The Ladyslipper

Perth & District Horticultural Society

www.perthhortsociety.com

Est. 1984

May 2024

President's Pen

Just another rainy day in paradise. If the rain keeps up, I will have overgrown jungles instead of gardens.

Please mark your calendars for our spring plant sale. It will take place on Saturday, May 18 from 8:00 am to 1:00 pm at the Perth Farmer's Market, Crystal Palace.

Our Junior Gardeners program is back thanks to program leader Robin McIntosh. We are in our last week for this program. Last week we made Mother's Day bouquets with flowers supplied by Sylvia Van Oort, 4th Line Florals.

Tonight Owen Marsh from the Ottawa Bonsai Society will speak about the art form of bonsai.

Valerie Heesen and Sandi Sissons did an amazing job selling raffle tickets. Linda Bartlett in the back.

The District 2 AGM was a huge success. The food from North Folk Cafe was well presented and very tasty. The speakers were engaging. Our raffle auction went very well and all expenses for the D2 AGM were covered by the revenue from the participant regisration and raffle. Kudos to a great team on our success of hosting this event.

We will have our dessert social, a standard flower show (see schedule on page 2) and Q&A session with the Master Gardeners in June. We will celebrate the 40th anniversary of the society.

We are working on a few garden tours this summer. A few member's gardens and a few local garden centres. More details to follow at our June meeting.

Happy Gardening

Linda

Membership Benefit Horticultural Discounts

As a member of the Perth and District Horticultural Society and upon presentation of your current year membership card, you may receive a discount on **PLANTS** only at the following local Garden Centres. Please remember, it is at the discretion of the Garden Centre if you receive a discount.

Garden Centre	Discount
Gemmell's Garden Centre (only plants in Gemmell's pots) 11862 ON-15, Smiths Falls	10%
Green Thumb Garden Centre 17 Tristan Ct, Nepean	10%
Kiwi Gardens 687 Harper Rd, Perth	13%
Reid Gardens 142 Pick Rd, Carleton Place, ON	10%
Rideau Woodland Ramble 7210 Burritts Rapids Rd, Merrickville	10%
Stoneridge Gardens & Nursery 1851 Galbraith Rd, Clayton	10%
The Garden Market 115 Williams Street West, Smiths Falls	10%
Whitehouse Perennials 594 Rae Rd, Almonte	10%

Carleton Place Nursery does not offer discounts – they have their own points system.

Most garden centres in Ottawa offer a discount as well. Exceptions are Peter Knippel and Ritchie Feed and Seed (all 3 locations).

When you are visiting a Garden Centre, anywhere in Ontario, all you have to do is ask if they offer a discount to OHA Horticultural Members upon presentation of their membership card. It never hurts to ask.

PDHS June Flower Show (Celebrate)

Here is the Schedule and Rules for the June Flower Show for 2024. We encourage everyone to participate.

Section I: Horticultural Specimen

Class 1: Allium – 1 stem
Class 2: Bearded Iris – 1 spike
Class 3: Delphinium – 1 stem
Class 4: Hosta, small-leaved up to 10cm (4") leaf base to tip, same cultivar – 3 leaves
Class 5: Hosta, large-leaved over 10cm (4") leaf base to tip, same cultivar – 3 leaves
Class 6: Peony (any kind) – 1 stem
Class 7: Rose (any kind) – 1 stem or spray
Class 8: Siberian Iris – 1 spike
Class 9: Any other perennial – named – 3 stems
Class 10: Any annual named – 3 stems
Class 11: Collection of Herbs – minimum 3 – named
Class 12: Collection of Hosta, any size, one leaf each of 5 different cultivars, in one container
Class 13: Collection of Peonies – at least 3 stems
Class 14: Rhubarb -3 stalks – displayed on a plate

Section II: Design

Class 15: "Ruby Ring" – a miniature design
Class 16: "Flag Garden" – a pavé design
Class 17: "Over the Bridge" – a stretch design
Class 18A: "Celebration" – a design using red flowers
Class 18B: "Celebration" – a design using red flowers (Novice Class)

SHOW RULES

- Exhibitors must be members of the Perth & District Horticultural Society.
- Entries are to be placed prior to 7:00 p.m. when judging takes place.
- Once placed, entries may only be moved by the show steward.
- Only one entry per exhibitor for each Design Class.
- Maximum of two entries per exhibitor for each Horticultural Class providing specimens are of different cultivars.
- All entries in Horticultural classes must have been grown or have been in the possession of the exhibitor for three months.
- Entry tag must be completed and remain with the entry.
- The decision of the judge is final.
- No exhibit will receive a prize, even though it is the only one in the class, unless judged to have sufficient merit.
- No exhibit may be moved before the specified closing time.
- All shows will take place during regular meetings.

For definitions and tips, please visit https://www.perthhortsociety.com/show.htm. Please refer to the Ontario Judging & Exhibiting Standards – Second Edition, OJES 2019 for more definitions and information.

Climate Change and the Home Gardener

Dale Odorizzi, Lanark County Master Gardeners

More and more people are believing that climate change is real. If there are any doubts, look at this past year. Our past summer in Eastern Ontario had us breathing in smoke from forest fires to the west and north. Some days, we were warned to not go outside. Not only was the smoke hard on a lot of us, but much of the boreal forest was also destroyed, eliminating a great deal of area for carbon capture. This past winter was the warmest in recorded history. In recent memory, we have had floods and tornados, something almost unheard of in Eastern Ontario.

Climate change is not just about the temperature getting warmer, it is also about conditions becoming more and more unpredictable. For instance, in 2022, on April 30, the temperature in Perth reached 30^{0}C. All the folks in our allotment garden raced out and bought large, beautiful tomato plants. On June 4 we had a hard frost and most of the plants were frozen.

Asclepias tuberose (Butterfly Weed) —Host plant for Monarch Butterflies and very popular with other pollinators, A well-behaved native Milkweed.

What can Home Gardeners do?

As home gardeners we can be superheroes, in the solution to slow down and prevent climate change by using sustainable gardening techniques. We can slow future warming by reducing carbon emissions and increasing carbon storage in soil and plants. We can make our gardens more resilient to climate change by adding native plant diversity, improving soil health, and managing storm water run off.

Gas-powered Tools

Over the years, many of us have used gas-powered tools, such as lawn mowers, leaf blowers, string trimmers, and pruning equipment. These tools are typically powerful and allow you to work farther away from an electrical outlet. They are also huge producers of greenhouse gas. People use their leaf blowers to blow grass clippings off their sidewalk. In the time it takes to do this, you could easily do the job with a broom with much less noise and air pollution. When it comes time to replace your equipment, investigate rechargeable electric powered tools or consider manual tools. Also consider reducing your lawn size, replacing it with native trees, shrubs, and plants.

Viburnum trilobum (Highbush Cranberry) is popular with turkeys and overwintering birds.

Plant Trees

Trees, especially native trees, are beautiful and provide many benefits—shade, cooling, cleaner air, habitat for wildlife and stormwater management. They are "carbon sinks" in that they capture and store carbon dioxide (CO_2). Trees help reduce heat, especially if they shade your house, reducing the cost of cooling in terms of dollars and pollution. They provide cleaner air and increase feelings of calmness. Their roots stabilize stream and lakeshore banks, reduce erosion, and keep the water clean. Finally, trees can reduce stormwater runoff.

When we moved to our 30 acre rural property 25 years ago, there were many native trees growing close to the house, predominantly sugar maples and black cherry. The first thing we did was plant 40 native trees and shrubs in what we called the back lawn. We mulched them with cedar mulch and watered them well in year one and after that they looked after themselves. That was one decision we have never regretted.

Lawns

There is often a big debate over lawns. Many folks and city by-law officers think that a lush, green lawn should occupy the front yard. Others like a mixed species lawn that attracts pollinators. The average lawn that looks like a golf course may be fun for children to play on, but it takes a lot of work and is not environmentally friendly. It needs to be mowed weekly, at a minimum. This costs money and uses gas which puts CO_2 into the

atmosphere. In fact, a Swedish study shows that the CO2 produced from one hour of mowing with a gas-powered lawn mower is roughly equivalent to that from a 160 km automobile drive. The roots of most lawn grasses are very shallow, so they store little CO2 and dry out quickly. In the hot, dry months, grass needs to be watered daily, using precious resources. Chemicals are needed to keep the weeds down, but weeds are likely the only food for pollinators.

On the other hand, mixed species lawns, planted mostly with native plants, require no regular mowing which saves you time, money, and gas. Once the plants are established, there is no need to water. This type of lawn provides food for pollinators. The deep roots of native plants capture carbon and stabilize and build the soil. Water is absorbed so the risk of nearby flooding is reduced.

I have just read that the City of Ottawa is now allowing homeowners to plant their gardens right to the curb. There are restrictions, of course but it is a wonderful step forward.

Improve Soil Health

Every gardener wants to protect and improve the soil. In the past, this often meant using chemical fertilizers. The manufacturing of these fertilizers uses natural gas and puts a tremendous amount of CO_2 into the atmosphere. We have now learned that soil stores huge amounts of carbon in the form of CO_2 and organic matter. Organic matter, such as leaves or compost, holds the soil particles together into stable aggregates (groups of soil particles that bind to each other). These aggregates are more resistant to erosion from heavy rainfall and improves water infiltration and holding capacity.

Composter—Reduce your carbon footprint and compost.

To improve soil health:

- Keep soil covered with plants, mulches, and cover crops. Leave some places bare so that our native ground nesting bees can build their nests. Grass clippings, leaves, and compost work well for this.
- Minimize soil disturbances with no-till or low dig approaches. Tilling and turning the soil brings weed seeds to the surface, accelerates the loss of organic matter, and spoils the soil structure. When starting a garden, layer cardboard or newspapers to smother the existing vegetation.
- Keep living roots in the soil year-round. Fall planted cover crops protects the soil and builds soil organic matter.
- Increase plant diversity to increase soil biodiversity. Different plants support different soil microorganisms.
- Increase the organic matter in the soil. This in turn will reduce the need for synthetic fertilizers. Make your own compost to recycle nutrients in your gardens and yard.
- Do not walk on your garden bed. This causes compaction and compaction is the enemy of carbon sequestration. Carbon sequestration is the process in which carbon dioxide is removed from the atmosphere and held in solid or liquid form. Leave paths between your beds to walk upon.
- Before using synthetic fertilizer, have your soil tested at a reputable laboratory.

More frequent heavy rainfalls are anticipated with climate change. Try to slow the excess water so it soaks in and reduces soil erosion. Create a rain garden or a swale and use rain barrels to store the water to use later.

Reduce Food Waste

Finally, reduce food waste and grow some food locally. Food waste in landfills generates methane, a potent greenhouse gas. This is the largest source of CO_2 in Lanark County. As much as possible, compost your vegetable scraps. If you grow your own food or buy it from a local farmer, you reduce emissions associated with long distance transportation. Fruits and vegetables grown locally not only reduce emissions, but they also taste so much better.

I often think that I am just one person and what can I do to slow climate change. After much research, I know that I am a gardener and I have a superpower. The more gardeners realize they too have this same superpower and use it, the better our environment will become.