

THE EAST YORK GARDEN

NEWSLETTER OF THE EAST YORK GARDEN CLUB



The East York Garden Club is a member of the Ontario Horticultural Association, District 5.

Meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month (except August and December) in the Stan Wadlow Clubhouse, 373 Cedarvale Avenue at 7:30 p.m.

Refreshments are available at 7:00 p.m. The Clubhouse is wheelchair-accessible. Visitors are always welcome.

Yearly membership fees are \$20 for a single, and \$30 for a family.

To inquire about membership, please contact Suzanne Boyd at 416-423-5857.

Visit us on the web at www.eygc.ca

President:

Veronica Callinan

Vice President:

Linda Boyko
Susan Bartlett

Newsletter Editor:

Susan Bartlett



Thursday, March 18, 2010

Topic: City Gardening

Speaker: Gayla Trail

Also on: Book Sale

Gayla Trail is the creator of the popular gardening project, You Grow Girl, a community for laid-back but enthusiastic gardeners, where she also shares her love of plants and personal experiences tending three very urban gardens. She writes a kitchen gardening column for *The Globe & Mail*, contributes regularly to magazines, and is a frequent speaker and spokesperson on the topics of urban gardening, ecology, and community. She is the author of two books on gardening:

The People's Choice photo contest category is "Ugly" - entries in by 7:15 please.

Phyllis Shepherd's horticultural library has been donated to EYGC, these will be for sale. Feel free to donate your unread gardening books by 7:00 p.m. Book Sale to follow the meeting. (If you would like to help with pricing/selling books, please call Karen Bell 416-429-3032.)

Members with surnames beginning with "D" to "F" are asked to bring in some cookies or squares for the refreshment table. Following the meeting there will be a draw table.

Thursday, April 15, 2010

Topic: The ABC of Containers (Annuals, Balcony, Care, Design)

Speaker: Paul Zammit

Paul Zammit has been a Director of Horticulture at the Toronto Botanical Garden since 2009. A graduate of the University of Guelph's Plant Agriculture program, Paul is an active member of many Canadian and international gardening communities. He lectures on a wide array of subjects, including container gardening, perennials, ground covers and tropicals. A popular and engaging speaker, Paul has given presentations at many garden clubs and large garden shows such as the Canadian National Exhibition, Success With Gardening and Canada Blooms, and other horticultural trade shows in both Canada and the United States.

The People's Choice photo contest category is "Spring" (entries in by 7:15 please). Following the meeting there will be a 50/50 draw. Members with surnames beginning with "G" to "H" are asked to bring in some cookies or squares.

From the President's Patch by Veronica Callinan

Hello Again!

From the “summer that wasn’t”, to the “winter that isn’t quite”. We buy plants, sometimes expensive ones, stick them in the ground with no control as to whether they'll survive or not. Gamblers, the lot of us.

The ground will thaw. Eventually. It’s tough, I know, but stay out of the beds till the soil is dry. Tromping on roots, forgotten bulbs and perennials will decrease your gambling luck. While you're inside staring at your garden, below are some notes I gathered from various horticultural meetings and seminars over the winter....

The challenge this winter is that we don’t have much snow. We still might get a dump or two, but the majority of winter was dry. Bone dry. Yes, I know, I promote mulch quite a bit, being a lazy gardener. However there are some rules, especially around trees.

When it comes to trees, mulch is grand, but snow is better. Mulch can artificially keep roots warm - warmer than they should be. In some cases, warm to the point that they think they should be growing. The new line of thought is not to mulch trees more than an inch, in order to keep the roots cool. When there’s snow, there’s no mistake that it’s NOT time to grow. Snow also turns into water when the plants SHOULD start growing again.

- Don’t use bark mulches of the same species as the tree it’s being used around. If there’s any disease in the mulch, it will go straight to the tree.
- Don’t use fresh chips. The decomposition processes increases soil temperature which dries it and stresses the tree.
- Leaf mulches are the best, and can be laid right on the beds or around trees in the fall. Although they absorb some nitrogen from the soil during decomposition, it’s marginal and occurs when the trees are dormant. When the leaves are decomposed, the old and new nitrogen goes back into the soil.

President’s Patch cont’d

- Diversify the genetic makeup of the leaves, don’t use just one tree variety. They decompose at different rates.

Evergreens drink all winter. You might notice there's rarely a pile of snow under a large evergreen. These trees are a great place to move (fresh, unsalted!) snow from your driveway or sidewalk. The pile of snow will disappear, waiting for the next dumping.

Just, remember to stay out of the beds! ...vc

The Ugly Side of Our Next Meeting By Malcolm Geast

At our March meeting, we’ll be holding our third People’s Choice photo contest of 2010, one which we hope will result in an interesting variety of entries. It has always been suggested that these competitions provide you an opportunity to be imaginative in your interpretations of each month’s category. This will especially be the case in March. With a category of “Ugly”, the challenge for this month will be to find a subject that has some measure of unpleasantness, while at the same time, also attracts the attention of the viewer (after all, you want to win, don’t you?).

In April, it’s a simpler category, “Spring”, but also one that allows a considerable degree of interpretation. Those spring months aren’t just the time for new growth, but can also be the time for winter weather’s final appearance, or for summer to make an early arrival.

I’ve been asked about the need for horticultural content in the photos that are entered in these competitions. In the fall photo contest, it’s a necessity in almost all of the categories. However, for the People’s Choice contests, there’s no specific requirement. You can feel free to enter pictures that have little or no horticultural content – the only stipulation is that the photo must fit with the category for that month’s contest.



VESEYS SPRING BULB CAMPAIGN
 Included with your latest newsletter mailing is a BROCHURE and ORDER FORM for the VESEYS SPRING BULB CAMPAIGN. The ever popular bulbs are back. Take a look through the available packages for beautifying your garden. Remember that this is a fundraising effort that gives you quality bulbs and seeds at good prices, and at the same time helps out the Club.

PRODUCTS
 New this spring is the Tango Lily Collection. You will also find:
 NEW LOW GROWING GLADS
 HOSTA MIX AND SUMME DAFFODILS
 SEED COLLECTIONS (*can be directly sown in the garden without starting indoors*)
 THE SUMMER SAVORY COOKBOOK
Don't forget Veseys Bulbs and Seeds make great gifts for family and friends.

ORDERING
 Orders should be brought to the **MARCH 18** and **APRIL 15** meetings. Final deadline for ordering is April 23, 2010. Orders will be collected by Paula Cameron.

PAYMENT
 Cheques should be made payable to **The East York Garden Club.**

CONTACT INFORMATION
 For more information or if you have an order but are unable to attend the meetings contact:
Paula Cameron
 309 Woodmount Avenue
 Toronto, Ontario M4C4A4
 Telephone: 416-467-9553 Email: witanhaunts@rogers.com

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

What to do in the Garden in March and April
 by Anna Leggatt

Soak tuberous begonias in hand warm water for 15 minutes and start them under lights or a warm window sill facing east.

- *Start tomato seeds in mid March if you have grow lights*
- *Cut back Hellebore leaves as soon as you can find them. Cut back Epimedium leaves just as the snow melts.*
- *Grasses can be cut down anytime now, except for evergreen types. These will be tussocks of live and dead leaves. Comb them with a gloved hand to remove dead leaves.*
- *Look for frost heaved plants as the ground unfreezes and push them back into the soil*
- *Cut back Group 3 clematis to about 20cm*
- *Rake the lawn and cut back dead perennials when the snow has gone and the ground has dried enough so you don't leave footmarks.*
- *Unhill roses in April when the buds start to swell. Prune when you can see what is dead.*
- *Prune dead wood from all shrubs. Prune late summer flowering shrubs to reduce size or improve the shape as the buds swell.*
- *Spread compost if you have any left.*
- *Ideally remove mulch as the bulbs start to come up – the ground will warm faster.*
- *Plant cold tolerant vegetables such as peas in mid April if the soil is dry enough*

Master Gardeners' Advice

The following is further advice from Linda Lynott, one of the Master Gardeners who appeared at the February 18, 2010 meeting:

Lasagna Gardening

Lasagna gardening is the antithesis of tillage. Tilling is not considered a good home garden practice because, for example, it causes erosion and moves the seed bank. The seed bank is the ungerminated seeds in the soil. Have you heard that when the pharaohs' tombs were opened, viable seeds were found?

Lasagna gardening is layering new material on top of the existing soil or sod.

Starting a new garden bed

Once you have determined that you want a new bed and you have laid out the shape of the bed, you put several layers of newspaper down and top it with good quality soil and just let it sit. 10 layers are recommended but I have been successful with 4 sheets. The best time to start a lasagna bed is in the fall. Just let it sit over the winter and in the spring it is ready to plant. There is no digging up sod or weeds with this method.

Maintaining an existing garden bed

Just layer peat moss, triple mix soil, composted material or leaves, over the existing soil. The worms take the material down through the soil and work it in for you. Leaf mold and completely composted soil are now considered the best amendments for a bed (make sure the leaves are disease free; if you have powdery mildew on your Lilacs or Phlox, put these items into the land fill garbage and not onto your compost or beds).

The additions of Leaf mold and Compost cause the creation of beneficial root fungi-most of structure outside of root, Mycorrhiza or Ectophytes or Endophytes, beneficial root fungi-most of structure inside of root. These micro-organisms help with translocation, the movement of water, nutrients sugars and plant growth substances (A plant grows and survives with an interaction of photosynthesis, respiration, transpiration, absorption and translocation).

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Maintaining cont'd

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A plant gets most of its nutrients from the soil, from absorption which starts with translocation. It starts the absorption process by the opening of the stomata's. Contrary to popular belief, adding fertilizers does not help much with plant nutrition. It only aids with the plants ability to absorb nutrients from the soil. So having good soil is the key to a healthy plant and a thriving garden.

Spring or fall is the time to put these amendments down. Who has time in the spring plus your compost pile is likely not ready because of winter temperatures.

Keeping the mulched grass clippings

Although we are not talking about fertilizing a lawn, fertilization, in southern Ontario, should be done three times per season; early season (May 15-June 15), middle season (early August) and late season (September 15- October 15); and a winter application on November 1. Fertilizing too soon can cause the blades to have a growth spurt, whereas all the early season growth should be at the roots, in order to promote healthy grass plants.

Sod

Lasagna gardening is also used for sod. In may you over seed the sod. In June you should top dress the sod. When you top dress you can mix grass seed with the soil for another over seeding. You do this by pretending that you are feeding chicken. 25 cm or 1 inch is the maximum to apply, so as not to smother the lawn. The key is to put down a thin layer. Over time the soil will break down, filter down and improve the overall texture and health of the sod.

March 17 to 21, 2010 (Wed.-Sun.) - Canada Blooms at the Direct Energy Centre. Moving to the CNE grounds, the largest flower and garden show in the country returns for another year, at a new location. Further information:

<http://www.canadablooms.com/>

March 18 to 21, 2010 (Thurs. – Sun.) The International Home & Garden Show and The Successful Gardening Show at the International Centre (Airport Road & Derry Road) Further Information: <http://www.home-show.net/successfulgardening/index.html>

Tuesday, March 30, 2010 - Re-Envisioning Your Garden at the Toronto Botanical Garden (Lawrence & Leslie) Marjorie Harris will speak about making changes to your garden without "throwing the baby out with the bathwater". Begins at 7:30 p.m. in the Floral Hall. Admission is free for members, \$20 for non-members. Further information: <http://www.torontobotanicalgarden.ca/programs/edwardslectures.htm>

Wednesday, April 7, 2010 - Rare Native Plant Gems – Species at Risk at the Toronto Botanical Garden (Lawrence & Leslie). Ecologist Jane Bowles talks about studying the ecology, monitoring and working on recovery of endangered plant species. Begins at 7:30 p.m. Admission is \$8 for NANPS members, \$12 for the general public. Further information: <http://www.nanps.org/>

April 9 to 11, 2010 (Fri. – Sun.) For the Love of Gardening at the Evinrude Centre, Peterborough. This annual edition of this increasingly popular show will have over 180 vendors & exhibitors and Plant and Floral Design Competition. Admission is \$5 per day. Further Information: <http://www.peterboroughgardens.ca/showhome.html>

April 10 & 11, 2010 (Sat. & Sun.) Toronto African Violet Society Flower Show & Sale at the Toronto Botanical Garden (Lawrence & Leslie). View and purchase prize winning violets, leaves or starter plants. Noon to 5:00 p.m. on Sat., and 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Sun. Further information:

http://www.bluejasper.com/tavs/4_events.html

Saturday, April 17, 2010 - Gardening and Nature Book Sale at the Toronto Botanical Garden (Lawrence & Leslie). Runs from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Further information: <http://www.torontobotanicalgarden.ca/events/earthday.htm>

Sunday, May 2, 2010 12 noon to 4pm Ontario Rock Garden and Hardy Plant Society Hardy Plant Sale, Floral Hall Toronto Botanical Garden
777 Lawrence Avenue, East
<http://www.onrockgarden.com/plantsale/welcome/>

Milne House Garden Club 10th Annual Legacy Event featuring Hitomi Gilliam an International Designer from Vancouver.

The Floral Demonstration will be held in the Floral Hall, Toronto Botanical Garden 777 Lawrence Ave E (at Leslie) Wednesday May 19th 2010, 12:15 for 1:00pm Tickets \$35.

An auction will follow the demonstration of all designs and plant material. cash/cheque. For information during Feb. and March to reserve seats please call Nancy Tong 416-481-4873

Please make cheques payable to Milne House Garden Club and mail to Nancy Tong, 51 Colin Avenue, Toronto M5P 2B8

An all day Workshop will be held on Thursday May 20, 2010. All materials and containers are supplied. Lunch is also included. Tickets \$175. Audit tickets are available for \$75. Lunch is included

Who: Loblaws Garden Centre

Position: Horticulturalist

When: 9am-5pm, Saturdays and Sundays, between May 8 and June 27th

Where: The Scarborough Town Centre, Brimley and Progress 1775 Brimley Road

Rates, If you worked for Loblaws Garden Centres before:

1-2 years - \$13/hour

3-4 years - \$15.50/hour

5 years and over - \$19.50

For more information contact Cheryn Parry, 416.284.0791

Members' Open Gardens

If you would like to open your garden to other EYGC members for a weekend afternoon this summer, please call Rosalind Regnier 416-759-6247