



Greely Gardeners Group

Newsletter

January 2009

GREELY GARDENERS 2009 CALENDAR

Thursday, February 5:

Greely Community Centre, 7:00 p.m. Bring all your gardening and houseplant questions for this one ?
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. We all love perennials, but there's a place for annuals too in every garden. 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 and amazingly knowledgeable Darrell Kekanovich of Ritchie Feed and Seed.

Wednesday, May 6:

Greely Community Centre, 7:00 p.m. Topic: PEONIES & PERENNIALS I KNOW & GROW. Guest speaker: Author and gardening guru 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 20:

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.

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...



IF YOU'RE A FAN OF GERANIUMS, keeping them over the winter is well worth the effort, considering the price you'll pay for new plants in the spring. Geraniums are one of the easiest plants to overwinter, and there are several more-or-less foolproof ways to do it. Of course it's too late now for last year's plants, if they're still outside they're done for. For future reference though, here are three ways to keep your geraniums from one year to the next.

First, and probably the most popular method is to dig up the plants at the end of the season, carefully shake all the soil off the roots and then hang them upside down in a cool, dry area of your basement.

Some people prefer to hang them in a paper bag, partly because the leaves will drop off and make a mess. Once a month during the winter, take the plants down and soak the roots in water for an hour or so. Then shake off any excess water and return them to the basement. In the spring pot them up and cut back any shrivelled dead stems. Water thoroughly and stand back. By the time all danger of frost is over your geraniums will be ready to plant out.

Bring 'em in

If all that sounds a bit complicated ? or if you don't have a cool, dry spot in your basement ? you can pot them up and grow them indoors for the winter. First cut them back by about half and remove any dead or diseased leaves and stems. (If you want more plants for next season, you can also pot up those cuttings and grown them on over the winter. More about growing cuttings in a moment.) Now dig up the geraniums carefully so as not to damage the roots, and plant them in clean 6-to-8-inch pots in a mix of three parts potting soil and one part sand. Of course if you grow geraniums outdoors in containers, you don't need to repot them. Just cut the plants back and move the containers inside before the first hard frost (Note: you might want to check those containers for unwanted guests, like earwigs or ants, before you bring them in.)

Indoors your geraniums will be happiest in a sunny south or west window (or under artificial light) with relatively cool temperatures. Water them only when the soil becomes dry and make sure that the pots are never sitting in water. No fertilizer until spring! Even with good light the plants will tend to become a bit spindly, so pinch them back occasionally to encourage sturdy, bushy plants. With luck and good light your indoor geraniums may even bloom for you. Don't plant them out until all danger of frost is past, but in early spring do acclimatize them to the outdoors by putting them outside in a protected area for a few hours each day, just as you would with seedlings or houseplants that spend the summer outdoors.

Now for those container-grown plants. By February they will probably have become a bit leggy too, so you will want to cut them back a bit. Leave the cuttings for 24 hours, remove the lower leaves, dip the stems in rooting hormone, shake off any excess, then plant them in 3-to-4-inch pots in that same sandy mix. I find cuttings taken this way do best in a cool, north-facing window. Don't let them dry out, keep the soil moist, but not wet, and remove any leaves that die back. With luck you'll have lots of extra geraniums to plant out in spring.

Don't really need that many geraniums? No problem, bring them along to the GGG Plant Sale on May 23 – they'll sell like hot cakes!

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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