



The Ladyslipper



Perth & District Horticultural Society

www.perthhortsociety.com

Est. 1984

P.O. Box 494
Perth, ON K7H 3G1

June 2020

President's Pen

Jane Avery has put together another great newsletter for your enjoyment, so I thank Jane for all her hard work. I also want to thank Lynda Haddon for her article as well as pictures of her gardens and other members' gardens she sends so Tineke can post them on Facebook for everyone to enjoy. I appreciate Tineke's postings on Facebook.

For your enjoyment and viewing pleasure, two other board members plus myself are going to open our gardens for a few days in July. We will be doing social-distancing viewing of the gardens. We ask that you call ahead of time to book an appointment. The morning of the day you plan to attend should be long enough notice. If there is no answer, please leave a message so we can get back to you and set up your appointment.

The three gardens to meander through are:

Catherine Stephen-Dunn - 613-805-1654

4500 Hwy 43 – on the left-hand side just 2 km east of Port Elmsley from Perth – [blue gate at entrance] 10:00 AM to Noon - Thursdays and Fridays, July 2 and 3, July 9 and 10 and again on July 16 and 17.

Sandi Scissons - 613-267-6619

371 Hands Road – from Perth, take Hwy 10 and turn left on Hands Road. Her house is on the left-hand side – bright yellow front door. 2:00 to 4:30 PM - Thursdays and Fridays, July 2 and 3, July 9 and 10 and again on July 16 and 17.

Linda Bartlett - 613-283-8027

1060 Ford Road - from Perth, take Hwy 10 and turn right on Ford Road - about 15 minute drive from Perth - house is on the left-hand side, gardens are out front - Canadian flag flying from balcony. 2:00 to 4:30 PM - Thursdays and Fridays, July 2 and 3, July 9 and 10 and again on July 16 and 17.

Perthmore Community Association Garden Contest

PDHS was approached by the Perthmore Community Association to see if we would sponsor their Garden Contest event. The Board decided that we would co-sponsor along with Hillside Gardens for this event to make people more aware of our society and hopefully gain some new members. We donated \$25.00 plus a one year PDHS membership. We also volunteered 2 judges for this event. The prizes for 1st place and 2nd place will be awarded on July 1st, so if you are in the area, take a drive through Perthmore and check out the lucky winners.



Following very successful PCA Halloween & Christmas lights contests, your association is holding the first annual street facing garden contest to celebrate our beautiful community.

This contest is open to all Perthmore residents and is co-sponsored by Hillside Gardens and the Perth & District Horticultural Society. Prizes will be awarded on Canada Day to the winning households. (No entry form, or PCA membership, is required – just your best effort at beautifying our streets.) The PDHS will also be supplying two OHA qualified people to act as judges. Good luck!



Town of Perth Gardening Volunteers

The town of Perth is heading up a Volunteer Gardening Committee to support the gardens around Crystal Palace. Our society will not be taking on this role as we have enough commitments with the gardens that we take care of now. However, if any of our members want to help/assist/support the Town on their own, please let me know by email and I will send you more information.

Stay safe and hope to see you all soon.

Linda Bartlett

Email: pdhsmembers@gmail.com

Who Put the “Zinn” in the Zinnias?

Gail Labrosse, Master Gardener

The Aztecs called zinnias “plants that are hard on the eyes” because of their brightly coloured flowers. Native to Mexico, zinnias were taken to Europe in the 1500s by Spanish explorers where they became very popular. In the 1700s Dr. Johann Gottfried Zinn, a German professor, wrote the first description of this beautiful species. So, it was Dr. J. G. Zinn who put the “zinn” in zinnias!

Bright cheerful pink, yellow, white, purple, orange and red zinnia flowers are long lasting in garden beds and survive up to two weeks in home arrangements when properly cut and cared for. Zinnias are annuals so need to be grown every year from seed. They also have two special features to consider, they attract butterflies and are deer resistant.



Growing zinnias is easy. Zinnia seeds can be planted indoors 4 to 6 weeks before the last frost, then transplanted when the soil starts to warm in your garden. Alternatively, in the spring, after all danger of frost has passed, sow the zinnia seeds in a sunny location just below the soil surface, 6 –10 cm apart. Seedlings will appear in 4-7 days. Thinning may be necessary as good air circulation is important for keeping your zinnias looking good all season long. It usually takes 60 to 70 days from seed to bloom. By planting seeds every two or three weeks until the end of June, you will have blossoms from mid-summer through to early autumn.

Caring for zinnias is easy. Water well weekly but keep the leaves as dry as possible to reduce the possibility of powdery mildew. Water in the morning to give the plants time to dry in the warm sun or use a soaker hose at the base of the plants. Zinnias prefer soil that is consistently moist but

do quite well in dry soil too. Mature plants are drought tolerant requiring less water.

Cutting zinnias for bouquets is easy. Using a clean sharp knife, cut in early morning when new blossoms are just beginning to open. Cut the stem just above a leaf axil and a new bloom will form to replace the one cut. This is multi-tasking at its best: harvesting flowers and encouraging new growth at the same time. Place cut flowers in cold water immediately after cutting so they remain hydrated, and strip off leaves that would be below water in the vase. Dissolving a packet of cut flower preservative in the water will supply food for the zinnias and re-duce bacteria growth. For long lasting bouquets recut stems at a 45-degree angle under water to ensure the stem can fully absorb moisture.

Zinnias are said to symbolize lasting friendship and affection, goodness and endurance. Shouldn't you have zinnias in your garden this year?



7 No-Fail Ways to Win the War on Weeds!

by Amber Kanuckel | Posted In: Home and Garden
section of Farmer's Almanac 2020

Year after year, we fight the same fight. No sooner than we pull all the weeds, new ones sprout right behind them. If you're tired of the frustrating battle against the weeds popping up in your gardens, here are a few all-natural strategies to keep your gardens weed-free all year long.

1. Corn Gluten Meal

This is one time you may not want to go gluten free! Many university studies show corn gluten meal to be an effective pre-emergent herbicide (a pre-emergent prevents seed germination). It is an all-natural alternative to synthetic pre-emergents and it has no known ill effects for human health or the environment. Since corn gluten stops seeds from sprouting, make sure that you don't use it in any spot where you'd like to plant seeds within the next year or two. Where to buy - available at any garden center or online.

2. Plastic and Fabric Weed Barriers

Weed barriers are a no-fuss way to keep weeds out of the garden for years to come. You can use weed barriers in vegetable gardens, but because you might change your plantings around from year to

year, this means that you may have to replace the weed barrier yearly.

Where weed barrier really stands out is in permanent perennial beds. Lay the sheeting down, making sure to cut holes wherever you plan to place landscape perennials and then cover the fabric with mulch, grass clippings, fall leaves or something else to hide the plastic or fabric sheets.

Where to buy: At any home improvement store, garden center, or hardware store.



3. Newspaper and Cardboard

Many gardeners would rather keep plastics out of their gardens. If this sounds like you, then try recycling newspapers and cardboard as weed barrier instead. The advantage to these two materials is that they're readily compostable, which means that you can easily till them into your vegetable gardens and reapply each year.

If you decide to use newspaper, make sure to avoid toxins by using non-glossy pages and black and white ink. Today, the vast majority of newspapers use organic soy-based black ink, which is safe for your gardens.

4. Mulch

Tree bark mulch wood chips are old standbys for weed management, and they can be used on their own or as a covering for your weed barrier of choice. However, store-bought bark and wood mulch isn't your only option. Grass clippings and straw can be used as mulch, so long as it is relatively free of weed seeds. You can also use whole or shredded tree leaves as mulch.

A couple of particularly stubborn weeds may still grow through your mulch of choice, but far fewer

than will grow on bare soil. In addition, no matter which type of mulch you use, you'll be adding nutrients to your garden beds and you'll increase the soil's ability to retain water.

5. Go No Till

When you till the soil, you're essentially planting weed seeds that were once laying on the surface of the bed. In addition, you're exposing any previously buried weed seeds to that ray of sunlight they need to sprout. As such, no-till gardening is a great way to reduce weeds in your garden — and save you the countless hours you spend tilling each spring!

No-till gardening works especially well when you allow a layer of organic material to cover the surface of your beds. This layer can be mulch or it can be last year's foliage. Either way, if you adopt this gardening method, you'll wind up with fewer and fewer weeds each year.

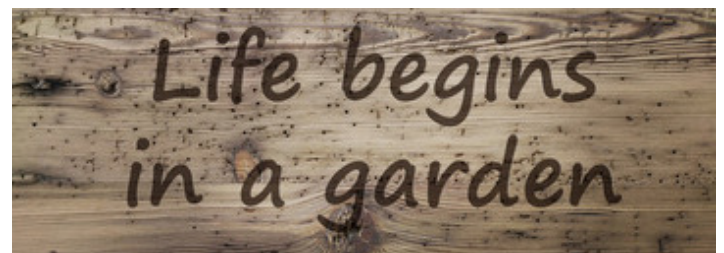
6. Pack Plantings Tightly

One of the best ways to keep weeds out of your gardens is to not give them any room to grow. We all love to see some space between our plantings, but if you can pack your plants instead — or use groundcovers to choke weeds — then you'll never need to worry about weeding again. As a general rule, this tactic works best in landscape plantings since many vegetable plants need quite a bit of space to mature.

7. Off with Their Heads!

It happens to the best of us — life gets in the way and before you know it, weeds have grown up and long since bolted. As the old saying goes, "One year's seeds, seven year's weeds." Therefore, before you start ripping them out of the garden, however, gently clip off the seed heads so that you don't scatter the seeds in your garden as you pull the weeds.

There are many weed-busting strategies, but these are some of the most effective. Give them a try, and you'll find yourself spending a lot less time weeding and a lot more time enjoying your gardens.



In Season This Month: Fresh Strawberries

Miller's Bay Farm, 65 Rideau Ferry Rd, Lombardy, ON K0G 1L0

There is nothing quite like a fresh strawberry right from the field.

Q. Jane Avery contacted Shannon Miller at Miller's Bay Farm for an update on when local strawberries will be available this spring.

A. The EXACT start date for strawberries is always a 'moving target' until we're a day or two away...so forgive me if my answer seems vague...but we truly don't know a firm date.

I can say that they look GREAT! We would expect that we will be sending our team out to commence picking somewhere between the 15th and 20th of June. We generally see the start of Pick-Your-Own follow a few days after that – once we're sure that there is a good quantity available to make it a positive picking experience.

As far as how to purchase...

Pick-Your-Own (Monday through Saturday, precise hours

TBA) Weather and supply permitting. ****ALWAYS** check conditions BEFORE heading to the farm. The home page of our website www.millersbayfarm.com is updated daily (sometimes more than daily) as to availability and conditions.

Also, folks are free to call 613-283-0205 and listen to our voicemail greeting – which is also frequently updated and will indicate whether the patch is open or closed.

Most likely, there will be the opportunity to order berries online and pickup during a pre-set time.

FRESH STRAWBERRY PIE (From the Kitchen at Miller's Bay Farm)

You will need:

1 pastry shell (9"), baked	2 Tbs. cornstarch
6 cups fresh strawberries, divided	2 Tbs. cold water
1/2 cup white sugar	Whipped topping for garnish
1/2 cup water	

What to do...

Berries: Mash 1 cup of the strawberries. Set aside for use in the glaze. Arrange remaining strawberries in baked, cooled pastry shell.

Glaze: In a saucepan, combine the sugar and water (1/2 cup portion). Cook and stir until sugar dissolves. Add mashed strawberries and bring to a boil. Combine cornstarch and cold water until smooth. Gradually stir into strawberry mixture and return to boiling. Cook and stir for 2 minutes, or until thickened. Cool for 15 - 20 minutes, stirring occasionally. Spoon over berries in pastry. Refrigerate for at least 2 hours. Garnish with whipped topping just before serving.



Why Start A Tree Small

Source: Farmer's Almanac

New tree? Small is best

Recommended source of tree planting information:

Trees magazine from Garden A to Z

www.gardenatoz.com/what's-up!/main-features-this-season/why-start-tree-small/

Here's an eye-opener from that magazine from the article Starting Small, to help you foresee how much time it takes a tree to become established.

Tree growth related to planting size: David beats Goliath

Consider a one-inch linden tree 7 feet tall and a four-inch linden tree 12 feet tall, both planted carefully (following our [tree planting step-by-step](#) in Oaks got flare) today into the same good site.

Tend each one well until it resumes normal growth. Water it faithfully throughout all its establishment years to keep the root zone moist but not soggy.

Here's how those two will increase in size:

Today's size	End of this year	2nd year	3rd year	4th year	5th year	6th year	7th year
1" dia. trunk 7' tall	7' tall	8'	9.5'	11'	12.5'	14'	15.5'
4" dia. trunk 12' tall	12' tall	12.1'	12.2'	12.5'	13'	14'	15'

The smaller tree: In one year the one-inch tree resumes near-normal branch growth and adds a foot to its height and canopy radius. After year two we can see it's going to continue at this pace, so we say it's established.

The big guy: Looks impressive right away but labors that year just to keep a too-large top going with a too-small root system. It grows only about an inch.

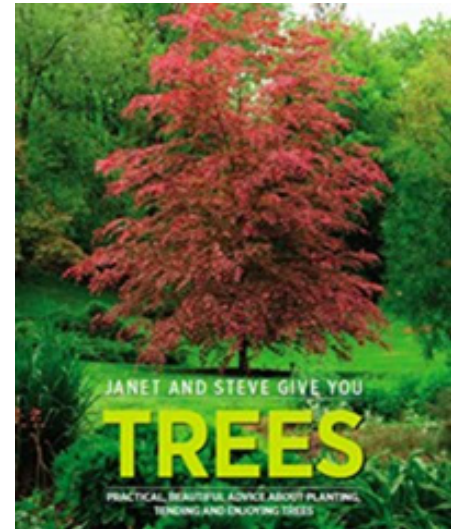
In 4 years, a matched set: After 4 years the smaller tree is just a bit shorter than the one that started larger. However, it probably looks bigger for being healthier and fuller.

Meanwhile, the tree that was four inches in trunk diameter and 12' tall at planting has added only about six inches by the time it gets into its 4th year. It will not have an appreciable growth until that time. Then, it adds six inches in year four, and increases that rate to ten inches the next year. By the beginning of its seventh year it will be growing at one foot per year -- that's established at the lower end of its species norm.

When a tree reaches and sustains its species normal growth rate, we say it has established. That means the gardener can at last put away the sprinkler that's been dedicated to keeping its root zone moist.

Good health, looks better

Both trees in our chart begin their seventh year even up at 14' tall. However, the tree that was smaller to begin with gains ground for at least a few more years. It has grown and will continue to grow more each year than its partner because it is healthier, with a wider, more self-sufficient root system and more starch reserves stored away to help it through rough times. It was less stressed by its initial uprooting (when it was balled and burlapped or containerized for sale) and every year after was less prone than its partner to insect or disease damage.



Plant Hostas in Containers

By Suzanne Patry of Whitehouse Perennials in Almonte

On a trip to the American Hosta Society Convention in Nashville I was amazed to see massive specimens of hostas growing in all kinds of different containers. In fact, in many of the gardens the hostas were almost entirely grown above ground. In Nashville it was done because of the constant threat of vole damage when the hostas were grown in the ground. It is also easy to handle hostas in containers there because the hostas can be left in their containers all year round. While I am not about to uproot our entire hosta garden and transfer them to containers, I love the look of a well grown hosta in a container. Hostas in containers add drama to a garden. Areas that are heavily filled with tree roots can be planted with groundcovers and hostas in containers can add much needed colour and a three-dimensional look. On a shady patio or deck a grouping of hostas combined with other shade loving perennials and annuals can be every bit as colourful and attractive as a pot of annuals. A beautiful pot with a perfectly grown prized hosta specimen can showcase that hosta better than any spot in the ground.

To grow hostas successfully in containers you need to deal with three issues, soil selection, fertilizing and watering. A high-quality potting mix that drains well yet retains moisture is essential for success. Don't skimp on the quality of the mix. You have bought good quality plants so don't cut corners by using poor quality mix. You can't use regular soil in the container even if it is bagged topsoil. A potting mix that contains composted pine bark is highly recommended but can be difficult to find. Some experts recommend adding extra drainage from coarse chicken grit. If a sopping wet handful of mix will crumble in your hands it has sufficient drainage. Fertilizing will necessitate the use of a slow release fertilizer designed for containers. The fertilizer should be applied to the soil surface and scratched in each spring just as the shoots start to poke out. Many hosta experts also suggest a regular application, until mid summer, of a foliar fertilizer that the plant absorbs through its leaves. The most difficult part of growing hostas in containers is the necessity to water regularly during the heat of summer. If you let container soils dry out, they can become very difficult to rehydrate especially if they are heavily peat based. If the potting mix drains well, you can't overwater because any excess will just drain away. Air is also

forced into the pot every time you water and air in the soil is essential for good plant growth. It is better to really soak the pot thoroughly than to water lightly every day. Soak the pot until water runs out of the drainage holes.



The choice of containers is vast and up to individual tastes. Fiberglass and resin pots are the easiest to deal with because they resist cracking in the winter and are light weight. Ceramic pots are very attractive but are very heavy and can be very fragile. No matter what pots you choose adequate drainage holes are essential. The old idea about putting gravel or broken pot shards in the bottom of the pots is bad advice. Styrofoam peanuts can be used in the bottom of the pot if you want to reduce the weight of the pot and don't need the extra depth of the pot. It is always a good idea to cover the bottom of the pot with a piece of landscape fabric or some fiberglass screening. This keeps the drainage hole open and prevents slugs or other pests from entering the drainage holes. Matching the size of the pot to the hosta is also important. A small hosta in a large pot is a recipe for disaster. There should be no more than four fingers of width between the root mass and the pot wall. Once the roots fill the pot move it into a larger pot.

Try a few pots of hostas in containers this year. If you are nervous about using a high priced hosta there are always divisions of overgrown hostas that you can experiment with. You'll find out how wonderful they look and how easy they are to grow. It may be the start of a new way of shade gardening.

For more information on wintering hostas in containers, go to www.whitehouseperennials.com/hostas.

Bloomfest

Garden Art Show & Sale

July 21 to August 3, 2020

Wander our beautiful display gardens and daylily field and enjoy the work of 12 talented garden artisans



Whitehouse Nursery & Display Gardens

594 Rae Road, Almonte

www.whitehouseperennials.com • 613-256-3406

Whitehouse Perennials on Rae Road just outside Almonte is well worth the visit. Their display gardens are amazing and their fields of daylilies when in bloom are outstanding. This year they are one of the few garden centres going to have a Garden Art Show and Sale this year, so if you are thinking of Art for the Garden, perhaps a visit to Whitehouse would be a great trip to plan between July 21 to August 3, 2020.



Stunning
Yellow Iris in
Richard
Catchpaw's
garden

2020–A Spring Season for the Record Books

By Lynda Haddon, Community Gardens Coordinator

Well 2020 has certainly been one for the books and different from anything I have ever experienced in my years of gardening. May itself had frost advisories at the beginning of the month to record breaking heat two weeks later. It was difficult to know when to get serious about planting seeds, trying to harden them off outdoors and/or covering them on the freezing nights. A couple of nights ago I read of some gardeners covering their fragile plants against the night cold and that was at the beginning of June!

With Covid-19 none of the nurseries were open (I am sure you noticed), and when they did open, some wanted appointments, some phone-in orders and car pick-up. And being serious gardeners, we did whatever was necessary. When we were allowed to enter the nurseries, it was a surprise to see how little product variety there was to purchase. So many special beauties were missing because shipping was minimal. Not one single herb to be found – according to Hillside and certainly the other two places I looked.

There was definitely a silver lining. Did you notice how generous and kind so many gardeners were in sharing either their excess seeds or seedlings they had started? Did you notice how word spread quickly that such and such plant that you were mentioning was available at _____? Everyone felt the disappointment and yet so many stepped up and shared what they did have. Gardeners are the nicest people. This Spring my wallet barely left my purse when traditionally it is in my hand as I pay for yet another plant I 'need' for my garden. It is nice to save money, wonderful to share what we have excess of, but oh those glorious greenhouses full of colour, variety and fragrance after a long Winter! I did miss them.

I have no doubt we will be talking about 2020 Spring for years to come.

Looking for more gardening inspiration? 9 Best Gardening Mags 2020

Source: The Spruce, Adapted by Jane Avery

Country Gardens

We like this Better Homes & Gardens Special publication because it features real gardeners with different interests and different gardening challenges. We also enjoy the planting diagrams and the way it incorporates garden crafts.

The English Garden

This magazine is a wonderful mix of meticulously cared for private gardens and articles about what's new. Our favorite feature is at the end of each garden profile when the owners share their knowledge and tips. Whether you lust after the look of an English garden or just want to hear from some of the most enthusiastic gardens out there, each issue is a treasure.

Fine Gardening

If you only read one gardening magazine, we recommend "Fine Gardening." They just seem to know what's important at the moment. There are regional departments, and the writers come from all over and all aspects of gardening.

Garden Design

Buy on Gardendesign.com

Learn from the best. The gardens showcased in "Garden Design" magazine are always innovative and often cutting edge. The photos alone make this magazine worth it, but the details about what's new, both in plants and in design, make it a good reason to keep back issues.

Garden Gate Magazine

"Garden Gate" has no advertisements, just lots of colorful pages of gardening how-to and tips. They have regular features like Before & After, Design Challenge, Container Recipe, and Weed Watch. "Garden Gate" always offers something new to learn, while providing plenty of eye candy.

Horticulture

"Horticulture" magazine cuts to the chase. Their articles are informative and educational with a touch of inspiration to get you to do the right thing

by your plants. While "Horticulture" has the pretty pictures required of a gardening magazine, their mission is to teach the serious gardener how to be even better.

Gardens Illustrated

Buy on Gardensillustrated.com

Another great British gardening magazine that is available in the U.S. and Canada, "Gardens Illustrated" covers various British estate gardens, including Christopher Lloyd's Great Dixter, and offers great tips for an assortment of gardening styles.

Sunset Magazine

"Sunset" is not exclusively a gardening magazine. Still, since they set the standard for western hardiness zones and have produced such a wonderful library of western gardening books, they are often the first source turned to by western gardeners. Non-westerners could learn a thing or two from "Sunset" about upcoming trends, too.

Birds and Blooms

Most gardeners enjoy attracting birds to their gardens, and "Birds and Blooms" combines the two interests into one magazine. There are tips on plants for attracting particular birds, education for those of us who can't identify all the birds that come to our gardens, and of course, crafts and projects and lots and lots of photos.

If not otherwise stated above, these fine magazines can be purchased through Amazon.ca.



Community Garden at Perth Museum. Thank you to all the volunteers for keeping this garden looking good.