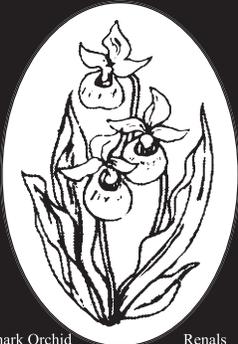


October 2012 Newsletter



Gardening is something you learn by doing - and by making mistakes. Like cooking, gardening is a constant process of experimentation, repeating the successes and throwing out the failures.

- Carol Stocker



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



The Sex Life Of Wildflowers...

Our speaker for our November meeting promises to be very provocative ... er ... exciting ... well, how about extremely interesting and humorous as well as informative?

Dr. Michael Runtz is one of Canada's most highly respected naturalists, nature photographers, and natural history authors. A birdwatcher since the age of five, he has lived, breathed and worked with nature all his life. Professionally, Michael has worked as a naturalist in Canada's national and provincial parks, and has performed numerous biological surveys, including one on the rare Peregrine Falcon. In addition to his highly-acclaimed books, Michael's award-winning photographs and natural history columns grace the pages of a number of Canadian magazines and newspapers.

A dynamic communicator, Michael Runtz is equally at home in the television or radio studio, lecture hall or classroom. Over 2000 people signed up every year for Michael's Natural History course. Televised from Carleton University, this is the most popular course of its type in Canada. This popularity arises largely from Michael's infectious and enthusiastic teaching style, for which he has received excellence in teaching awards from students and peers alike. He is also in great demand as a speaker for groups as diverse as outdoor educators, professional biologists, school-children, and naturalists' clubs. As well, Michael is a popular guest on numerous television and radio shows, and regularly co-hosts phone-ins on CBC Radio Noon.

Join us and encourage your friends and neighbours to come for an arousing ... oops! ... rousing presentation on

"Sexual Stigmas And Surrogate Lovers - The Remarkable Sex Life Of Wildflowers" with Dr. Michael Runtz on **Tuesday, November 13** at 7:30 p.m. in the auditorium of PDCI instead of the Library.

Non-members will be asked to pay \$5 at the door. It will be a presentation that is sure to stimulate ... or rather ... seduce ... no ... I mean ... well ... see you there!!

88 Shopping Days 'Til Christmas!

BUT only 74 days (at the time of writing) until our Christmas Potluck Social.

A little early for the reminder? Well, maybe, but since we are having a special speaker at our November meeting, we don't want you to forget. So put on your best sparkles, bring your spouse or a guest and come to the PDHS Christmas Social on **Tuesday, December 11** at the Perth Legion and get yourself into the proper frame of mind.

Once again, it will be a potluck supper so cook up your famous Christmas recipe or dessert and bring it to share. We always have a wonderful array of delicious dishes.



President: Madeline Archer

Secretary: Pam Pratt • **Newsletter:** Pam Pratt, Irene Hofmann

As always, PDHS will supply cooked turkey.

The festivities will begin at 6:00p.m. with appetizers. Cocktails, wine and beer can be purchased at the bar for a reasonable price.

The Annual General Meeting will take place after dinner and the Board of Directors for 2013 will be voted in.

While at the Social why not avoid the January rush and renew your PDHS membership? The renewal forms will be available to fill out at a special membership table. Membership is still held at \$10 per year - the cheapest bargain in town!

If you would like to help in the preparations and set-up, please contact any board member or Janet Osborne at the November 2012 meeting or show up at the Legion a little early.

Janet will be passing around a sheet for sign-up at the break time today, for the dish you may wish to prepare - appetizer, main course, salads, desserts.

Christmas Table Centrepieces

We do apologize for mentioning the "C" word again so early in the season but our speaker in November will be in the PDCI Auditorium so we may forget to remind you then about the Christmas Potluck information. Along with the potluck supper we also like to have you enjoy the table centrepieces which will, once again, be won by all members as prizes.

As we did last year, we are inviting all members to participate in providing one Christmas floral centrepiece and bring it as a prize to the potluck. Find a small container that you no longer use or better yet buy it at the dollar store and start designing. Collect greenery, small decorations, flowers whatever you feel like and make an arrangement for others to enjoy at Christmas. Let's see how many interesting and beautiful designs our members can create again this year. The more centrepieces, the more fun! No experience is required, just give it your best shot.

PDHS Photographic Competition

We will be having a photographic competition again this year with the results given at the Christmas Potluck Social. The schedule and instructions regarding entries can be found in your PDHS Yearbook on page 17. While the deadline date is listed as October 9, 2012, we are extending the deadline to November 13, 2012. Bring in your favourite photos

and give them to Linda Bartlett. There is even a class for your favourite horticultural picture taken on your travels. There are many more fun classes, so dig out those photos and give the competition a try.

Put A Note On Your 2013 Calendar ...

If you have a calendar for 2013 available or if not, a very good memory, our meeting in March 2013 needs to be switched from the second Tuesday of the month to the third Tuesday, March 19, 2013 due to school closure for March Break. Don't worry, we will keep reminding you. Other than the date, it will be same place, same time.

PDHS Nomination Committee For 2013

The PDHS Nomination Committee is supposed to consist of two board members, currently sitting, and one member from the general membership. Lynda Haddon has offered to be the Chairperson for the Committee and Margo Fulford has agreed to serve on the Committee so far. The position which is still open, is the one from the general membership. What it requires is a general member (that's most of us!) willing to approach other members, in person or by telephone, to ask if they will consider serving on the PDHS Board for 2013. If you are willing to be the general member for the Nominating Committee, please contact, Lynda Haddon or Margo Fulford as soon as possible.

If you are interested in actually servicing on the board of the PDHS for 2013 in any capacity or as a Director at Large, please contact Lynda Haddon or Margo Fulford as soon as possible. A Director at Large isn't responsible for anything in particular but is willing to assist on whatever projects are of interest such as helping with Seedy Sunday or the Junior Gardener project. It is a great position if you are interested in seeing how the PDHS board works. We have a lot of fun and meet a lot of people. So don't be shy and sign on now.

Flag Garden

The PDHS sign for the Flag Garden has now been installed by the Town of Perth. We hope to arrange an opening ceremony and photographic opportunity. An email will be sent in the future with the time and place.

Tree Planting Tips

In keeping with tonight's subject of trees in your backyard the following planting tips are courtesy of Environment Canada:

Planting trees when they are dormant is the best way to insure good survival and initial growth. Most trees can be planted in the spring as soon as the frost is out of the ground and before buds break open for the season. Otherwise, plant in autumn, after the leaves fall off and the buds are set before freeze-up.

Handling and storing trees

The tree you choose to plant might come as a seedling with exposed roots, or as a more mature tree with roots surrounded by soil or in a pot. Here are a few tips on how to handle these fragile plants:

- Do not allow the seedlings to dry out. Remember, "if they dry, they die."
- Handle seedlings carefully. Be sure not to damage the roots or stem. Rough handling could kill your tree.
- Avoid temperature extremes. Changes in temperature, especially excessive heat, can damage your tree.
- Plant promptly once you get your tree.
- If your seedlings comes in a bag, don't open it until you're ready to plant.
- If it is necessary to store unplanted trees overnight, remove them from the bag, dip the roots in water, reseal them in the bags as quickly as possible and store them in a cool, dry location.

Proper planting technique

Proper planting will help your tree to survive.

- Place the seedling as upright as possible, even on hills.
- Don't plant seedlings near water holes, stumps, or rocks.
- For bare-root seedlings:
 - o Never leave roots exposed to the air, as they can dry out and die within minutes.
 - o Dig a deep enough hole to accommodate the roots spread out well and oriented straight up and down (not all bunched up).
 - o The swelling that marks the transition between stem and roots (root collar) should be at ground level.
- For potted or burlap-wrapped seedlings:
 - o Be sure to remove all packaging material from around the roots even if it appears to be biodegradable.
 - o Ensure the seedling is planted at the same depth as it was in the pot.
 - o A shallow 1 to 2 cm dish-shaped impression can

be left around the planted seedling to contain mulch and provide water catchment.

- Never bury the branches.
- Do not trim roots. Seedlings need every single tiny root.
- Pack the soil well, but don't over pack it. Press gently but firmly to prevent shocking the roots. Air pockets can kill roots.
- If you're planting more than one tree, don't put them too close together. Some types of trees require more space than others, so check with an expert if you aren't sure.

Financial Statement Aug. 31 - Sept. 30, 2012

Ledger Balance – Aug. 31, 2012 \$ 1,388.82

RECEIPTS –

Membership	\$ 98.00	
Community Projects	100.00	
Miscellaneous	8.00	
Bank Interest	<u>.02</u>	
September Receipts	\$ 206.02	
		\$1,594.84

EXPENSES –

Meeting Expenses	\$ 31.64	
Speakers	<u>75.00</u>	
September Expenses	\$ 106.64	

BALANCE SEPT. 30, 2012 **\$1,488.20**

Reserve Fund –

GIC due July 18, 2012	<u>\$2,524.88</u>
<i>Investment + Interest @ 1.150</i>	
<i>will be reinvested each year</i>	

Library News

by Kevin Long

Our gardens should be welcoming habitats twelve months a year, not just during the growing season. All of this month's books include sections on encouraging wildlife to visit your garden. Head over to our library cabinet to sign out books and magazines, including these three that we are highlighting this month.

The Wildlife Gardener (639.92 Den) by John V. Dennis. Do you want your garden to be a refuge for birds and other wildlife? This book will show you ways to attract such creatures to your own backyard.

Dick E. Bird's Birdfeeding 101 (598 Mal) by

Richard E. Mallery. This is another book that teaches you how to invite and feed birds in your garden. It even includes bird seed recipes!

Gardening Month by Month in Ontario

(635.09713 Bec) by Alison Beck. This book is set up as a calendar, showing what you need to do each month of the year related to your garden. It covers topics such as: how and when to prune, how to create a habitat for wildlife, plant propagation, lawn maintenance, and first/last frost dates.

Tips For Bulb Planting

By Judith Adam

Planting spring-blooming bulbs can be as easy as tossing them into a shallow hole, throwing some soil over them and walking away. And it can also be frustrating to watch squirrels unearth the buried treasures and make a good meal of them. Just a few simple preparations will help you get the best from the bulb planting you do now for next spring's show.

Small minor bulbs like snowdrops, winter aconites, crocus and Siberian squills should be planted as soon as possible, and certainly before the end of October. Leaving them out of the soil for an extended time causes premature sprouting and dissipates stored energy needed for spring bloom.

Larger tulip and narcissus bulbs can be held in a cool, dark garage (not indoors) to plant in late autumn. Warm soil can stimulate bulbs to sprout in fall, something to avoid. If warm days persist through September and October, it may be necessary to hold off planting most large bulbs until the weather has chilled in November. The soil temperature should be cooled to below 15°C; chilly nights indicate the soil is cooling. If you don't have a soil thermometer, wait until nights are consistently in the range of 4 to 8°C.

Bulb planting depth

The traditional rule has been to plant bulbs at a depth three times their height, measured from the bottom of the bulbs. Consequently, a tulip bulb standing two inches (5 cm) tall should be buried six inches (15 cm) deep, and a one-inch (2.5-cm) crocus would be buried three inches (8 cm) deep. That's a fairly good guideline, but there are circumstances when planting slightly deeper might better.

Most spring bulbs are hardy to Zone 4. If planting in colder regions, it's safer to plant bulbs two inches

(5 cm) deeper than recommended to ensure they have adequate insulation from the coldest frost. A layer of leaves and conifer boughs laid over the bulbs will also help hold insulating snow in place all winter. Remember to pull the covering off in early spring to allow the sun to warm the soil.

Good drainage

Bulbs require good drainage to prevent them from rotting and developing fungal diseases. Sandy soil drains rapidly and favours good bulb health, but heavy clay soil holds water and promotes the growth of pathogens. To prevent the buildup of excessive moisture around bulbs, amend the immediate planting area with coarse builder's sand to a depth of 10 inches (25 cm). Plant the bulbs into the amended soil, gently firming the soil over them. They will have well-drained soil on all sides, which will prevent excess water from pooling around them.

Squirrel protection

Avoid setting the bulbs on the soil while you work; keep them in a paper bag or other container until they go into their planting holes. Also, don't allow any of the papery tunic covering them to flake off and remain on the soil. (No sense leaving delicious hints lying about to attract attention.)

Squirrels search the ground for signs of freshly disturbed soil and then dig for a reward. The marks you leave behind after planting bulbs are strong indicators that something delicious is buried underneath and they'll quickly take advantage of the free meal. The final step in planting a cluster of bulbs is to disguise your work with a thorough drenching from a watering can (not a strong hose stream that could dislodge soil over the bulbs). Be sure there is enough water to erase the marks of your trowel and hands, creating a slightly muddy surface.

Follow this with a four-inch (10-cm) layer of leaves on the soil over the bulb planting area. The leaves can be left in place until the soil freezes or all winter to help conceal your buried treasure. Pull back some of the leaves in early spring (leaving a light covering of scattered leaves in place), allowing sunlight to warm the soil. Although there's no certainty when dealing with persistent wild animals, this is usually enough to fool a squirrel.

Judith Adam is the horticultural consultant for Garden Making magazine.