



The Ladyslipper

Perth & District Horticultural Society

www.perthhortsociety.com



Est. 1984

June 2023

President's Pen

Welcome to our June meeting featuring our Standard Flower Show, Dessert Social and Q&A with the incredibly accomplished Ed Lawrence.

Bob Perreault, Operations Manager at local radio station Lake 88.1 kindly interviewed Ed on the June 6th edition of In Focus to help promote our June meeting. In Focus is taped and is available on Lake 88.1's web site <https://lanarkleedstoday.ca/>. Thank you Bob and the team at Lake 88.1.

We thank David Archer, Robin McIntosh and our many volunteers who came out to the Crystal Palace on a soggy Saturday May 20 morning to help with our plant sale. We sure had some laughs. Members were very generous with their time and plant contributions. Richard Catchpaw brought a wonderful array of lilies and hostas. Linda Bartlett sold up a storm as she looked up photos of these exotic specimens on her phone, thrilling shoppers with the choices. I came home with a bounty!

We were pleased to offer the plant sale again after several years hiatus. Significant proceeds from the sale will go to our Junior Garden program. We were delighted to greet many of our Junior Gardeners and to help them find a plant to call their own. Caroline Bolduc kindly provided a beautiful spring farm box as a prize for one lucky new member. Kim Matheson took home this marvelous creation. Caroline hopes to contribute a Thanksgiving/Halloween farm box for our October meeting. Thank you Caroline, and thanks to Sarah Smith of Gossamer Gardens Flower Farm for doing the draw. We will organize a tour of Gossamer Gardens Flower Farm for the second Tuesday in August. Stay tuned for the details.



We trust that you will enjoy our Dessert Finger Food theme as we socialize and admire the flower show. Thanks all for sharing your homemade goodies.

Spring is now in full swing. The lilacs were stunning this year. We are now onto poppies, peonies, allium, iris, local asparagus, rhubarb +++ Enjoy the summer growing season.

We will see you back at our September 12 meeting where speaker Judith Cox will present ***Promising You a Rose Garden.***

Best!

Jane & Linda

June 27th Purdon Conservation Tour



Tuesday, June 27th,
leaving at 9:30am.

Jim Ronson will
take us on the tour.

We will gather
at Steward Park
Bandstand.

Recommendation is for us to drive in full-cars, a donation of \$4 to the driver towards the gas is suggested.

Plenty of parking near the Rainbow bridge.

- ▶ We will walk to the lookout ~ 1.7 km; although some may wish to continue on the 32kms trail;
- ▶ We will be enjoying the fully accessible boardwalk;
- ▶ Wheelchair accessible;
- ▶ Washroom is an Outhouse;
- ▶ Parking and picnic area, bring a snack and plenty of water and a hat;
- ▶ Sunscreen and mosquito repellent required.

Enjoy a stroll along the boardwalk of a rare fen wetland and see the Canada's largest colony of Showy Lady's Slipper orchids. Take a hike through uplands forest up to a breathtaking lookout while traveling 1.7 km of trail.

Extra information: Purdon Conservation Area is open dawn to dusk, Victoria Day to Thanksgiving. The typical bloom period for the Showy Lady's Slipper Orchids is the third weekend in June to early-mid July.

There is no parking fee but donations are always appreciated.

If you have any questions before the tour, please contact Jim at 613.264.1937.

Organized by Muriel Hopper

Rock Painting Workshop

Saturday June 17 at 10:30 am
Jane Avery's Garden at Rideau Ferry

Our society has been asked to contribute 20 painted rocks to the OHA Conference taking place in Ottawa this July. The rocks will be



used as a centre piece on meeting room tables. Conference attendees will take them home as a souvenir.

Your design can be simple or more complex... It is all up to

you. We are looking for a group of keen volunteers to join in the fun and comradery.

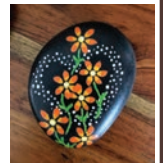


All art supplies and rocks will be provided, along with coffee, tea, and snacks. We will be using acrylic paint which dries quickly to become a plastic coating so please

wear painting cloths as acrylic is hard to remove from your good clothes.



Come and stay for a few hours to work on your creation. We are hoping the weather will cooperate so we can keep the mess outside.



Kindly sign up for this session so that we can plan the session. We will have a sign-up sheet at our June meeting, or you are welcome to contact Jane directly at 613-390-1915.

I have included a few samples to provide inspiration.

Best!

Jane



Junior Gardeners Program Recap

In 2023, after a three-year interruption, we relaunched the popular Junior Gardener Program in six area schools: the Stewart School, Queen Elizabeth P.S., St. John Catholic Elementary School in Perth, Drummond Central P.S, North Elmsley P.S., and Maple Grove in Lanark. We had a total of 122 students in 6 different Grade 3 classrooms which were led by 14 volunteer members.

Every week of the four-week program, the students selected a new plant from the “Plant Library” to observe and record findings in their journal and then exchange plants the following week. The students also had hands-on experience planting tomato and marigold seeds, and seed potatoes. For the third week, the students created a container planter of pansies for Mother’s Day. And the last week was spent with the students reviewing what was taught, receiving instructions on how to transplant the plants they had started in class as well as choosing their own Library plant to keep.

We are very grateful for the donations received from generous “Community Sponsors” like Canadian Tire, Barnabe’s YIG, and Metro. And, of course, we couldn’t run this program without the generosity of so many PDHS members who donate materials and, most importantly, their time and expertise. We would like to recognize the valuable contribution that Ruth Nelson has made to this program by once again nurturing some 100+ plants for the “Plant Library” along with several other members contributed plants to this program.

Thank you to all PDHS members who help with this program in big ways and small: by collecting and donating Canadian Tire money which we use to purchase planting soils and seeds; by donating cuttings for starting “Plant Library” plants; by collecting and strawberry and yogurt containers which each of the students received to plant their seeds and potatoes.

Finally, a special “thank you” to our dedicated volunteer teachers, who devote their time and energy to bring the weekly sessions alive to the classes. Every one of you is making an important contribution to our youngsters and tomorrow’s gardeners. The feedback we receive every year from students, parents, and teachers is that this is a valued community service!



*Robin McIntosh and Sandy Sissons
Co-Coordinator, Junior Gardener Program*

A thank you card from one of the classes.

In Defence of Earwigs

By Dale Odorizzi, Lanark County Master Gardeners

Mention the word earwig to a group of gardeners and you get with a strong negative reaction. Tell gardeners that they are beneficial insects, and they look at you as if you have lost your mind. Earwigs are members of the insect class Dermaptera, and are despised by most gardeners.

Generally, earwigs are called plant pests, but this is an undeserved, harsh, and erroneous rap. Earwigs do eat our garden plants, but this practice is forced on them by gardeners who are too neat, removing all plant debris and leaving their garden soil exposed, often called well-groomed. If earwigs do not have any dead plant material to munch on, they eat your ornamentals and vegetables. In more natural conditions such as soil covered with mulch and organic debris that naturally occurs under plants, the earwigs happily find much to dine on, leaving your prized plants alone.

Too often, gardeners blame earwigs for damage caused by other pests, such as snails, slugs, and cutworms. The blame is put on them as they are found at the scene of the crime where they may be taking shelter for the day. In fact, earwigs are one of the great controls for these pests. They enjoy dining on soft bodied insects such as aphids, mealy bugs, and slug eggs. They also eat mites, nematodes, insects, and decaying matter.

Earwigs work at night and often will take cover in our plants in the daytime. In my early years of gardening, earwigs were prevalent in my garden. They particularly liked to take cover in the daytime in the petals of my large double marigolds. I soon learned that if I wanted to take a bouquet into the house, I should shake the flowers over a bucket of water. Often 20-30 of them would fall in the water. Even then, a few earwigs would hang on and come into the house. Those were the days when chemicals were available to dispose of every kind of insect, usually killing more than the intended victim. I bought every kind of earwig bait I could find. One day, sitting at my breakfast table, I watched mesmerized as a goldfinch destroyed a couple of zinnias in my window box. Hubby asked why I was so happy to see a goldfinch do that damage when I had worked so hard to get rid of an insect that only hung out in the plant. Good question!

Earwigs do not do any damage in the house and prefer to hide in corners. They do like to hang out in crowds and emit an odour if startled. While I have learned to appreciate earwigs, I still do not like seeing them in my house and actively go after them.

If you are not convinced that earwigs can be beneficial, you can trap them by laying sections of old hose or rolled up newspaper in your garden. After a night's work clearing the pests and debris from your garden, they will crawl into the hose to take daytime shelter. Go out in the morning and tilt the hose into a bucket of water with a few drops of soap added and dump the earwigs captured in the hose into it.

If gardeners are inclined to destroy all pests they see in their gardens, they are doing the wrong thing. They can be destroying predators that perform a valuable service and removing food that attracts birds and beneficial insects to our gardens.

How to Grow and Care for Currants and Gooseberries

Source: *The National Gardening Association*

Introduction

Currants and Gooseberries are attractive shrubs known for their tasty, colorful fruit that can be eaten fresh off the plant or harvested for making jams, jellies and pies.



About currants and gooseberries

Currants and Gooseberries are multi-stemmed, hardy, fast growing deciduous shrubs approximately 5-6 feet high and wide, with maple-shaped leaves, clusters of flowers in the early spring and colorful fruit into the fall season (Hardiness Zones 3-8). Currants are most widely used for jelly, but also used in making sauces and pies. Birds are highly attracted to these colorful, fruit-bearing plants.

Special features of currants and gooseberries

Perfection – a red currant with a bushy upright form, small to average red colored fruit.

Red Lake – a vigorous red currant resistant to mildew, with small dark red berries.

White Imperial (*Ribes rubrum*) – a hardy, dense, spreading white currant, producing small berries.

Boskoop Giant – a vigorous, low-branching black currant with flavorful berries; requires a pollinator.

Buffalo Currant (*Ribes aureum*) – very hardy with a wide, weeping form, tolerant of a range of soil conditions, showy yellow and fragrant blooms, with ripe pea-sized, glossy, brown-purple berries.

Jostaberry (*Ribes hirtellum*) – a hybrid of black currant and American gooseberry, the mildew-resistant Jostaberry has a tall upright form with glossy foliage, and small, dark purplish fruit.

Choosing a site to grow currants and gooseberries

Currants grow well in cool regions with humid summers and a winter chilling period. In warmer areas, they prefer morning sunlight followed by part-shade, conditions such as those on the north or east side of a building. They can withstand dense shade conditions, but they won't bear as much fruit. Currants can also withstand ocean breezes but are susceptible to leaf burn from the salt air.



Planting Instructions

Plants are sold both bare-root and in pots. Set out bare-root plants in early spring, potted plants anytime. Space them about 6 feet apart in well-drained, slightly acid soil.

Ongoing Care



In late winter, fertilize with compost or aged manure, then add an organic mulch, such as straw, in early summer to help keep roots cool and soil moist. Once the fruit colors, let it hang for 3 weeks for fresh eating. Yields vary depending on the selected variety, location and growing conditions.

Annual pruning in the late winter will help increase the berry yield and aesthetic form of your shrub. Prune out broken or drooping branches. Intense sunlight may burn the leaf growth and a reduction in leaf size and quantity may indicate the plant is under water stress. Watch out for changing cooler temperatures that may cause your currants to contract powdery mildew, a white fungus that coats leaves and can develop on the fruits too. Cut off and remove infected portions of the plant. Consider purchasing certified disease-free varieties and plant them further apart to encourage plenty of air movement between bushes to encourage healthy growth.



HAPPY GARDENING - ENJOY YOUR SUMMER - SEE YOU IN SEPTEMBER