

# 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 Karen Bell at 416-429-3032.

Visit us on the web at [www.eygc.ca](http://www.eygc.ca)

President:

Malcolm Geast

Vice-Presidents:

Linda Boyko

Veronica Callinan

Newsletter Editor:

Susan Bartlett

## Canada Day – Sunday, July 1

As we've done for many years, we'll be participating in the Canada day festivities at Stan Wadlow Park on July 1. We'll have a booth where we'll be selling plants and Attic Treasures. If you have any plants that you can donate, they can be dropped off at the booth anytime between 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.

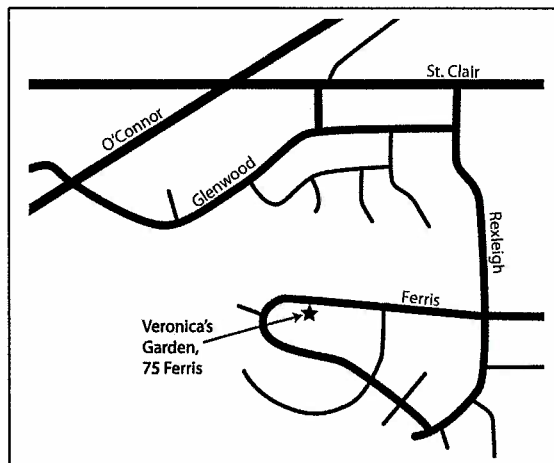
If you're going to be away that day, but would still like to donate, give Malcolm a call at 416-429-4719, and we'll try to make other arrangements. And what are "Attic Treasures"? They're second-hand items in good condition, items you no longer need or want, but someone else could use.

We also plan to walk in the parade. We will meet at 8:45 a.m. at Dieppe Park, on Cosburn Avenue just east of Greenwood. The walk is a leisurely pace with many stops and opportunities to meet your neighbours. While the parade ends at Stan Wadlow Park, one can drop out at any point on the route.

## Thursday, July 19 – Pot-luck supper in Veronica Callinan's Garden, 75 Ferris Road, Begins at 7:00 p.m.

This year our July pot-luck meeting will be held in Veronica Callinan's garden, at 75 Ferris Road. Please bring a dish of food, with at least six portions. We also ask that you bring your own plate and cutlery, and a folding chair if possible.

Veronica would like you to know that, "the garden is a 'work in progress', and the upper portion is under construction. Ignore the weeds and enjoy a variety of hostas, shrubs and vines. Note: there are cats in the house for those with severe allergies. Sorry, but the bathrooms are not wheelchair accessible. There'll be a few chairs for those who can't bring one, but I'm hoping most people will bring chairs." Free street parking is available. By TTC, the Dawes Rd 23 North bus stops just around the corner on Rexleigh.





EYGC members, after the June 23 bus trip to Peter Keeping's garden, Blossom Hill Nursery, and Ocala Winery. (Source: Malcolm Geast)

A Senior's Metropass was found at the June 21<sup>st</sup> Garden Club meeting, and was not claimed. If this pass is yours, please contact Veronica Callinan at 416-750-9758.

### Garden Tour 2008

We're hoping to have another garden tour in 2008. And of course, the essential ingredient is attractive, interesting gardens. This summer, please keep an eye out for gardens that could be part of our tour next year. If you know of any (or if you'd like to have your garden included), please let Malcolm Geast know, at 416-429-4719 or malcolm@eastyork.net.

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### Don't Say You Weren't Warned....

by Malcolm Geast

Most of us have read about, or experienced first-hand, the problems associated with invasive plants such as dog-strangling vine or garlic mustard. Usually, these don't result in immediate health-related concerns. But in Iowa, the proliferation of an invasive weed has prompted a public warning. Contact with wild parsnip (a distant relative of the veggie you ate with your Christmas dinner), can cause blisters, rashes, itches, and burns. It especially likes to grow in disturbed areas, such as roadsides. Introduced to the area in the late 1800s, recent mild winters and heavier-than-normal rainfalls have resulted in a rapid spread of the plant throughout the state. Contact with the chemicals in the stems and leaves of wild parsnips (which can grow up to five feet high) will result in a condition known as phytophotodermatitis. The ultraviolet light of a normal summer day (the "photo" part of the name) will react with chemicals known as "psoralens" found in the plant, and will result in the destruction of cells and skin tissue. Mild cases will feel similar to sunburn, but severe exposure can cause blisters and a red or brownish skin discoloration that can last up to two years.

It's the exposure to sunlight that's particularly important in the process, so that contact made during the late evening or overnight is not a major concern (as long as it's washed off before it can be exposed to ultraviolet light).

All very interesting, but what does this have to do with us? While it's not yet a significant worry in southern Ontario, wild parsnip does occur in Ontario. A biennial that spreads only by seed, you'll recognize it by its 10-20 cm wide flat clusters of flowers that show up from May to July. Its compound leaves are composed of 5 to 11 leaflets that are yellowish-green, shiny, oblong, coarsely-toothed, and either mitten- or diamond-shaped. Although it's still uncommon enough that you won't find it in your everyday travels, it's something to be aware of if you happen to stop the car and get out for a walk through the grasses at the side of a country road. And one other thing - if you can get to the root without handling the stems or leaves, it's safe to eat with your next Christmas dinner.

You can find more information about wild parsnips at:

[www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/facts/ontweeds/wild\\_parsnip.htm](http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/facts/ontweeds/wild_parsnip.htm)

[www.wnrmaq.com/stories/1999/jun99/parsnip.htm](http://www.wnrmaq.com/stories/1999/jun99/parsnip.htm)

[www.oardc.ohio-state.edu/weedguide/singlerecord.asp?id=540](http://www.oardc.ohio-state.edu/weedguide/singlerecord.asp?id=540)



## Blooming Contest

Just a reminder that the closing date for nominations for the 2007 East York Blooming Contest is July 3.

There are four categories of gardens: Traditional, Environmental/Alternative, Commercial & Industrial, and Other. Traditional gardens are those with a predominance of grass. An Environmental/Alternative garden is one that substitutes plants for lawn, or significant areas of lawn, and utilizes environmentally sensitive gardening practices. Commercial & Industrial gardens are exactly what the name implies. And the "Other" gardens are apartment buildings, churches, townhouse complexes, schools or any other property that doesn't fit into the first three categories.

Complete information can be found on the nomination form that was included with your May/June newsletter, and are also available on our website ([www.eygc.ca](http://www.eygc.ca)). You can also send your nomination directly to [blooming@eastyorkgarden.ca](mailto:blooming@eastyorkgarden.ca). If you don't have one of the forms and don't have Internet access, you can request one by calling 416-392-1432.

Judging of the gardens will be performed by members of our Club. If you'd like to be a part of the judging team, but you didn't sign-up at either our May or June meeting, give Malcolm Geast a call at 416-429-4719.

Winning gardens will be announced at an awards presentation at the East York Civic Centre in September. The first-place winners of the Traditional and the Environmental categories will be entered in the 2008 city-wide contest.

## The Rockery

The Rockery is now ready for garden related work, i.e. weeding, pruning, planting.

If you are interested in helping out, group work dates are:

- Wed. June 27, 6:30 p.m.
- Sun. July 8, 10:00 a.m.
- Wed. July 18, 6:30 p.m.
- Sun. July 29, 10:00 a.m.
- Wed. Aug. 8, 6:30 p.m.
- Sun. Aug. 19, 10:00 a.m.
- Wed. Aug. 29, 6:30 p.m.
- Sun. Sept. 9, 10:00 a.m.
- Wed. Sept. 19, 6:30 p.m.



## Environment Day

On Saturday, June 2 Club members held a booth at the Stan Wadlow Environment Day. Fundraising through rhubarb and plants was a success, as well as a chance to meet with city politicians and other volunteer groups.

## Spotlight on Herbs: Lavender

*(by Susan Bartlett)*

At last year's Canada Day parade we greatly enjoyed handing out sprigs of lavender to the parade watchers along the route. Some of us had such an abundance of blooming lavender in our gardens, we didn't even miss it after handing out so many cuttings!

While spectacular to look at, lavender also has many medicinal and nutritional functions.

Historically it has been said that lavender was found in the pyramids of the ancient Egyptians, where it was used for preservation. In Roman times lavender was used for bathing rituals and once brought to England lavender has been popular since the Middle Ages. It even gained the reputation of warding off the plague.

Essential oil of lavender is thought to have antiseptic and anti-inflammatory properties. It was used in hospitals during WWI to disinfect floors, walls and other surfaces.



An infusion of lavender is claimed to soothe and heal insect bites. Bunches of lavender are also said to ward off insects. If applied to the temples, lavender oil is said to soothe headaches. Lavender is frequently used as an

aid to sleep and relaxation: Seeds and flowers of the plant are added to pillows, and an infusion of three flowerheads added to a cup of boiling water are recommended as a soothing and relaxing bedtime drink.

Here are some recipes I plan to try this summer:

### *Lavender Lemonade*

*5 cups water*

*1 ½ cups sugar*

*12 stems of fresh lavender*

*2 ¼ cups of lemon juice*

*Boil 2 ½ cups water with sugar.*

*Add the lavender stems and remove from heat. Put a lid on the container and let cool. When cool, add 2 ½ cups water and the lemon juice. Strain out the lavender buds. Serve the lavender lemonade with crushed ice and garnish with lavender blossoms. Serves 8*

### *Lavender Liquid Hand Soap*

*10 tablespoons finely grated castile soap*

*8 tablespoons boiling water*

*2 tablespoons crushed lavender buds*

*4 drops of lavender oil*

*Melt the soap in the water in a bowl placed over a saucepan of hot water, stirring frequently, until smooth. Crush the flowers to a powder and take the bowl off the saucepan. Stir the flowers into a soap with oil. Cool and store in pretty bottles or empty hand soap dispensers.*

## Members' Open Gardens

While the Club won't be holding a garden tour in 2007, some club members will be opening their gardens. On Saturday, July 21 from 1 to 4 in the afternoon Anna Leggatt's garden will be open to members. She is located at 2593 St Clair Ave East, East York, 2 blocks west of O'Connor Drive, where Marilyn Dr. meets St. Clair.

## CNE

The Ontario Horticultural Association is looking for members to volunteer for the OHA booth at the CNE. The job will not be to answer those strange, wonderful, and baffling gardening questions that we've all heard (those will be answered at the Master Gardeners booth next door), but instead to give out information about the OHA and garden/hort clubs & societies. Information about GTA clubs & societies and the OHA is provided to help answer most questions that pop up.

The flower show is across the hall and various speakers will appear on the nearby stage in the afternoon to provide extra interest. Free admission to the Ex and free parking is provided. I've done this several times, at the Ex and the Successful Gardening Show, and have found it to be an enjoyable experience, speaking to gardeners from various parts of southern Ontario.

Those who are interested should contact me at 416-429-4719 or [malcolm@eastyork.net](mailto:malcolm@eastyork.net).

## New Members:

Please extend a warm welcome to our newest members, Gail Brodeur and Brenda Riviera.

## Plants for Sale

As some of you may know, Janet Badali, a long-time member of our Club will soon be selling her house (she's at 2 Westview, near St. Clair & O'Connor). Janet's garden is known for its perennials, and over the years has been a significant source of some of the best looking and healthiest plants in our plant sales. Before the house is sold, she plans on selling many of her plants. If you're interested in buying some of them, you can give Janet a call at 416-751-0685.

## June Flower Show

There were a total of 89 entries in our May, flower show, down somewhat from the past couple of years. However, the number rebounded somewhat in June, with 127 entries. Congratulations go to Jean Quinn for the Best Cut Specimen and Best Design in the May show, and to Betty Meyers, who received similar honours in the June show.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### July 14 & 15 (Saturday & Sunday)

*Marion Jarvie - Open Garden (37 Thornheights Road, Thornhill)*

The third of four weekends that Marion Jarvie has her garden open for viewing (the garden will also be open on the weekend of September 15 & 16). There are always many select plants for sale, and there is no charge for admittance. Open from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., rain or shine.

### Saturday, July 7 and Sunday July 15, 2007

*Merlin's Hollow - Open Garden (181 Centre Crescent, Aurora)*

The third and fourth of four open garden days this summer. Merlin's Hollow is an English flower garden with over 1500 different plants, and designed by David Tomlinson. The garden is open 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., rain or shine.



## UPCOMING EVENTS CONT'D

July 7 & 8, 2007 (Saturday & Sunday)

*Ontario Regional Lily Society Show at the Royal Botanical Gardens, Burlington*

See what lily growers have been up to through the year. Awards will be presented on Sunday at 2:00 p.m., and the sale of lily stems in the show starts at 3:15 p.m. The show runs from 1:30 to 5:00 on Saturday afternoon, and from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Sunday.

Further information: <http://www.orls.ca/events.htm>

Sunday, July 15

*Water Garden Tour*

The Greater Toronto Water Garden & Hort Society presents a tour of gardens with ponds in the west side of the GTA from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Tickets are \$10 each and can be purchased by calling 416-425-3329.

Sunday, July 15

*Triffids plants - Open Garden (10612 Sixth Line, Georgetown)*

Belinda Gallagher's nursery sells unusual, rare and rarely grown perennials, and is usually open only by appointment. This is the third of four weekends with open dates this year. The next will be September 14-16.

Further Information: <http://www.haltonhills.com/triffids/index.html>

Saturday, July 21

Walking Tour of the Goulding Estate on Dawes Road

Meet at the parking lot on the east side of Dawes Road, just north of Crescent Town Road at 1:30 p.m. On this walk you'll get to see FODE's largest restoration project to date, involving over 3,000 trees, shrubs and wildflowers, as well as the last surviving structure of the Dentonia Park Farm.

Further Information: <http://www.heritagetoronto.org> [www.web.net/~fode/](http://www.web.net/~fode/)

August 11 & 12 (Saturday & Sunday)

*Herb Fair at the Royal Botanical Gardens, Burlington*

From growing and cooking demonstrations, to plant sales, products and crafts — this one-day event is all about herbs and wellness. Runs from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Further information: <http://www.rbg.ca/index.html>

Saturday, August 25

*East York Garden Club Annual Flower Show and Afternoon Tea at the Stan Wadlow Clubhouse*

The finest plants and flowers from East York will be available for viewing from 2:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.