

Feb. 2016

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the Iris

Gilford & District Horticultural Society

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What a strange winter season we have had, if we are lucky the future will include a gradual approach to spring with enough sunshine and rain to nudge our gardens into a burst of new growth. For now I would settle for more sun, enough of these grey skies! A trip to Canada Blooms or the Peterborough Garden Show should lift your spirits. Check later in this newsletter for dates.

The first meeting of this year will be on Monday March 14 with Kristen Martyn giving a presentation on nature's tiny flying acrobats – Hummingbirds. With the cost of vegetables shooting up so much, our April meeting subject on starting seeds is a timely one. If you have six hours of sun somewhere in your yard it is possible for you to grow some vegetables in the ground, in pots, or if you are really ambitious you could rent a bed at the Knock School Community Allotment Garden (John Crow 705.436.5292). Maybe you would like to grow some flowers not commonly found at your local garden centre.

This is just a taste of subjects lined up for the coming year, ideas for topics in the future would be welcome. Please let your executive know what you would like to see and learn about.

Don't forget to plant some of the flowers listed in this year's Flower Show Schedules. We try to make it easy to enter specimens in the shows, but if you need help, your committee is ready and willing to assist. You don't even need vases, I used clear beer bottles when I started out. Don't hesitate to enter into the 'B' categories in Floral Design. 'B' stands for beginner, not perfection! There will be another Design Workshop held in April if you are interested in learning the basics. Flowers used in designs don't need to be grown in your garden. We can't give out trophies if no one enters, so why not give it a try.

Pruning Time

Now is the time to start thinking about pruning some shrubs you may have, specifically ones that bloom in late summer or autumn like Butterfly Bush, Beautyberry, Rose of Sharon and Pee Gee Hydrangeas. Of course you can prune out any damaged branches anytime but we are talking here about sustaining bloom and shaping for size and or general aesthetic appearance.

First make sure you have sharp loppers and secateurs. Have a container with a bleach solution handy to clean tools between cuts.

In general cuts are made just above outward facing buds at a 45 degree angle sloping down and away from the bud. Not too close or you could damage the bud and not too high or die back could occur. Make the cuts clean and try not to tear or fray the bark, that's where the sharp tools come in.

The same rule applies when thinning out branches, cut back to an outward facing twig. If you think the shrub is too overgrown with branches, some of the thicker and older ones can be cut right at the ground to open up the plant to let in more air and sunlight. Cutting large diameter branches anywhere other than the ground doesn't usually produce a pleasing result as you end up with a large stub. Thin straggly branches can be removed in the same way. They are unlikely to produce good blooms anyway. If there are branches that interfere or rub against others decide which one to remove, always keeping in mind that you are aiming for outward direction of growth. It is a judgement call, don't worry it isn't a life or death decision, and if you don't like the result it can be fixed the next time you prune. Usually the aim is to remove just enough growth to give a pleasing shape and to promote flowering. If you are trying to rejuvenate an old overgrown shrub try not to take out more than 30 percent of the plant in one year. You can do this for a few consecutive years in a row until you get the results you want. Stand back periodically while working and look carefully at what you have done – maybe that is enough for now!

A few shrubs that can be pruned before and after bloom are Weigela, Spirea, and Red-Osier Dogwood. Shrubs that you prune after spring blooming are, Peashrub, Flowering Dogwood, Cotoneaster, Deutzia, Forsythia, Beautybush, Mock Orange, Flowering Cherry, Firethorn, Rhododendron, Azalea, Spirea, Lilac and Viburnum. All shrubs can be pruned directly following blooming. The reason for this is it gives more time for new growth to happen over the rest of the growing season making more blooms for next time. Some shrubs like Spirea will give a second flush of bloom later in the season if pruned right away.

Upcoming Events

- March 11-20 **Canada Blooms & National Home Show**, Direct Energy Centre, Exhibition Place, 100 Princes Blvd., Toronto 416.263.3000 Tickets: Adults \$20. Adults Online \$17./ Seniors \$17. Seniors Online \$14. Students 13 to 17 \$16. Students Online \$13. / Children 12 and under Free – **Tickets purchased online are non-refundable** / If you want Garden Tour tickets or Workshop Sessions tickets purchase online or at the head office, see phone number above
- *Jill Watts-Hayward of Schomberg Society has invited us to join them on their trip to CANADA BLOOMS.
They are hiring a bus to leave Schomberg Arena at 9:30 a.m. sharp on TUES. MARCH 15 and returning back from Toronto at approx. 5:30p.m.
The cost is \$22.00 which includes bus and entry to Canada Blooms.
If you are interested please call JUDITH MATCHETT at 705-456-3299 and reserve a spot.
Jill's number is 905-939-2781
Please reply no later than Mon. Feb.29
- April 8-10 **Peterborough Garden Show**, Evinrude Centre, 911 Monaghan Rd., Peterborough, tickets \$8., children under 12 free
- April 11 **General Meeting & Flower Show**, at Churchill Community Centre, Members Speakers – Starting Seeds
- April 16 **Barrie Garden Club's Annual Spring Seminar** / 4730 25th Sideroad South, Thornton. 8:30am to 2:30pm
Coffee Break and Full Lunch \$45. for members, non-members \$50.
There will be a silent auction and vendors for your shopping enjoyment
Speakers:
Frank Ferragine – Container Gardening Throughout the Season
Lexi Dearborn – Contemporary Design
Carson Arthur – Increasing Your Home's Value With Curb Appeal
Mail your Name/Address/Phone # /Email and any dietary restrictions to:
*Mrs. Holly Wells, 79 Emms Dr., Barrie, ON L4N 8H4
She can be reached by email at h.j.wells@hotmail.com or phone her at 705.735.3198
- April 17 **Floral Design Workshop**, at the home of Jenni Murrell 705.456.3163 – Horizontal Design, 12 noon
- Sixth Annual Hosta Forum**, Glencairn Golf Club, 9807 Regional Road 25, Halton Hills ON L9T 2X7
9am to 4pm – registration begins at 8:30am / Until March 1st members \$55. and non-members \$60.
After March 1st members pay \$60. and non-members \$65.
Live and Silent Auctions, Draws and Prizes, Delicious BBQ Lunch and Refreshments
Speakers:
Paul Zammitt – Gardening Without Flowers: Fantastic Foliage, Garden Ornaments and Creative Containers
Marion Jarvie – Designing Your Garden With Hostas and Other Treasures
Mike and Kathy Shadrack – Big Hostas, Little Hostas and Other Shady Characters
- Cheques Payable to: Ontario Hosta Society**
Mail to: Norm Limpert, 11174 Sixth Line, Acton, ON L7J 2L7
- To Pay by Credit Card contact: Glenn Wilson at 519.859.5701
***Please include your Name/Mailing Address/Email Address/and Phone # so tickets can be mailed to you!**
- April 23 **District 16 of the Ontario Horticultural Association A.G.M and Flower Show** at Tangle Creek Golf Club, Thornton / Entries for the Flower Show will be accepted from 8:00am to 9:15am. Judging starts at 9:30am./ Coffee and pastries will be put out at 9am, the meeting begins at 9:30am
- May 7 **Spring Greenhouse Tour** at Lakeview Gardens
- May 9 **General Meeting**, at Churchill Community Centre, Speaker Koidu Sulev – Use of Herbs

May 14 **Spring Flower Show and Social Tea** at Churchill Community Centre, see your yearbook or our website for schedule. Bring entries from 9:30 to 11am, lunch from 12 noon to 1:30pm, cost \$5.

May 28 **Annual Giant Tailgate, Plant Sale, Bake Sale & BBQ**, at the South Innisfil Arboretum
We need your donations of potted and labeled garden plants! Call Judith Matchett at 705.456.3299 if you need help with potting and/or digging plants or if you would like to rent a space to sell lawn sale items. If you think you don't have enough for the sale, get together with a friend and pool your resources! If you have baking to donate call Sharon Wice at 705.456.3316

If you have pots to donate please call Judith Matchett, please don't leave them at the Arboretum

G&DHS Membership Registration Form.

Cut and fill out and bring to any meeting or mail with a cheque to the address provided.

Gilford & District Horticultural Society 20__ Membership Registration Form

- () Single Membership \$15.00
- () Family Membership (Up to 3 at same address) \$20.00
- () Life Membership (FREE)
- () Youth Membership (FREE)

Name:

2nd & 3rd
Family Members

Address:

City:

Postal Code:

Telephone: ()

Email :

Please fill this form in and bring it to the next general meeting or mail with your cheque to:

Gilford & District Horticultural Society,

PO Box 73, Lefroy, ON

L0L 1W0

() Membership List

() Cash

() Cheque