



Greely Gardeners Group

Newsletter

May 2004

GREELY GARDENERS CALENDAR:

Saturday, May 29 GGG's Annual Plant Sale. In the pavilion at Andrew Shields Park, Old Prescott Highway, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Of course we can't have a plant sale without plants to sell, and that's where you, the members, come in. Here's what we're asking you to do:

- Please pot up as many plants as you can spare. If you don't have enough pots, you could use some of those plastic margarine or ice cream tubs that the City won't recycle now. If you're really stuck for containers, call Bob at 821-1847.
- Clearly identify the plant in *each* pot. The best way to do this is to write the name of the plant on a popsicle stick and put it in the pot.
- Bring your plants to the pavilion at Andrew Shields Park between 8:00 and 9:00 on Saturday morning, the 29th. If you have plants for the sale but can't make it on Saturday morning, call Bob at 821-1847 to make other arrangements.
- Come to the sale! You may find just that rare perennial you've been looking for – and at a fraction of the price you'd pay at a garden centre.

Questions? Call any member of the Executive (phone numbers on back page).

Wednesday June 2, Greely Community Centre

Neil Ritchie of Ritchie's Feed & Seed will be our guest speaker. He'll talk about old and new vegetable beds, what to plant, when to plant it, what to feed it, and how to combat pests. He'll also talk about some of the new vegetable varieties this season.

Saturday, June 26, Annual members' garden tour.

Open to members and guests. Leaves the Greely Community Centre at 10:00 a.m. (the tour takes approximately 3 hours). We need about six gardens for this event. If you'd be willing to show your garden on the tour, or would like more information, please call any member of the Executive (phone numbers on back page).

Sunday, August 15, Conducted tour of Gardens North in North Gower.

Free for members. Non-members \$3.00. Car pooling will be arranged.

Wednesday, September 8, 7:15 p.m. Greely Community Centre

Monthly meeting and Annual General Meeting. Topic: "Selecting Trees and Shrubs." Guest speaker: Peter from Richmond Nurseries

Wednesday, October 6, 7:15 p.m. Greely Community Centre

Topic: "Rock Gardens". Speaker: to be announced.

Wednesday, Nov. 3, Greely Community Centre, 7:15 p.m.

Hardscaping – Arbours, pergolas and other garden structures. Speaker: Maryanne Schmidtz, from Artistic Landscaping.

Wednesday, December 1, Greely Community Centre, 7:15 p.m.

Christmas Pot-luck Supper. Members and guests. Details to be announced.

OTHER UPCOMING EVENTS

Lilac Tour. The Friends of the Farm invite you to walk along the lilac rows in the Ornamental Gardens with the Friends of the Farm lilac team Sunday May 23 with tours at 1 and 2 p.m. The tours will begin at the Macoun Garden just east of the red museum barn on the CEF. For more information call 230-3276. Rain date is May 30. Admission is free.

Manotick Horticultural Society meets the second Thursday of the month at 7:30 at the Legion Hall on Ann Street in Manotick.

TIP OF THE MONTH



THE HUMBLE DAISY. Pretty, hardy and prolific, common varieties like shasta daisies and black-eyed Susans are staples in the perennial garden. But there's much more to the daisy than that. The word daisy comes from the Old English "day's eye" – a flower that opens in the morning and closes at night. The daisy (or *Compositae*) family is thought to be the largest genus with over 1,200 species. It includes such garden favourites as chrysanthemums, dahlias, sunflowers, asters and calendulas (marigolds).

Now is the time to start most varieties outdoors from seed unless they are biennials – plant these in the Fall to flower the following year. (Note that many varieties self-seed prolifically, something to keep in mind when you are trying to decide where to plant!) Here are some planting tips:

If the seeds have a hard coating to shake them in a jar filled with coarse sand and let the seeds soak overnight in water. Prepare the bed by raking the soil to an even surface and add some peat or compost (no fertilizer! Water the soil if it's dry. Sow the seeds thinly (you can mix really small seeds with fine sand for easier sowing). Cover the seed with a little soil and firm gently. Cover the area with chicken wire or twigs to prevent birds from eating the seed.

Depending on the variety, some seeds germinate within days others take weeks. When the seedlings are big enough to handle they need to be thinned out leaving one seedling every 2 inches. A week later thin out again leaving the seedlings 4 inches apart. Bigger plants should be spaced 6 inches apart.

If you have perennial daisies in your garden you'll probably want to divide them after one or two seasons. The best time to do this is early Spring or Fall. This would be a good opportunity to pot up a few for the GGG Garden Sale (see front page article). As a general rule, when dividing plants it's best to avoid times when it is too wet, too dry or very cold. Here's how you do it:

Lift the daisy with a fork and then carefully divide the root ball either with your hand or with the fork into smaller pieces, trying to damage the roots as little as possible. Shake off the soil and choose the healthiest looking pieces. These are often the pieces from the outer ring of the plant. The center of the plant is usually woody and shouldn't be used. Cut off any old and untidy looking bits and then replant or pot! Work as quickly as you can so the fine roots don't have time to dry out. Water your new plants thoroughly.

It's said that dreams of daisies in the Spring bring months of good luck, so plant some daisies and buy a lottery ticket. Who knows?

*For **much** more information about daisies of all kinds, visit www.daisyparadise.com.*

Greely Gardeners Group, Executive Committee

President ~ Bob Stanley 821-1847

Events Director ~ Gill Toll 821-6123

Secretary/Treasurer ~ Heather Clemenson/Gary Hall 821-7445

Membership ~ Shelagh Heatlie 821-0816