



Greely Gardeners Group

Newsletter July 2004

GREELY GARDENERS CALENDAR:

Note: Our monthly meetings for the rest of 2004 will continue to be held at the Greely Community Centre.

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

Free for members. Non-members \$3.00. Car pooling will be arranged. Gardens North is a unique garden centre specializing in rare and unusual native plants. The gardens are well worth a visit, and if you would like to buy, we have been promised discount prices. We will meet at the Greely Community Centre parking lot at 1:15 and go from there. The tour starts at 2:00 p.m. and we should be finished by about 4:00.

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

Monthly meeting and Annual General Meeting. The annual meeting will be a brief business meeting and will be followed by a guest speaker presentation as usual. Topic: "Selecting Trees and Shrubs." Guest speaker: Peter from Richmond Nurseries

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

Monthly meeting. Topic: "Rock Gardens". Speaker: Ernie Boyd from the Ottawa Valley Rock Garden Society.

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

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

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

Christmas Pot-luck Supper. Members and guests. Details to be announced. Would you be willing to help organize this event? If so, give Gill a call at 821-6123

OTHER UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday August 8, from 2 – 4 p.m. Friends of the Farm Victorian Tea. Classic tea \$5 served on the lawns of Building 72, Central Experimental Farm Arboretum. Bring a patio chair and listen to the music. Enter the best hat contest, judging takes place at 3:45 with Maxine, of Maxine's Design. Don period costume for an old-time CEF tradition (not required). In case of foul weather or for more information call 230-3276. Thank you to our partners, the Good Companions Centre.

Saturday August 14, from 10 am to 4 p.m. Art on the Farm, hosted by Friends of the Farm in the Arboretum on the Central Experimental Farm. Rain date August 15. Artists working in various formats will display and sell their original works under the trees of the Arboretum. Free admission. For more information call 230-3276

If you know of upcoming events that you think would interest GGG members, call Bob at 821-1847 or send an email to stanleyb@rogers.com.

TIP OF THE MONTH



GARDENERS KNOW ALL TOO WELL that the beautiful flower gardens in midsummer will be only a memory by later fall. But you can retain a little of the beauty by drying some of the flowers. And it's not hard to do. The easiest way to dry flowers is by air drying. The first step is to choose a place that is dry and dark, with good air circulation. An attic is usually good, but a basement may be too damp. Old barns, if you're lucky to have one or from a nearby neighbor, often work well.

Harvest before the flowers are fully open, and strip the foliage from the stems. Tie small flowers in bunches so that their flower heads do not touch, then hang upside down. Most will dry in two to three weeks. Many flowers, and those with many petals such as roses, can be dried in a water-absorbing, or desiccant, material. Simply place flowers, not touching, in a container such as a shoe box on a layer of such material. Then cover with more of the material, and cover the box. Materials can be purchased for this, or you can simply use corn meal.

The most popular annual for drying is probably the strawflower. They grow up to two feet tall with flowers in all shades of red, pink, and gold. The showy, stiff bracts surround and conceal the tiny flowers inside. Globe amaranth has small, globe-shaped flowers as its name indicates. They come in many bright colors including purple, pink, white, and red. These flowers dry quickly, and are long lasting.

Purple statice and sea lavender, just like the florists use, are easy to dry at home. Rat-tailed statice has 18-inch long, pencil-thin spires of tiny lilac-colored flowers. It should be cut when the flowers are fully expanded.

For warm colours — yellows, golds, and reds — grow and dry some calendula, marigolds, and celosia or cockscomb. All retain their colours when dried, but the bright and clear colours of celosia are especially good. Some celosia have plumed or feathered tops, others crested as the comb of a rooster — hence the name.

Bells of Ireland are delicate green spikes that add a subtle background to any arrangement. Pick off most of the leaves so that the bells will be more conspicuous.

Dusty miller dries to a delicate silver-white, and compliments soft pink and purple flowers. There are a couple varieties to choose from, including a very finely cut lacy form. Another white filler, commonly seen in florist arrangements, but easily grown and dried at home, is the baby's breath. There are annual and perennial forms of this plant.

For a light, airy touch add dried grasses. Just about any ornamental grass will do. Some such as the fox-tail grass (*Pennisetum*) are not hardy in the coldest areas (they need USDA zone 5 and warmer) so must be grown as annuals. Another grass-like plant, the purple-leafed Ornamental Millet Royal Majesty, has tall dark purple spikes. It is a recent All America winner and quite popular in gardens.

Dried flowers can be used in flower arrangements, bud vases, door swags, wreaths, and many other crafts. Viewing these flowers through the winter will remind you of how beautiful your garden was last year, and will be next spring. And they will remind you to order more annuals for drying next year, to replace those that fade and shrivel over time.

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