

THE EAST YORK GARDEN

NEWSLETTER OF THE EAST YORK GARDEN CLUB



The East York Garden Club is a member of the Ontario Horticultural Association, District 5.

Meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month (except August and December) in the Stan Wadlow Clubhouse, 373 Cedarvale Avenue at 7:30 p.m.

Refreshments are available at 7:00 p.m. The Clubhouse is wheelchair-accessible. Visitors are always welcome.

Yearly membership fees are \$20 for a single, and \$30 for a family. To inquire about membership, please contact Suzanne Boyd at 416-423-5857.

Visit us on the web at www.eygc.ca

President:

Veronica Callinan

Vice President:

Linda Boyko
Susan Bartlett

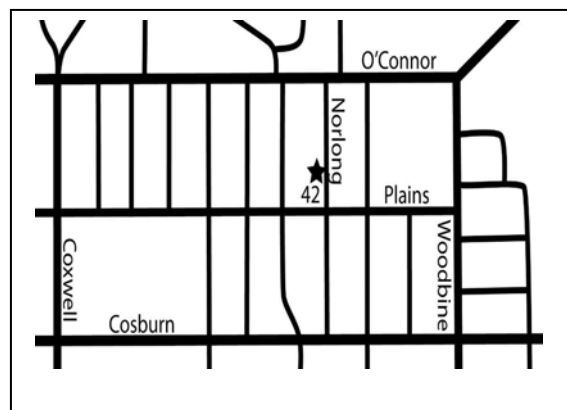
Newsletter Editor:

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Thursday, July 16, 2009, 7:00 p.m. Members' Pot-Luck Dinner

This year's dinner will be at the garden of Mary Lou Burt at 42 Norlong Boulevard. Norlong Boulevard is 2 blocks west of Woodbine Ave. Mary Lou's home is between Plains Road and O'Connor.



Please bring a dish with six portions, a plate, cup, personal cutlery and a lawn or folding type chair. Drinks will be provided.

(The law requires us to give notice that the food has not been inspected i.e., eat at your own risk. In keeping with food safety, please follow general food safety practices – wash your hands when cooking, keep cold foods cold and hot foods hot.)

Saturday, August 22, 2009, 2:00 – 4:30 p.m. Annual Show & Tea

The Annual Show is our largest show of the year. Come and see the many varieties of wonderful things our members grow. Your entries for the show will be accepted between 7 o'clock and 8 o'clock on Friday evening, and between 9 o'clock and 11:15 a.m. on Saturday morning. Judging begins at 11:20 a.m. sharp, with viewing between 2:00 p.m. and 4:30 p.m.

There will be an informative talk (topic to be announced) and this year there will be a draw for some special garden items – see page 6 for details.

If you'd like to help out on Saturday or with the setup on Friday evening, please give Cristina Brown a call (755-9077). For the afternoon tea, we would appreciate donations of desserts, cookies, or other goodies.

Please note: at this time we are still planning/hoping to hold the Annual Show at the Stan Wadlow Clubhouse. In the event a prolonged City strike makes this impossible, we will find an alternate location.

Prez Patch

by *Veronica Callinan*

There's nothing more motivating to compost than a garbage strike. Composting and buying skinless/boneless meat leaves almost nothing to go into the green bin. Except, in my case, kitty litter...but I digress. If your green bin absolutely stinks, there's a temporary garbage drop off site at the bottom of Haldon Avenue, down in Taylor Creek Park, open 7AM to 7PM daily. Note: Keep the veggie seeds out of the composter, though. Tomatoes and green peppers are wonderful, but not when they grow all through your flowerbeds.

How to...The Toronto Master Gardeners in conjunction with the Toronto Health Connection put together this fantastic fact sheet on composting. Since not everyone has internet, the info is below.

COMPOST FOR YOUR ORGANIC GARDEN

Beautiful lawns and gardens are achievable without the use of pesticides. Composting is an integral part of a natural approach to garden and lawn care.

Compost is partially decomposed organic matter. Most often, organic matter is found in the form of plant residues and manure of plant-eating animals. It contains a healthy range of nutrients essential to plant growth. The gradual degradation of organic matter into compost by soil organisms releases these elements slowly, at rates and in forms plants can utilize.

Why Compost?

Composting yard and kitchen waste is beneficial for many reasons. Compost is the backbone to any good soil fertility program. It contains all the basic nutrients required for vigorous plant growth. The nutrients in compost are released slowly over time and are readily available to plants. Compost helps keep soil pH levels in a range that maximizes nutrient availability to the plants. Compost improves the structure and water holding capacity of soil.

Compost supports the growth of healthy plants. Healthy plants have an increased ability to resist attack by insects and diseases. Compost protects plants from soil-borne diseases by inoculating them with beneficial organisms that fight disease.

Compost serves as a food source for soil dwelling creatures. These organisms assist in decomposing organic matter and help improve water and gas movement through the soil. The

improved soil structure eases plant root growth through the earth.

Composting recycles material that would otherwise end up in a landfill. Its use reduces the need for inorganic fertilizers on the lawn and garden.

Methods of Composting: Hot versus Cold Composting

Hot composting requires a few simple, but specific, steps. If done correctly, it generates heat to 160°F, which will destroy most weed seeds and disease organisms. Hot composting is fast – from start to finish can take only 3 weeks. Even if the conditions for hot composting are not maintained, the organic matter in the pile will decompose and produce compost. This slower method is called cold composting and takes 6 – 12 months. It has the advantage of requiring a less management and works better if you have more brown material than green.

How To Make Hot Compost

This is the most intensive composting method but it is far from being complicated. Your compost pile (bin) should be on level ground and have good drainage. Stockpile all the materials you will need to build a pile that is 1 cubic metre (3 cubic feet) in size.

Reduce the particle size of the raw materials to be composted to about 5 cm (2") pieces if possible. Fresh succulent material and smaller particles break down faster. However, very small particles such as saw dust or very finely shredded leaves may slow the process by limiting the amount of air in the pile.

To begin, place about 12 cm (5") of coarse, woody material (e.g. small twig and plant stalks) at the bottom of the pile. This encourages air to move freely through the pile.

A layer of brown (carbon-rich) material is added, followed by a green (nitrogen-rich) layer. Both layers should be about 12 cm (5") thick. Nitrogen-rich materials include fruit and vegetable trimmings, coffee grounds, rotted manure and grass clippings. Carbon rich materials to be composted include straw, leaves, wood shavings, saw dust and newspaper. Add 2.5cm (1") of finished compost or soil on top of the green layer. This inoculates the pile with soil microbes and also limits odours.

Compost ... cont'd

Mix the layers together as you continue to build the pile (browns, greens, soil), until it is 1 m (3–4 feet) high. Maintain moisture in the pile, keeping it damp but not saturated.

At this point, cover the bin and wait a week. As the compost pile heats up it will feel warm to the touch and may release steam.

When the pile starts to cool down, turn it. The pile will begin to heat up again, and about a week later the temperature in the bin will reach its maximum. At this time it should be mixed again. Let another week pass. The material inside should now be sufficiently decomposed to be used as finished compost.

How To Make Cold Compost

Cold bin composting involves half filling a bin with brown materials (carbon rich) and putting green materials (nitrogen rich) between brown additions. Add a layer of dirt on top.

When the bin is full, start another if space permits. In a year or so, finished compost can be taken from the bottom of the bin. A bin isn't necessary but it helps keep the area neat.

Sheet composting involves top-dressing the soil with organic matter and allowing it to decompose over time. Leaves and wood chips are used around trees, shrubs and other plantings in this way. Trench composting involves digging a trench about 20cm (8") deep, filling it with kitchen waste and then covering with soil. Compost will form a few months.

Compost Considerations and Uses:

Never add meat, bones, dairy products, fats/oil, cat/dog waste or herbicide/pesticide treated plants into the compost pile.

When layering organic material never use more than 50% of brown organic matter (e.g. wood chips, autumn leaves, sawdust, straw) as they slow the decomposition process.

If there are rodents in your area, use galvanized screening material to enclose the bottom of the compost bin.

Finished compost can be used as a soil amendment in the garden, as a mulch for annuals, perennials, trees and shrubs and as a top-dressing for the lawn. Compost can also be used to make compost tea that can be applied as a liquid organic fertilizer or foliar spray.

Instructions for making compost tea are at <http://www.toronto.ca/compost/value.htm>

Canada Day

Despite the last minute change of location, our sale was a success and the weather held. Many thanks to everyone who donated or came out and special thanks to Suzanne Bond for providing her place as a backup.



Photo: Veronica Callinan

Weed Control: Corn Gluten

We are all noticing the effects of the pesticides ban, if not in our own gardens then certainly in public areas. The City strike has also contributed to the free reign of clover, dandelions and others interesting things, but perhaps that is not the vision you had for your own yard. This is a reprinted article.

The all-natural herbicide is a proven weed stopper in the lawn, but is it effective in garden beds?

Findings: Not so much, reports Martin Nicholson of Oregon's Portland Parks and Recreation Department. He applied it four times a year to shrub beds at the application rate recommended on the label and found that weeds in the beds actually increased. Corn-gluten meal prevents germination of weed seeds, but because it is rich in nitrogen, it also acts as a fertilizer. In comparison trials, researchers at Iowa State University experimented with higher-than-recommended rates of application and had some success with weed prevention. Regardless of its

Corn Gluten cont'd

effectiveness against weeds, corn-gluten meal "remains a solid choice for a nonmanure, balanced, organic fertilizer." notes Bob Fiorello of the San Francisco Recreation and Park Department. Organic Gardening Magazine Advice: Use corn-gluten meal judiciously.

In the concentration that was effective in preventing weed-seed germination at Iowa State (three times the recommended), you may be applying an excessive amount of nitrogen that could damage your plants and the environment.

Article from Organic Gardening, Aug/Oct. 2008 Research Report.02

Other sites:

Toronto - What to Buy:

http://www.toronto.ca/health/pesticides/what_to_buy.htm

Toronto Environmental Alliance

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

Please share your suggestions for weed control! newsletter@eygc.ca

Service Providers

In response to requests about a reputable East York service providers, The East York Garden Club won't endorse any, but will share the information provided from our Members, to our Members. Here are some of our members' recommendations:

Electrical Contractor

- Beni Katz - Big Ben Electrical Contracting Co. Ltd. 905-889-4133

Garden Renovation

- Leo McPherson - MCP Landscape Contractors 416-715-7510

House cleaning

- Elizabeth Adam 416 421 4954
- Darlene 416 282 6273

Garden Help

- Elizabeth Adam 416 421 4954

Plumber

- Nestor Koukoulidis 416 732 6010
- David Vonsolkema 416 465 4991
dv@sympatico.ca

Real Estate

- Gabriela Petrovic - HomeLife/Cimerman Real Estate Ltd. 416-690-6363

Tree Trimming

- Al Miley - Miley & Associates 416-562-3269

Upholstery

- Princess Perfect Upholstery 416-465 0821
lisajo@princessperfect.ca
www.princessperfect.ca



The Library by Karen Bell

The Library Committee has been working on updating the Club's Library.

A number of new books have been purchased which cover the widest possible range of gardening topics. This book explains how to do a number of outdoor projects:

Popular Mechanics Outdoor & Garden Projects

Here's a guide that shows you how with photos, diagrams and text. If you have been thinking about building fences, gates, walkways, walls, masonry, lighting or water features, you'll find good information here, and help with all-important choices of material and styles.

Includes (with typical PM thoroughness) a glossary of terms, tool lists and information on permits.



The EYGC LIBRARY makes an appearance before most meetings; feel free to browse and borrow a book. Your name must be entered on the card in the back of the book and left with the librarian as a record of who has borrowed the book.

Passionate gardener? Passionate about volunteering? Become a Master Gardener!

Basic gardening knowledge entrance exam September 21

Personal interviews September 28-30

Course start January 2010

To register or for info:

jgardin609@rogers.com

Stepping Stones in your Garden Beds by Anna Leggatt

Our May speakers showed us how to make concrete steps so we could walk through a larger bed without crushing an emerging shoot.

Now is an ideal time to try, as the plants are all above ground level and we can see the shrivelled remains of the spring bulbs.

This is roughly what they suggested with my interpretation and suggestions:

Look at your bed. How many stepping stones will you need? Will you need to pass through quickly or stop and pull a weed or two? You will need larger steps for the later. How long is your stride?

By a bag (or more) of ready mix concrete.

Put a plastic sheet on a flat, shady outdoor surface or garage floor.

Select large leaves - biggest Hosta, ferns, Rogersia, Rhubarb, and lay them on the plastic with the prominent veins up. They suggested one leaf per step.

Mix the concrete adding water gradually till the mix is a bit thicker than cottage cheese and will hold a shape. You can add concrete colouring at this stage.

Pile the mix onto the leaves just going past their edges. Try for 4 cm thick.

Add reinforcement for larger stones - wire mesh or fibreglass treads. Put a layer of concrete mix on the leaf, then the mesh, then more concrete.

Cover with a plastic sheet and leave for 48 hours.

Gently lift up, peel off the leaf and use an old knife to trim the edges if desired.

Cover in plastic again and ideally leave for 2 weeks to cure.

Place in the garden and admire!

I am going to try this - come and see. Join the Ontario Rock Garden and Hardy Plant Society on a visit to my garden on Sunday, August 16 from 3-5pm

Anna Leggatt



August Show Draw

There will be a special draw for a chance to win this beautiful dragonfly trellis donated by Gardenpizzazz.

Other prizes include two Lee Valley \$50 gift certificates handcrafted twig garden items.

Tickets will be available for purchase at the July pot-luck and at the August Show.

UPCOMING EVENTS

July 18 & 19, 2009 (Saturday & Sunday) - Marion Jarvie - Open Garden (37 Thornheights Road, Thornhill)

The third of four weekends that Marion Jarvie has her garden open for viewing (the garden will also be open on the weekend of August 15 & 16). There are always many select plants for sale, and there is no charge for admittance. Open from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., rain or shine.

Sunday, July 19, 2009 - The Gardens by the Bluffs

The Scarborough Garden & Horticultural Society annual garden tour visits the area by the Scarborough Bluffs. Included will be an afternoon social at the Historic Cornell/Campbell Farm House. The tour costs \$10. Tickets are available on the day of the tour in the parking lot of the Scarborough Recreation Centre at Markham & Kingston Roads. Further information:

<http://www.gardenontario.org/site.php/district5/news/details/4515>

July 25 & 26, 2009 (Saturday & Sunday) - Live Green Toronto Festival

This year's festival includes a street-closure of Yonge street (from Dundas to Queen) with over 100 exhibitors, local food, live music, and more. On Sunday, it's family day with events in the Yonge-Dundas Square with kid-friendly activities. Further information:

<http://www.toronto.ca/greentorontofestival/index.htm>

August 2, 12:00 p.m. - Summer Orchidfest by the Southern Ontario Orchid Society at the Toronto Botanical Garden (777 Lawrence Ave. E.) <http://www.soos.ca/summerfest09.htm>

August 18, 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm, Mount Albert Garden & Horticultural Society Flower Show Mount Albert Community Centre 53 Main Street (http://www.gardenontario.org/eve/event_details.php?id=4113)

Friday, September 11; 3 to 6 p.m. and Saturday, September 12; 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.; Auxiliary of RBG Plant Sale, at the RBG Arboretum (680 Plains Rd. W., Burlington). Rare perennials, new stock of woody plants, ornamental grasses, ferns, spring bulbs and more. Some plants up to 50% off. Prices include taxes. http://www.rbg.ca/pages/events_annual.html#Anchor-SEPTEMBER-51540