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"In the spring,
at the end
of the day,
you should
smell like dirt."

- MARGARET ATWOOD



Better Late Than Never!

Kelly Noel

In 2017, my husband and I happily downsized and moved from our big old house to a condo. He gave up a large model train layout and I gave up my much-loved large garden.

I was a late-blooming gardener. My family were nature-lovers – I grew up knowing trees and wildflowers – but, except for a row of orange daylilies planted by a previous occupant, we had no garden. Every year those daylilies grew up out of the faded foliage and bloomed for weeks with never a bit of care from us. I loved them because they saved my life when I was six and decided to stretch out on a verandah railing (4 inches wide and 15 feet high) and soon fell off into the daylilies. I was unscathed – no evidence to alert my mother to my foolishness – saved by the daylilies! It would be another 35 years before I had my next close encounter with a daylily.

Around 1985, a good 12 years after we moved into the house we recently left, when my neighbour suggested maybe I should plant some flowers, I went looking for some of those life-saving, self-sufficient daylilies. The nursery had 7 different cultivars available that day and I bought one of each. I was surprised there were colours other than orange and also surprised they had names – ‘Parian China’, ‘Sirocco’, ‘Invictus’ Even though we had a half-acre lot with many sunny areas, I planted



them in a row along the north side of the house. I enjoyed their blossoms every summer and, at my neighbour's urging, I removed the faded foliage each spring. That was the extent of my gardening – I did not own a tool or a watering can – and it stayed that way for another 10 years.

THEN CAME A LIFE-CHANGING EVENT!

On a beautiful June day in 1994, I went with other teachers to a colleague's home to celebrate the end of the school year. She invited us to sit on her patio and when I stepped out into her backyard I was astonished to see an incredible garden. I was captivated by the variety and colour and amazed to learn that she did it all herself. I left there knowing that I had to have that in my backyard too!

GROWING INTO A GARDENER

I started reading gardening magazines and library books – learning with every page.

Getting instructions from those books, I bought some tools and created another bed, in a sunny location this time, and divided and transplanted some of the daylilies. I waited nervously until spring wondering if I had killed them. They grew!! Inspired, I created a long west-facing foundation bed and pored over plant lists and catalogues choosing bulbs, trees, shrubs and perennials to plant there. Three years later when I retired, I had 2 rain barrels, a small tool shed and 207 different species in 6 beds (I keep records!) – there were 19 daylilies. I loved everything about being in the garden and being a gardener!!

Fast-forward another 10 years to 2006. By that time I had taken several correspondence courses in horticulture, had been a member of the Master Gardeners of Ottawa-Carleton for 3 years, and had added another 226 species to my ever-expanding garden. I was a "specimen gardener" – I wanted at least one of everything. But daylilies were featured – I had 39 different cultivars by then and thought that

was a lot! I grew some annuals from seed every year and usually collected seed from one perennial to try too. That September, I noticed a ripe pod on each of two daylilies. I looked at the seeds – shiny black bits. I decided to try growing them – another life-changing event!!

BECOMING A “HEMEROHOLIC”

I germinated those daylily seeds and planted two of each in the garden, thinking that seeds from the same pod would produce nearly identical plants. All four bloomed in 2008 and I was surprised to see that the “siblings” did not resemble each other and they were noticeably different from the mother plants too. I googled “growing daylilies from seed” and the world of hybridizing daylilies was revealed to me! I was amazed to discover the huge variety of colours, forms and features of modern daylilies – and I wanted them all! I was fascinated

by the pictures of “parents” and “kids” on the websites of hybridizers. I joined the American Hemerocallis Society and the Ontario Daylily Society (ODS). I ordered 100 cultivars from mail order nurseries in Canada. And I resolved to be a backyard hybridizer!

Over the next four years I made many crosses, planted many seeds and continued collecting registered cultivars, many by trading with new friends who were also “daylily people”. By 2013 I had 445 registered cultivars, 256 seedlings that had already bloomed and another 196 that were about to bloom. I loved seeing each seedling bloom for the first time, noting the differences from other seedlings from the same cross. And I gloried in the riot of colour in July and August – there were still lots of other perennials but it definitely was a daylily garden. It was my happy place! But I was running out of room. Most hybridizers make



The Book Nook

TITLES SUGGESTED BY THE OTTAWA
PUBLIC LIBRARY FOR OHS MEMBERS



The Collection Development staff at the Ottawa Public Library have put together a list of materials for OHS members. This list includes new titles added to the OPL collection, as well as titles relevant to OHS monthly talks. In this issue, the focus is on eBooks and digital resources as Library services are currently limited due to Covid-19.

AMONG THE MATERIALS ARE:

The Art of Butterfly Gardening

The Pollinator Victory Garden

Soil Science for Gardeners

Grow Food at Home

Growing a Greener World (PBS)

Mastering the Art of Flower Gardening

Click on the link below to see the complete list from the Library. This also allows you to view availability and place a hold from the link.

https://ottawa.bibliocommons.com/list/share/354296247_collection_development/1629859289_ottawa_horticultural_society_summer_titles

more space by composting the seedlings they deem not "worthy" of registration but I found I just couldn't do that. So I stopped making new seed and started inviting everyone I knew to select some of my "babies" for their garden. I was running out of steam too – the garden was getting bigger and I was getting older and by 2015 I was ready to think about moving on. Fortunately, so was my husband. Over the next two years I downsized the garden – gave dozens and dozens of daylilies and other perennials to friends and managed to find homes for all of the seedlings too. By good luck, we found a ground-level condo with a back door that opens on to a small garden area which I am allowed to plant and tend, so I brought many plants with me, including 50 daylilies. I left 184 behind!!

So I still have a garden to tend but on a much smaller and more manageable scale. My old garden gave me much pleasure and it still does when I visit it virtually through the many photos I took. I only regret all the early years I wasted NOT knowing the joy of being a gardener and the peace of being in a garden. Just by the way, it turned out that the buyer is a developer who wanted our property for the large lot and plans to tear the house down. My old garden has not been weeded since 2017 and will likely be dozed over sometime soon. It still looks colourful from a distance in July – I do a drive-by every now and then! ■

" GARDENING ADDS
YEARS TO YOUR LIFE
– AND LIFE TO YOUR
YEARS. "

– UNKNOWN



Growing Happy, Healthy Hostas

Ann Frederking

I am a Hostaholic! And I caution you that hostas can be extremely addictive! There may be something in hostas that causes addiction because it happens often. One day you're a sensible gardener and the next, you NEED to have as many as you can! I'd like to tell you why hostas are addictive and a bit about them (Image 1).

Hostas are native to Japan, Korea, China and parts of eastern Russia. Many hostas were taken to Europe by the 1800s and, by the 1920s, many were well-known in North America as well. But even in the 1970s, hostas were regarded as rather ordinary. Tissue culturing of hostas began in the 1980s, rapidly increasing the availability of many varieties along with interest in the plant. Hostas have always been a bit unstable, but tissue culturing vastly increased the number of new sports. There are thousands of known cultivars, and hundreds of new ones are registered every year. There is now great interest in breeding hostas with red in the leaves, and with larger, showier flowers.

But what makes hostas so addictive? They come in a variety of greens, blues, yellows, and white. Some are solid colours, while many others have margins that can be any of those colours.

Some margins change colour during the season, usually from yellow to white or creamy white. Others have leaf centres that change colour during the season. Often that colour changes from yellow to white, but it can also

do the reverse. The margins can be wide, medium or narrow. Some hostas are misty or streaky and those streaks vary widely in size, colour, and stability (images 2,3,4).

All these characteristics can be found in hostas of various sizes. Some are only a few inches wide at maturity while others are HUGE! In summary, you can have any of several



LEFT TO RIGHT: Image 2 - 'Marilyn Monroe' - a green hosta with frilly leaves that have white backs. Image 3 - 'Blue Wedgwood' - a classic blue hosta. Image 4 - 'Fire Island' is almost neon yellow in spring. Image 5 - 'Lakeside Mom' is my favourite streaked hosta. Image 6 - 'Wheel' has extremely frilly leaves. Image 7 - 'Island Breeze' has very red petioles extending in the leaf.

Hosta leaves come in many shapes. In addition to different colours, hostas can exhibit other characteristics: red leaf petioles, and leaves that are frilly, very shiny, dull, or with white backs, or with saw-tooth edges. They can be cupped, twisted or folded, wavy, or corrugated. Shapes of hosta mounds also vary. Some are upright. Others are flat and low. They can be neat or unruly. Hosta flowers range from white to dark purple. Some are spidery and delicate while others are large and fragrant and some bloom early while others bloom in autumn.

greens, blues, yellows or white mixed up in many combinations of size, leaf shape, and mound size and shape. And you have many that change colour during the season (images 5,6,7). Is it any wonder that hostas fascinate and become addictive?

CARE OF HOSTAS

Hostas are hardy, easy-care plants, though some newer varieties seem harder to grow well. While they are shade-tolerant, most will grow best with some sun and many like morning sun. Some will tolerate more sun and



a search for "sun-tolerant" hostas yields lists of varieties which will thrive in more sun (image 8 - Praying Hands). But hostas grown in sun will need more water than those grown in shade. In general, blue hostas do better with more shade and yellow hostas need some sun to maintain their yellow colour. Hostas with white centres often need morning sun or highly filtered sun. If in doubt, try growing a hosta in a pot and moving it to find the right spot.

Hostas thrive with our cold winters even though they originated in warmer climates. In fact, they require a cool dormant period of about 40 days under 40 degrees F (around 4 degrees C) to grow well. They like moisture but need soil that drains well, otherwise crown rot may result. They appreciate some fertilization during the season but not after September.

Division of hostas is not necessary! But if you want more plants, the mound is getting too large, part of it is developing a sport that needs separating, or if the plant develops a 'Fairy Ring' (image 9), they can be divided.

If a variegated hosta develops a solid green or blue section, it needs to be removed because it will grow faster and eventually overwhelm the variegated part (images 10,11).

Some hostas divide easily by pulling the divisions apart and they make excellent garden borders (see image 1). Others need to have the crown cut for successful division and I've had better success dividing those in autumn. I also remove sports in autumn or after the plant has unfurled in spring so I can see that I'm dividing the desired part (image 12).

Finally, if you just need to reduce the size of a large plant, you can cut around the clump with a clean spade in early spring.

TOP TO BOTTOM: Image 8 - 'Praying Hands' grew rapidly after I moved it to a sunny location. It has unusual long, folded leaves. Image 9 - 'Ice Cream' had developed a 'fairy ring' in the centre after several years. I dug, divided and replanted closer together. Image 10 - 'Ice Age Trail' had largely sported to solid blue which grew faster than the streaked portion. Image 11 - 'Ice Age Trail' after the solid blue section was divided. Image 12 - Photo of dividing hostas by Bob Axmear from Hosta Library. Sometimes a knife is needed.

HOSTA PROBLEMS

Slugs are the best-known hosta pest and they LOVE hostas. I battle them by dousing the plants as they emerge with an ammonia mixture: 1 part ammonia to 10 parts water. I repeat in autumn when I cut back the hostas.

Foliar nematodes (image 13) affect over 200 types of plants and are in most gardens. With pesticide bans, there is little we can do to eliminate foliar nematodes although experiments are taking place. Their damage to hostas is very clear because of the strong vein structure. You can destroy the plants or live with the nematodes. I remove leaves as soon as I suspect they are affected and do a good fall garden clean-up with ammonia-water solution. I've had some affected plants show few or no signs the next year. I've also dug up small plants early in spring, before the leaves unfurl, washed the roots and replanted in clean soil, usually in a pot. A year later, no nematodes.

Hosta Virus X (HVX) is the most common hosta virus and it affects different cultivars in different ways. HVX may not show symptoms for a few years, but it can be present and it can be spread to other plants if you are not careful. Classic symptoms of HVX vary from plant to plant though the most common symptoms are: an 'ink bleed' along the veins in leaves - lighter in dark leaves and darker in light leaves; the texture of the leaf may appear lumpy, or puckered, or appear to have patches or streaks of sunken, wrinkled or collapsed tissue.

See <https://www.hostalibrary.org/firstlook/HVX.htm> for pictures and information.

The best way to avoid HVX is to purchase from reliable hosta nurseries. Ask what their suppliers are doing to prevent HVX. Treat new plants as possibly infected and develop a habit of good garden hygiene, cleaning your tools well with alcohol or bleach (wipes) before moving to another plant. If you find an infected plant in your garden, destroy it. There is no cure. Do NOT compost it and do not plant another hosta in the same location for several years.



LEFT TO RIGHT: Image 13 - Foliar nematode damage is very clear in hosta leaves. Image 14 - 'Loyalist' (L) and 'Patriot' (R) are related plants that have reversed colours. Image 15 - some plants in this garden are solid colour and several pick up colours from each other. Image 16 - A theme garden - all hostas are members of the "mouse ears" family or have mouse in their name. Image 17 - 'Liberty' is the crown jewel of any garden that contains it.

PLANNING A HOSTA GARDEN!

Some would consider planning a hosta garden futile because hostas don't always grow as expected and hosta lovers always find new varieties they want to grow. But some guidelines might help.

I like to plant hostas with inverse colours near each other (image 14 'Loyalist' and 'Patriot'). Or with colours that pick-up on colours in surrounding plants (image 15).

Be sure to include solid colour hostas in green, blue or yellow to give the eye a rest from the variegated ones. Learn what shape and size of mound to expect and plan accordingly. Finally, bear in mind that the same plant in varying light situations may look very different.

WHAT HOSTAS SHOULD ONE START WITH?

The American Hosta Growers Association has created "Hostas of the Year". They include many stellar varieties that would make good additions to a garden. **You can find them at:** http://www.hostagrowers.org/Hosta_of_the_Year.html

Hosta names vary widely, and some people like to make theme gardens based on them (image 16). Some could be racy names like 'Illicit Affair', 'Hanky Panky', 'Striptease' or they could relate to an interest or to names of family members. But if you choose plants based on your family members's names, I suggest you research the plant first and ensure you like it.

Don Rawson has developed over 90 lists about all aspects of hostas. Using those lists, you can choose hostas by many different characteristics. You'll find these lists at: <http://www.hostalists.org/>

Happy hosta growing!

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HOSTA RESOURCES

There are many books on hostas, but most have been around for awhile and may not have information on newer varieties. They may also be out of print. Check a library or Amazon.

HOSTA SOURCES

We are very fortunate in the Ottawa area to have three excellent hosta nurseries nearby. All offer excellent plants and are aware of HVX.

THEY ARE:

Budd Gardens

<https://www.buddgardens.com/>

Rideau Woodland Ramble

<https://www.rideauwoodlandramble.com/>

Whitehouse Perennials

<https://www.whitehouseperennials.com/>

In addition, you can find hostas at a number of other sources, but I would ask whether their supplier tests for viruses and treat hostas from other sources as potentially infected for the first few years you have them.

In addition to local sources, there are mail order hostas sources in Ontario.

THREE ARE:

Hosta Choice Gardens

<https://hostachoicegardens.com/>

Hosta Fever (Barrie)

<https://hostafever.com/>

Gardens Plus (Peterborough)

<https://www.gardensplus.ca/>

Mail order plants usually come bare root and should be planted quickly. Because of shipping costs, I limit myself to one nursery each year.

For other Ontario sources, check the Ontario Hosta Society web site.

<http://www.ontariohostasociety.com>

More hosta resources on the following page

Hosta

INFORMATION RESOURCES

HOSTA LIBRARY

<http://www.hostalibrary.org/>

Many pictures and much other information

HOSTA REGISTRY

<http://hostaregistrar.org/>

Information about registered hostas

MY HOSTAS DATABASE

<http://myhostas.be/>

Information about many others, including unregistered cultivars and also sport families and much other information.

HOSTA DICTIONARY

<https://americanhostasociety.org/Education/Hosta-Dictionary.htm>

AMERICAN HOSTA SOCIETY

<http://www.americanhostasociety.org/>

ONTARIO HOSTA SOCIETY

<http://www.ontariohostasociety.com/>

CHAT LISTS ON:

NATIONAL GARDENING ASSOCIATION

<https://garden.org/forums/view/funkia/>

HALLSON GARDENS FORUMS

<http://www.perennialnursery.com/forums/>

FACEBOOK

Groups for both the **American Hosta Society** and the **Ontario Hosta Society** as well as several other hosta-related groups.

If you'd like to look at my own pictures, I've been tracking my hostas since 2008 at:

<https://violaann.smugmug.com/Garden/Hostas>

(Note: I've not yet uploaded 2019 pictures) ■

A Sea Change

Sheila Burvill

As I told you in March, last year my husband Eric and I went from living in a single-family home surrounded by a garden to inhabiting an apartment with only a rooftop terrace to grow plants on.

What with the hub-bub of moving in mid-May, the endless number of legal and financial details to attend to, the fact that the terrace area was still under construction, the ongoing construction in other parts of our building, the need to quickly get the containers that we'd brought from our old house out in the open air, plus my complete inexperience with balcony gardening, last year's 'garden' did not amount to much.

MY 2019 GARDEN

The big ceramic containers we'd brought from our house were full of garden soil, many with individual hostas still in them. So for the time being, we squeezed them in next to the outer wall of our apartment, the only sheltered and clear place available. We'd also brought six or seven miniature hostas in small wooden containers and they, too, were moved onto the terrace. Some of the large ceramic containers that were empty came with us as

well and they got shoved in wherever.

It was mid-June before we managed a trip out to Ritchie Feed and Seed where we found two rather sad-looking tomato plants, a couple of flowering annuals, some garden soil and some bags of composted cow manure. As usual, we bought some herbs from the Byward market stands to add to the thyme and oregano plants bought at the OHS spring sale. I planted the herbs into the biggest empty planter and, as usual, put a rosemary plant into a more ornamental pot so that it could be moved inside for the winter months. The tomato plants, both of which were small varieties, went into another big pot. Eventually, in mid-summer, the terrace surround went up, the building debris was removed, the pots moved into more felicitous places, and a few pieces of outdoor furniture were purchased. That was our garden in 2019.

Once everything was planted, the thought occurred to me: would there be any pollinators

so far above the ground? (Bear in mind that our terrace is atop a two-storey building.) Indeed there were. Both bumble and solitary bees appeared, along with some other insects.

WATCH AND LEARN

Then I did what every gardener should do when moving into a new garden – I just sat and observed for a year. The idea is that plans can then be made on the basis of what was observed.

The growing conditions I observed through last year surprised me. We have a unit that faces both east and south. There's a fourth floor balcony above that overhangs a goodly section of the terrace. So I was expecting a lot of shade – perfect, I thought, for my beloved hostas. In reality, we get a lot of sun even in the areas under the overhead balcony where direct sunlight hits from early morning until noon during the summer months. Even more surprising was the wind. Because of the configuration of the two component buildings of our complex, the wind was almost constant last summer and fall.

MIXED RESULTS

Despite the increased sun and wind though, the hostas did quite well, although the colour on all of their leaves was a brighter green and yellow than it had been in our house garden, and the blue variety was not so much blue as green. The leaves also stayed colourful and intact until later in the fall than usual. No slug damage!

The rosemary prospered, as did the annuals, but the tomatoes showed signs of wilt early on and although they bore a fair amount of fruit, I had to pull out and destroy the plants in August. The herb garden, planted so hopefully with fresh plants and placed so carefully in full sun areas, just sat and moped.

Not what you'd call a roaring success. In fact, only the rosemary gave a good result. It started in mid-June 2019 as a little seedling, and you can see from the photo, taken at the end of April 2020, how well it's done. It even blossomed for a short time in November. (The pot, by the way, is a purchase from the OHS September sale of a few years ago.)



LESSONS LEARNED

Take a look at the photo to see our poor huddled mass of a 'garden' in winter. Isn't it sad? When the weather turned cold, we gathered all the pots together, wrapped them in covers purchased at Lee Valley Tools, and



placed them close to one another next to the building wall that we thought might offer protection throughout the winter since it blocks the prevailing north-west winds. A bad mistake

was that I completely forgot that the roots are the most sensitive part of a plant over-wintering out of doors in a container. I should have first found and put down some sort of insulating material on the floor of the terrace under the plants. Sigh!

There are two reasons for last year's dismal results, as I see it. Well, maybe three. Of course buying plant stock so late in the 2019 growing season already imposed a challenge. Plants remaining on nursery shelves in mid-June are usually the runts of the plant litter and require much better nurturing than I could give them last year. Then there was that wind. Because of the building design, our terrace essentially sits in a wind tunnel. Almost every day we have a breeze, strong at times, out there – lovely for us humans but drying and difficult for growing plants. I'd expected the terrace surround to block the wind at plant level but that just doesn't happen. But quite possibly the main challenge those poor herbs and tomatoes had was the quality of the soil I used for them.

LOOKING FORWARD – EVER HOPEFUL

Some of the new challenges I now face include how to identify which plants are best suited to be grown year after year in the same pot, and what steps to take to make sure they continue to get the nutrients they require. Of course, I could just grow annuals or be prepared to junk perennials every year, but to my Scottish snobbish mind, that's not a thrifty way to do real gardening. So perennials stuck in the same pot year after year it shall be.

Somehow, we have to deflect the wind from plants most sensitive to it and, perhaps, we can also create a little more shade. The big problem, I've come to realize, is how to provide good soil to the plants. In our old garden, the soil came with the house and we enriched and added to it with soil deliveries

brought in by the truckload from suppliers and also by producing our own compost. (I had three composters in the good old days.) But now, essentially, I have to make my own soil. I suspect it will involve a lot more soil-less mix and whatever odor-less manures I can find. Maybe buying some compost from the City of Ottawa would help. Hand-trucking it from the back of our car, up the elevator, down the corridor, through our living room, and up the two steps to the terrace will be a challenge.

I used to have a nifty plant bench (made by my husband from Lee Valley plans) and I had a large collection of tools and equipment, but those are pretty much all gone now, donated to the OHS or to friends. It's fine for me to say I'll have to make my own soil but it's pretty hard to do when you have little storage or appropriate working space.

We'd planned to scrutinize gardening catalogues and websites during March and April 2020 and to come up with some sort of overall design for the terrace but COVID-19 put paid to that. The only solace I have right now is that, in late April, some shoots of some of the hostas are poking their noses out of the soil (see photo). Gives you faith that Mother Nature looks after her own. Even if the COVID restrictions are lifted by early summer, 2020 may just be a reprise of 2019 on our terrace. We'll see.

ANY ADVICE?

If you have any experience in the sort of gardening I'm now contemplating, please let me know. You can buttonhole me at meetings or sales (assuming we are able to have these this year) or send me a message at **saburvill@sympatico.ca**.

I need all the help I can get. ■



Early Spring Wonders

Maureen Mark

Covid-19 does not mean that you cannot go out and explore the trails.

Early morning is a great time to easily keep your distance. On May 4, I went hunting for spring ephemerals at the South Marsh Highland Conservation Klondike Trail. *Sanguinaria* (blood root) were scattered along the road at the edge of the forest. On the trail, a few toad lilies were blooming, but there are swaths more that will come into bloom over the next week. Large patches of trillium are showing buds that will burst open in the next week or two. *Hepatica* were freely scattered along the trail. And a magnificent clump of *Corydalis lutea* was blooming. Ferns are just starting to emerge. There will be many more sights to be seen over the next few weeks along the trail. ■

Cabbages of the Cold

Tuula Talvila

My 10-year old son has a fascination with finding cold, remote, inhospitable places of the world and he recently informed me about the Kerguelen Islands, part of the French Southern and Antarctic Lands in the Indian Ocean, roughly equidistant from South Africa, Australia, and Antarctica. Also suitably known as the Desolation Islands, they are one of the most remote locations on earth, accessible to tourists by boat only four times per year. The only inhabitants are wind-buffed French scientists.

Photo attribution: Armand Patoir / CC BY-SA

The thing that caught my attention about these isolated, bleak, glacial hunks of volcanic rock poking up above the frigid waters of the ocean, was the native plant life. The Antarctic tundra ecosystem supports limited plant species – mostly mosses, lichens, and grasses – but the islands are known especially for one endemic species, *Pringlea antiscorbutica*, the Kerguelen cabbage, discovered by Captain James Cook's surgeon and naturalist, William Anderson, in 1776. The first scientific description of the plant was made by English botanist Sir Joseph Dalton Hooker. He had visited the islands aboard the *Erebus* and *Terror* during the 1839-1843 Ross Antarctic expedition and had dined on the cabbages.

SURVIVAL IN A HARSH LAND

Like other organisms that eke out an existence in harsh climates, the Kerguelen cabbage exhibits some adaptations to its challenging environment. Other members of the Brassica family typically rely on insects for pollination but an absence of insect pollinators combined with extremely strong winds means these cabbages can't rely on either insect- or wind-pollination between individuals and instead are self-pollinating. In the flowers, the (male) stamens project out and the (female) stigma has long threadlike projections; presumably these adaptations increase the chances of pollen ending up on target.

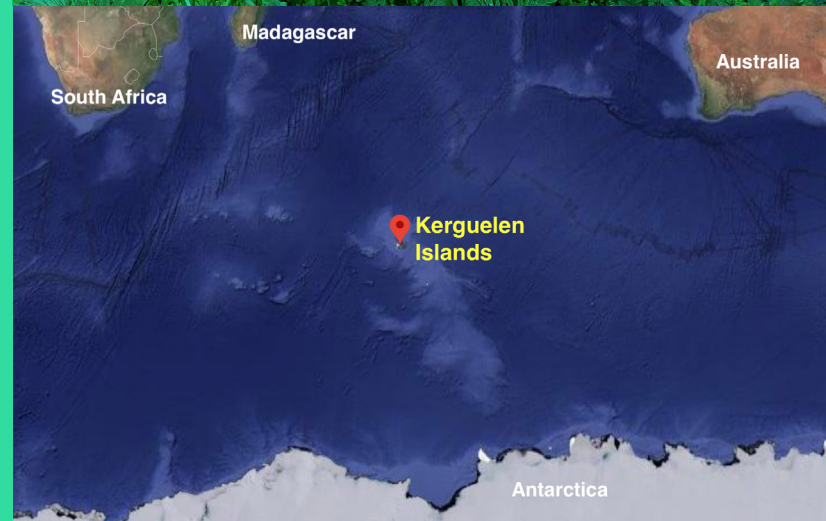
Kerguelen cabbage plants also exhibit other characteristics related to cold-tolerance. Contrary to what one may expect, they have

no dormant period during the year. Instead, growth of vegetative and inflorescence structures occurs during the winter, followed by a period of seed development in the summer. Additionally, mature plants exhibit high levels of polyamines. These compounds, found in all living organisms, are involved in many processes of plant growth and development and may improve the ability to photosynthesize under stress conditions. Perhaps this is what allows them to continue to photosynthesize during winter's low-light conditions, providing the plants with enough carbohydrates for continued growth.

KERGUELEN CABBAGE

Pringlea antiscorbutica

- it is the only member of the genus *Pringlea*, in the cabbage family Brassicaceae
- the specific epithet *antiscorbutica* is Latin for "against scurvy", referring to the high vitamin C content of oils in the plant's leaves – it was eaten by sailors (it also contains high levels of potassium)
- its ancestor is thought to have arrived from South America 5 million years ago
- it grows to approximately 50cm in diameter
- it produces flower stalks when approximately four years old which can remain on the plant for several years
- the cabbage is potentially endangered by rabbits, introduced to the islands in about 1874



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Pringlea, Wikipedia:

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pringlea> ■

Make your Garden **POP** in August

Lori Gandy

If gardening has taught me anything, it is patience. "Everything in its time", Mother Nature would chide whenever I surveyed my garden in August and bemoaned the fleeting splendour of the peonies and the irises and all the other perennials that make their thrilling but brief appearance in spring and early summer, and then disappear for another year. In the heartless heat of August, I am especially prone to heavy sighs as I crave a shot

of colour to replace those spent flowers. Over the years, I've learned to look for bright, bold and spectacularly coloured perennials and pop them strategically into my garden to ensure a constant flare of colour throughout the summer.

Below are some suggestions on the kinds of perennials and flowering shrubs you might consider to brighten up your late-summer garden this year.

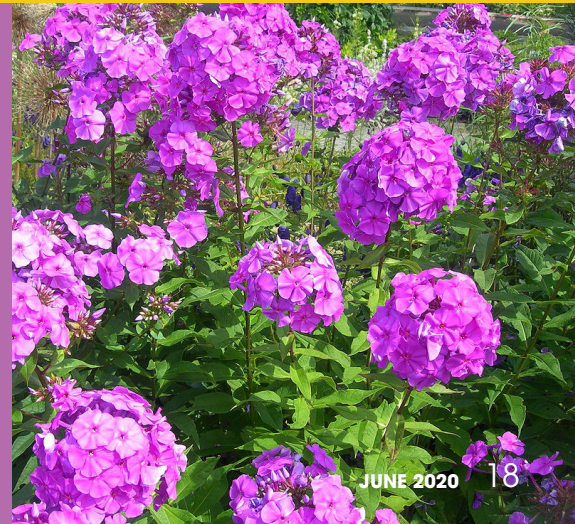


DAYLILIES are a must in any garden, not just because they flower non-stop, but because of the range of colours available - apricot, bronze, crimson, gold, lemon, mahogany, maroon, orange, pink, purple, red, violet, and yellow from pale yellow to bright orange. While each flower lasts for only a day, they bloom constantly and will fill your garden with colour throughout the summer. 'Stella D'Oro' is particularly welcome as it continues to bloom into September.

Photo 1: 'Stella D'Oro' daylily (Photo: F.D. Richards / CC BY-SA 2.0)

PHLOX is another great late-summer flower. These tall, majestic perennials come in a range of colours from white and soft pastel pinks and purples to a range of vibrant reds, oranges, purples and pinks. Many varieties have a contrasting eye that enhances their appeal. Phlox are true stand-outs in a garden with many tall varieties that will complement the other bold colours and give you a summer-long display of colour.

Photo 2: Phlox paniculata (Photo: Atilin, public domain)





I was introduced to the magnificent **ROSE MALLOW**

HIBISCUS FIREBALL a few years ago. These perennials take their time coming back to life in the spring (my first year I was worried that they had died over the winter) but they take off like a rocket once they do and produce dinner-plate-sized flowers in flaming red or pink. They are a tall, heavy plant, so give them space and tie them up and they will dazzle you from August through September.

I have a fondness for summer perennials that give a show of colour in varying hues of yellow, orange and red. **Helenium** bears yellow or orange daisy-like flowers and is a towering presence near my back fence.

COREOPSIS comes in a range of yellows, oranges and reds, with varying bloom sizes.

BLACK-EYED SUSAN is one of the most welcome plants in my late-summer garden. These daisy-like flowers are the smiles in my back yard in August, so bright and cheerful. I don't know whether they are smiling, but I certainly do when I see them tossing about in a gentle wind.

Finally, the **CARDINAL FLOWER** (*Lobelia cardinalis*) is a show-stopper of tall flaming-red spires that never disappoints. It's also an Ontario native.

Photo 3: Coreopsis (Photo: Rob Duval / CC BY-SA)

Photo 4: Black-eyed Susan (Photo: Lorax / CC BY-SA 3.0)

Photo 5: Cardinal flower (Photo: Dr. Thomas G. Barnes / Public domain)

DON'T FORGET ABOUT THE SPLENDID BLUES AND PURPLES

While the brazen oranges, yellows and reds match the sizzle of August's heat, other bold and unusual colours – blues and purples especially – provide a striking contrast and act as a cooling counterpoint to all that flaming heat.

I am partial to blue flowers – I don't have many, but I always seek out anything that will give a dash of blue to my garden. I have my share of perennials - **LOBELIA, SALVIA** and **VERONICA** - in various shades of blue and purple, all of which have proven to merit their place in my garden. **BLUE FALSE INDIGO** is another favourite that provides a dependable hit of blue with interesting foliage to boot.

Photo 6: Salvia (Photo credit: jhenning / Pixabay)

Photo 7: Blue false indigo (Photo: Donna L. Long / CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)

Speaking of blue, you can't get a deeper, more dramatic blue (in my view anyways) than with certain varieties of **DELPHINIUM**. The Queens of the June garden, delphiniums will flower again in late August if you cut back the early-summer flowers once they are spent. You can easily find many varieties of this stately, spectacular perennial with spires of blue and purple, along with red, pink and white.



BULBS AND TUBERS

Don't forget the bulbs and tubers that will bring such pizzazz to your summer garden; Asiatic and Oriental lilies, dahlias, and gladiolas, for example. They are well worth the effort to plant in the spring and will provide splendid interest in a range of colours in August and September.



ENDLESS SUMMER BLOOMS

Many other perennials will bloom splendidly in August to brighten up your garden. Check out this link from Landscape Ontario for a listing of perennials in bloom month by month. <https://landscapeontario.com/perennials-in-bloom-month-by-month>

FLOWERING SHRUBS

Perennials aren't the only way to add colour to your August garden. Flowering shrubs can also provide interest in late summer, along with their spring blossoms and often changing foliage in the fall. Summer flowering shrubs come in a variety of sizes and colours, so there should be a few that will fit into your particular space. Here are a few suggestions to try in your garden this year:

BLUEBEARD SHRUB is a real treat in late summer when it bears airy clusters of beautiful blue blooms.

Photo 8: Bluebeard shrub, or Blue Mist Spirea, Caryopteris x clandonensis (Photo: Patrick Standish / CC BY 2.0)

BUTTERFLY BUSH is another summer flowering delight, with deliciously fragrant blooms in purple, lavender, blue, pink and white.

Photo 9: Butterfly bush, Buddleia (Photo: Tuula Talvila)



POTENTILLA is a standard in many gardens, with yellow, pink or white blooms starting in late spring and continuing through to autumn.

Photo 10: Potentilla (Photo: Jerzy Opiola / CC BY-SA)



CONTAINERS FOR THOSE DEAD ZONES

If you still find you have a few barren zones that need a pick-me-up in August, don't overlook the utility of a well-dressed container to fill those dead spots created when perennials finish blooming. Consider creating moveable planters with vibrant annual blooms. You can create impressive displays with various shapes, sizes, textures and colours. The planters can then be moved around your garden whenever a bare spot emerges. Remember to include the thrill (something tall and dramatic), the fill (plants that give body to your planter) and the spill (cascading plants).

The Old Farmer's Almanac provides a stunning example of a container doing some heavy lifting in a perennial garden. This colour-filled container with canna 'Tropicanna', French marigolds and *Callibrachoa* (million bells) is spectacular and can be easily moved around the garden to fill those pesky spots where other perennial blooms have faded.

*Gorgeous container in the perennial garden
(Photo: The Old Farmer's Almanac)*

In these challenging times, and with the winter chill dawdling well into May, it is soothing to think about the garden in August. Prepare now for a splendid show. Nurseries are open – visit your favourites and see what you can do to make your garden pop this summer. ■

SOURCES

Landscape Ontario

<https://landscapeontario.com/gardens>

Canadian Living

<https://www.canadianliving.com/home-and-garden/gardening/article/4-easy-to-care-for-shrubs-to-plant-midsummer>

Old Farmer's Almanac

<https://www.almanac.com>

Canadale

<https://canadale.ca/flowering-shrubs-for-the-summer-garden/>

" THE MOST NOTEWORTHY THING ABOUT GARDENERS IS THAT THEY ARE ALWAYS OPTIMISTIC, ALWAYS ENTERPRISING, AND NEVER SATISFIED. THEY ALWAYS LOOK FORWARD TO DOING SOMETHING BETTER THAN THEY HAVE EVER DONE BEFORE. "

– VITA SACKVILLE-WEST

Bebb's Oak

Central Experimental Farm Arboretum

Sylvia Spasoff

My favourite tree is the Bebb's Oak (*Quercus x bebbiana*) in the Arboretum. A huge, awesome tree which I just happened upon once in our earlier years in Ottawa, even before I was aware of its fame. The first painting is one I did plein air at least 10 years ago. The second was based on a photograph in the Ottawa Citizen, although I got a little carried away with colour. The tree, very sadly, sustained serious damage a few years ago, but it is still magnificent even after almost half of it is gone.

Trees are so important to our survival and I am distressed that so many are being destroyed in the rural regions of Ottawa.

According to Richard Hinchcliff and Roman Popadiouk, authors of "For the Love of Trees: A Guide to the Trees of Ottawa's Central Experimental Farm Arboretum", this much-loved tree, with its great girth, huge spread, and breathtaking canopy, was collected from woodlands nearby and replanted in the Arboretum in 1898. It is a natural hybrid of White Oak (*Q. alba*), which is rare in the Ottawa Valley, and Bur Oak (*Q. macrocarpa*), which is common in the region.

IS THERE A SPECIAL TREE IN YOUR LIFE?

Is there a tree in your neighbourhood that has special meaning for you? Is there a tree that evokes fond memories or one that you find yourself inspired by? Is there a tree in the Arboretum or Gatineau Park that you love to visit? We want to showcase some of the beloved and most beautiful trees in the National Capital Region.

ARTWORK BY SYLVIA SPASOFF



Please send in your nominations to: **Jamie Robertson - jamesrossrobertson@gmail.com**

Please include a photo if possible and a brief write-up of why this tree is special. ■

Rideau Woodland **Ramble**

David Dunn

2020 is here and the Ramble is now 20 years old!

Rideau Woodland Ramble will celebrate all year long with the launch of a new book titled *The Ramble at 20*, new art installations, and other events. Unfortunately, due to the Covid-19 situation, the annual "Art, Jazz and the Garden" event scheduled for June 20th has been cancelled.

The book, *The Ramble at 20*, celebrates the 20th anniversary of this special place and takes a look at its history, from its birth as a result of the ice storm, all the way up to today. It is 39 pages, costs \$47.25 (includes taxes), and will be available at speaking engagements, and at Rideau Woodland Ramble.

We look forward to continuing to evolve and improve and learn in the years ahead. Thank-you to all who have supported the Ramble over the last 20 years... and for all the support in the future! ■

Rideau Woodland Ramble

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www.facebook.com/rideauwoodlandramble

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THE RAMBLE AT 20
BY ROB CARON & DAVID DUNN

The OHS SHOWS CORNER

A NOTE FOR EXHIBITORS &
POTENTIAL NEW EXHIBITORS

BY MAUREEN MARK *Convenor*

Sadly, we will not be having a Spring Show due to Covid-19. As a result, we will be moving the Indoor Plant classes (Sections A and B) and the Special Exhibits classes (Section H) on pages 34 and 35 of your Yearbook to the Fall Show.

As garden centres are now open, review your show schedules on pages 34-37 of the Yearbook, and make your lists before you head out. Check out what planters you might want to fill or buy and fill. Maybe this is the year that you go all out and prepare a trough garden. Indulge in your creativity. You might win Best in Show that comes with a \$20 prize! Or you may indulge in your curiosity. Never tried dahlias before? There are many new compact

varieties that are easy to grow. Time to try some vegetables? Check out all the heritage tomatoes. There are so many more varieties available.

Maybe you think you shouldn't bother as there might not be a September meeting and therefore no show? Banish the thought. We will have a show one way or another. The Ottawa Orchid Society is having a Virtual Show and so can we - complete with prizes. ■

Let's get growing!



ABOUT US

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:

info@ottawahort.org

The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter are solely those of the individual authors. They do not purport to reflect the position of the OHS or its members.

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