



Greely Gardeners Group

Newsletter

January 2005

GREELY GARDENERS CALENDAR:

DON'T FORGET - February and March meetings will be on Thursday nights. We go back to Wednesday nights in April.

Thursday, February 3, 7:15 p.m. Greely Community Centre. Monthly meeting. "Creating ponds and water features". Guest speaker Nadija Pazanr of The Pond Centre.

Thursday, March 3, 7:15 p.m. Greely Community Centre. Monthly meeting. Topic: "Year 'round colour in your garden". Guest speaker: Our very own Alison Whitlock of Flower Buds Nursery.

Friday, March 11 – Saturday March 12. Coach trip to Toronto for the Canada Blooms Flower and Garden Show. *Seats still available.* For more information or to reserve a place, call Shelagh (821-0816) or Bob (821-1847).

Wednesday, April 6, 7:15 p.m. Greely Community Centre. Monthly meeting. Back by popular demand! Tony Williams from Peter Knippel Nursery will talk on the topic of "Naturalizing with wildflowers and bulbs"

Wednesday, May 4, 7:15 p.m. Greely Community Centre. Monthly meeting. Topic "Ornamental Grasses in Your Garden". Guest speaker: Suzanne Patry of Whitehouse Perennials in Almonte.

Saturday, May 28, 9:00 a.m. to noon. Greely Gardeners Annual Plant Sale. Andrew Shields Park, Old Prescott Highway.

Wednesday, June 1, 7:15 p.m. Greely Community Centre. Monthly meeting. Topic: "Living fences - separating flower beds, property, using trees, shrubs, and vines." Guest speaker: Neill Ritchie of Ritchie's Feed and Seed.

Saturday, June 18, 10:00 a.m. GGG Members Garden Tour. Starts from the Greely Community Centre parking lot.

OTHER UPCOMING EVENTS

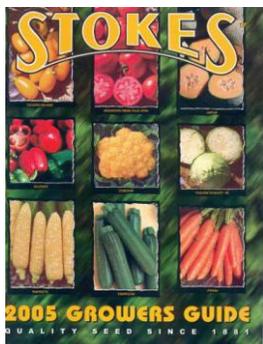
February 2, 7 - 9 p.m. A lecture on The Central Experimental Farm Tropical Greenhouses and Tips and Tricks on House Plant Care will be hosted by the Friends of the Farm and presented by Owen Munn, Horticultural Technician, CEF tropical greenhouses. Building 72, Arboretum, Central Experimental Farm. FCEF members \$12, non-members \$15. For information and to reserve a seat 230-3276. Free parking..

Manotick Horticultural Society has changed the time of their monthly meeting: They now meet on the second Monday of the month. Time and location are unchanged: 7:30 p.m. at the Legion Hall on Ann Street in Manotick.

MEMBERSHIP REMINDER...

It's time to renew your membership for 2005. Shelagh will be happy to collect your \$10 at the next meeting. And don't forget that your membership card is worth money – it will get you a discount on plants at the following garden centres: Ritchie's Feed & Seed, Richmond Nurseries, Rideau Woodland Ramble and Down to Earth Gardens (the last two are both in Burritt's Rapids). You do have to show your membership card to get the discount, so make sure you have it with you next time you go plant shopping.

Tip of the Month



SEED CATALOGUES STARTED TO ARRIVE IN MY MAIL IN DECEMBER. Now is the time to dig them out and start planning this year's garden. If you haven't received enough catalogues, there are dozens listed in January gardening magazines and on web sites. But note that, while most catalogues are free, some charge a minimal price. You can also view many catalogues online at web sites such as *icangarden.com* and *canadiangardening.com*.

Warning: treat a catalogue the same as you would a sales person. Read it carefully and understand that the wonderful pictures and descriptions are chosen for a reason – to sell the product!

Besides looking for the obvious, plant size, flower colour, scan the descriptions for details such as:

- ❖ Days to maturity – Knowing how many days a plant takes to mature after it germinates is important when choosing seeds. Long-season crops need to be started indoors to mature in our short growing season. Harvest can be extended over a number of weeks by planting seeds with different maturity dates.
- ❖ Seeds per package – A package of seed can range from 5 seeds to several 100. And the price of the package of seed is not always directly related to the amount of seeds it contains.
- ❖ Germination instructions – While the commonly grown annuals will germinate easily, others require specific temperatures and light conditions. Perennial seeds often have a deeper dormancy and need special conditions to germinate. Knowing the conditions in advance helps you decide what seeds to buy. It's also good to know the outdoor growing conditions the plants require. Placing plants in their ideal spot usually ensures a good display.
- ❖ Latin and common names – Common names guide most gardeners through the catalogue. Unfortunately, many plants have more than one common name and a Latin name is needed to be sure of the right plant variety. Latin names are used throughout the world thus enabling anyone to identify the specific plant by referencing it in any gardening book.

Some words to watch out for: "New" can mean that this is the plant's debut year, but it usually means that it is the first year that it's being offered in this catalogue. "Exclusive" refers to the fact that this variety is only sold through this seed house. Often these seeds have been developed in their own trial plots. "Heirloom" refers to seed varieties that can be traced back to early settlers. Heirloom flowers are often smaller with a stronger scent than new hybrids. Likewise heirloom vegetables will often be smaller, and less uniform while being more flavorful. Many of the older varieties will also be more susceptible to diseases. It's important to preserve heritage seeds as they contain a wide range of genetic diversification.

Compare the ratings of plants in different catalogues and books. If in doubt, check with other gardeners and reputable garden centres. They will be happy to tell you of their experiences with a particular plant.

Finally, factor in the cost of shipping and handling. It is often enough to double the cost of orders if you want only one or two packets of seeds! You can save money here by getting together with other gardeners to place a single order.

Adapted from an article on the I Can Garden website, www.icangarden.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