



Greely Gardeners Group

Newsletter

November 2008

**Wednesday, December 3: 7:00 p.m. GGG's ANNUAL CHRISTMAS POT-LUCK DINNER –
AN EVENT NOT TO BE MISSED!**

If you haven't signed up yet and you'd like to attend, it's not too late. Phone Shelley Piercey (821-1120), who is coordinating the event, to let her know you're coming, and of course what dish you'll be bringing. IMPORTANT NOTE: Please do not bring alcoholic drinks. We've turned a blind eye to the occasional bottle of wine in the past, but we've now been advised that this could result in the Community Centre losing its licence for events such as the Winter Carnival, or even for wedding receptions! Have a glass at home before dinner if you wish, but please leave the bottle behind. A non-alcoholic punch will be available.

GREELY GARDENERS 2009 CALENDAR:

Thursday, January 8: Greely Community Centre, 7:00 p.m. Topic: A POND FOR YOUR GARDEN. Guest speaker: Nicholas Butt of the Pond Clinic.

Thursday, February 5: Greely Community Centre, 7:00 p.m. Back by popular demand... GARDENING Q&A WITH PETER AND JOAN KNIPPEL, of Knippel's Nursery on Bank Street.

Thursday, March 5: Greely Community Centre, 7:00 p.m. Topic: EASY CARE ANNUALS. Guest speaker: Mary-Anne Jackson-Hughes.

Thursday, April 2: Greely Community Centre, 7:00 p.m. Topic: SUMMER BULBS, CORMS AND TUBERS. Guest speaker: the ever popular Darrell Kekanovich of Ritchie Feed and Seed.

Wednesday, May 6: Greely Community Centre, 7:00 p.m. Topic: PEONIES AND ORCHIDS. Guest speaker: Author, Marilyn Light.

Saturday, May 23: Andrew Shields Park, Old Prescott Road, 9:00 a.m. GGG's ANNUAL SPRING PLANT SALE. When you're dividing your perennials or thinning out seedlings this Spring, be sure to pot up some of the extras for the plant sale.

Wednesday, June 3: Greely Community Centre, 7:00 p.m. Topic: EVERYTHING YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT BEES. Guest speaker: Greely beekeeper Brent Halsall.

Saturday, June 23: ANNUAL MEMBERS GARDENS TOUR. The tour starts at 9:00 a.m. from the Community Centre parking lot and lasts about four hours. Details to be announced.

Wednesday, September 2: Greely Community Centre, 7:00 p.m. Topic: MUSHROOMS. Guest speaker: Michel Corbeil.

Wednesday, October 7: Greely Community Centre, 7:00 p.m. Topic: A WALK ON THE WILD SIDE. Guest speaker: John McKenzie.

Wednesday, November 3: Greely Community Centre, 7:00 p.m. NEW AND UNDERUSED PERENNIALS. Guest speaker Suzanne Patry of Whitehouse Perennials.

Wednesday, December 2: Greely Community Centre, 7:00. GARDENERS' CHRISTMAS DINNER. Members and their guests. Details to be announced.

OTHER GARDENING 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

WELL THERE'S SNOW ON THE GROUND AGAIN and it's probably here for the duration – time to restock the bird feeders... or is it? Some people say feeders make birds dependent, and if you go away for a couple of weeks vacation many of your “regulars” may starve. Just how much birds depend on your feeder depends on how much natural food the birds can find in the area, whether there are other feeders nearby, and above all on the weather.

If you have a few neighbours who are also regularly feeding birds it is likely not a big problem if you stop feeding for a while, but if you are the only one providing food in your neighbourhood you have a responsibility to be consistent. Many of “your” birds chose to winter in your area partly because of your feeder. This is especially true of birds that are beyond their normal winter range, such as cardinals that probably couldn't survive in our area without feeders to supplement their diet.

Then there's the weather. If a blizzard drops a metre of snow overnight, or freezing rain coats everything in a thick layer of ice, many more of the birds in your area will depend on bird feeders for their survival. So stock up on a variety of foods to supplement the supermarket seed blends:

Good mixed seed has a large amount of sunflower seed, cracked corn, white millet, and perhaps some peanut hearts. The really cheap bags of mixed seed usually contain the least useful seeds.

Fruit is an important dietary element for birds, but it's hard to find in midwinter. Set out grapes, raisins, slices of citrus fruits, apple or banana slices, even melon rinds.

Safflower is a favourite food of the northern cardinal, and it is not popular with squirrels.

Niger seed, also called thistle seed, will attract colourful red and yellow finches all winter, but you'll need a special feeder with small slotted holes that allow the finches to get at the seeds.

Suet is an excellent source of energy for birds in winter fat. Ask at your grocery store butcher counter, or purchase ready made suet-and-seed blocks, but again you'll need a special feeder designed to hold the suet blocks.

Peanuts ? de-shelled, dry-roasted, and unsalted ? are a high-protein, high-energy food that will attract woodpeckers, jays, nuthatches, chickadees, and even cardinals and finches will eat them. Peanuts can be expensive, but ask your feed/seed retailer about peanut bits or rejects.

Black-oil sunflower seed is the hamburger of the bird world. Almost any bird that will visit a bird feeder will eat black-oil sunflower. Birds that can't crack the seeds themselves will scour the ground under the feeders, picking up bits and pieces. Birds prefer it because the outer shell of a black-oil sunflower seed is thinner and easier to crack and the kernel inside is larger than striped sunflower seed. Striped sunflower is still fine (evening grosbeaks may even prefer it) but black-oil is better.

Greely Gardeners Group, Executive Committee:

President - Shelagh Heatlie 821-0816; Vice-President - Anita Snelgrove 821-0447; Treasurer – Melissa MacDonald 821-9680;
Secretary – Melody Tomka 821-1985; Shelley Piercey 821-1120; June MacDonell 821-1949;
Past-President - Gill Toll 821-6123; Newsletter Bob Stanley 821-1847

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