



Greely Gardeners Group

Newsletter

December 2005

GREELY GARDENERS CALENDAR:

Note: As indicated below, our first three meetings of 2006 will be held on the first Thursday of each month rather than our usual night, which is Wednesday. This is to avoid clashing with the Greely Players, who will be rehearsing(at full volume!) in the hall next door on Wednesday nights.

Thursday, January 5, 7:15 p.m. Greely Community Centre. Monthly meeting. Guest speakers the Knippels, from Peter Knippel Nursery on Bank Street. You can hear Peter answer garden questions on CFRA every Saturday at noon. At this meeting Peter and his wife will answer your questions in person!

Thursday, February 2, 7:15 p.m. Greely Community Centre. Monthly meeting. Guest speakers Pat and Steve Shapiro will talk on vegetable gardening – why and how to grow vegetables, gearing the garden to the energy available to do it, soil and other requirements, and much more.

Thursday, March 2, 7:15 p.m. Greely Community Centre. Monthly meeting.

Wednesday, April 5, 7:15 p.m. Greely Community Centre. Monthly meeting. Welcome the return of Dave Dunn from the Rideau Woodland Ramble, near Merrickville. Dave's topic will be "Provocative Conifers". This a new presentation all about dwarf, medium and large evergreens for the garden.

Wednesday, May 3, 7:15 p.m. Greely Community Centre. Monthly meeting. Another return visit, this time Suzanne Patry and Bruce Trites from Whitehouse Perennials in Almonte. Daylilies (thousands of them) are the specialty of the Whitehouse gardens, and this illustrated talk will show you just why!

Wednesday, June 7, 7:15 p.m. Greely Community Centre. Monthly meeting. Details t.b.a.

More details on topics, guest speakers and other GGG events coming up real soon. We're working on it!

OTHER UPCOMING EVENTS

Manotick Horticultural Society meets on the second Monday of the month at their new location, the RCMP Club House off Nicholl's Island Road. For information contact Mary Kealey at 823-1658.

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.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

....and by the way, your membership fees for 2006 are now due. GGG membership is still one of the great bargains at just \$10 for the year, so if you haven't already renewed, make sure you see Gary at the January meeting. As treasurer he'll be happy to take your money and give you your new membership card. Looking forward to seeing you in 2006.

Tip of the Month

CHRISTMAS IS OVER. The New Year is about to come in. We gardeners know what that means... it's seed catalogue time. So many catalogues, so many exotic looking varieties. How to choose? How to determine what those descriptions mean? For the novice (and for those of us who never learn), here's a primer to catalogue terminology, adapted from my favourite website ICanGarden.com:

Challenging - Plants that are labeled "challenging" are the opposite of hardy (see below). They will probably die. In law this is called a disclaimer. When it dies, don't bother asking for a refund.

Choice – There are plants that are choice and plants that are presumably not choice. If you can see no difference, "choice" is likely a signal that they're overstocked on that item and need to move it out. **Rare and choice** means they can't even squeeze through the storeroom.

Common - These are the plants of our childhood, those that have bloomed in gardens for five generations with only the most inept care. Catalogs hardly ever sell common plants, but they often use the word, as in, "this flower is much improved over its common ancestor."

Durable - If they do want to sell a common plant, this is what they call it.

Exclusive - The seed company has paid the breeder a fat fee (which they will recover from us) so that he won't let anyone else sell it. If you must have this variety, there's only one place to get it. At least if you want it this season. Next season the arrangement may expire and you can find it everywhere at half the price.

Hardy - This plant will live through the winter, maybe not in your garden, but somewhere. "Hardy to Zone 5" means it is hardy to Zone 6, but there is one known instance of it surviving north of that. And "Hardy with some protection" means it requires the kind of coddling that would make a flu-stricken husband seem stoic.

Light fragrance - Means that it doesn't have a heavy fragrance; you have to crush it and shove it up your nose to notice.

Limited supply – Don't bother racing to the post office, scribbling your order as you weave through traffic. "Limited supply" means either (1) they sold out the day before the catalogues were mailed, or (2) they're holding the handful that they have for close friends, relatives, or favoured customers far more discerning than you and me.

Mail order exclusive - Make sure the shelves at Giant Tiger aren't groaning under pots of the stuff before you send in your order.

May bloom first year - Not in my garden it won't, and probably not in yours either. Note that there's no mention of a second year.

Rare – See "Choice".

Tolerates light shade - Does so in the same way that teenage girls tolerate younger brothers, that is, grudgingly. Tends to be pale, leggy and disinterested.

Vigorous grower - These plants will devour your house and garden by July, choking out everything that gets in their way. Remember, kudzu is a "vigorous grower".

Will bloom first year if planted early enough – "Early enough" is January.

Winter interest - This plant is stultifyingly boring in spring, summer and fall.

Greely Gardeners Group, Executive Committee:

President ~ Gill Toll 821-6123; Vice-President ~ Anita Snelgrove 821-0447; Events Director ~ Natasha Robb-Burrows 821-1037; Secretary/Treasurer ~ Heather Clemenson/Gary Hall 821-7445; Social ~ Shelagh Heatlie 821-0816; Past President/Newsletter ~ Bob Stanley 821-1847