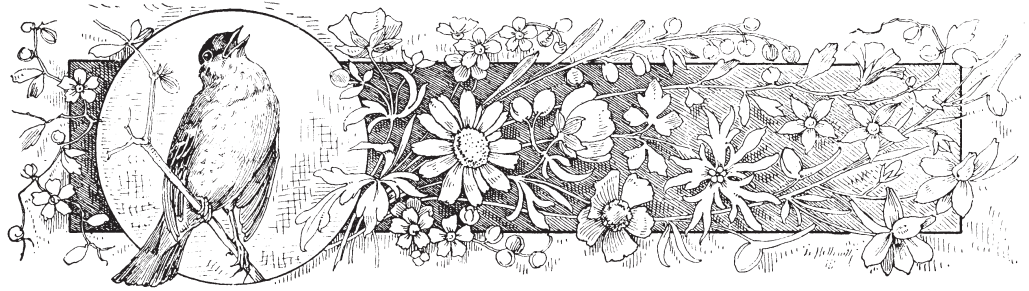


# May 2014 Newsletter



"Winter is many months of the year  
But now at last Maytime is here;  
And birds sing from a leafy screen  
In the trees and hedgerow freshly green;  
And the wood-anemone is out in the shade,  
With its blushing petals which too soon fade;  
Once more the bracken is unfurling there,  
And bluebells gently perfume the damp air."

- Veronica Ann Twells, Maytime



## Happy Birthday, Perth & District Hort Society

Your presence is requested to attend the Perth & District Horticultural Society's 30th birthday party on June 10 at 7 pm.

Ordinarily, this is the month when you showcase your favourite desserts, but this year the society will purchase a birthday cake and fruit trays for this occasion.

We would like you to bring your plates, forks and coffee mugs. This will save on the garbage generated at this event.

I look forward to seeing all our members at this event.

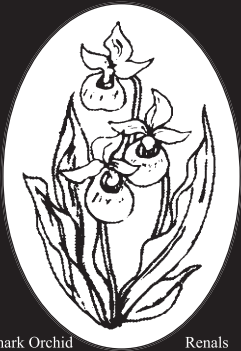
*Madeline Archer*

## PDHS Organic Fertilizer

Our organic fertilizer will be on sale at our meeting for the same price as last year: \$2.00 per bag for members and \$2.25 for non-members. If you need five bags or fewer, please try to bring a shopping bag to take them home in. Whatever is not sold at the meeting will be for sale at the Plant Sale.

## PDHS Plant Sale

Our annual plant sale will be held on Saturday, May 17th, 8-10 am. Set up is on Friday, May 16th, 5-7 pm. While dividing perennials please pot some up for the sale.



Lanark Orchid

Renals

Perth & District  
Horticultural  
Society

P.O. Box 494  
Perth, ON, K7H 3G1  
[www.gardenontario.org](http://www.gardenontario.org)

District #2 of the  
Ontario Horticultural  
Association



**President:** Madeline Archer  
**Vice President/Secretary:** Margo Fulford • **Newsletter:** Irene Hofmann

## Carleton Place Flower Show and English Tea

The Carleton Place & District Horticultural Society's A History of Carleton Place Flower Show and English Tea will be held at Zion Memorial Church hall 37 Franklin St. Carleton Place on Sat. 14th June. The show is open to the public, free of charge, from 1.30pm. to 4pm. There will be a question and answer session with Master Gardeners also free of charge, from 2pm. to 3.30pm. The English tea will be held from 1.30pm to 4pm. Cost is \$7.50 at the door. All events are wheelchair accessible. For more info. contact Heather Lebeau at 613-257-7604 or n-lebeau@sympatico.ca. [www.cphorticulture.ca](http://www.cphorticulture.ca).

## PDHS June Flower Show

### Section I: Horticultural Specimen

- Class 1** Any poppy – 3 blooms
- Class 2** A collection of peonies
- Class 3** Bearded Iris – 1 spike
- Class 4** Siberian Iris – 1 spike
- Class 5** Any rose – 1 stem or spray
- Class 6** Daylily - 1 scape
- Class 7** Hosta – 3 leaves – same cultivar or 3 different varieties
- Class 8** Any other perennial – named – 3 stems
- Class 9** Leaf vegetable – 3 stems
- Class 10** Collection of herbs – minimum 3 – named

### Section II: Design

- Class 11** Novice Class: "Canada Day" – a red & white mass design – accessories permitted
- Class 12** "Things Are Heating Up" – a mass design
- Class 13** "Drifting Away" – a design using driftwood

## Spring Gardening Tip

It has been such a long winter that everyone is itching to get their hands in the dirt but it's **Too Wet!** Working the soil too early in the spring

is a mistake. Plant roots need tiny air spaces to grow well. When wet soil is worked it does not break up into the loose texture that is best for the plants. It tends to stay in large clumps that can dry out in the summer and become hard as rocks. Planting in wet conditions can also trap large pockets of air around plant roots and that is a problem too. Even stepping on wet soil will compress it and cause long term damage to soil structure. To test whether your garden is ready to work in, take a half a cup of soil and give it a squeeze to make a ball. If it can be shattered by pressing it with your finger or if it falls apart when you drop it the soil is dry enough to work. If it keeps its shape or is difficult to break apart be patient. Wait a few days and try again. In the meantime enjoy the beautiful flowers that signal the beginning of another year in the garden.

*Whitehouse Nursery*

## To Prune or Not to Prune

*By Dale Odorizzi*

Few subjects in gardening are as confusing or as frustrating as the proper pruning of Clematis. Most modern hybrid clematis have complex parentage with many combined strains that have contradictory pruning needs.

As Yogi Berra once said, you can observe a lot by just watching. The easiest way to determine the specific pruning needs of your clematis is to watch it grow through a season. It won't harm your plant one bit to leave it completely unpruned for a season.

**Group A**—If it blooms only in April and May, it belongs to Group A. These plants flower on old wood. To prune this group, just remove any dead stems and weak growth as soon as flowering is finished. *Clematis alpine* and *C. macropetala* hybrids only grow to about 6 feet and should not be pruned too heavily or next year's flowers may be lost. *C. montana* and *C. armandii* grow so rampantly they may need to be cut back yearly to keep growth manageable.

**Group B**—If a clematis blooms in May and June and again in September, it belongs to group B. This group have very large showy flowers on old wood in late spring and a smaller flush of flowers on the current season's growth in late summer. 'Nelly Moser' is a good example of this group. Remove dead and weak stems in early spring, just as the leaf buds begin to swell. The

whole vine can also be given a light pruning for shape then. Cut each stem separately, varying the lengths for a more natural look, rather than chopping them all off to the same height.

**Group C**—This group flowers in June or July and blooms almost nonstop through September. Their vines reach 10 feet tall. *'Jackmanii'* is one widely grown variety. Since flowers on Group C are produced only on new wood or stems that grow each year, prune this group hard every year to stimulate fresh new growth. This means cutting back each stem to 2 strong sets of leaf buds just as they begin to swell in early spring. On established vines, prune to within 2 feet of the ground is sufficient. This hard pruning will guarantee flowers over the entire length of the vine. If Group C clematis is not pruned hard, it will still bloom but only on new wood which will begin growing where last year's growth ended, leaving long, bare stems.

Late Bloomers are usually classed with Group C for pruning. Most popular is the hardy golden clematis which bears small yellow lantern shaped flowers from July through September, followed by attractive fluffy seed heads. These, too, can be left unpruned to cover a fence or sprawl across the ground.

An overgrown or neglected clematis of any type can be invigorated by pruning hard, at whatever height you like, as long as some leaf buds remain, in early spring. New growth will appear quickly, thanks to the vines' large, established root system. Flowers may not appear until next season if it is the type to bloom only on new wood.

## Brugmansia

*Mike Pineau, Peterborough Master Gardeners*

For my money, the exotic and spectacular flowers of Brugmansia are a must have on the summer patio or border. This tropical American plant genus hails from the lowlands of Brazil and Ecuador and botanically belongs in the large Solanaceae family which includes Datura, potato, tomato, petunia and tobacco. The large 9" pendant, tubular and fragrant Brugmansia suaveolens X B. versicolor hybrids predominate in cultivation but other species are also involved in the genetics of some of the named types. The flowers come in pastel shades of pink, yellow

and white on 5 to 8 foot plants and are ideal for tub culture in full sun to partial shade.

Cultivating Angel trumpet is very straightforward and rewarding (think giant tomato) and a stunning collection can be achieved quickly. They are easily started from stem tip cuttings with 2 nodes inserted into a soilless mix with extra perlite in a warm sunny spot indoors in early spring. Rooting takes only 10 days. Hormone is not needed. When new growth starts, move up into a 6" pot with a blend of soilless mix, perlite and rich compost. Use rain or naturally soft water (i.e. reverse osmosis) and let the top 1" dry between watering. Do not fertilize until roots fill the pot. At this point the plant will be single stemmed, 2 to 3 feet high and cloaked in leaves from top to bottom. The plant is now preparing for explosive vegetative growth.

At this point, the plant is ready for its summer quarters as long as frost has passed. Now is the time to transplant into a large pot with drainage. Angel trumpets become very top heavy so the larger the container the better; up to a half-barrel. These plants are extremely heavy feeders and the soil should be rich. One part compost/triple mix, one part sharp sand or perlite, one part peat works for me. I use natural lump charcoal for drainage. The plant quickly "catches" into this mix and it can grow 2" a day in warm weather of May and June. When the roots fill the tub, ample water must be provided, often daily, especially in hot stretches. Mix in Miracle Gro powder for tomatoes at 50% strength at EVERY watering till it runs out the bottom of the pot. Keeping a barrel of pre-mixed fertilizer water handy is a big help (i.e. garbage can sized).

The first year, the angel trumpet will bloom August to frost after it forms a framework of new growth. It will not set flowers until it branches and will bloom in flushes of 2 weeks on and off on the new growth. On a mature plant there will always be some bloom however. Spider mite is the main pest but frequent hosing of the leaves will help if detected.

The big question is: "How do I keep this Godzilla of a plant from year to year in our climate?". Firstly, one may treat it as an annual and grow new plants from purchased seed (start in February) or cuttings (April). However, this does not allow the plant to reach its full potential though still giving a spectacular flower

show. In late summer, one may take cuttings of new growth, root in 1 or 2 gallon pots and keep as a green plant in a warm bright spot for the winter. Or bring the entire plant into the house using one of two techniques. Before moving at the end of September or October depending on frost, cut the plant back by one-third but leave a scaffold of main horizontal branches. Spray for insects (Safer's soap and pyrethrum). Let the soil dry down and bring the entire plant into a bright position such as a sunroom and grow on during the winter as a houseplant. A simpler approach is to bring the plant into a cool dark basement or fruit cellar and allow to go semi dormant but not bone dry. These last two strategies preserve the entire mother plant, thus allowing the full bloom potential of a second or third year plant. A well-grown 3-year-old angel will produce as many as 100 fragrant blooms at once on an elegant horizontal framework of traffic-stopping beauty.

#### Sources for plants :

- Brugmansia Quebec
- Flora exotica
- Some garden centres sell starter plants
- Seeds from Thompson & Morgan or mail order such as Flora exotica 1 dollar seed store.

## PDHS Summer Tours of Members' Gardens

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

**July 8, 2014** Debi McEwen, 1026 Ford Road  
and  
Linda Bartlett, 1060 Ford Road  
Gillies Corners (15 minutes east of  
Perth, off of Hwy 10 from Perth)

**July 22, 2014** Pam & Dave McCord,  
22 Port Elmsley Road  
Port Elmsley (off of Hwy 43  
towards Smiths Falls from Perth)

**August 5, 2014** Dale Odorizzi,  
505 Clarchris Road, Perth  
(off of Hwy 511 towards  
Balderson from Perth)

**August 12, 2014** Pam Newton,  
262 Lakewood Lane, Perth  
(off of Rideau Ferry Road towards  
Rideau Ferry from Perth)

**August 6, 2014** Max Wood,  
(organic vegetable gardens)  
1380 Bathurst Con. 7, Perth  
(off of Harper Road, past  
Kiwi Gardens)

## PDHS 2014 Photography Competition

The classes for this year's PDHS photo competition are as follows:

- Class 1:** "Ice and Snow" – a picture of your garden in winter
- Class 2:** "Spring at Last" – a picture of your garden's first blooms
- Class 3:** "Midsummer Delight" – a picture of your garden all in bloom
- Class 4:** "The End is Approaching" – a picture of your garden in the fall
- Class 5:** "Who is Playing in My Garden" – a picture of life in your garden
- Class 6:** "An Outdoor Laugh" – a picture of your garden which puts a smile on your face
- Class 7:** "Bounty" – a picture of produce from your garden

Entry deadline is October 14, 2014.

The rules are basic:

- Color 4" x 6" print from film or digital picture submitted to convenor by email;
  - Photo class number and your name must be written on the back or indicated in email for digital images;
  - Only one entry per competitor per class;
  - Person entering must have taken the picture.
- When submitting your photos, keep in mind the horticultural value of the judging.

We will display the photos and ribbons (1st, 2nd, 3rd) at the annual Christmas Social in December 2014.

Convenor for the Photographic competition is Carolle Anne Armour - Email: caarmour@hotmail.com