



Greely Gardeners Group

Newsletter

March 2005

GREELY GARDENERS CALENDAR:

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: Neil Ritchie of Ritchie's Feed and Seed.

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

Saturday, July 16, GGG's annual field trip. Details to be announced.

Saturday, August 20, GGG members' BBQ. Details to be announced.

Wednesday, September 7, 7:15 p.m. Greely Community Centre. Monthly meeting and AGM. Topic: "New Plant Trends." Guest speaker: Mary-Anne Schmitz, of Gardening by Design.

Wednesday, October 5, 7:15 p.m. Greely Community Centre. Monthly meeting. Topic: "Pruning and Protection of Plants." Guest speaker: Mary-Anne Riley.

Wednesday, November 2, 7:15 p.m. Greely Community Centre. Monthly meeting. Topic: "Container Gardening." Guest speaker: Helen Halpenny

Wednesday, December 7, 7:00 p.m. Greely Community Centre. Christmas Pot Luck Dinner.

OTHER UPCOMING EVENTS

Manotick Horticultural Society meets on the second Monday of the month, 7:30 p.m. at the Legion Hall on Ann Street in Manotick.

Osgoode Garden Club meets on the third Wednesday of the month, 7:00 p.m. at the Osgoode Library on Main Street. For information call Louise Boudreau 826-0385.

Russell and District Horticultural Society meets on the third Monday of the month, 7 p.m. at the Legion Hall, corner of First Street and Legion Lane. April 18 topic is "The Asian Long Horn Beetle and Other Nasty Bugs," a talk by an entomologist from the Government of Canada on imported invasive insects in Ontario.

Friends of the Central Experimental Farm, one-day hands-on workshop, "Garden Stepping Stones." Saturday, April 2, 7-9 p.m. Building 72, Arboretum. Presented by Diana Dakers. FCEF members \$25, non-members \$30. Pre registration is recommended as seating is limited. To register or for more information call 230-3276.

Tip of the Month



SPRING IS HERE – it's official – and we'll all be glad to see some warmer days (and nights). Plants, however, need that long cold spell to rest and prepare for the spring flush of new growth. Plants cope well with our winters regardless of how long the cold weather lasts into the spring. Ironically though, cold can become a problem now the days are noticeably longer and periodic thaws take place.

Soil that is exposed to the elements can be responsible for damaging the plants it supports. Even though the air may still be cold, the sun can warm soil to the melting point, thawing it to a depth of several centimeters. This layer stays soft and mucky as long as the sun continues to shine during the day. But when night falls and the sun disappears, temperatures drop dramatically, freezing the soft surface soil again. This freeze/thaw cycle may be great for tapping maples, but it can be deadly for the plants in your garden. Plant roots are normally protected in winter, insulated by the soil and the snow covering. But at this time of year new roots start to sprout in the warm soil near the surface, only to be killed off when the sun goes down and the ground freezes.

There's more. Soil expands when it freezes, and shrinks again as it thaws. So there is movement (frost heaving) near the surface, but the deeper soil remains frozen solid, unmoving. Any roots crossing between these two layers may be severed. Plants with root systems damaged in this way may be unable to support their above ground parts when the real growing season begins. And the severed ends of the roots are wounds that are prone to infection. Dormant plants damaged in this way will be vulnerable to disease.

The damage caused by soil thawing and freezing in late winter or early spring can be minimized by mulching bare soil. Even before the snow melts you can apply a mulch of wood chips or evergreen boughs to the snow surrounding recently planted specimens. As the snow melts mulch will be lowered into place on top of the bare soil where it will insulate and bring about a slow, manageable thaw.

THE GGG FLYER

In your mailbox this week you should have received a flyer that's all about the GGG. This was mailed to all 2100 homes in Greely with the goal of attracting new members. Greely really is a "growing community" in more ways than one, and the bigger our membership the more activities we can support. So please welcome any new faces you see at next month's meeting. By the way, more than half the cost of printing and mailing the flyer was paid through advertising, so please keep our advertisers in mind when you are garden shopping this season!

FIT FOR THE GARDEN

Any day now we'll finally be able to get out in the garden and start getting things ready for the growing season. For many of us that means a lot of activity that our bodies haven't been used to for the past few months. So take it easy, you don't want to get an injury at the start of the season. Better still, pick up a set of tip sheets provided to us by Chiromax of Manotick. They tell you how to stretch before you start, offer tips for a healthy back in the garden, and more. There are four sheets in the series, and they're free, so help yourself, and have a happy healthy gardening season!

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