intense flavour and a more delicate skin. Another type is the Japanese Eggplant. They are smaller and longer, almost cucumber shaped and have a thin delicate skin. They tend to be a lighter purple or even striped. White skinned eggplant are now available. They also have a delicate flavour.

Cover plants with floating row covers until they start to flower. This will keep many of the problem insects away from them.

Pick fruits when immature, about two-thirds the maximum size, when skin is still very glossy with a uniformly deep purple colour. When the side of the fruit is pressed slightly with thumbnail and an indentation remains, the fruit is ripe. Long, slender Japanese eggplant may be ready to harvest from finger or hot dog size. Discard over-ripe fruit of dull colour with brown seeds. Mature fruit should not be left on the plant as this will reduce overall productivity. The fruit will store for about 7 days at temperature between 7-10°C.

Eggplants are susceptible to the same problems, pests and diseases as tomatoes, including flower drop and misshapen fruit due to extreme temperatures.