



Greely Gardeners Group

Newsletter

July 2009

2009 CALENDAR

Saturday, August 8, 1:00 p.m. (rain date Sunday, August 9) The GGG's Annual Barbecue – a tradition since 2008. This year the BBQ will be bigger and better than ever, and best of all, the food will be free! Once again Melody Tomka will be hosting the event at her home at 6719 Bank Street. All GGG members are welcome, and you can bring a guest (spousal unit, friend, etc.) and your own children. There will be hamburgers, hot dogs, salads and desserts. Soft drinks and juices will be provided too. If you wish to bring wine or beer that's ok, but please remember that drinking and driving don't mix, so a designated driver is a good idea. Bring a chair or two, and anything else you'd normally bring to an outdoor event. If you're planning on coming and you haven't signed up yet, **please call Melody at 613-821-1985** or e-mail her at mtomka@rogers.com and let her know.

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 4:

Greely Community Centre, 7:00 p.m. NEW AND UNDERUSED PERENNIALS. Guest speaker, the always popular and very knowledgeable Suzanne Patry of Whitehouse Perennials.

Wednesday, December 2:

Greely Community Centre, 7:00 p.m. ANNUAL CHRISTMAS POT-LUCK DINNER, where our members show that they are not just great gardeners but great cooks too. Don't miss it!

2010 CALENDAR

Shelley Piercey, our Events Coordinator has been very busy over the past few months putting together a programme of interesting, informative and entertaining speakers for 2010. In all our 11 years we have never had a complete line up of speakers this early – so congratulations and a big thank you to Shelley and her helpers! Here's a taste of what's to come in the New Year – full details to follow soon...

Thursday, January 7: Topic: VERICOMPOSTING. Guest speaker, Andrew Aitkens. That's a fancy word for composting with worms. Not as yukky as you're probably thinking, as Andrew will explain.

Thursday, February 4: Topic: WEEDS – IF YOU CAN'T BEAT THEM, EAT THEM! "Guest" speaker, Bob Stanley. This presentation (complete with recipes) will make you think about weeds in a whole new way.

Thursday, March 4: Topic: JAPANESE FLOWER ARRANGING. Guest speaker, Wendy Batson of the Ohara School of Ikebana.

SUMMER GARDENING EVENTS

Master Gardeners of Ottawa-Carleton Plant Sale, Sunday, August 9 from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm, at the Central Experimental Farm, Building 72 in the Arboretum, east of Prince of Wales traffic circle.

Art on the Farm, On August 15 (rain date August 16) Friends of the Farm invite you to visit the Central Experimental Farm Arboretum from 10 am to 6 pm, for our Annual Art on the Farm event. Artists will display and sell their original works under the trees of the arboretum. Admission and parking are free. For information call 613-230-3276, email info@friendsofthefarm.ca, or visit www.friendsofthefarm.ca.

TIP OF THE MONTH...



AT OUR JUNE MEETING, BEEKEEPER BRENT HALSALL TOLD US how important bees are for our environment and our food. He also talked about Colony Collapse Disorder (or CCD), also known as bee decline disease, which has been evident now for several years. The problem isn't getting any better, and it's not just in Canada. Beekeepers are experiencing the phenomenon in the United States, United Kingdom, Belgium, France, the Netherlands, Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain and reports have also come in from Switzerland, Germany, and Taiwan. Aside from fundamental concerns about the survival of bee species, colony collapse is economically significant because many agricultural crops worldwide are pollinated by bees... and so are the flowers and vegetables in our gardens.

In the winter of 2008 a survey by the US Department of Agriculture showed that 36 percent of America's 2.4 million hives were lost to CCD. The survey suggested an increase of 11 percent over the losses of 2007, and 40 percent over the losses of 2006. In the UK losses were estimated at 15 percent over the last two years, and the population of butterflies and other beneficial insects is also down. The cause (or causes) of the disease are not yet fully understood, and scientists believe there are many factors involved. But the concern is very real because bees are essential to pollinating fruit and vegetables, as well as maintaining wildlife.

So you say that's all very sad, but what can I do to help stop the decline of bees? So glad you asked, because there's quite a lot you can do actually. For starters you can plant your garden with all kinds of nectar-rich plants. Encourage bees to visit a part of your garden by planting a bee border or a bee garden, just as you would plant a butterfly garden (you could plant one of those too).

Use many different kinds of perennials that bees like to ensure something is in flower every month. One the best plants you can use is lavender. Plant it between pastel-coloured perennials, such as catmint and verbena. Other perennials that provide plenty of pollen and nectar include campanulas, purple coneflower, hellebores, ice plant (*Sedum spectabile*) and sea holly (*eryngium*)

Good shrubs to use are buddleia, hebe, Japanese quince (*chaenomeles*), weigela and flowering honeysuckle (*Lonicera purpusii*)

If you have acidic soil in your area (sandy soils generally are acidic), try hardy heathers (*calluna*) and heaths (*erica*). These give great scent and the bees love them

Be sure to create your bee garden in full sun and, where possible, in a sheltered place out of the wind. Bees don't like to be blown around when trying to land on flowers and also prefer flowers in sun rather than shade.

Lastly, protect bees from sprays or other insecticides or pesticides. If you must use a spray, try to use one that doesn't affect bees and spray pesticides in the evening after bees have returned to their hives.

One bee garden probably isn't going to make much difference, but if we all started bee gardens...

Day Lily Open House

Thanks to Lindley McPhail for this tip: **Friday evening July 31, after 6:00 p.m., and all day Saturday, Aug.1.** Over 1200 varieties of day lilies in the field, many now in bloom. Most may be purchased. In past years it has been \$10 for a small shovel full. "Everyone Welcome" for this nice outing close to home. Follow Hwy 31 south through Vernon. South of Vernon look for the large sign "Belmeade Road". Drive west until you come to house # 6601.

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; Program coordinator -- Shelley Piercey 821-1120; June MacDonell 821-1949;
Past-President - Gill Toll 821-6123; Newsletter Bob Stanley 821-1847

www.greelygardeners.org