

# June 2016 Newsletter

*"Garden: One of a vast number of free outdoor restaurants operated by charity-minded amateurs in an effort to provide healthful, balanced meals for insects, birds and animals."*

- Henry Beard and Roy McKie, *Gardener's Dictionary*



## From the President's Pen

This is our last meeting until September 13, 2016 but we have two exciting summer visits planned. Richard Catchpaw opens his garden on July 19 at 454 Keays Road in Balderson. August 9, 2016 will see Noreen Tyers hosting a garden social event. Both visits will begin at 6:30 and close around 8:30 p.m. We are extremely grateful to both Richard and Noreen for opening up their gardens for all society members to see their outstanding works of art. I am sure we will be dazzled with the many plants and flowers in full display.

I would like to remind all of you that our Flower and Edible show will take place on August 6, 2016 at the Perth Legion. We will be hosting this event and it will really put our society in the limelight. It is also one of the sponsored events for the Perth 200th anniversary year. Further information will be published on various web sites.

I would also like to thank all those who volunteered at our annual plant sale held on May 21st at the Stewart Public School. We had a number of members come out on Friday and Saturday to help us with donations of plants and set up for the event. A special thank you to David

Archer who spearheaded this fundraising event.

We also had a number of volunteers take part in the junior gardener program again this year. We are so fortunate to have such dedicated people who really care for our youth. It always brings a warm feeling to me when I see the glee and excitement in the faces of our junior gardeners who come to our plant sale all ready to plant their own little perennial as soon as they can get home. A job well done!

An ongoing thank you to all those society members who come out every second Thursday to work at the four gardens within Perth. Without the passion of these volunteers, Perth would not have these beautiful areas within the town.

From a personal perspective, I have such fantastic support from my Executive, my communications specialists and my community gardens coordinator. I couldn't do this job without all your support and friendship. I really appreciate the help.

Lastly, my wish for all of you is to have a healthy and happy summer. Enjoy your friends and family while taking pleasure from the beauty which is all around us.

*Jane Law*



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District #2 of the  
Ontario Horticultural  
Association

## Upcoming

**August 6, 2016 - Flower & Edibles Show**  
At the Perth Legion

### Summer Garden Visits Of PDHS Members' Gardens

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

**July 19, 2016 - Richard Catchpaw**  
454 Keays Road, Balderson

**August 9, 2016 - Noreen Tyers**  
10 Victoria Street, Perth

## Junior Gardener Program 2016

Our Junior Gardener Program 2016 has wrapped up once again in mid-May as a great success with nearly 173 students with 8 classes in 6 local elementary schools run over a 6-week period. The students thrive on this program and are excited every week for something new to learn and be creative in a weekly activity: be it planting seeds, making their own succulent dish garden or arranging flowers for a Mother's Day gift. 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, Metro, Brown Shoe Company, Sweet Pea's Fresh Flowers, and Inter Alia Images Design. 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
- Karen Kristine – My co-coordinator – Thank you for being a great partner
- Barb Michie – Your dedication to Seedy Sunday and donating all the proceeds, over \$400, plus in addition to extra seed packages, donating succulents for the dish garden.
- Marie Amyot – For donating hens & chicks, sedum, and moss so generously.
- Linda Bartlett, Kathy Allen, Karen Kristine and Ed Chenard for your help in getting supplies needed,
- David Archer, Ed and Karen 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, Robin McIntosh, Tara Lapointe, Cynthia Thompson, 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,  
Robin McIntosh*

*2016 Junior Gardener Program Co-Coordinator*

## "That Makes Sense" Gardening Tips

- Weed after a rain and weeds are more likely to pull out with their roots intact and not break off at ground level to grow back later.
- When edging, changing the "push" foot after every 5-6 strokes makes it less likely to have a repetitive action injury, plus both legs get an equal workout.
- When digging, never jump on your shovel with both feet to push it further into the soil as there may be a hidden, underground rock. After all, this is Lanark County. When you jump on the shovel and it hits a rock, the knees take the brunt of the force of hitting the rock and injury of one or both knees could result.
- Don't water on a windy day or in the heat of the day, as much water is blown away and there is a higher rate of evaporation.
- Water first thing in the morning or last thing at night so the sun is not drying up the ground faster than plants can absorb the water. Evening is a great time to water because plants have all night to draw up the water.
- When planting trees or taller shrubs look up to ensure that as they grow, they will not interfere with wires.
- Familiarize yourself with the sun pattern over your gardens. In this way you will be planting the right plant (i.e. shade, full sun or part shade-part sun) in the most beneficial spot.

- Having two of your most favourite tools on hand ensures that time is not wasted looking for your one and only temporarily misplaced favourite tool.

*Submitted by Lynda Haddon*

## Ten Top Perennials To Please Pollinators

*Annie White, Research Assistant, and  
Leonard Perry, Horticulture Professor  
University of Vermont*

Many plants and pollinators have the kind of relationship we all look for in everyday life—one that is mutually beneficial. Pollinators help move pollen to fertilize flowers, and in return, the plant offers the insect a food reward of pollen or nectar or both. Female bees collect the protein-rich pollen from flowers and combine it with nectar to form a food product for their larvae. In addition to bees, other insects like butterflies and wasps visit flowers just to sip on nectar—a sugary energy source. Unbeknownst to them, they also help in a small way to move pollen from flower to flower.

The size, shape, color, and bloom time of flowering plants all influence what types of pollinating insects will visit, so planting a diversity of flowers is the best way to attract a diversity of pollinators. To help support more beneficial pollinators in your gardens and landscape, consider these ten native, and hardy species of perennial plants. All are listed to grow to at least USDA zone 4 (-20 to -30 degrees Fahrenheit average minimum temperature annually).

1. Wild Bergamot (*Monarda fistulosa*). This native perennial offers nectar and pollen to pollinators during its long mid-summer bloom period. Long-tongued bumblebees are the most frequent visitors to wild bergamot, but hawk moths and hummingbirds also visit to sip on the consistent nectar source.

2. Purple Coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*). This native perennial is also one of the most popular garden flowers. It features showy daisy-like flowers from mid- to late-summer. The large central cone of the coneflower is made up of hundreds of tiny flowers called disc florets. Bees and butterflies can be seen circling around the cone, visiting each floret to sip nectar or gather pollen. Only those cultivars (cultivated varieties)

that are selected from the species may be useful to pollinators. Many hybrids and double forms may not.

3. Culver's Root (*Veronicastrum virginicum*). The towering spikes of a Culver's root plant provides a nice vertical element in the garden. The tiny white flowers that cover these spikes are most frequented by bees, flies, and butterflies, but are also a favorite of other beneficial insects, including predatory wasps and parasitoids. The pale purple-flowered cultivar Lavender Towers has proven quite attractive to pollinators.

4. New England Aster (*Symphotrichum novae-angliae*). This is one of the last flowers to bloom in the fall, making it an essential food source for many pollinators. Because of its abundance of small, purple, daisy-like flowers, both honeybees and pre-hibernation bumblebee queens flock to this aster for the plentiful nectar and pollen. Asters are also the preferred nectar source for many butterflies and moths in the fall.

5. Spotted Joe Pye Weed (*Eutrochium maculatum*). This bold and statuesque native perennial attracts many bees and butterflies during its mid- to late-summer bloom. Most visitors are seeking out the abundant nectar found in the numerous tiny disc florets clustered on the large flower heads. Wasps, flies, and moths can also be observed visiting the flowers. While the spotted Joe Pye weed prefers wet to moist soils, Joe Pye weed (*Eutrochium purpureum*) is more tolerant of partial shade and drier soils.

6. Anise Hyssop (*Agastache foeniculum*). This and other wild hyssops provide long-lasting, nectar-rich summer blooms. This clump-forming perennial features tiny lavender to purple flowers densely packed along upright spikes. Honeybees and bumblebees are the most frequent visitors, both collecting pollen and feeding on nectar. Butterflies and moths also feed on the plant's nectar.

7. Wild Blue Indigo (*Baptisia australis*). Tall spikes covered in deep-purple flowers of this species bloom in late spring, attracting bumblebees and serving as a host plant for some moths and butterflies. Accessing the nectar inside the closed pea-like flowers is challenging for most pollinators, but the size and strength of bumblebees enables them to pry the flowers open and reach the nectar reward.

8. Marsh Milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*). Marsh milkweeds are rich in nectar and attract pollinators of all kinds with their highly fragrant

and showy pink flowers. Milkweeds are also the host plant for monarch butterflies. Marsh milkweed prefers medium to wet soils in full sun. An alternative for drier sites is the orange-flowered butterfly milkweed (*A. tuberosa*).

9. Beardtongue (*Penstemon digitalis*). Blooming in late spring, beardtongue's white tubular flowers are a favorite of small- and medium-sized native bees. Smaller bees like sweat bees and mason bees are well suited for accessing the flower's hidden nectar and pollen. Bumblebees, honeybees, and flies also visit beardtongue.

10. Sneezeweed (*Helenium autumnale*). Do not let this plant's misleading common name deter you: it really doesn't make you sneeze! It is a magnet for all insect pollinators late in the season. The bright-yellow daisy-like flowers bloom from late summer to early fall and are especially attractive to honeybees, bumblebees, and butterflies.

These 10 flowering plants are just a handful of the many tried-and-true native perennials that flourish in New England gardens, and are known to attract and support a variety of pollinators. If you are looking at other perennials or selections of these ten, try mainly native species, and perennials without double or exotic flower types. You can find more pollinator resources and recommendations, including design tips, online; for starters, please visit [pollinatorgardens.org](http://pollinatorgardens.org).

## I Love Onions

*Dale Odorizzi, Master Gardener of Lanark County*

It is difficult to think of a main course dinner at my house without thinking about onions and garlic. They are key ingredients in soups, sauces, salads and stir fries, and in virtually every variety of ethnic cuisine. These versatile vegetables are high in beneficial sulfur compounds, giving them their distinctive flavour and aroma. Onions and garlic belong to the *Allium* family, derived from the Greek word for garlic. Shallots, leeks and chives are also members of this family.

Onions have been cultivated for thousands of years and originated in the Near East and Central Asia. They come in a variety of colours and flavours:

- Yellow - Mild flavour and grows well in our region. These are the type typically found dried in our grocery stores. They dry well and keep well over the winter.

- Red - Have dark red skin and the white ring have a red edge around them. They are very attractive in salads or any cold dishes and do well when lightly cooked in a stir fry. Some Red varieties do not store well.

- White - Mild and sweet flavour. They are not recommended for long term storage.

- Spanish - Grow quite large and have a mild flavour. They are available in red or white.

- Pearl - Very small and valued for their sweet, delicate flavour. They can be creamed, roasted or glazed and are often pickled.

- Multiplier - Each bulb produces 5-8 green onions. You can harvest one at a time from the centre of the clump and leave the rest to grow. They never get too large. A few times, I have left one of these in the ground and found that after it matured, it started to shoot up a few more green onions.

- Scallions are thought to be a type of onion but in fact, they are simply immature plants of any bulbing onion, harvested before the bulb is fully formed. They are also called spring onions or green onions.

All onions need a long growing season to mature from seed. Most home gardeners prefer to plant onion sets. If growing onions from seed, start in early February. By planting time April/May, they will look like small grass blades. To simplify the planting process, start your seeds in cell packs with 2-3 seeds per cell. When spring rolls around, plant the whole cell. As the plants grow, you can use your extra onions as a garnish or green onion. Be sure to thin your seedlings to 10 cm to allow space to grow. When planting onion sets, set them out at 10 cm apart. For storage onions, harvest them when about 2/3 of the leaves have fallen over. Let them dry for a few days until the skin becomes papery and the stems have died back. Store in a dark cool area at about 2-5°C.

Garlic (*Allium sativum*), a native to Central Asia has the strongest flavour of all alliums. It has been historically prized for both its culinary and medicinal uses. It grows as bulbs made up of cloves. Garlic must be started in October so that it has time to grow and dry prior to winter storage. See the October 2014 Edible Garden Newsletter for planting and storage directions. If you have garlic left over in the spring, try planting it. You will be able to harvest "green garlic" a fresh spring taste and may eventually get bulbs. Use these bulbs first as they may not store well.