

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 Bond at 416-423-5857.

Visit us on the web at www.eygc.ca

President:

Veronica Callinan

Vice President:

Linda Boyko
Susan Bartlett

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Thursday, March 17, 2011

Topic: Coming up Roses / Speaker: Shari-Lyn Safir
Pre-Talk: Anna Leggatt on Preparing for a Flower Show

Shari-Lyn is national President of the Canadian Rose Society and past-President of The Greater Toronto Rose and Garden Society. Her passion for roses has led her to become a rose judge and consulting rosarian as well as her overall love of gardening to join the Master Gardener program. She has travelled widely assessing roses. She adores Old Garden and David Austen roses. Be sure to arrive by 7:00 p.m. as Anna Leggatt will demystify for us the process of preparing plants and flowers for show.

The People's Choice photo contest category is "Green" - entries must be in by 7:15 please. There will be a draw table following the meeting.

Members with surnames beginning with "A" and "B" are asked to bring in some cookies or squares for the refreshment table.

Thursday, April 21, 2011

Topic: New Modern American Flower Arrangements
Speaker: Rosemary Dobson
Flower Show

Rosemary is a well known horticulturist of wide ranging interests. She is a Horticultural and design judge and wins many prizes for her innovative designs, both oriental, modern as well as traditional. She grows many bulbous plants and has recently started the Greater Toronto Bulb Society. She is a founding member of the Toronto Master Gardeners

New in 2011, the first Flower Show will be held at the April meeting. (Please note there will be no flower show at the May meeting.)

Following the meeting there will be a 50/50 draw. Members with surnames beginning with "C" and "D" are asked to bring in some cookies or squares.

Doors open at 7:00 for coffee (please bring your own mug), refreshments and the opportunity to mingle with other members.

Forcing Spring Branches

from *GardenMaking* by Judith Adam



Finally, at the middle of February, the days begin to grow noticeably longer and we begin to anticipate spring. Of course, there are still several weeks of winter in front of us with the potential for more snow and ice. But I prefer to be proactive about spring activities and get started early by forcing some flowering branches.

Most spring-flowering shrubs can be forced into bloom indoors by easing them out of dormancy over a period of one to three weeks. I begin in mid-February with Cornelian cherry (*Cornus mas*), witch-hazel (*Hamamelis x intermedia*), redbud (*Cercis canadensis*) and forsythia. I cut a second batch of branches at the beginning of March from mock orange (*Philadelphus* spp. and cvs.), shrub honeysuckle (*Lonicera* spp. and cvs.) and February daphne (*D. mezereum*). The younger branches of woody plants usually carry the most flower buds, which appear more round and puffy than the slimmer leaf buds. If you're unsure, use a razor blade to cut a bud open and look for recognizable flower parts inside.

With a sharp knife or secateurs, cut a cross into the bottom inch of each stem to encourage water uptake. Put the cut branches into a basement utility sink or bath tub overnight, submerging them completely, if possible, in cold water for 12 hours; then stand them in a bucket or vase containing water, and set them in a cool, bright location, away from direct sunlight. (Too much heat or sunlight can cause the buds to drop.)

Change the water every other day to keep it fresh and prevent bacteria from entering the stems. A floral preservative in the water will help to prolong the display.

Soon the buds will begin to swell and crack open, and then the branches can be arranged in vases wherever you want a display of flowering branches. Moving the arrangements to a cool place at night will help the flowers last longer. I've noticed a difference in petal colour as the result of maturing indoors, away from ultraviolet light. For instance, deeply coloured flowers like red Japanese quince (*Chaenomeles* spp. and cvs.) may fade to pink, although they're still lovely.

All kinds of branches can be forced. If you have access to fruit trees, try apple, apricot, pear and peach branches. Smaller spring-blooming shrubs like azalea, cotoneaster and deutzia are pretty in mixed arrangements. Foliage branches are also beautiful to have indoors, and you can try any kind of beech, Japanese maple, willow and dogwood. Be careful where you cut and don't take too much. It requires only a few branches to make a beautiful vase display that will give weeks of pleasure while real spring is developing outside.

Print Friendly Redbud branches can be forced to bloom early indoors. (Photo from *WikiMedia Commons*)

EYGC Library

Thanks to Cain Knoechel for taking over the role of Librarian. The library was rolled out at the February meeting and received a good measure of attention. Good work, Cain!

REMINDER - if you have books out, they should be returned so other members can enjoy them, too!

New in the East York Garden Club Library

by Karen Bell



Growing Winter Hardy Cacti

by John N. Spain

Elisabeth Harmon Publishing 71 pages with index

The cactus family contains plants which grow from the tropics of central America up nearly to the Arctic Circle. If you have a hankering to try growing something different, maybe winter hardy cacti are for you.

Hydroponics for the Home Gardener

by Stewart Kenyon

Van Nostrand Reinhold 146 pages with index

Obtain abundant yields of high quality produce year-round in a very small space at low cost.

Hydroponics is the practice of growing healthy veggies, herbs and house plants without soil. Includes instructions for building your own system and recipes.

Propagation Basics

by Steven Bradley

Hamlyn 128 pages with index

Visits to the garden centre emptying your bank account? Learn how to propagate all kinds of plants with step-by-step instructions. Includes photos and excellent illustrations.

Water Gardening Basics

by Helen Nash & Marilyn M. Cook

Sterling Publishing 128 pages with index

Humans have a universal attraction to water. We find it peaceful and restorative. So why not have it in your own backyard?

This book contains a broad base of information on all aspects of pond gardening- from large ponds to small container ponds: how large and where to locate it; how to build it; drainage and safety issues; pumps and filters and water chemistry; installing plumbing and electricity; which plants to choose; adding fish to the mix; maintenance and troubleshooting; and once you are hooked on your pond, how to expand it. Includes lots of photos to inspire and inform you.

EYGC Members' Tour 2011

2011 EYGC Garden Tour - Members and Friends, Saturday, June 18.

This year, Members can bring **up to 3** neighbours, friends or family with them on the tour. No charge. This increases our exposure to like-minded people, without asking our Members to open their gardens to the general public. Hopefully, we'll get some new Members! Non-Members will have to be escorted by a Member, no strays will be allowed to wander in.

We need YOUR garden! Don't be shy!

- Do you have a new bed and looking for suggestions? You'll get tons of suggestions!
- Do you have an old bed that needs refurbishing? You'll get tons of suggestions!
- Do you have a plant that looks fantastic? We'd love to see it!
- Did your garden reno turn out like you'd planned? We'd love to see it!

We're not looking for manicured gardens fit for Canadian Gardening Magazine. Our Members want to learn and get new ideas. They want to see what can be tried in their own gardens.

Please contact Roz Regnier (roz_regnier@hotmail.com, 416-759-6247) to put your garden on tour. More info about times will come later.

Members' Flower Shows & Plant Sale

This year we will have our first Flower Show in April and skip the May show. In recent years the May meeting has gotten rather hectic with both the plant sale and the flower show on. Of course, part of this is due to our members bringing in so many great donations for the plant sale. So just a reminder it's not too early to start thinking about May!



Growing Orchids

Fact Sheet from the Toronto Master Gardeners

There are 15,000 to 35,000 different species of orchids and not all are easy to grow. The orchids most generally cultivated are *Cattleyas*, *Phalaenopsis* (moth orchids), *Paphiopedilums* (slipper orchids) and *Cymbidiums*. Even within these general groups, cultural requirements are variable and best results can only be obtained by choosing plants that fit the particular environment available or by adjusting the environment to fit the plant.

Growing *Cattleya* orchids

The following are some basic cultural rules for growing *Cattleya* orchids in the home. While these rules are basic to many other orchids, too, different rules for temperature, light and water may apply and it is best to seek expert advice.

Temperature

Ordinary home temperature is good for many orchids. They do well at temperatures from 15 - 20 degrees C. although the night temperature should be slightly lower. For *Cattleyas* do not let the temperature go below 12 degrees C. as it may blast any flower buds that have formed. (*Phalaenopsis* like temperatures above 20 degrees C. while *Paphiopedilums* and *Cymbidiums* prefer night temperatures of above 10 degrees C.) Warm rooms without good circulation may keep the buds from opening fully.

Light

In winter, the orchid plant takes all the sunlight it can get. In this climate, this usually means all the direct sun you can give the plant from about the first of November until the middle of February. In the late spring, summer and early fall months, plants still require lots of light but some shading from the direct sun is necessary. (A gauze curtain at the window is sufficient.)

Water

If your plant is potted in fir bark, as most orchids now are, water it heavily every five to seven days according to your

particular home conditions. Place the pot in the sink and flood it with water. Allow the pot to drain completely before returning it to its saucer as the roots may rot if it sits in water. Remember the orchid is somewhat of an air plant and likes drenching rains on its roots but does not like "wet feet." Do not use chemically softened water due to the high sodium content.

Humidity

During the winter months when your house is heated and consequently dry, place the plant on a dish of wet pebbles which will help to develop an envelope of humidity around the plant. Be sure that the pot sits on the pebbles and not in the water. A light spraying of the leaves with water during bright, hot days is beneficial, but not on dark, dull days.

Food

Because orchids are generally potted in fir bark, which is devoid of nutrients, you must feed them regularly to get new growth. Use any balanced, water-soluble fertilizer (20-20-20 for example) at a quarter of the rate recommended for other house plants. During the winter use this solution for one of the regular waterings every three weeks. Feed every two weeks in the summer.

Air

Orchids like lots of air since they usually grow up in the crotches of trees where there is lots of air movement. Drafts will not hurt the plant unless the temperatures are extreme. The ideal location should include plenty of light but also include shade. Hanging your plant from the branch of a tree is recommended. Remember, however, that the plant will dry out more quickly if put outdoors and you will have to water it more often.

Factsheets are produced by the Toronto Master Gardeners in association with Toronto Botanical Garden.

THE MAGNIFICENT PRIVATE GARDENS OF ITALY TOUR

There are still some seats left for this tour. They are being offered to any Ontario Horticultural Society and Garden Club members at a \$200 pp DISCOUNT for any booking made before March 31, 2011.

Canadian garden expert and author, Marjorie Harris will lead this unique and exciting Italian Garden Tour from October 13 to 24, 2011. Together with Linda Clay, Marjorie brings you a magnificent garden tour that is for both garden enthusiasts and landscape designers.

Tour itinerary:

http://www.italianvisits.com/garden_tour/

Contact: Linda Clay
leclay@sentex.net

519 823 5849 or 1 888 823 5849

UPCOMING EVENTS

March 16 to 20, 2011 (Wednesday to Sunday) Canada Blooms at the Direct Energy Centre

The largest flower and garden show in the country returns for another year.

Further information: [Canada Blooms](#)

Sunday, April 17, 2011

Annual Rhododendron & Horticultural Society Plant Sale at the Toronto Botanical Garden (Lawrence & Leslie)

The Toronto Rhododendron and Horticultural Society holds its annual plant sale. In addition to a wide variety of Ontario grown plants in bud (at great prices), there will be experienced rhodo growers on hand to answer questions and provide tips.

Further information:

http://www.onrhodos.com/TRRHSD/Plant_Sale.html

Sunday, May 1, 2011

Ontario Rock Garden Society Plant Sale at the Toronto Botanical Garden (Lawrence & Leslie)

Unusual shrubs & perennials, hardy Ontario-grown plants, alpine & rock garden plants, shade & woodland plants. Runs from noon to 4:00 p.m.

Further information:

<http://www.onrockgarden.com/plantsale/>

Saturday, May 7, 2011

North American Native Plant Society Annual Plant Sale at the Markham Civic Centre (101 Town Centre Boulevard)

The North American Native Plant Society holds its annual sale of thousands of native perennials, shrubs and trees. Runs from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Further information:

<http://www.nanps.org/index.php/events/annual-plant-sale>

And further into summer:

- Doors Open Toronto - Saturday, May 28 and Sunday 29, 2011
- Toronto Botanical Gardens- Through the Garden Gate - Saturday, June 11 & Sunday, June 12, 2011 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Father's Day - Sunday, June 19
- Leaside Garden Tour - Saturday, June 25th from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Toronto Island Garden Tour - Saturday and Sunday, June 25 and 26, 1 - 5 p.m.
- Beach Garden Tour - Sunday, June 26th (they'll let us know if that changes)
- Dyke March - Saturday, July 2, 2:00 PM
- Gay Pride Parade - Sunday, July 3, 2:00 PM
- Honda Indy - July 8, 9, 10, 2011
- Toronto Caribana Parade. Sat. Jul. 30, 2011



Rain Barrel Fundraising Sale

Order NOW!

The Toronto Master Gardeners and the Toronto Botanical Garden are pleased to offer environmentally-friendly, cost-effective rain barrels to capture precious rain for homeowners' gardens.

ONLY \$55.00

What do you get?

- 220-litre repurposed, reconditioned bulk food barrels
- Fully-equipped and ready to use with a leaf & mosquito filter basket, an overflow adapter and hose and a spigot to attach directly to a garden hose
- 1 m (38 - 40") tall and 0.6 m (22") diameter
- Black, grey, or terra cotta

How do you get them?
Simply pre-order your rain barrels on-line, in person, or by phone:

- On-line at the supplier's secure website - www.rainbarrel.ca/tmg-tbg
- At the TBG shop - in person or by phone (416-397-1357)
- From any Toronto Master Gardener
- At many of the spring-time events at the TBG

When and where can you pick them up?

9am to 2pm, Saturday, April 23
At the Toronto Botanical Gardens, 777 Lawrence Avenue East

Distribution is on a first come, first served basis, so come early for best selection ... and to enjoy the TBG Earth Day celebration events!

**Renee's Garden
Anna Leggatt**

Renee's Garden is one of my favourite sources for seed even though it is in the States.

Why? The list contains unusual and heritage vegetables and flower seeds, as well as old favourites. Many packets contain 2 or 3 varieties of colour coded seeds so you don't have to buy 3 packets of say, heritage tomato seeds.

The seeds arrive quickly - it is easy to order on line. There are clear instructions on planting and germination is good. Frequently you get cooking hints.

Why not give it a try?

Raise Funds for your School or Non-Profit Organization

Need a great fundraiser? Gardening from seed is a fun, productive and totally "green" activity. Sign up for **Renee's School and Nonprofit Program** and 25% of every order will be donated to your program.

HOW IT WORKS:

We'll assign a unique coupon code to your organization. When your supporters and members purchase from our website, they will enter your code in the coupon code box on the checkout page. At year end we will send you a check for 25% of the total order value of all customers who use your code. Codes expire each December.

HOW TO SIGN UP:

Send (via fax, e-mail attachment or regular mail) a brief letter on your organization's letterhead. Just request to join our Nonprofit Fundraising Program and give us a very short description of what you do, your nonprofit status, a contact person with telephone number and e-mail, and tell us exactly how your end of season check should be made out and where to send it.

Fax to: 831-335-7227 Email to:
customerservice@reeneesgarden.com
(put "Fundraiser" in the subject line)

Mail to: Fundraising Program
6060A Graham Hill Rd.
Felton, CA 95018

Marion Jarvie

At our January meeting, Marion Jarvie shared her garden with us through photos and provided her experience with various shrubs.

She reminded us that she now has a website which lists the dates her garden is open as well as her upcoming speaking engagements:

<http://www.marionjarvie.ca>