



Greely Gardeners Group Newsletter

June 2006

GREELY GARDENERS CALENDAR:

Saturday, July 15 GGG's ANNUAL FIELD TRIP. This year we will be visiting Kiwi Gardens, which is just the other side of Perth, about an hour's drive. This is a spectacular garden centre and its extensive gardens include a collection of art that is well worth a visit. For more information visit their website at www.kiwigardens.ca. We will meet at the **Community Centre parking lot at 9:30** (half an hour earlier than usual to allow for the slightly longer drive). As usual we will car pool where possible. Bring a picnic if you want to eat at the Gardens, or there are numerous places for lunch in and around Perth for those who want to get together after the tour.

Wednesday, September 6, 7:15 p.m. Greely Community Centre. Monthly meeting and AGM. Topic: "BULBS AND FALL PLANTING". Guest speaker: Neill Ritchie of Ritchie's Feed and Seed.

Wednesday, October 4, 7:15 p.m. Greely Community Centre. Topic: "IMPROVING YOUR GARDEN WITH COMPOST AND MULCH". Guest speaker: Lindley McPhail, Master Gardener.

Wednesday, November 1, 7:15 p.m. Greely Community Centre. Topic: "KEEPING YOUR INDOOR PLANTS HAPPY AND HEALTHY THROUGH THE WINTER".

Wednesday, December 6, 7:00 p.m. Greely Community Centre. GARDENERS' CHRISTMAS SUPPER. Members and their guests. Details to be announced.

Gardeners Wanted

Only a few members signed up at this month's meeting to help with watering and maintaining the gardens at the Community Centre. This is a once-a-week job (on Thursdays, when there's someone available to give us access to the water supply). A little weeding and a little watering should be all that's required. There are still some weeks open, so if you, ahem, forgot to sign up, feel free to contact Anita at 821-0447. She'll be pleased to hear from you.

OTHER UPCOMING EVENTS

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, 7:00 p.m. at the Legion Hall, corner of First Street and Legion Lane.

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

TIP OF THE MONTH

THIS MONTH'S TIP comes in the form of the attached handout from Gerry and George of the Herb Garden, who were guest speakers at the June meeting. Unfortunately they didn't bring enough copies of the handout to go around, which gives lots of useful information on harvesting, drying, freezing and storing herbs, so we promised to scan it and distribute it to everyone with the newsletter. So here it is. Enjoy!

2006 Member's Gardens Tour



Gary Hall took this shot of the group at their first stop — Loreena Wallace's garden.

Saturday June 17 was the date for the annual Members' Gardens Tour. The weather was great, despite the threat of showers in the forecast, and some two dozen members turned out for this event, which took in five gardens — four in Greely and one in Vernon.

The tour started just across from the Community Centre at Loreena Wallace's beautiful garden, then moved on to Shadow Ridge where Anne and Bob Lavoie welcomed the group. Next stop was at the garden of Jane Benyon in Sunset Lakes, then a walk across the way to Carol and Bob Stanley's neighbouring garden, where refreshments were available. Special thanks to Joan Bradley for once again providing wonderful baked goods. Finally a short drive south to Vernon to see Elaine Newton's garden — well worth the drive!

If you missed the tour you missed a treat. Be sure to catch it next year.

Greely Gardeners Group, Executive Committee:

President ~ Gill Toll 821-6123; Vice-President ~ Anita Snelgrove 821-0447; Secretary ~ Heather Clemenson 821-7445;
Treasurer ~ Gary Hall 821-7445; Past President/Newsletter ~ Bob Stanley 821-1847



HARVESTING, DRYING AND STORING HERBS

HARVESTING

- cut, don't pick
- cut in the morning after the dew dries and before the sun is too hot
- cut just before flowering
- for annuals, leave at least four inches of growth on the stem
- for perennials, cut only one third of the leafy stem
- wash thoroughly and towel dry or dry in a salad spinner

DRYING

Hanging

- leave on stems, bunch with elastic bands
- hang in dry, dark area with good ventilation
- if too hot, the heat spoils the flavour, and if too bright, the sunlight will fade the herbs
- takes from 3 or 4 days to 10 weeks to dry, depending on the humidity
- when dried, flavour is retained for at least a year
- flavour is retained longer if the leaves are left on the stem

Oven Drying

- herbs can be dried in a slow oven (100 to 125 degrees F for a few minutes) but it is quite difficult to gauge the exact time needed

Microwave Oven Drying

- heat on low for one minute or less
- the time depends on the herb variety and the amount of herbs you are drying
- microwave drying is not appropriate for large batches, or if you want good retention of aroma

FREEZING

- useful for delicate tasting or tender leafed herbs e.g. borage, tarragon, basil and parsley can be frozen whole or chopped
- can be placed in plastic bags or glass jars
- single herbs or combinations of herbs can be frozen in ice-cube trays, ready to be used in soups or stews

STORING

- dried herbs have a better flavour if the leaves are crushed just before use
- dried herbs are very attractive hanging in the kitchen but they do attract dust and will also lose flavour if hanging anywhere near the stove
- once crushed, dried herbs should be stored in glass containers with tight-fitting lids
- store in a cool dark place

PREFERRED GROWING CONDITIONS FOR HERBS: SOILS, LIGHT & DRAINAGE

POOR SOILS: Mullein, Rue, Winter Savory, Wormwood

RICH SOILS: Angelica, Basil, Chives, Comfrey, Lovage, Marjoram, Mints, Parsley, Pennyroyal, Sorrel, Sweet Cicely

ALKALINE SOILS: Fennel, Pyrethrum, Sage

SHADY LOCATIONS: Agrimony, Angelica, Bergamot, Borage, Chervil, Horehound, Hyssop, Lemon Balm, Lovage, Mints, Parsley, Pennyroyal, Rue, Sweet Cicely, Worm wood

FULL SHADE: Sweet Woodruff

WET CONDITIONS: Angelica, Bergamot, Elecampane, Lovage, Mint, Pennyroyal, Sorrel, Sweet Cicely, Sweet Woodruff

DRY CONDITIONS: Bedstraw, Calendula, Catnip, Dill, German Chamomile, Horehound, Lemon Verbena, Mullein, Oregano, Salad Burnet, Thyme, Wormwood

PROPAGATION

FROM SEED: Anise Hyssop, Basil, Borage, German Chamomile, Chervil, Chives, Coriander, Dill, Fennel, Lovage, Parsley, Summer Savory, Sorrel, Thyme, Wormwood

FROM CUTTINGS: Bay, Bergamot, Roman Chamomile, Curry Plant, Hyssop, Lavender, Lemon Verbena, Mint, Rosemary, Rue, Santolina, Southernwood, French Tarragon

SEED OR CUTTINGS: Catnip, Feverfew, Lemon Balm, Marjoram, Oregano, Sage, Winter Savory

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**www.herbgarden.on.ca
www.herbfest.ca**