

The East York Garden

Newsletter of the East York Garden Club

January & February, 2007

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 Karen Bell at 416-429-3032.

Visit us on the web at www.eygc.ca

President:
Malcolm Geast

Vice-Presidents:
Linda Boyko
Veronica Callinan

Newsletter Editor:
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416-429-4719

Thursday, January 18, 2007

Speaker: Peter Money
Topic: Toronto Wildflowers & Hints on Photographing Them

Since retiring from a career in geology, Peter Money's interests have expanded to include botany and nature photography. One of his projects has been to "photograph all the wildflowers occurring within the City of Toronto that my camera can handle".

There will also be a general discussion about growing wildflowers.

Members whose surnames begin with A, B, or C are asked to bring some cookies or sweets for the evening's tea. There will also be a draw table following the meeting.

Thursday, February 15, 2007

Speaker: Margaret Nevett
Topic: Gardening for Life

This meeting will look at tools, tips and techniques for easier, life-long gardening. Tools to overcome physical challenges, tips on how to move safely in the garden, and techniques to make gardening easier on you will be discussed. A Master Gardener since 1992, Margaret Nevett is also a Horticultural Therapist, dedicated to helping gardeners of all abilities.

Members whose surnames begin with D, E, or F are asked to bring some cookies or sweets for the evening's tea.

At this meeting we'll be trying a couple of new activities. There'll be the *People's Choice Photography Contest* (details on page 4), and, instead of a draw table, we'll have a 50/50 draw.

Don't forget...Our meetings begin at 7:30, but refreshments are available at 7:00. Come early to give yourself time to enjoy some conversation and cookies.



Membership Reminder

Membership fees are due in January. If you haven't already paid your fees, please bring with you a filled-in membership form (there's one on the back page of the newsletter), and a cheque or cash.

The Peaceful Garden

Transform your garden into a haven of calm and tranquility by following a few simple rules:

Keep it simple – Simplicity is key. Often the starting point is what is removed rather than what is added. Taking away fussy detail and clutter and restricting the colour palette has an immediate calming effect that is both visually and emotionally satisfying. This is true of the plants as well as the solid elements contained within the garden.

Symmetry and balance – Consider the difference between symmetry and balance within the peaceful garden. Symmetry mirrors one side of the garden with the other, while balance combines differing features in a pleasing way. Symmetry can be achieved intellectually; balance requires feeling.

Contemplation and relaxation – As you plan your peaceful garden, it is important to remember that it is as much about how the garden is used as about how it looks—a balancing of form and function. Ideally, it should be multifunctional, with open areas for family activities and entertaining, as well as quiet places and hidden corners that are conducive to private contemplation.

Special places – Within every garden there are places that are invested with meaning, places where an object, a plant, or a view has particular significance for the gardener. It can be a memento recalling love or loss, a work of art, or even a tree grown from seed. When life gets complicated you can go to that special spot or visit it in your imagination.

Detail is as important in the peaceful garden as design and layout. Cool, soft or pastel colours, soothing textures in plants and surfaces, the interplay of light and shade; fragrant plants and herbs, and water features all add to the creation of a calm and peaceful garden.

Excerpted from *Peaceful Gardens* by Stephanie Donaldson.

Perennial Plant of the Year

The Perennial Plant Association has named *Nepeta x faassenii* “Walker’s Low” as the 2007 Perennial Plant of the Year. With its distinctive long-blooming blue-violet flowers and its grey-green foliage, Walker’s Low catmint is already a popular plant in many gardens. The name indicates nothing about its growth habits (it can reach heights of almost a metre!), but instead derives from the garden in Ireland where it was first found in the 1970s. Four Seasons Nursery in Norwich, England first introduced it commercially in 1988. Despite the “catmint” name, it has very little attraction to cats. But, if you have it in your garden, you’ll soon notice that it’s a magnet for bees.

An attractive addition to any garden, Walker’s Low has distinctive crinkled, aromatic, silver-green foliage and a proliferation of small dark blue-purple flowers on upright arching stems. A plant that will accept almost all conditions that you’ll find in East York, it likes full sun, but, with our hot summers, will also tolerate shade. A preference for well-drained soils and a high tolerance of drought are good news in a southern Ontario summer, especially for those of us who have sandy soil. Prune it back by two-thirds when the initial flowers fade, and it will bloom until the fall frost.

To qualify as a Perennial Plant of the Year, a plant must have the following qualities:

- Suitable for a wide range of climate types
- Low maintenance
- Not difficult to propagate – easily flowers true from seed or vegetative propagation
- Exhibits multiple seasonal interest

With its range (zones 3 to 8), its ease of care, easy growth from seed, and long blooming season, Walker’s Low easily meets these criteria.



Gardening with Physical Challenges

by Veronica Callinan

Back problems, arthritis, and even walker or wheelchair requirements are a fact of life for many gardeners. The love of gardening is in the soul, not the knees. Eventually, the desire to dig, prune and pot will erupt, regardless of the physical cost. Remember, if you don't have challenges today, you probably have friends or family who do. And challenge-free today, doesn't mean forever!

This column will come in 3 parts, Gardening with back problems, arthritis, and gardening from a wheelchair. Each part will include physical preparations; warnings or things to watch out for; and tips & tricks. That's where I hope YOU come in.

One of the things that the fall survey clearly showed was that Members wanted more knowledge sharing

among members. We have such an abundance of skill and knowledge in our Club – and a good share of gardeners with physical challenges. Maybe you've discovered a way to lay mulch without bending, found a great pair of gloves that no one knew can help arthritic hands, or have an ingenious way of planting that's easy on sore joints. (Or, you've found a great local chiropractor!)

The next newsletter will include "Gardening with Back Problems". I'll share generic information on each topic, but the information that comes from the members will no doubt be of much more value. Feel free to email me (vcallinan@sympatico.ca), phone or mail me your wealth of wisdom (I'm in the yearbook).

Let's take some of the 'ouch' out of gardening!

2007 District 5 AGM

The 2007 District 5 AGM will take place on April 21 at the Georgina Ice Palace in Keswick. Hosted by the Lake Simcoe Gardeners, this year's meeting will have as its theme "Rejuvenate & Grow". Featured speakers will include Paul Knowles, who speaks on the joy of gardening, gardens, and gardeners. As well, there'll be a flower show, a design competition, raffle and door prizes. As always, this is a great opportunity to meet other gardeners from around the GTA. And of course, lunch is included.

Admission will be \$25. There will be a sign-up sheet at our January and February meetings.

You'll also be able to find out more information at our January meeting, when we'll have a presentation from the Lake Simcoe Gardeners.



Thoughts of Spring

The snow is on the ground, and the cold temperatures have arrived. Now that winter has finally arrived, we can start to think about the season that follows. And to help us with those thoughts, the Toronto Botanical Garden will be holding its annual show, *Get the Jump on Spring*, on Saturday, February 17. The show runs from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., and features seminars, vendors, and horticultural groups (and of course, lots of other gardeners). The Toronto Botanical Garden is located at the southwest corner of Leslie and Lawrence. Admission and parking are both free.

One of the horticultural groups that will be a part of the show is District 5 of the OHA. We will have an information table to promote garden clubs and societies in and around the GTA. We're also looking for a few people to help, for just a couple of hours through the day. If you're willing to lend a hand, please call or email Malcolm Geast at 416-429-4719 or Malcolm@eastyork.net. It's a great opportunity to meet with, and speak to, other gardeners.

The People's Choice Photo Contest

This year, we're going to try something new with the photography competition. In addition to the contest that we hold every autumn, this year we'll have two smaller competitions at our February and April meetings. These will be "People's Choice Awards" – your photos will be judged by the membership and the winners will be announced at the end of the meeting. For both of these competitions, we've come up with a couple of "fun" categories, which will be up to you to interpret. February's category is *Evergreen*, and April's is *Egg*.

There will be no entry forms for these competitions. Instead, you'll bring in your photo, with your name on the back (please don't put any identifying marks on the front). We'll have all the photos laid out on a table, and will ask the membership to vote for the best picture. Ballots will be available for all members. It will be done on the honour system, so please take only one ballot.

Of course, with every contest, we have to have some rules. And here they are:

- Members may submit one print, no larger than 5 by 7 inches (approx 13 by 18 cm)
- The members' name must be printed on the back of the photo. (Note: Press lightly when writing, so as not to make an impression on the front of the photo.)
- The photo must fit with the category for that month's contest.
- Entries must be received by 7:15 p.m. on the day of the contest.
- Ballots will be provided for those attending to vote for the photo of their choice, one vote per member.
- First, Second, and Third Prize winners will receive ribbons and points to be counted toward the awarding of the annual trophy.
- Winning entries cannot be re-entered in subsequent contests of the Club.
- Photographs are to be produced from any still-camera (film or digital), and must have been taken by the entrant in 2006 or 2007.
- Winning photos will be returned to the entrants the following month.
- The Club reserves the right to copy and use the images of the winning entries.

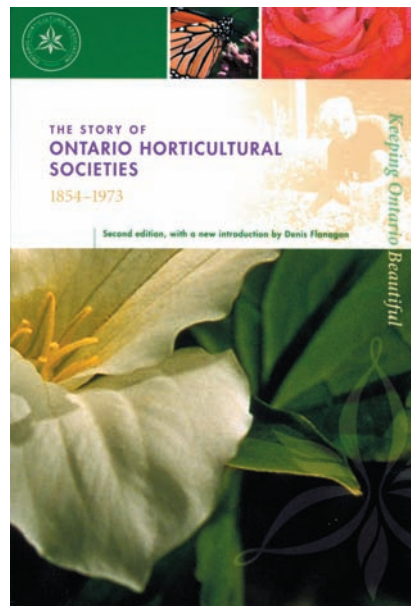
But above all remember that this competition is meant to be a light-hearted event to be enjoyed by all the Club's members, so have fun with it.

Ontario Horticultural History Book

In 2006, the Ontario Horticultural Association celebrated its 100th anniversary. To help commemorate this milestone, and with the help of a grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation, the OHA is making available a history of Ontario gardening over the past 150 years. As the first part of that effort, *The Story of Ontario Horticultural Societies 1854-1973* has been reprinted and made available after a 30-year absence. The book tells the story of the early development of agricultural organizations and the transformation of many of them to horticultural societies. The activities and accomplishments of the OHA since its establishment in 1906 are recounted, including its role in the protection of wildflowers, planting trees, and of course, the leading role played in the adoption of the *Trillium Grandiflorum* as the provincial floral emblem. Information is also given on every horticultural society that was a part of the OHA in 1973. It's of particular interest to see some of the changes that have taken place over the years. In the early days of horticultural organizations, the membership was predominantly male; so much so that, in 1907, it was noted "there were four ladies present, and they have been coming in increasing numbers".

The book is available in its original hardback form for \$14.99, or in paperback for \$9.99. We'll be taking orders at our January meeting (please bring payment with you). Order forms are also available on the OHA website (gardenontario.org).

A second volume, covering the 1974 to 2006 period, is also planned. We'll have more information in the months to come, but for now we can tell you that it is hoped (but not promised) that it will be available at the 2008 OHA convention in Brampton.



2007 Meeting Schedule

January 18	Peter Money	Toronto Wildflowers
February 15	Margaret Nevett	Gardening for Life
March 15	Ashok Grover	Photographing Your Garden
April 19	Sean James	Renovating a Garden
May 17	Allan Foster	Myths and Magic of Plants
June 21	Peter Keeping	Clematis
July 19	Pot-luck Supper in a member's garden	
August 25 (Saturday)	Annual Flower Show & Tea	
September 20	Toronto Master Gardeners	Master Gardeners Question Time
October 18	Marion Jarvie	Trees and Shrubs for a Small Garden
November 15	Annual General Meeting, Awards Presentation, and Pot-luck Supper	

Winter Edition of The Trillium

The Winter edition of the OHA's newsletter, the Trillium, is now available. Included in this issue are items about the OHA and the 2006 convention, articles about other clubs and societies in Ontario (including a report on our own East York Blooming Contest), gardening without pesticides, and two magazine offers for OHA members. You can find it online, in full colour at www.gardenontario.org/gar/news1.php?news=153. To make it easier, you'll find a link on the home page of our own site (www.eygc.ca).



A Flowering Season for Stamps

In early 2006, Canada Post released a set of four stamps with gardening themes to help commemorate the Ontario Horticultural Association's 100th anniversary. After using them on all of our regular newsletter mailings since last March, we'll finally run out of our supply with this issue. But we'll still be able to keep the floral theme alive. On March 1, two new stamps will be issued featuring two Canadian lilacs, 'Princess Alexandra' (cultivated in 1874, by former Windsor mayor James Dougall) and 'Isabella' (originated in 1927 at the Ottawa Central Experimental Farm after more than seven years of work by plant hybridizer Isabella Preston).



Along with the OHA commemoratives, the wildflowers that Canada Post used for its "definitive" stamps in 2005 and 2006, and the lilac issue, we can hope that the horticulture theme is here to stay.

Upcoming Events

Shade: Planting Solutions for Shady Gardens – Wednesday, February 7, at the Toronto Botanical Garden. Starts at 7:30 p.m. Admission is \$15.00, free for TBG members.

Southern Ontario Orchid Show – February 10 & 11 (Saturday & Sunday) at the Toronto Botanical Garden (Lawrence & Leslie) – Open to the general public 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Admission is \$10.00, children 12 & under are free. More information is available at www.soos.ca.

Get the Jump on Spring – Saturday, February 17, at the Toronto Botanical Garden – Vendors and horticultural societies will be on hand. Spend the day there and soak in all of the information you'll need to prepare for the coming spring. Runs from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Admission and parking are free. The TBG is located on the southwest corner of Lawrence & Leslie.

Stratford Garden Festival – March 1 to 4, at the Stratford Coliseum, 20 Glastonbury Drive, Stratford. Admission is \$8.00. Further information is available at www.stratfordgardenfestival.com or by calling 519-271-7500.

Canada Blooms – March 7 to 11 – Billed as Canada's "largest horticultural exhibition" (and unfortunately, also its most crowded), Canada Blooms marks the start of spring for many gardeners. Taking place at the Metro Convention Centre (right beside the CN Tower), admission is \$18 (\$16 for seniors & children).

Successful Gardening – March 15 to 18 – Running in conjunction with the International Home & Garden Show, this show returns for its 15th year. It takes place at the International Centre (Derry Road & Airport Road). Admission is \$12, and parking is free.

You'll find a complete list of events on our website (www.eygc.ca). The list is updated at least once a week.

East York Garden Club Membership Renewal Form

Name

Address

Postal Code..... Phone #

email

(Note that we will only use your email address to send you EYGC information. **We do not distribute it to anyone else.**)

Membership fees are due by January of each year. Fees for 2007 are \$20 for a single, and \$30 for a family membership. Fees can be paid in person at a regular meeting of the Club or by mailing this form and a cheque (payable to "East York Garden Club") to:

East York Garden Club
153 Durant Avenue
East York, Ontario
M4J 4W4