

The East York Garden

Bi-monthly newsletter of the East York Garden Club

November & December, 2003

Thursday, November 20, 2003 - 7:00 p.m. Annual General Meeting and Potluck Supper

This is our final meeting of the year. The evening will begin with a potluck supper, followed by the awards for the year's flower shows and the photography contest. We'll finish off with the election of the 2004 Executive. There will also be door prizes. All of the entries in the photography contest will be on display throughout the evening.

All those attending are asked to bring a dish of food (at least six servings). It would be appreciated if items such as lasagna or desserts could be pre-cut. If possible, an appropriate serving utensil would also be welcome. And it's always helpful in the cleanup afterwards if you can put your name on the bowl or plate. The Club will be supplying dishes and cutlery, so you won't need to bring your own. Punch, tea and coffee will also be provided.

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. The Clubhouse is wheelchair-accessible. Visitors are always welcome.

Yearly membership fees are \$10 for a single, and \$15 for a family. To inquire about membership, contact Rosalind Regnier at 416-759-6247.

Visit us on the web at www.eygc.ca

President:
Betty Goldring

Second Vice-President:
Bev Woods

Newsletter Editor:
Malcolm Geast
416-429-4719
newsletter@eygc.ca

Membership Renewal

It's time once again to renew your EYGC membership, one of the best bargains around. Included with your membership you get:

- ◆ 10 monthly meetings
- ◆ three monthly flower shows
- ◆ an Annual Show & Competition
- ◆ six newsletters
- ◆ a yearbook
- ◆ an autumn seed exchange
- ◆ a spring plant sale
- ◆ discounts and special promotions at selected nurseries (for example, 10% at Bill's and at White Rose, a spring promotion at Humber Nurseries)

Where else can you get all that for just \$10? There's a renewal form on the back page. You can renew by mail, or at the November or January meetings.

New Members

We currently have 147 members. We welcome these new members, all of whom have recently joined the Club:

Heather, John, and Jocey von Atzgen
Christina Staios
Theresa Boyd
Bozena Stypka

Please welcome them and take the time to answer any questions that they may have. Remember what it's like to be a stranger. Say hello!



From the Editor's desk...

Putting out a newsletter such as this certainly is not a one-person job. As my first year as editor draws to a close, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank those whose work appeared on these pages: Diane Ronan for her stories and illustrations that made their way into every issue; Karen Bell for her "Novice Gardener" series and her illustrations; Glen Hutzul for his "Gardening with Glen" series; and Peter Ronan and Leslie Steinberg for their photographs. As well, credit goes to Laura McIntyre for suggesting the "bug of the month" articles. Distributing *The Garden* is a long and sometimes tedious task (folding, inserting, sealing, labelling and stamping) that was made exceptionally easy due to the efforts of my wife, Dawn and my daughter, Morgan.

I'd also like to thank Betty Goldring for her untiring efforts as Club President. After three years in the position, Betty will be stepping down this month. Her dedication and hard work have left us with a club that is well-situated to continue on as a vibrant and contributing part of the East York Community.

This month, the Club holds its Annual General Meeting. As well as a pot-luck supper and presentation of the annual awards for the flower shows and the photography contest, this is the time when we elect our new Executive Board for the coming year. If you're interested in volunteering for club activities, but don't want to be on the Board, there are many other areas in which your efforts and expertise can be applied. The Flower Show and Public Outreach committees are always ready to welcome the efforts and ideas of new members. The main project of the Public Outreach Committee is the rejuvenation of The Rockery in Stan Wadlow Park (see "Fun in the Mud" on page 3). Here's an opportunity to volunteer for the club and do some gardening at the same time!

At the present time we are without a yearbook editor. As well, I would like to relinquish my role as the coordinator for the Photography Contest. I've done it for four years, and with the other Club activities I'm engaged in, I feel that I should give someone else the opportunity to

put their stamp on it. Neither of these positions requires a year-round effort. For each of them, the major part of the work spans about one month. We are also looking for a new Secretary for meetings of the Executive. Linda Boyko, who has done a sterling job for the past two years, will be taking the experience that she has gained over that time and will be moving up to be a Vice-President in 2004.

If you are interested in volunteering for any of these positions, or activities, please call or email me, or speak to me at the November meeting. I should note that, since the yearbook is an essential publication for the Club, it is imperative that we have an editor as soon as possible.

In the next few weeks the Executive that is elected at the November meeting will be making some decisions regarding our activities in the next year or two. One event to which we are already committed is a joint hosting (along with the Leaside Garden Society) of the OHA District 5 meeting in April 2005. OHA? District 5? For many of you both of these are obscure terms that mean little or nothing to you (I know, until I joined the Executive, I'd never heard of either of them). If you're one of those who would have guessed that the OHA had more to do with hospitals or hockey than with gardening, there'll be an article in the January/February issue of *The Garden* describing what the OHA is, and the Club's role in it.

If there are other subjects that you'd like to see covered in these pages, or if you have an article or other information to submit, speak to me at a Club meeting, or get hold of me by phone at 416-429-4719 or by email at newsletter@eygc.ca.

As I'm writing this, the grass is still green and there are still a few leaves left on the trees. However, I'm also seeing snowflakes blowing past the window. Winter is most certainly on its way. But look on the bright side: spring is only four months away.

Malcolm Geast

Fun in the Mud



Sunday, October 26th was an overcast, rainy day but fifteen determined club members showed up to work on The Rockery at Stan Wadlow Park. Under the guidance of Glen Hutzul, who volunteered to be foreman for the day, weeds were removed, rocks uncovered, compost spread around and over 200 spring bulbs planted. Thanks to the City of Toronto, Parks and Recreation Department for the use of their tools, the delivery of the compost and 100 assorted bulbs. A special thanks to these wet and muddy volunteers: Roz Regnier, Darina Quinn, Diane Bickers, Sheila Clarke, Glen Hutzul, Leslie Steinberg, Wini Stoddart, Liz and Bruce Arkwright, Bev Woods, Gail Gregory, Diane and Peter Ronan, Dawn McEachern and Malcolm Geast. Now we can look forward to next spring and "a splash of colour" in the garden.



Break time...

Gardening with Glen

by Glen Hutzul

Is your Christmas cactus a dud? If you're frustrated with its lack of bloom, try this trick! Keep it outside for a few days, when the temperature is above freezing. Three or four days with the temperature in the range between 35°F and 55°F (2°C to 13°C) will set the flower buds. It should bloom in four to five weeks.

Holly is a seasonal favourite of mine. I've learned that those cute little six- or eight-inch high "plants" selling for \$3 or \$4 are really just a holly branch with only two or three roots. They usually die in our hot, dry indoors. Both White Rose Nursery and the big box stores like Home Depot and Rona sell bushes that have well-developed root systems and come in one- or two-gallon pots. If the label says self-fertilizing, it means that the single bush is capable of producing holly berries by itself.

If you purchase a potted chrysanthemum and its blooms are finished, plant it in the garden. Prune it back to a two-inch stem, and plant it in a sunny spot. Water it well. Mulch it if you like, but keep the mulch one or two inches back from the main stem. It will probably bloom again next year, though the flowers will be taller and fewer.

Emailed Newsletters

If you're interested in having a copy of *The East York Garden* emailed to you (instead of, or in addition to the mailed copy), drop me a line at newsletter@eygc.ca And if you're looking for another copy of one of this year's newsletters, back issues of the 2003 edition are also available on the Club's website (www.eygc.ca)

Retirement Home Gardening

by Diane Ronan

Both my parents are 87 years old. I know that I've inherited their gardening genes. I can only hope that I've got the longevity ones.

Last fall they made the big move to a retirement home. A serious decision when you're giving up your space, a lot of your possessions and a sense of independence. Not to mention the allotment garden that you've had for over twenty years.

I come from a long line of gardeners. In 1889, two of my great grandfathers were founding members of The Perry Agricultural Society, now known as the Emsdale Agricultural Society. My mother and father are lifetime members of the same association.

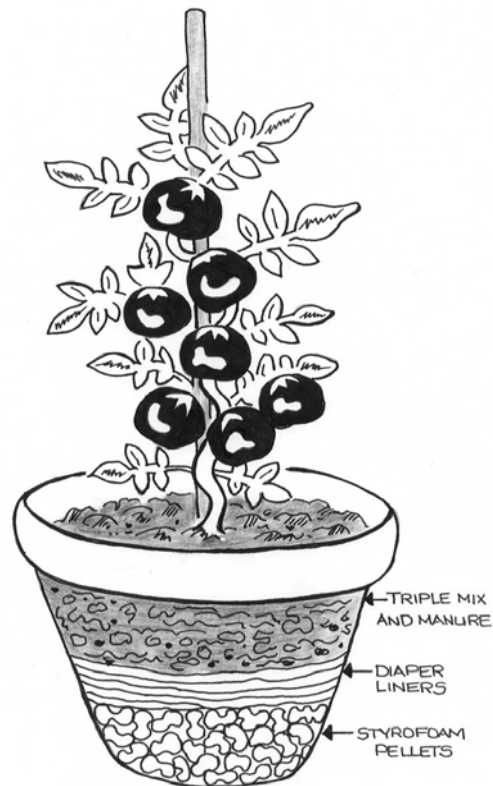
When I was growing up, we always had a garden, primarily vegetables to eat and put by for the winter but also flowers for fun. My parents continued to garden even after they moved from their house in Emsdale to an apartment in North Bay. In fact, they grew enough vegetables in their allotment garden to share with the community.

So moving to a place where there wasn't a garden...that was a big deal!

But this spring, we solved the problem. Fortunately, they have access to a small space in a courtyard. Scaled-down flowerbeds and containers for vegetables were the solution.

Things I considered when choosing the containers were that they were tall enough to be accessible from a walker or from a wheelchair but light enough to be moved if necessary. That's when I read about a very clever use for their great-grandson's disposable diapers (Clean ones, that is!).

You create layers in the containers: First a layer of styrofoam pellets (available at stores that sell packaging and shipping supplies), then a layer of the absorbent material found in disposable diapers (remove all the plastic coverings) and top it off with a mixture of good triple mix soil and manure.



We planted tomatoes, cucumbers and petunias. The plants flourished and Mom and Dad shared the harvest with their friends.

You can apply the same container-growing principals to your patio or deck. You will have an attractive, lightweight, drought resistant, moveable garden.

Something to try next year.

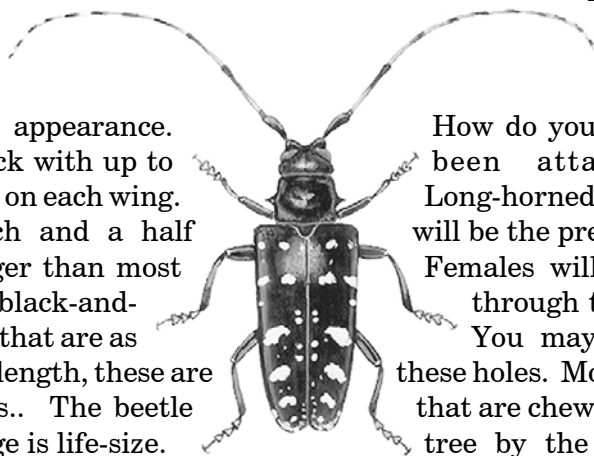
An Unwelcome Visitor

by Malcolm Geast

Starting this month, and continuing through the winter, thousands of trees in the northwestern section of Toronto and southern Vaughan will be chopped down and destroyed in an attempt to stop the spread of the Asian Long-horned Beetle (ALHB) a potentially devastating threat to the hardwood forests of eastern Canada.

The Asian Long-horned Beetle was first discovered in Canada just two months ago, when a live specimen was found in a parking lot in Woodbridge. It's likely that the beetle has arrived in Canada in wood used as packing material.

Were it not for the destruction that it causes, this would be a creature to be admired for its magnificent appearance. Adults are a glossy black with up to 20 irregular white spots on each wing. A body length an inch and a half makes for a beetle larger than most us have seen. But with black-and-white striped antennae that are as much as twice the body length, these are truly striking creatures.. The beetle that you see on this page is life-size.



In its native area in China, it has caused severe damage to forests, and is the most serious pest of poplars in the northern part of the country. Recent Chinese attempts to grow North American varieties of maple for wood and syrup production have been abandoned because nearly all the trees have been killed by the ALHB.

The list of trees that the beetle attacks is exhaustive. During infestations in New York City and Chicago in the 1990s (and continuing in some areas today) it attacked elms, willows, horse chestnuts, birches, poplars and any kind of maple. In short, most of the hardwood trees in our neighbourhood are potential victims.

As we're about to see this winter, since there are no known natural predators, drastic measures are required to control and/or eliminate the beetle. The tree, and those around it, must be cut down and destroyed. In Chicago and New York, over 5000 trees were removed as one piece of the control program. As part of the eradication program, the chemical imidacloprid has been used on many trees, with some degree of success. Although the possibility of harmful effects from this product appears to be extremely small, the use of any chemical control should only be seen as a last-resort action. Additionally, to prevent the beetle from spreading, the affected area is usually quarantined, with no wood allowed to be moved out.

How do you know if your trees have been attacked by the Asian Long-horned Beetle? The obvious signs will be the presence of holes in the tree. Females will chew oval-shaped holes through the bark to lay their eggs. You may find sap dripping from these holes. More noticeable will be holes that are chewed from the interior of the tree by the newly emerging adults. Befitting such a large insect, these holes will be about half an inch in diameter, just a bit smaller than a dime. While still in the larvae stage, they may be responsible for large amounts of coarse sawdust that will be found at the base of the tree, or where branches connect to each other. This is the result of feeding of the larvae. And of course, the undeniable evidence is the beetle itself. Between July and October, you may find it feeding on the leaves, bark, or the tips of the tree's branches.

If you suspect that you have a tree with the beetle, call the City of Toronto's hotline (416-392-7859), or the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (1-800-442-2342)

Upcoming Events

Sunday, November 23

ORGS, OWGS, RSC Meeting at the Toronto Botanical Garden – A combined meeting of the Ontario Rock Garden Society, the Ontario Water Garden Society, and the Rhododendron Society of Canada. The speakers will be Patrick Nutt from Longwood Gardens, and Ellen Hornig from Seca Hill Nursery. A plant sale begins at 12:30 p.m. The main meeting begins at 1:30 p.m.

December 4 to 7 (Thursday to Sunday)

Mistletoe Magic at the Toronto Botanical Garden – The Christmas tradition returns with 70 booths showcasing high quality, hand-made, unique items and gifts from across Ontario. A holiday plant sale includes Azaleas, Cyclamens, Poinsettias, Rosemary, Topiary Ivy, Paperwhites, Amaryllis, Evergreens, Berried Branches, Wreaths, and Garlands. Open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Thursday, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. on Friday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturday, and 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Sunday. Admission is \$5 at the door.

December 7, 2003 to January 4, 2004

Winter Wonderland at Allan Gardens – Open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Special **Conservatory by Candlelight** show December 14 to 23 and 26 to 30, 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. Admission is free.

Thursday, January 29, 2004

Influential Garden Designers of the 20th Century at the Toronto Botanical Garden – Through engaging profiles of 56 garden stars, Andrew Wilson (Director of Garden Design Studies at Inchbald School of Design in London, England) will pinpoint how the innovators of 20th-century garden design created their effects and shaped gardening taste. Admission is \$10, free for members.

Sunday, February 22, 2004

Getting the Jump on Spring at the Toronto Botanical Garden – Sure, it's only November now, but it's never too early to start thinking about next year's garden. This annual event will bring you out of those winter doldrums.

You'll find a complete list of events on our website (www.eygc.ca). The list is updated as we hear about new events.

2004 Renewal Membership Form

Name

Address

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Postal Code Phone #

email:

Fees: Single \$10.00 Family \$15.00

Membership fees are due by January of each year. Fees can be paid in person at the next monthly meeting, or by mailing this form and a cheque (payable to "The East York Garden Club") to:

Rosalind Regnier
82 Presley Avenue
Scarborough, Ontario
M1L 3P8