



# OHS NEWS

April 2018

## Coming Events

Unless otherwise indicated the following events take place at 7:30 p.m. at the **Tom Brown Arena**, 141 Bayview Road. Consult the 2018 yearbook for a complete list of events for the year.

Website:

[Ottawahort.org](http://Ottawahort.org)

**April 24 – Square Foot Gardening**  
Beth Tilbury

**May 13 – Friends of the Farm Plant Sale**

**May 22 – OHS Auction and Plant Sale** — Auctioneer Marilyn Light

**June 26 – Summer Show & Starting from Scratch** - Alain Decelles; Bill Brown and John McKinven

**The mission of the OHS is to cultivate an interest in plants and gardening in order to create a beautiful community.**

## Spring Newsletter

### Tulips in the Capital

by Tina Liu  
Design Manager,  
Capital Floral Program  
Landscape Architect,  
National Capital Commission

The tulip is a symbol of friendship and peace. It is a bulbous plant native to the mountains in Central Asia, has been an inspiration of different forms of art works as well as literature, and its image has appeared in many artifacts. Tulips were first introduced to Europe by an ambassador of the Holy Roman Emperor to the Sultan of Turkey, who sent the first tulip bulbs and seeds to Vienna in the 16th century from the Ottoman Empire. Since then, the beauty of tulips has deeply influenced human history, including the Tulip Mania in the early 1600s that caused a significant economic crisis in Europe. Tulips can easily be found blooming in many historical gardens around the world. Today, these colourful 'eye candies' continue to capture our hearts.

In Ottawa, tulips have become the icon of spring, just like the Skateway is the icon of winter in Canada's Capital. So much so that over the last six decades, an internationally renowned festival has grown around and between our numerous and beautiful tulip beds. The tulip is the official flower of the City of Ottawa. Why do we celebrate tulips in Canada's Capital?

It all started with the blooming of friendship between two nations, the Netherlands and Canada. Princess Juliana was the only child of Queen Wilhelmina and thus was the next heir to the Dutch throne. During World War II, it was decided that Princess Juliana

and her two daughters Beatrix and Irene would take refuge in Canada for the duration of the war.



Princess Juliana and her two daughters, Beatrix and Irene, travelling westward from Halifax in June, 1940. Source: Library and Archives Canada



Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands, Princess Juliana, Princess Beatrix and Princess Irene staying at Stornoway, Ottawa. Source: Library and Archives Canada

During Princess Juliana's stay in Canada, preparations were made for the birth of her third child. To ensure the Dutch citizenship of this royal baby, the Canadian Parliament passed a

special law declaring Princess Juliana's suite at the Ottawa Civic Hospital "extraterritorial" (or Dutch Territory). On January 19, 1943, Princess Margriet was born, the only day in Canadian history that a foreign flag was flying atop the Peace Tower on Parliament Hill: the Dutch tricolour flag was flown, and Dutch music was played by the carillon.



The Dutch flag flying over the Peace Tower to celebrate the birth of Princess Margriet Jan 19, 1943. Source: Frank Kuin



Princess Juliana holding baby Princess Margriet at the Civic Hospital, Ottawa, 1943. Source: City of Ottawa Archives

The Royal Family returned home safely in 1945. In autumn, the people of the Netherlands sent a gift of 100,000 hand-picked tulip bulbs as a token of their appreciation for the role played by Canadian soldiers in the liberation of the Netherlands. These tulips were planted on Parliament Hill and along the Queen Elizabeth Driveway.



Citizens of Utrecht celebrating the liberation of the city by the Canadian Army, 7 May 1945. Source: Library and Archives Canada

Princess Juliana was so pleased at the prominence given the gift that in 1946, she decided to send a personal gift of 20,000 tulip bulbs to show her gratitude for the hospitality received in Ottawa. The gift was part of a lifelong bequest. Every year, Canada's Capital receives 20,000 bulbs from the Dutch Royal Family.



Nurses from the Civic Hospital were invited to visit the tulip beds. Source: Library and Archives Canada

Following Queen Juliana's original donation, the Federal District Commission (the predecessor of the National Capital Commission [NCC]) increased the number of tulip bulbs planted along the Rideau Canal. In 1952, an Annual Tulip Festival in Ottawa was inaugurated by the world-renowned Canadian photographer Mr. Malak Karsh, together with the Ottawa Board of Trade. Tulip bulbs were planted in the fall and the First Canadian Tulip Festival was launched in the spring of 1953 on Parliament Hill, with music provided by the Marine Band of the Royal Netherlands Navy.



First Canadian Tulip Festival opening at Parliament Hill, 1953. Source: Library and Archives Canada



Mr. Malak Karsh photographing the tulip beds. Source: Julie Oliver/Postmedia

Today, our spring floral celebration is still a result of collaboration between many parties. As the official gardener of the National Capital Region, the NCC continues to be responsible for the design and maintenance of the tulip beds. The Department of Canadian Heritage remains the story teller of the Tulip Legacy, and the Canadian Tulip Festival is dedicated to hosting the events and bonds our tulip community.

### Did you know?

1. Tulips come in every colour of the rainbow, except one that can never be found naturally grown from a bulb. Blue! Tulips cannot produce blue pigment in their genetic makeup.
2. The Dutch produced 2 billion tulips in 2017.
3. The 20,000 bulbs of the Royal Gift are planted in the Queen Juliana Bed in Commissioner's Park, the Civic hospital where Princess Margriet was born, St. Andrews Church where the Princess was baptized, the Perley Rideau Veterans' Health Centre, and the Beechwood Military Cemetery.
4. Malak Karsh was born in 1915 in Mardin, Ottoman Empire (now Turkey).



## President's Message

by Jayne Huntley

This issue of the Newsletter includes an article that looks back at the history of this informative publication. It is eighteen years since the current Newsletter was launched and, over time, it has evolved to meet changing needs.

With this issue, Sheila Carey is stepping down as Editor after three years, and Sheila Burvill is stepping down as Assistant Editor, having been involved in the Newsletter since its launch in 2001. A tremendous thank-you goes to both of them and to all those involved in the production of the Newsletter over the years. In particular I would like to thank Sheila B. for her work on over 50 issues!

There is a lot of great information in each issue of the Newsletter, drawing on the gardening expertise and experience of members and giving members a chance to get to know more about each other. The Newsletter's current format and production process were developed when technology was not as advanced, and the Newsletter is now essentially a version prepared ready to print and then posted on the website. With current technology there are more options open to us for sharing information, and both the Editor and the Assistant Editor suggested that, with both positions vacant, this would be a good time to take a look at what comes next for the publication.

The Board had a good discussion on this at its March meeting and agreed that the place to start in deciding what the Newsletter should look like was to ask you, the OHS Members, what is important to you. In the coming weeks we will be sending out a survey to seek your views on a variety of questions, including what type of information you would like to see in the Newsletter, what topics might interest you, and what format you like. I encourage you to take the time to complete the survey so that we can shape

our communications to best meet your interests.

We are also looking at what other societies are doing in on-line publications, and if you have a favourite newsletter please feel free to send me the link at [president@ottawahort.org](mailto:president@ottawahort.org) and tell me what it is you particularly like about the publication.

As we shape what the Newsletter might look like in the future, we will also be looking for volunteers to help with its production. So if this is an area that interests you, please let me know.

I am writing this as snow is once again falling and Spring seems a long way off. I hope by the time you are reading it we are all able to get out into the garden and start planning the year ahead!

## Did You Know

The patron saint of gardening is Saint Fiacre. There is a beautiful alabaster sculpture of the saint in the Cloisters (site for the medieval collection of the Metropolitan Museum, in Fort Tryon Park, New York City). Note the shovel in the saint's left hand. This is what the plaque says:

According to the legend of the seventh-century saint, Fiacre earned the right to establish a hermitage and a hospice for the poor after single-handedly clearing an entire forest in one day. Famed for growing many different kinds of vegetables and herbs in his garden in Meaux, France, he made and dispensed many herbal remedies. Credited with miraculous cures, Saint Fiacre was particularly renowned for curing hemorrhoids.



## Anniversary Project Update

by Tuula Talvila

Work is continuing with the second part of the joint project between the OHS and the Friends of the Central Experimental Farm to commemorate both Canada's 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary and the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the OHS. This part of the project involves a replanting of parts of the Macoun Memorial Garden, which was opened in 1936 to honour William T. Macoun, Dominion Horticulturist from 1910 until 1933. He was also the OHS President in 1899.



Macoun Memorial Sundial

Over the winter months, Lynn Armstrong completed her historical research, which included a visit to the Royal Botanical Garden in Hamilton to peruse Isabella Preston's journals. An original planting plan of the Macoun Garden remained elusive but Lynn's extensive research allowed her to create a number of plant lists for us to work with – perennials, annuals, native plants, and shrubs. Lynn compiled print copies of the relevant documents and her summary of findings, and these are also being turned into an electronic reference document for the OHS that will be made available as a resource.

Based on Lynn's plant lists, a suggested planting plan of perennials and a few shrubs was developed by Polly McColl of the Friends for the northeast portion of the garden. Plans for the northwest garden include native plants and several shrubs that were developed on the Farm. Blaine Marchand produced a list of historical varieties of spring bulbs that we intend to plant among the other plantings in both gardens. To provide visitors with some information about the garden's history

and these bed restorations, we are also hoping to include a small information panel in one of the garden beds. Like the hybridizer panels that were erected in the OHS pergola for the first part of this project last year, the panel would have a QR code that will take a smart phone user to a website with further information.

After enthusiastic approval from the Farm horticultural staff, our proposed planting plan is making its way through the necessary levels of Agriculture and Agri-Foods Canada for approval. We believe that most of the plants to be included in the planting plan should be available locally and we'll be hitting the spring plant sales and local nurseries with our planting lists. Funding will come from the special project grant we were awarded from the OHA. We may also put out a request to OHS members who may have plants they would consider contributing. Volunteers will help with the planting this spring and, with luck, all will be in place and ready to show off on the same day as the Friends' June Blooms garden event, Sunday June 24<sup>th</sup>. We will keep you posted!

## Did You Know

Thanks to a partnership among Friends of the Earth, University of Ottawa, and the Fletcher Wildlife Garden, there are now demonstration pollinator beds at the Fletcher site. The pollinator plants sit in three raised beds, where they grew well in 2017. OHS member Sandy Garland has written an article giving details; it may be found at <https://wildpollinators-pollinisateurssauvages.ca/2017/10/17/creating-pollinator-gardens-in-a-box-at-the-fwg/>.



## Gardening Without a Garden

by Roberta Woods

When gardeners begin to doubt their ability to manage both a house and a garden, they often turn to that unlvely word "downsizing" as the solution to their problems. And though a smaller home - often a condominium - takes care of the household aspect, downsizing does not replace the garden where many happy hours have been spent lavishing tender loving care on one's plants. Yet, in my experience, the move from a house with a garden to a condominium has proved to be more a change in emphasis and focus rather than a cessation of gardening altogether.

Nevertheless, the prospect of having to adjust to life without a garden is not an easy one to contemplate. Gone are those spontaneous little forays to check the progress of some treasured plant while snatching up a weed or two on the way. No more lingering, coffee or wine at hand, to assess whether -or not- one's carefully planned vista will materialize. But even worse than having to give up the innumerable, almost inconsequential activities which constitute a gardening life, there is the looming threat that with the change of ownership, your garden will be neglected, or cease to exist. The fact none of the prospective purchasers had made any inquiries about the nature, extent, or maintenance of our garden when it had mostly been concealed by snow, told me that the likelihood of its survival was slim. To ease my misgivings, I decided to divide suitable perennials, giving divisions to friends and neighbours, or donating them to the Ottawa Horticultural Society as fund raisers. And, in the hope of ensuring the perpetuation of at least some of the hardy annuals, I scattered my seed collection throughout the garden.

Next, having done what I could in the way of conservation, I turned to thinking about the possibilities and constraints of my new location. I knew that the purchased condo would have a south-facing balcony and that the building itself would have a roof-top terrace garden. But I also knew that condos are not known for the lavishness of their storage space. Only a

small area of the storage locker would take the place of all those areas in the basement, garage and garden shed where gardeners house their gardening paraphernalia. Yet another factor which influenced my decision over what to keep was the interval of at least one year between vacating the house and moving into the condo.

A period of ruthless passing on of all but a very small number of gardening items followed these considerations. By the time of the move from the house, the grow lights and seed germination equipment, all the outdoor planters and pots (whether ceramic, wood or plastic), the stakes, rakes, brooms, loppers, shears, watering cans and hoses, the wheelbarrow, and the lawn mower had all found new owners or been donated to the OHS as fund raisers. Likewise, and in like manner, I found new homes for all my indoor plants, with the exception of one plant (an Amazon Lily, *Eucharis amazonica*). Because I expected to do some type of gardening on both the roof top terrace and the balcony, I did keep a few of my pots, as well as a small number of trowels, hand forks, secateurs and kneeling pads. And once the dimensions of a Lee Valley collapsible metal potting/greenhouse bench had been identified as compatible with a space on the balcony, it accompanied the small tools. Still, I couldn't bear to part with my gardening fork and spade, a gift from my in-laws so many years ago.

About 18 months after moving to Toronto, when the upheaval of settling in had subsided, I made a start with gardening on the balcony. I chose plastic pots (for ease of handling) in the size and number appropriate to my much-reduced space. The balcony's southern exposure has ensured good growth for the sun lovers but the extreme heat of mid-summer coupled with the frequent high and blustery winds keeps me on high watering alert. I have had very good results with Geraniums, House Leeks, Calendula, Saponaria, Rosemary, Sage, Lemon Grass, Basil, Indian Borage (*Plectranthus amboinicus*), common Borage, and tomatoes. Unexpectedly, the placement of the Lee Valley frosted privacy screen gave me an area

of filtered sun light and some protection from the wind. On the top shelf, a few indoor plants enjoy the summer out of doors; on the lower shelf, I harden off my seedlings and rooted cuttings.

Before moving to Toronto, I had imagined that I would be spending most of my gardening time on the condo's roof-top terrace garden but a chance encounter with a fellow gardener took me in another direction. Within a short time of arriving in Toronto, Robin Woods (my husband) and I were invited to a barbeque where one of the guests, someone I had never met before and have never spoken to since, guessed that I was a gardener. Without much more than identifying the location of a community garden in need of volunteers, he urged the two of us to turn up and ask for Christine. And we did turn up and asked for Christine as instructed, all the time feeling a little apprehensive but carrying our kneeling pads and trowels in a canvas bag. Our resulting commitment to this garden has effectively prevented us from joining a group of condo residents interested in working on the terrace garden since both groups met on Saturday mornings.

The community garden and its volunteers are known as 'The Garden Party'. The garden is located on a relatively small piece of land belonging to the Lutheran Redeemer Church on Bloor Street in west Toronto. The volunteers are committed to raising vegetables and herbs for donation either to a local food bank and community centre, or to a downtown soup kitchen. At the beginning of each season, the volunteers meet to plan which crops to grow and where to plant them. The few gardeners with cars undertake to deliver the donations and during the heat of summer a team keeps the garden watered. There is a division of labour, with the physically fit younger members taking on the heavy jobs while the older ones pass on their working knowledge on subjects such as suitable varieties of seeds or plants, times for planting, transplanting, staking, pruning, composting, and harvesting. Last season, the volunteers donated 303 bunches of herbs and 291.45 kg of vegetables.

Undoubtedly, the food banks and the soup kitchen clients appreciate these donations, but the volunteers who grow the food consider themselves to be the true beneficiaries of their efforts. The essential tasks of planting, watering, and weeding nurture both the plants and bonds of friendship among the gardeners. These friendships are then celebrated throughout the year with a range of social occasions appropriate to the time of year. A Pot Luck Supper is held in the garden at mid-summer; a Pumpkin Pie Pot Luck marks the end of the growing year; a pre-Christmas get-together brings the gardeners together for a restaurant meal; and, to deal with the winter blues, one member hosts the viewing of a garden-related film early in the New Year. In addition to these more formal occasions there are the mid-morning coffee breaks and spontaneous lunches at local restaurants. Plus, because many of the gardeners are avid readers, book exchanges often accompany social occasions.

Since I have now been a volunteer with The Garden Party for more than four years, the title of this piece might seem to be a misnomer. But when I compare the garden I left behind with the volunteer garden there is one subtle difference to justify naming it "Gardening Without a Garden." I was a joint owner of the garden I left behind and, as such, I was at liberty to landscape and plant it according to my vision for that particular plot. In contrast, I do not own The Garden Party garden and only volunteer my time there. To achieve its goal of the growing of vegetables for donation, the volunteers have to be committed to its aims and work together. So, when I speak of gardening without a garden, I mean without a privately-owned garden. I feel privileged to be a member of The Garden Party for it has enabled me to continue working with plants and soil when the move to a condo could very easily have been the end of true gardening. I am also the beneficiary of several new friendships. My only regret is that I have never been able to thank Shannon -he moved away- for introducing me to The Garden Party. He changed my life.

## Stretches for Gardeners

by Lara Jiménez,  
Registered Massage Therapist

As the days get longer, the sun burns brighter, and the snow melts, a gardener's thoughts turn, naturally, to gardening! After a long winter of – perhaps – decreased physical activity, our bodies may have become unaccustomed to the demands of lifting, heaving, bending, and reaching that are part and parcel of the gardening experience. Jumping back into these activities can lead to muscle aches that cut down on our enjoyment of working outdoors. One way to reduce discomfort and maintain our ranges of motion is to stretch these hard-working muscles during or after gardening.

Below is a list of stretches that will target some of the usual culprits and help to keep you feeling limber. While performing them, keep in mind the "Rules of Stretching" Stretch muscles that have been warmed up (through activity, for example, or a hot shower). Ease into stretches gently – they will be most effective if you allow the muscle to lengthen before increasing the amount of stretch. A stretch will be more effective if it can be held for a sustained period of time – minimum 15 seconds. A stretch should not cause you pain. So if you feel pain, do not perform the stretch.

**Neck:** Standing or seated, tilt your head, bringing your ear gently towards the same-side shoulder. In addition to bringing your ear down towards the shoulder, think about moving the crown of your head away from your body (lengthening your neck). Repeat on the other side. You should feel this along the sides of your neck.

**Shoulders:** Standing, interlace your fingers behind your back, keeping your arms straight. Push your chest forward while you pull your shoulders back and down. You should feel this in your chest and the front of your shoulders. You can also pair this with gentle side-to-side head movements.

**Chest:** Begin by raising your arm 90 degrees out to your side, then bend your elbow, and anchor the length of your forearm along a doorframe. Lean



gently forward to feel this stretch in your chest and the front of your shoulder. Play with the angle of your arm by bringing it higher or lower than 90 degrees in order to target different fibres of the chest muscle.



Source: [www.acefitness.org](http://www.acefitness.org)

**Lateral Torso:** Stand with feet wider than hips, then reach an arm up and across overhead. Stabilize yourself by placing your other hand on your hips or upper thigh. You should feel this anywhere from your hips up to your armpits.

**Low Back:** Begin on all fours. Then sit your hips back while folding at the waist. Reach your arms out along the ground. Relax into the stretch by allowing your bottom to sink back onto your heels as much as possible. You should feel this along your lower back. You can target your sides by reaching your arms out to the right, then the left.

**Forearms and Fingers:** Standing or seated, straighten your arm in front of you, then use your other hand to pull your fingers back towards the top part of the forearm. You should feel this along the palm side of the forearm. Place your fingertips together to form a "steeple", and then press your palms in towards each other. You should feel this in your palms, thumbs, and possibly wrists.

**Hamstrings:** Standing or seated, step one foot forward and then straighten that leg. Hinge at the hips and fold forward over that leg. Keep your back straight and think about pushing your tailbone away from your body. You should feel this along the back of your thigh.



Source: [www.physicaltherapyfirst.com](http://www.physicaltherapyfirst.com)

## Did You Know

Alas, Garden Making, that good Canadian gardening magazine, is no more. Issue 32 is its last edition in print. They have told subscribers:

'We will continue to support the gardening community through the [gardenmaking.com](http://gardenmaking.com) website and our email newsletters. In the online world, we try to be both national (with gardening information) and local (with events listings and reader photos).'



Biodiversity Heritage Library

## Spring List

*Editor's note: this list is adapted from a year-long list of tasks that was published in the 2001 newsletter.*

Now that spring is here and we're enjoying the early bulb flowers (scilla, *Iris danfordiae* and *I. reticulata*, crocuses and early narcissus) we can think about our other plants.

Here's a list of jobs to think about.

### April

Start making rounds of the local nurseries to see what's new and noteworthy. Remember to use your OHS discount where applicable!

Prune fruit trees, vines, and shrubs; apply dormant oil spray (see the January 2018 issue) if there's a stretch of warm, calm weather.

Be cautious about working on the lawn too early; wait until you can step on it without leaving an imprint.

Don't do your cleanup, i.e. cutting down old plants and raking the garden, too early. Beneficial insects like bees may be hiding in hollow stems and under some garden debris. Don't step on the bees!

Towards the end of the month, if it's warm enough, start hardening off your indoor seedlings by putting them outside in a shady spot during the day but protecting them through cold nights.

Late in April remove protective covers from roses; prune them as necessary.

Plant cold weather germinators, such as lettuce, spinach, peas, and swiss chard, directly into the vegetable beds. Plant rhubarb and asparagus.

Plant bare-root trees and shrubs, also hardy perennials. (Be sure to check plant labels and reference sources to see when things should be planted.)

Don't be misled by early fair weather; remember that the average last frost date for Ottawa is May 6. Be prepared

to protect plants if the weather turns cold.

Check all your gardening tools, including power tools such as the lawn mower, and make sure they're in good shape for the season.

Once it's safe to walk on the lawn, rake up leaves and prune back old perennial growth.

When it's dry enough, rake the lawn and note bare patches. If the grass is long enough, cut it.

## May

Aerate lawn and fertilize it. Seed bald spots if needed.

Start moving lawn weekly or biweekly as required, but don't cut it too short. Keep an eye out for white grub damage and take the appropriate measures. If you fertilize, apply a slow-release fertilizer.

Early in May sow hardy annual seeds directly into beds. Sow a second round of cold-weather vegetables such as lettuce. Seed new lawns.

Start weeding beds weekly or biweekly, as needed.

Check clematis for new growth; prune back those varieties that flower on new wood. Check roses to see if they need to be dusted. Start moving supports for bushy perennials such as peonies into place as needed.

Check irises for borers and take appropriate action.

Fork over compost and spread any that is ready.

Plant evergreen hedges.

Late in May, plant annuals and container-grown plants. Don't forget to harden them off first for a week or so. Sow beans, tomatoes, corn and other warm weather germinators. Plant perennials. Check spring-flowering bulbs to see if they need to be deadheaded. Plant summer-flowering bulbs and tu-

bers (e.g. dahlias, gladioli, acidantha).

## June

Mow lawn weekly or biweekly as required, but don't cut it too short. As weather heats up and becomes drier, let grass grow longer.

Make sure the garden gets about 1 inch of water weekly.

Early in June check lawn for weeds and dig them out or spot kill them.

Plant your herb garden.

Move houseplants outdoors but introduce them gradually to places of direct sunlight or wind.

Prune early flowering shrubs that have finished flowering.

Thin vegetable beds. Plant successive vegetable crops, such as lettuce and carrots.

Keep a sharp eye out for pests such as the raspberry cane borer, and pick off or spray.

Support tall perennials as needed.

Continue routine weekly or biweekly weeding of garden beds, as needed.

Remove dead blossoms from plants. Prune lilac and similar spring-flowering shrubs after blooms have died.

## Summer

Continue mowing the lawn and checking for grubs.

If you've defeated the weeds, you can enjoy your garden! Bring in cut flowers from the garden to enjoy indoors.

As spiking flowers bloom and fade, cut off the spikes. Stake tall fall-flowering plants, such as asters.

Continue deadheading. Cut out old raspberry canes after they've finished fruiting.

Send for bulb catalogues.

Deadhead repeat-blooming annuals and perennials regularly.

In August, prune climbing roses. In mid-August, stop feeding shrubs such as dwarf evergreens, roses, rhododendrons, azaleas, and clematis.

Sow cold-weather vegetable seeds (e.g. spinach, lettuce) for fall harvest.

Late in August, divide peonies and irises. Start harvesting vegetables. Seed lawn if necessary.

Start preparing houseplants for move indoors by gradually allowing them to get less sunlight. Order bulbs for fall planting and indoor forcing.

Additional reference:

Beck, Alison. *Gardening Month by Month in Ontario*. Edmonton: Lone Pine Publishing 2003.

## Did You Know

According to Stephen Westcott-Gratton, not all trees and shrubs can be treated with dormant oils. Among the ones that cannot tolerate the treatment are: Japanese maples, Red and Sugar maples, Hickory, Eastern redbud, Smokebush, Japanese cedar, Beech, Japanese holly, Walnut, Blue junipers, Norway spruce, Dwarf Alberta spruce, Colorado spruce, Eastern white pine, Douglas fir, Red oak, Yew, and Cedar – quite a hefty list.

<https://gardenmaking.com/dos-donts-dormant-oils/>

## Member to Member

### My "Desert Island" Gardening Tool Kit

by Lyn Taylor

For the past few years, more than I want to count (where does the time go?), I have been maintaining gardens for a number of clients in the Ottawa area. As a "professional" gardener, I have come to rely on a few tools and accessories that I use on a regular basis. These are the ones which help to make tasks such as weeding, digging, and pruning faster, more comfortable, and less tiring.

Here are some of my favourites:

#### No. 1: Swoe

I have said many times that if I lose this tool, then it is time for me to retire. I would be lost without it.

My swoe is a perfect tool to help with the never-ending process of keeping weeds at bay. It makes weeding quicker and easier on the back. It has a long handle so I can weed standing up. The 5" stainless steel blade is used in a push-pull motion to cut off weeds just below the soil surface. It works well in confined spaces and between established plants. When used on a regular basis while weeds are small, it is a good tool for keeping weeds under control.

It is also very useful when adding compost to planted beds. It makes it easy to mix the compost into the top layer of soil.

#### No. 2: Yankee Weeder

My second favourite weeding tool is my Yankee Weeder. This is a small, 15" long, hand-held tool, and this is one I use while working on my knees. It is good for digging out deeply-rooted weeds in tight or closely planted areas.



Swoe and Yankee Weeder

#### No. 3: Knee Pads

Speaking of knees, I am a big fan of knee pads. I have tried several types over the years and still haven't found the perfect pair. The closest I have come are Lee Valley's Memory Foam Knee Pads.

These are quite comfortable. They flex easily when you move and don't pinch behind your knees when crouching. The hook-and-loop fasteners stay in place but, like all of them, they can snag and fray the nylon covering of the pads. Also, the nylon outer covering on mine has worn through on one pad, but this doesn't affect their comfort or performance.



#### No. 4: Hand Pruners

A pair of good quality pruners (secateurs) is essential. There is nothing more frustrating than pruners that don't make good clean cuts. Good pruners not only make the job easier; they are also kinder to the plant. My pruners of choice are a type of bypass pruner made by Felco, the ones with the ergonomic grip and swivel handle. Of course, to maintain their effectiveness, they need to be kept sharp and well oiled.

#### No. 5: Extendable Ratchet Loppers

For jobs which my hand pruners can't handle, I have extending ratchet loppers. The ratcheting mechanism allows me to cut through thick branches with less effort. The telescoping handles are easy to adjust and have six pin-locked position stops.



#### No. 6: Trail Blazer Folding Saw

And for even bigger jobs, I have my Trail Blazer Folding Saw. This is a very handy little saw which cuts very effectively. It is light and compact. The blade folds securely into itself so I can carry it around safely in my tool belt. The finger grips on the handle make it comfortable to use, and the handle is long enough to be able to use two hands to cut.



#### No. 7: Tool Belt

I find a good tool belt essential to keep my tools to hand. It is very frustrating to have to hunt around all the time for tools.

I haven't found the perfect one but mine comes close. Its pockets are deep enough so that my tools don't fall out whenever I bend over. It is comfortable as the two sections sit on either side of my body and don't interfere when I bend over. It has enough pockets to hold my essential every day tools, and has a separate, attached holster for my secateurs.

#### No. 8: Gloves

I wish I could garden without gloves but unfortunately they are a necessary evil. They do help keep your hands moderately clean but, more importantly, they help protect your hands from sharp objects in the soil, like glass or nails, and from toxic soil microorganisms, like the bacteria that cause tetanus. The gloves I like best are skin tight so it almost feels like you are glove-free. The disadvantage of these is that they are quite difficult to get off in a hurry. I also haven't found a pair



## Member to Member

which doesn't quickly wear out on the left index finger.

I also have a pair of long, heavy-duty waterproof gloves that I call upon for pruning prickly plants such as barberies. They make it easier to get right into the base of the plant to thin it out. Made of nitrile, they are strong and protect your whole arm against punctures and abrasion.

### No. 9: Set of Trugs

Another best friend is my set of three plastic garden trugs. They are lightweight and flexible with a multitude of uses. I use them to carry tools around from location to location in one load. They are useful when moving plants around. I fill them with water when planting, and they are great for tipping mulch or compost where needed.



### No. 10: Propane Weed Burning Torch

Another gizmo that doesn't get a lot of use but that I really like having at my disposal is my mini weed torch. It is great for burning weeds in cracks and crevices on walkways and between paving stones. You just fire it up, apply enough heat to the weed to shrivel the foliage and watch it die.

It is quick and easy to use and sure beats weeding them out by hand. It works best when weeds are young and, used a few times a season, this tool keeps weedy areas under control.

Of course, you have to be careful to keep it away from plants and other fire hazards you don't want to see go up in flames. I don't use it when the weather is hot and dry or windy, and I always make sure that there is a water source nearby.

Most of the items described above are available at Lee Valley, my favourite place to shop – although it is getting to be less fun as I have so much of what they have to offer that I now often come away empty handed.

Happy gardening.

## Did You Know

The third week in April is Soil Conservation Week in Canada, led by the Soil Conservation Council. To test your soil's health, take a brand new pair of white 100% cotton briefs and bury them in a narrow trench in the top six inches of soil. Leave the waistband showing a little and mark the place with a flag. Leave the underwear buried for about two months, then dig it up carefully and wash it in a bucket of water to remove the soil. If there is not much left beyond the elastic band, it's a sign of healthy, living soil.

If there is not much decomposition of the underwear, you can take some steps to improve the quality of your soil, such as adding organic matter like compost.

<http://www.soilcc.ca/soilyourundies/2017/Soil-Your-Undies-Protocol.pdf>

[http://www.soilcc.ca/news\\_releases/2017/nr\\_2017-07\\_e.php](http://www.soilcc.ca/news_releases/2017/nr_2017-07_e.php)

<http://www.soilcc.ca/soilweek/2017/soilweek2017.php>

## Sun-loving Violets

by Trish Murphy

One of the things we think we know about violets is that they grow in shade, shyly, among mossy rocks. The other thing we think we know about violets is that they invade lawns.

Many species of native violets do grow in moist, shady places, and a couple of species of native violets, notably the Common Violet, will invade lawns, a tendency which you might think charming or a nuisance. What is less well known is that there are also violets for dry sunny places, charming little plants that are ideal candidates for sunny rock gardens.

We grow two of the sun-loving violets in the rock garden at [Beaux Arbres](#). The locally native Hooked-spur or Early Violet (*Viola adunca*) is one of the earliest native flowers to bloom. It is a small plant, only about 2" tall, covered in small violet blooms in early May. The plant is very well-behaved and the stem emerges from a central crown each year. It might seed gently in the rock garden - and volunteers are always welcome with us - but the plant is too small to compete with lawn grass.



The second sun-loving violet we grow, Bird's Foot Violet (*Viola pedata*), is a very special flower from Carolinian Ontario, where it grows in Turkey Point Provincial Park and a very few other locations. It is more widely distributed in the United States but is threatened by habitat loss throughout its range. Bird's Foot Violet has finely divided foliage, quite unlike that of a typical violet. The flowers, with a prominent yellow central boss, are relatively large for a wild violet. The plant is in bloom for a long period in the spring and will

## Member to Member

often re-bloom in late summer. Last year, the cool wet weather encouraged Bird's Foot Violets to bloom almost continuously, which is an amazing feat for a native wildflower. This lovely little flower will certainly not invade lawns and is quite shy about offering volunteer seedlings even when we encourage it to do so.



Both of these violets like full sun in the spring, and lean, sandy soil. They can tolerate a bit of shade as the summer progresses, but not too much.

One of the best reasons for growing sun-loving violets, apart from their charming bloom, is to attract and provide food for Fritillary Butterflies. There are several species of fritillary in the Ottawa area and, as caterpillars, they all eat violets – diverse violets – but only violets. The smallest species, the Meadow Fritillary, seems to seek out violets wherever they are. We often see them laying eggs on or near the Common Violets in the damp end of our lawn. I have had to stop the mower, sometimes giving up on the idea of mowing that day, while the Meadow Fritillaries are intent on egg-laying.

The largest and most glamorous fritillary is called the Great Spangled Fritillary, a very beautiful butterfly almost as large as a Monarch. Great Spangled Fritillaries are creatures of warm sun-lit spaces and they don't seem willing to venture into the shade to find violets. They are so well-adapted to dry, sunny environments that they have the ability to discern violets even if the violet foliage has shrivelled in a dry summer and all that remains are the roots below ground. The mama butterfly will lay her eggs on the ground, in anticipation of the violet's leaves emerging with damper fall weather.

Great Spangled Fritillaries are quite common at Beaux Arbres, probably because we have so many Hooked-spur Violets growing, not just in the rock garden but abundantly on the dry hills behind the barn. If you are interested in providing host plants for butterflies, be sure to include some of the lovely little sun-loving violets in your garden plans.

### Losing a Tree – part 2

by Sheila Burvill

I told you about our sick Sugar maple in the January 2018 issue of the Newsletter. This is what has happened since then.



The City of Ottawa had told us they'd come to take down our tree in January but January came and went without anything happening. However, on February 14, two days after we'd left for a trip to Chile and Argentina, a City crew showed up. Luckily our good neighbour Helen, with whom we'd left our car keys and who knew the whole sad story about the maple, was home. She was able to chip our car out of its shell of ice (remember Valentine's Day 2018?), and moved both our car and hers safely out of the way before the workers began cutting down the tree.

The way they removed the tree was to cut off the larger branches first. Then they used a big set of calipers to hold the trunk in place while simultaneously cutting right through it about six inches above ground level. Then everything was cut into shorter pieces that were loaded on a truck and carted away in a remarkably short length of time. There

is a bit of sawdust and other debris that must await the spring thaw to remove but not really much to clean up. We have no idea when the stump may be taken out.

We mourn the tree, of course, but can see from the stump that the centre was rotting and an area of infection setting in on the east side. So removing the tree was a good decision. What will now happen to the hostas that so happily enjoyed the maple's shade, we don't know. Nor do we know how much damage removing the stump might inflict on them. Time will tell.

## Did You Know

There is a collection of hundred-year old hedges on the Central Experimental Farm. The hedges were planted to see what varieties of trees and shrubs are suitable as hedging materials and which ones are best for specific situations. There are over 20 kinds of plants in the collection, which is located just south of the Dominion Observatory complex, in an area slated for transfer to the Ottawa Hospital's planned new site. Will the hedges survive?



## Member to Member

### What's in a Name? Linnaeus

by Robin Woods

The majority of gardeners refer to plants in two ways: by their common and by their scientific names. Most of us recognise common names such as "peony" or "marigold" and can immediately picture the plants they refer to. However, with respect to scientific names in Latin, gardeners may question the use of an archaic language that they have either never studied, or did so many years ago. From earliest times naturalists gave plants (and animals) names in Latin. These names were essentially a detailed description of the physical characteristics of the plant or animal. The disadvantage of this polynomial system was that these Latin descriptions were lengthy and cumbersome. The use of common names was even more problematic because they varied according to language and location.

These two problems prompted Carl von Linnaeus (1707 - 1778) to devise a simple naming system that we use to this day. In 1753, Linnaeus published his book 'Species Plantarum', a revolutionary work setting out his binomial system. He retained the use of Latin, the universal language of scholars, so that names could be translated and understood by naturalists from different countries. In the Linnaean system, referred to now as binomial nomenclature, any plant has just one name but each name has two parts. The first part identifies the organism as belonging to a particular genus, i.e. a grouping of plants that are closely related, for example, the genus *Rosa*. The second part, the specific epithet, assigns the plant to a species within that genus. Only the first letter of the genus is capitalised and both the genus and the species names are italicised in print or underlined in handwriting. For instance, the scientific name of the Dog Rose is *Rosa canina*; *Rosa* is the genus and *canina* is the specific epithet. This means each species has a unique name without the need for a lengthy description. These scientific names are universal and refer to the same plant irrespective of the locality in which it grows and the local lan-

guage.

Linnaeus formulated genus and species names from the existing literature and also added them from his own studies. In formal writing, the originator of a name is recognised by adding one or more initials after the name of a genus or species. For example, the genus *Camellia* is given as *Camellia* L since it was first named by Linnaeus; similarly the Dog Rose is *Rosa canina* L.

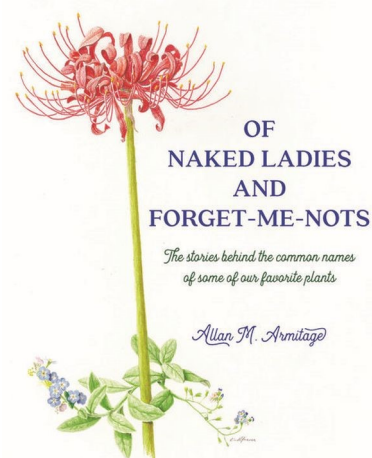
The International Code of Nomenclature (ICN) for Algae, Fungi, and Plants sets out rules for the formulation of plant names. There is a wide range of options in the application of specific epithets. The epithet can refer to a particular individual: *Kalanchoe blossfeldiana* is named after the plant collector Karl Blossfeld. It can refer to a specific location: *Iris sibirica* is native to Russia and Eastern Europe. It can be a descriptive term from Latin or Greek: *Kalanchoe arborescens* (Latin – tree-like) is, well, tree-like. It can be a name from another language: *Zea mais* comes, via Spanish, from the Taino word 'mahiz'. It may describe a particular habitat: *Senecio fluviatilis* (Latin – associated with streams and rivers) grows on riverbanks. It can draw attention to a feature of morphology/appearance: *Ranunculus repens* (Latin – creeping) grows close to the ground.

Some names are more whimsical than descriptive. For example, the genus name *Muilla* SW was given by Sereno Watson (SW) to three related species that he found in Southern California. He thought that the flowers of these species resembled those of the genus *Allium* (onions) so he simply reversed *Allium* to get *Muilla*!

### Book Review: Of Naked Ladies and Forget-Me-Nots: by Allan M. Armitage

by Nancy McDonald

Printed in USA, 2017, ISBN 978-0-692-85473-0 Trade paperback \$25.83 Indigo



I am always happy to receive a new gardening book under the Christmas tree and when it is delightfully humorous as well as informative, it becomes a keeper. Dr. Armitage displays his talent as a storyteller, revealing the interesting circumstances which led to the common names of beloved plants. These names are almost a social history of the botanical world.

An example of this is the word 'Bets', a common name at one time for English barmaids. These 'Bets' cleaned the bottles by adding a sprig of *Saponaria* and shaking vigorously. Need I say more on 'Bouncing Bets'. Another example, Queen Anne's Lace, common along our roadsides, is named for Queen Anne, who was also known as the tatting Queen. I don't want to give away too many of the stories as I would like you to discover them for yourself. I think you will want to know how the 'Annabelle' hydrangea was discovered and named; whether there was a person named 'Joe Pye'; how teasel raised the nap; and the dark history associated with False Indigo.



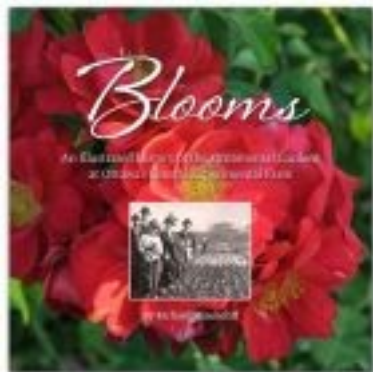
## Member to Member

## OHS Matters

I am going to leave you with one more tidbit on a favourite garden plant, *Tricyrtis* or Toad Lily. I have it growing next to my front walkway where the beauty of its diminutive flowers can be enjoyed. Why might it be called Toad Lily? Some would say the spots on the flowers, but Dr. Armitage tells us to turn over the flower and, on the back, to look for three warts. That warts are caused by toads is not true but certainly has been passed down as folklore over the years. Is this why it is called toad lily? I'm not sure, but it makes a good garden story and Dr. Armitage's book is full of ninety-six of these stories. I recommend this book as fun to read, learning as you do. Isn't that the best kind of gardening book?

### Did You Know

Sales of the "Blooms" book, published by Friends of the Central Experimental Farm in 2016 have gone well. If you don't have your copy of this handsome book yet, you can buy one for \$35 from the Friends, through their website, or at the Friends' office in [Building 72](#) on Monday, Wednesday or Friday, from 9am to 2pm. Copies are also available at various bookstores in Ottawa and at Lee Valley Tools.



### The OHS Newsletter as We Know it

by Sheila Burvill and Sheila Carey

#### Sheila Burvill Remembers...

Back in 2000, then-President Pat Russell asked Lyn Taylor whether she would take over the editorship of the OHS News. Lyn then asked me, a neighbour and a new OHS member, whether I'd help her out, and I said "yes". At that time, neither Lyn nor I were experienced in producing a newsletter. In addition to me, Lyn recruited her friend, Carol Russell, to do the design and layout, and Carol, thankfully, did have some experience

We met to review examples of various OHS newsletters produced through the years and adopted the ones edited by Sandy Parsons as our primary model. Even this latest issue that you're reading now still lists OHS coming events in the left-hand column of the first page, and the official title is still "OHS News" even though almost everyone calls it "the newsletter".

Among the things we decided was to expand the list of coming events: to include information on meetings planned by similar organizations, to publish information on workshops and other gardening education events, and to expand the number of authors and topics in any one issue. We thought that if we publicized the activities of other gardening-type organizations, they'd do a *quid pro quo* and publicize ours. Well, that didn't quite work out. There was no problem establishing liaisons with other clubs and getting their information, but in most cases, the other groups had no means to publicize our events to their members.

Lee Valley Tools at the time had a robust gardening workshop/lecture programme and they were happy to give us their information. Also, Algonquin College and the Ottawa-Carleton School Boards published their programmes. So all we had to do was copy out the pertinent information in our pages. You'll notice that I've made no mention of internet sources. Hard to believe now, but back in 2000, very few of our members had access to the

internet and the OHS website was in its infancy.

Lyn instituted a "Garden Calendar" feature that listed garden chores for the months up to the next issue's publication date. She also saw that the only way to get colour into the newsletter was to print each issue on differently coloured paper, which is how the April issue ended up on yellow paper, the September on green, and the January on a light fawn colour.

We were inordinately proud of our first issue (January 2001), a whole eight pages long and containing some nice graphics (largely taken from image clipboards). I had to write an article to fill in space on a page and it was like releasing a genie from the bottle, because I found that I really liked writing and from then on, had to be kept in check.

The April 2001 issue expanded to twelve pages and Lyn added a copy editor (Jennifer Mix) to our crew. We included some photos for the first time, tried to promote classified ads (dead in the water from the get-go), and introduced the "Did You Know" fillers (bits of information that are still used liberally in our pages). That issue also had a special feature, "Recommended Gardening Sources", an annotated listing of businesses and plants sources recommended by "a selected group of gardeners", aka anyone I could talk into writing up a short text.

In 2002, we expanded further, up to sixteen pages now and with an increasing list of contributing writers. Funnily enough, we didn't list a distribution manager until January 2003 (it was Jane Ritchie). Someone, though, must have taken charge of the process because we had to take a clean crisp copy of the newsletter pages to Staples, and order the necessary number of copies for members and everyone on the supplementary list. It was likely Lyn who did this. Once the copies were ready, they had to be picked up and stuffed into stamped and addressed envelopes. Lord knows what the postie in our neighbourhood thought because, three times a year, Lyn and I completely filled our

## OHS Matters

local post box with the OHS newsletter envelopes.

January 2003 saw our first "Getting to know you!" column (another great idea from Lyn); it featured Jeff Blackadar and his baby daughter. We also started a "Q and A" feature that was eventually dropped since we often had to make up the questions ourselves. That year I started planning a separate pullout section for the April 2004 issue (List of Gardens Open to the Public) that, complete with annotated maps, could sit in the car and be ready for use whenever needed. A great many people contributed to this publication through suggestions and verification work. Carol Russell prepared the maps, but maybe that was a bridge too far because she resigned as layout editor later that year. And we lost Lyn as editor and Jane as distribution manager around that time too.

Luckily, Margaret Scratch, who'd been a regular contributor and part of the distribution team, agreed to become editor. She actually liked doing layout so she assumed those responsibilities as well. Turned out that making editorial decisions and doing layout had some overlap, which cut a little time from our production work. Jennifer Mix took over distribution and Laurie Graham became copy editor. We all had to pull up our editorial socks then, because Laurie is a professional copy editor. She wrote the first style manual for the newsletter (we'd been pretty laissez-faire up until then) and every fact was thoroughly checked. In 2012, Lara Jiménez joined the editorial team, and Pat Russell co-ordinated the Getting To Know You feature for several years.

Somewhere along the line, we started posting the newsletter on the website and we discovered we could have colour appearing in the website version. The introduction of the Grapevine meant another desirable change. Since the Grapevine goes out to members via e-mail at least every two weeks, there was no longer any point in the newsletter staff seeking out information on coming events and then crossing their fingers that nothing

would change before the event actually took place.

We had been doing a joint mailout of the OHS yearbook and the January issue of the newsletter to save money. Then Jennifer Mix undertook to investigate the labyrinthine procedures that constitute Canada Post's set-up for publications mail and discovered a method that would save the OHS a bundle of money. It is D.J. (Dorothy) Smith's creation of the membership database and her ability to print out stickable labels in postal code order that allowed us to use Canada Post's system. What saved even more money was making the newsletter primarily an electronic publication.

### Sheila Carey Remembers...

In late 2014, Margaret stepped down as editor and I agreed to take over. Though we lost Lara shortly after, we gained Nathalie Chaly as copy editor and Carolyn Sprott took over the Getting to Know You column.

At the time I took over as Editor, we were producing one version for the website and another version that could go to print. This meant creating two newsletters, with the one going to print being a maximum of 16 pages to keep it within Canada Post's affordable mailout price range. It was quite an onerous process for someone new to the software, but I do like a technical challenge! For a while it was the 'two Sheilas' on the editorial team, although we have had people come in for an issue here and there.

As well as having Nathalie Chaly as copy editor, we also gained Tuula Talvila to proofread the versions I produce on my computer. I'm constantly amazed how many details I miss that Tuula manages to catch before we send them out to the world. Still, we all miss a few; sharp-eyed readers noted that Sheila B had been aged into her eightieth decade in the last newsletter!

After going through several production cycles of the 'two version' newsletter, Sheila B suggested that mailing out the newsletter as a photocopied black

and white version of the online PDF version would cut down on production time. That has been a big time-saver for me, but there have been other hiccups along the way. One time my computer had a black screen of death on the weekend I was trying to prepare a final version. A technical wizard took about six hours to 'rebuild' my computer and retrieve all my files. I now make sure I **always** create a copy every time I make any edits to the pages I'm working on! Another time my computer decided it didn't want to produce PDFs, which is how the newsletter is sent to the printer and for posting on the web site.

Although I can think of themes or ideas in the general gardening sphere, I've relied heavily on Sheila B for her knowledge of the OHS membership to suggest people we could 'hit up' to write an article or review here and there. I've learned a lot in this time about the OHS members and about gardening in general.

In the last few production cycles, I've been finding that I spend far too many hours in front of a computer between my 'day job' and the newsletter production. I started thinking that I might enjoy finding other ways to become involved in the OHS and volunteered to be on the Board in the most recent elections. I mentioned my plans to step down as newsletter Editor and relinquish the layout duties to someone else, although I said I would be interested in continuing on as part of the editorial team. I thought that we might finally be back to three members. However, Sheila Burvill also feels that is time for her to bid farewell to her longstanding role in the newsletter.

And so this issue of the OHS News is the last of the current version. As for the future, we refer you to the President's Message.

## OHS Matters

### Shows Corner

#### **The 2018 Plant Shows: Inspiration and Celebration**

by Josie Pazdzior

Come April, we're just itching to get outside and see the plants show up and grow, right? Fear not, they will, whatever the weather this season. By June 26th, our summer show date, Ottawa gardens will be bursting with leaf and bloom. Don't miss this chance to share the joy with your gardening buddies! Every year we encourage OHS members to participate in the two plant shows, in June and September.

The Shows Committee records tell us that in recent years there has been a general decline in the number of people bringing in exhibits, though it does vary from year to year. However, we can count on a reliable group of folk to participate, often by entering a number of different classes, both horticulture and design. Some new gardeners have been competing too, we're happy to see, and surprising themselves by winning prizes. Did you know that you can actually walk away with \$20, \$40, or even more in cash prize money? Not to mention earning Plant Bucks for every entry you make.

Think, too, about the difference between winning a red (1st) ribbon in a class with two entries, and one with eight entries. Which would be more gratifying to you? Yes, indeed, the more competition, the more glory! Then there's the educational value for the members viewing the show of seeing a variety of plants (especially those properly identified), as well as the inspiration to try growing that wonderful, rarely seen perennial proudly displayed by another member. Don't walk out again saying to yourself or friends "I had much better roses (heuchera, hosta leaves, etc). Why didn't I bring them in?"

The OHS continues to promote greater use of native plants, which are defined thus in the 2018 yearbook: "A native plant for purposes of this show is any-thing native to continental North Amer-

ica that can survive in Ottawa." Consider, too, the special reward for this – the Mary Bryant award for the exhibitor with the highest aggregate score for classes calling for native plants. The winner gets her gorgeous painting to display for a year, after it's awarded at the June show. Good places to find more natives to enter next year are the Friends of the Farm plant sale at the Experimental Farm on May 13th, and the Fletcher Wildlife Garden sale on June 2nd. The Fletcher Wildlife Garden website is a mine of information, not least of which is the list of wildflowers that grow in our area at <http://ofnc.ca/programs/fletcher-wildlife-garden/flora-and-fauna-at-the-fwg>.

Don't stop there however - the entire site is chock full of useful information on native plants, their environment, and many other subjects of interest as well.

#### **Tips for Entering the 2018 Shows**

by Josie Pazdzior

A few tips may help you prepare your entries for the June show, even though late June can be difficult for many gardens. In particular, it's often hard to find a lot of native plants in bloom since the spring ephemerals have passed, and the later summer bloomers like Joe Pye weed have not started yet. I keep a close eye on how the flowers are developing from mid-June onward, and make a list of all the possible ones – and don't forget foliage, which also features in the classes, with special ones for ferns. Examples of some natives that may be in bloom then include *Baptisia australis*, *Aquilegia canadensis*, some *Campanula* and *Penstemon*, *Gillenia*, *Filipendula*, and *Geum triflorum*. As well, there are many perennial non-natives to look out for, including those listed in the 2018 June show classes (roses, iris, etc.), and "other" garden flowers and collections.

I know that one factor holding gardeners back sometimes is simply that we don't want to lose our best blooms, which may be few. We've tried to help with this by requiring only one stem in

collections and some classes.

It can be important to watch the weather. If heavy rain or scorching heat is predicted around June 26th, I'd try to cut anything suitable in advance, maybe in bud, and store the stems in water in a cool, dark place. Generally, though, you want to cut flowers and foliage as fresh as possible, the night before or in early morning when the water content is highest. Some do not last long once cut, may wilt quickly and look poor by show time; so it's a good idea to experiment with doubtful ones in advance – some ferns wilt quickly, for instance.

I usually collect all the possible flowers and foliage stems that might be entered, and place them in large containers (in water) to rest overnight in a cool place. On show day I assess them carefully and figure out how best to organize them by class singly or in collections. I also trim off leaves below the waterline, and put the entries into plain glass jars assembled beforehand.

If you too are one of those people who leaves thing until the last minute and then rushes around to complete the task or project, the only guarantee you'll get it done is to start early, planning and being ready to go on show day, so that only the last step is left.

The design classes are another matter, best planned well in advance especially if you're new to this. Choose a couple of classes that appeal to you and keep the theme and descriptions posted somewhere to spark inspiration. (You can also search the web for pictures of such designs.) Start collecting non-plant material such as containers and things to use in the design, and know where you will source the right plants. Then you can put it together on the day or even the night before. This June's theme, with a focus on native plants, is 'A Romantic Comedy', with classes such as 'The Runaway Bride'. (The fall theme is 'Broadway Musicals', by the way.) There is plenty of scope for creative interpretation of these themes, which



## OHS Matters

provide the necessary guidelines. We hope for lots of design entries, which are so interesting to view!

A good source of inspiration for design classes is displays of botanical art. This year, on May 10, a botanical art exhibition featuring native plants from coast to coast opens at the Stone Gallery in the Canadian Museum of Nature. (The gallery is located in the lowest level.) This exhibition is Canada's contribution to a simultaneous worldwide botanical art exhibition initiated by ASBA (the American Society of Botanical Artists). Twenty-four countries are participating and five Canadian provinces will have exhibitions of their own. As well, on May 18 at the Central Experimental Farm in the Marketplace Gallery, a local exhibition of botanical art by the Ottawa Society of Botanical Artists opens. Some of these local artists are also in the Stone Gallery exhibition.

Much useful information is found in the OHA booklet of Ontario Judging and Exhibiting Standards which is the relevant reference for exhibitors. It can be purchased online for \$6 at the OHA site or is sometimes available at OHS meetings. Please note that the list of classes in the printed OHS Yearbook is incorrect. An up-to-date listing of classes for both 2018 shows is available in the online version on our website.

### Did You Know

"The best way to get real enjoyment out of the garden is to put on a wide straw hat, dress in thin, loose-fitting clothes, hold a little trowel in one hand and a cool drink in the other, and tell the man where to dig."

Charles Barr, quoted in the New York Times, 11 July 1948

Oh, for a man to do the digging!

### New OHS Members

Samantha Boles  
Maria Borys and Helena Borys  
Doug Chapman  
Sandy Crosby  
Celia Glanville and David Beal, Zoë  
and Maia  
Margaret Hart  
Anne Kenny  
Barbara Koch  
Germain Larose  
Nancy Livingstone  
Danielle Manley  
Jeff Menzies and Ali Collins  
Nancy Moss  
Janet Moyser  
Christine O'Reilly  
Maren Oddie  
Ria Quik  
Wendy Simmons  
Tiffany Smiley

### Getting to Know Jane Lund



**How long have you been a member of the OHS and what prompted you to join?**

I have been a member of the OHS for over 20 years now, and was introduced to the club by Angèle Biljan whom I knew from the Ottawa African Violet Society, which was the first gardening club that I joined after attending a couple of their shows. Angèle told

me about the OHS and the Ottawa Valley Rock Garden and Horticultural Society, and I eventually joined both.

**Have you been gardening for a long time or are you a novice?**

I wasn't much of a gardener before I joined these clubs. I would say my gardening time is linked to the time I've been in these clubs; so more than 20 years. My knowledge has increased from the talks and the garden tours, where you see what other gardeners have planted and you get inspired by their plants, the design of their gardens, and sometimes the art objects they have included in their gardens. I have also learned a lot just from talking to other gardeners.

**How would you describe your garden?**

Honestly, right now my garden is a mess and needs a complete overhaul. Over-enthusiastic plants that propagate by seed or runners have unfortunately gotten away from me over the years. I need to be ruthless and weed them all out and start again with plants that stay where they are planted! The odd thing popping up here or there is not totally a bad thing, but when perennial sweet peas are smothering other plants, to the point of almost killing them, it's time for them to go! They are beautiful and I do like them, but the only way for me maybe to keep them would be on a trellis where I can get at them easily to prune off the seed pods. Even that may still be asking for trouble, if I miss one of their spring-loaded seed pods that spread their seeds everywhere! I've tried to pull them out, but I think their root systems, that somehow extend to China, are made of a material that is very difficult to cut and should be used in bullet-proof vests!

My yard has several large trees on it. So I go from full shade, to partial shade, to full sun, which allows me to garden with a wide variety of plants.

## OHS Matters

### **What do you like best about your garden? What least? Favourite plants?**

I like the way the mature trees on my property and my neighbours' properties give me shade in various parts of the garden over the course of the day. When I garden, I choose the areas that are in shade during the heat of the summer, and in the spring and fall, I love to be warmed up by the sun where the shade hasn't yet reached.

What I like least about my garden is of course the invasive plants, my clay soil and how some of my neighbours' trees don't drop their leaves until mid-November, when I no longer want to be outside doing yard cleanup.

I love my collection of troughs that I have made over the years with the rock gardening club, but even some of those have been taken over by some invasive plants and need to be repotted with new alpine plants.

My favourite trees are birch trees. I have four on my property: two of the clumping kind I grew from seed - one on purpose and the other from a seedling that I never got around to removing! I feel if you have a birch tree on your property, it is landscaped!

My favourite plants are hostas. I love all the different shades of green, the different variegations, the different sizes and growth habits, and of course, they are easy to care for. I am very worried about the Hosta Virus X which has been stopping me from buying varieties I don't have but would like to get. I'm thinking of setting aside an area of my garden specifically for a bunch of new hostas so they are segregated, then taking extreme care when I work on those plants, sterilizing the tools I use on them.

### **Are you the main gardener or do you have help?**

I am the only gardener at my house except for the occasional squirrel that transplants some tulip bulbs in my yard in strange places. My dog, Scooter, almost never helps in the garden ex-

cept of course he does fertilize the grass in spots!

### **Do you have plans for your garden? Are there things in it you would do differently?**

I would like to incorporate some more roses, hostas, and heucheras this year as I redo my garden.

I have started, but not finished, a small circular garden in my back patio strictly as a foliage garden. It is in a prime location and I want it to look interesting all summer, based not on plants in bloom but on the interest from contrasting foliage colours and shapes.

The sunniest part of my garden does not look very good, and it really needs to be fixed up because it is in full view from my back patio door and deck. I have a raspberry patch there from which I do enjoy the fruit, but I need to camouflage that area with maybe a trellis covered with a clematis and some other nice plants. The mint, knautia, and dame's rocket in that area have got to go, but the peonies can stay! A patch of Japanese anemones needs to be scaled back so I can reclaim the path in front of my raspberries, and I need to weed out many *Centaurea montana* plants. I love them, with their beautiful spidery blue/purple/magenta blooms, and they have been in this garden for over 60 years, but just a couple will do me! I'm more of a plant collector who likes a lot of different plants, not two of the exact same variety.

I would like to stop my annoying habit of buying plants for which I don't have space (they look so nice in the garden centres in the spring - how can I resist!). I wind up plunging their pots into the ground to overwinter them, intending them to be there for just one winter. Five years later they are still there and the roots have found their way out of the pots! I hope to dig up those plants this year and commit them to their final planting location, if they can survive such abuse!

This Newsletter is published by the Ottawa Horticultural Society (OHS) and is distributed to OHS members free of charge.

We depend on our members for ideas, articles and information about what is going on in the gardening community. Please send your submissions to:

Editor, OHS Newsletter  
Ottawa Horticultural Society  
P.O. Box 8921  
Ottawa, Ontario K1G 3J2  
or by email to: [info@ottawahort.org](mailto:info@ottawahort.org)  
or in person at the regular meetings

Editor: Sheila Carey  
Associate/Contributing Editor:  
Sheila Burvill  
Text Preparation and Proofreading:  
Nathalie Chaly, Tuula Talvila  
Design & Layout: Sheila Carey  
Distribution: Gloria Sola

### **Contributors:**

Sheila Burvill  
Sheila Carey  
Jayne Huntley  
Lara Jiménez  
Tina Liu  
Nancy McDonald  
Trish Murphy  
Josie Pazdzior  
Margaret Scratch  
Tuula Talvila  
Lyn Taylor  
Roberta Woods  
Robin Woods