



Greely Gardeners Group

Newsletter

March 2014

GREELY GARDENERS EVENTS

Please note the March meeting is the first Thursday of the month.

MONTHLY MEETING – Thursday March 6

Topic: “Pondless Water Features”

Guest speaker: Benjamin Stapper

Greely Community Centre, 7:00 p.m.

Landscape designer and horticultural specialist, Benjamin Stapper has worked in the landscaping industry in both Ottawa and the Netherlands. Hear how you can enjoy a water feature in your yard without the expense and work of a pond.

MONTHLY MEETING – Wednesday April 2

Topic: “Questions and Answers with Ed”

Guest speaker: Ed Lawrence

Greely Community Centre, 7:00 p.m.

Ed Lawrence, the former Head Gardener at the Governor General's Residence, Rideau Hall, and current long-time CBC Radio gardening guru on CBC Radio's Monday afternoon call-in show, will be our special guest at the April meeting. Ed will be available to answer your questions on both indoor and outdoor gardening. So, bring along a guest and your questions for Ed. It promises to be a very entertaining and informative evening!

Please note that for this special event only, the admission fee for non-members will be \$5.00.

MONTHLY MEETING – Wednesday May 7

Topic: “Big, Bold and Beautiful”

Guest speaker: Nancy McDonald

Greely Community Centre, 7:00 p.m.

Bold, eye-catching plants have a place in every garden. They create a focal point, fill large spaces, quickly block a view and replace bushes. Master Gardener, Nancy McDonald, will show us how to use high impact perennials and annuals to bring drama and excitement to our gardens. Come see plants that will take your breath away.

Reminder GGG 2014 Membership Fees Are Now Due

If you joined the GGG after September 2013, or have renewed your membership since September 2013, your membership takes you to the end of December 2014.

If you have not yet renewed your membership for 2014, this is a subtle reminder. If you intend to renew your annual membership at our next meeting, to save time please consider printing a membership form from our website: www.greelygardeners.ca and filling it in ahead of time.

At only \$10 for the year, we are still the best bargain in town!

OTHER GARDENING EVENTS

Hosted by Seedy Saturday: Saturday March 1, "10 Metre Diet, Intro to Backyard Organic Food Production", Tom Marcantonio, Master Gardener, 2:00 p.m., Ron Kolbus Lakeside Centre, 102 Greenview Ave, Ottawa.

Ottawa Valley Rock Garden & Horticultural Society: Saturday March 8, "Native Plants for City Gardeners", Josie Pazdzior, Master Gardener, 1:30 p.m., Westboro Masonic Hall, 430 Churchill Avenue at Byron, Ottawa (Guest fee \$0)

Manotick Horticultural Society: Monday March 10, "Whispers in the Wind: Ornamental Grasses", Edythe Falconer, Master Gardener, 7:30 p.m., Main Hall, RCMP Campground, Long Island Locks, Manotick.

Old Ottawa South Garden Club: Tuesday March 11, "Whispers in the Wind - Ornamental Grasses", Edythe Falconer, Master Gardener, 7:30 p.m., Old Firehall on Sunnyside Avenue, Ottawa (Guest fee \$7)

Russell and District Horticultural Society Monday March 17, "Aquatic Planters and Living Walls", Nicholas Bott of The Pond Clinic, 7:00 p.m. , Royal Canadian Legion/Lion's Hall at 24 Legion Lane in Russell. Details of upcoming events are posted on their website: <http://www.russellgardeners.ca/>

Ottawa Public Library: Monday March 17, "10 Metre Diet, Intro to Backyard Organic Food Production", Tom Marcantonio, Master Gardener, 6:30 p.m., Carlingwood Branch, Ottawa Public Library, 281 Woodroffe Ave, Ottawa (Registration required through the Ottawa Public Library website: <http://bibliooottawalibrary.ca/en/program>).

Peterborough Garden Show, 11-13 April
<http://peterboroughgardens.ca/Showhome.html>

The 2013 show was a great success with nearly 8000 visitors and 175 booths of vendors and exhibitors all with gardening-related products and services spread over two arenas.

MEETING REPORT FEBRUARY

Judith Cox, Master Gardener, presented a very interesting talk on the subject of "Gardening with Children". Judith works full time as a gardener in the rural west end of Ottawa at Saunders Farm. The Farm covers 100 acres and has "acres of gardens". Judith's gardening passions are heritage vegetables, roses and fairy garden accessories. She has tended a constantly evolving Fairy Garden for several years and is always looking for new ways to bring magic into the garden. Judith particularly works with children who visit the farm. To illustrate the fun she has in working with children she began by sharing with us some of the many questions that children ask including: "if I plant a sandwich will it grow?" and "do worms have ears?"



In the vegetable garden she allows lettuce to go to seed for interest, grows small yellow tomatoes for children to try and grows purple carrots that are another curiosity for children.

Judith had many ideas for engaging children in gardening, even in the winter. She suggested, for example, cutting out photos from seed catalogues for children to

look at and to select flowers or vegetables that they would like to grow in the spring. Early in the season it is a good idea to develop a starter garden for children, maximum about 8 feet by 8 feet in which they can plant a few vegetables, such as carrots, lettuce, beans, and tiny pumpkins as well as colourful and easy to grow flowers such as pansies, marigolds and nasturtiums. If you want to grow bigger pumpkins grow one, for example, on a compost pile. Even for very young children planting a big pot or planter is a good idea with pansies, nasturtiums and sunflowers as examples of interesting flowers.

Indoors she suggested that a pineapple top is an interesting plant to grow with children, although she admitted to not having success with this herself. Growing an avocado plant from seed is another project as is starting bean seeds in a clear plastic bottle. In the latter case, plant the seeds so that they are visible on the inside edge of the bottle and children can watch the roots, stem and leaves grow.

One of the fascinating parts of her talk was when she described her Fairy Garden at Saunders Farm. She has developed it over the years and has quite a following of children who have become regular visitors to the farm in the summer months. The choice of flowers and herbs are those that attract butterflies and bees and that are colourful and scented.

Judith talked about the smaller props for her fairy gardens, particularly for the planters that she develops as fairy gardens; these props include small houses, small wind chimes for air, coloured glass beads used as shiny rocks to imitate water, and sparkly objects that can be used to imitate fire. Many of her small accessories she finds at the dollar stores. If developing a fairy garden in an existing garden it is recommended to try to anchor it around a fruit tree with lots of blossom, like a crab-apple, or around a rose. She talked about using lilies, foxgloves and herbs in the garden as well; recognizing that some plants are poisonous (foxglove).

As part of her talk she took us step-by-step through the designing of a fairy garden in a shallow wide planter. Judith noted that she filled the planter with soil up to the rim. Then she planted a miniature rose, shamrocks and rosemary and decorated the surface with a small painted house, rocks, sparking items for water, a small frog and other miniature accessories that would create a scene to stimulate the imagination of a child. Fine mulch was used to cover the soil.

Judith obviously really enjoys this aspect of her work and judging by the response from the members who attended the talk, she caught many of us up in her enthusiasm. There may be fairy gardens popping up all over Greely this coming season!

NOTE: FEBRUARY/MARCH TO DO LIST *

- Leeks, onions and parsley can be started from seed now. These plants take a long time to reach maturity and will benefit from sowing early indoors and growing under lights.
- Check bulbs and tubers that are in cold storage for signs of rot, or if you've used peat moss to store them, check the moisture level of the peat moss and if it is too dry, add a bit of water to moisten it slightly.
- Keep an eye on houseplants for signs of pests. Don't overwater indoor plants as they are semi-dormant now; increase watering when their spring growth begins

*Taken from Trowel Talk, published by the Master Gardeners of Ottawa-Carleton

Greely Gardeners Group – 2014 Executive Committee

President:	Lee Nickerson	613-574-0214
Vice-President:	Geoff Voyce	613-692-5384
Treasurer:	Jane Rietze	613-699-6330
Secretary:	Denyse Becker	613-425-1157
Speaker Coordinator:	Elaine Routledge	613-692-9988
Past-President:	Gary Hall	613-821-7445
Member-at-Large:	Sue Young	613-574-0098
Member-at-Large:	Phyllis Nickerson	613-574-0214
Member-at-Large:	Claire Maxwell	613-821-9982
Newsletter Editor:	Heather Clemenson	613-821-7445
Website Updates:	Gary Hall	613-821-7445

Website URL www.greelygardeners.ca
E-mail: greelygardenersgroup@gmail.com