



# The Ladyslipper

Perth & District Horticultural Society

[www.perthhortsociety.com](http://www.perthhortsociety.com)



Est. 1984

P.O. Box 494  
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## President's Pen

A short update to let you know what is happening with the society and to keep in touch with everyone.

Unfortunately, we will have to cancel our June meeting due to the restrictions of the number of people who can gather. Hopefully, group restrictions will be lifted by our meeting in September.

Exciting news for gardeners, our local nurseries can now open with strict social distancing rules. Here are a few of my favourite garden centres to visit:

- ▶ Stoneridge Nursery in Middleville is a great place to visit if you are looking for perennials. They are very reasonably priced and healthy plants. Laurie asks that you look at her website and place your order by phone or email so she can have it ready for you. To visit the greenhouses, she asks that you wear a mask and gloves.
- ▶ Hillside Gardens is one of the best nurseries around for annuals. Check their website for their protocols for visiting them.
- ▶ Gemmell's Garden Centre is by appointment only, so you can go to their website and book your appointment using their calendar system.
- ▶ Rideau Woodland Ramble is open for business as well. Again, look at their website for their rules for visiting.
- ▶ Whitehouse Perennials is another great spot. Plants are amazing. Visit their website for information about opening and hours.

*Gardening weather has finally arrived. Enjoy your gardens, connect with mother nature, and gets lots of sunshine (Vitamin D au naturel).*

Stay safe and hope to see you all soon.

Linda Bartlett

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## Fresh Flowers Can Lift Spirits During This Time of Isolation

Excerpt from Saturday April 18, 2020 Ottawa Citizen.

Original Source: The Washington Post

Fresh flowers confer unmatched instant beauty and joy to any interior space. Their transformative nature is a welcome, fragrant addition with unique mood-elevating properties, especially now with everyone sheltering in place.



Christina Stembel of Farmgirl Flowers, a flower-and-plant delivery service, which she launched from her San Francisco apartment, talks about how to effectively brighten your home by bringing the outdoors indoors, with practical tips on creating unique bouquets and making blooms last longer.

### **Q. During a time like this when many people are down, what's the benefit of having flowers and plants in your home?**

A. Before I started my company, I thought flowers were a waste of money. Ever since starting the company, I almost always have fresh flowers in my house. Even if my house is a mess, flowers make me feel like I have my life together. One of my favorite things to do on a weekend is to take a bucket of flowers home and create something beautiful. Having a creative outlet is so important. And having something beautiful to show for it really improves my mood.

**Q. How can you make your bouquets have a longer life indoors and in a vase?**

A. The No. 1 thing you can do to help keep an arrangement looking fresh is to change the vase water daily. As the stems age, they will begin to decay and release bacteria into the water. The flowers drink the bacteria-filled water and can't hydrate properly. I also recommend giving the stems a trim while you are changing the vase water. A small cut will do, about a quarter inch, and it will ensure the stems continue to hydrate *efficiently*. Keep your vase away from light and heat. Being near a sunny window or a heater can cause your bouquet to wilt much faster than it would if it is in a cooler location. Remove stems as they begin to die.

**Q. My apartment doesn't get a lot of great natural light. Do you have flower recommendations that are best suited for this?**

A. You're in luck. Cut flowers don't love light and they prefer cool environments. Your space may be more challenging for plants, though, so if you are looking for a top pick for a houseplant, you'll need to find a heartier green plant, such as a snake or *Zamioculcas zamiifolia* (ZZ) plant. These are both really tolerant of less-than-ideal conditions, such as low light or infrequent watering.

**Q. What kind of flowers last the longest once cut from the stem?**

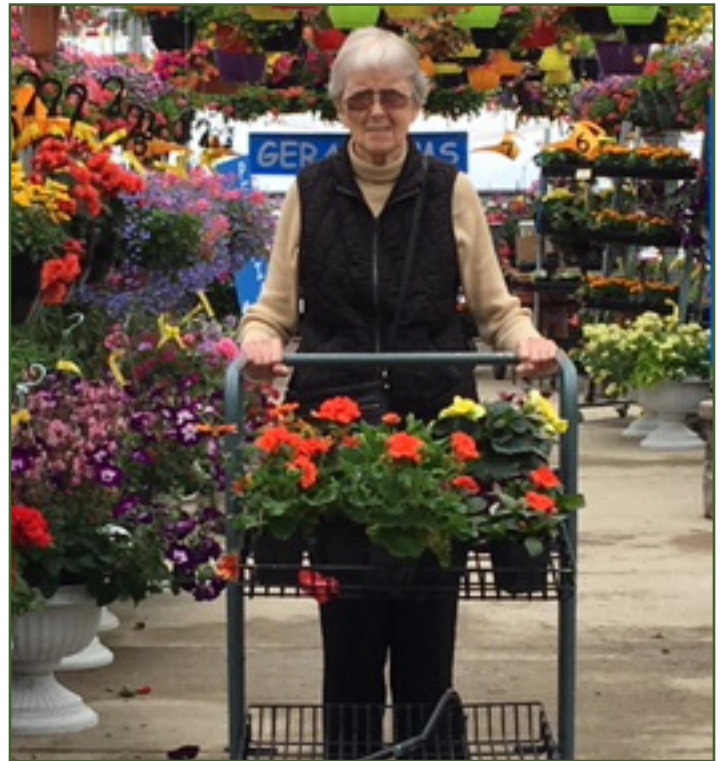
A. Carnations. If they're in a cool space, I've seen them last up to four weeks. I love them and they come in such beautiful colours. Look for the muted tones and the antiqued varieties for something that feels subtle and sophisticated. Tropical flowers, specifically orchids and anthurium, are another option for longevity. I also love greenery. A vase with a few branches of tropical foliage or some attractive ferns will give you a long vase life.



**Interview with Evelyn Bothwell**

**The beginnings of the PDHS in the 1980s**

Article and photo submitted by Lynda Haddon



Together with her husband and a few other people, Evelyn Bothwell is a founding member of PDHS. Here Evelyn is in 2019 taking in the sights, colours, fragrances and joy of Hillside Gardens Nursery

**When did your love of gardening begin?**

While my father was an avid gardener and we had a huge vegetable garden each year, I did not get interested in gardening until after my marriage to Gordon. Gordon loved gardening, both vegetables and flowers and he excelled at both. His enthusiasm was contagious, and I could not resist getting involved myself. Gordon became a Master Gardener. I learned a lot from working with him. We always had huge gardens, both vegetables and flowers at the farm.

**Do you have some favourite plants?**

Delphiniums and gladioli are two of my favourites and we grew a lot of both them. There were so many colours of both and each made a wonderful display.

**When did you and Gordon look at starting up the PDHS again?**

It was in the early 1980s after Joe Rawson moved to Perth from the US. He was enthusiastic and really enjoyed gardening. When Joe and his wife

were introduced to Gordon and I, we became great friends and together with Adele Watson talked about starting up a Horticultural Society once again. Shortly after that, Alan and Irene Roberts, Ken Willis and Peter McMahon came on board and the Perth & District Horticultural

Society became a reality. There was fear from some Perthites that a 'Horticultural Society' might mean one needed special education in order to join and get the most out of the meetings. 'Perth & District Garden Society' was suggested as an alternative, but 'Horticultural' prevailed.

Gordon loved to compete in the Perth Fair and in every category there was, he had an entry, from vegetables to flowers. He won many ribbons. I have a box load of them.

While I have so long loved outside gardening, I also enjoy my indoor plants, particularly succulents. In the Summer they are on my back deck and for the colder weather, my sunroom is full. An indoor oasis.



## Bon Motts May 2020

### What's on now:

#### Virtual Garden Tours and How-to Videos

New York Botanical Garden's Jeff Leatham's Kaleidoscope, featuring orchids as never seen before <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cCXkVDt7m1I>

It's tulip time at Longwood Gardens, just south of Philadelphia, PA. Join Garden Manager, Roger Davis on a tour of their blooms and learn how to start a cut flower garden at home. Zinnias serve as a fantastic cut flower because of their long stems. Tomato cages can be used for supporting them. Rogers also recommends Ageratum, globe-amaranth, snap dragons and dahlias. Choose a sunny location that receives a minimum of six hours of sun per day.

<https://longwoodgardens.org/our-gardens-your-home>

**Check out these how-to videos:** 15 tips to make seed-starting easier and Pruning hydrangea+++ <https://www.finegardening.com/videos>

### Welcome News:

- ▶ Ontario garden centres reopened to the public on May 8. Social distancing practices remain in effect.

- ▶ Announcing a new Garden Centre located between Carlton Place & Almonte at 900B Ramsay Concession 7A. Ramsay Creek Nursery is owned and operated by "two determined women with a vision", Elizabeth Salter and Carolyn Styles. <https://ramsaycreek.com> 613-462-7335

### Now in Season:

- ▶ **Asparagus** - The highest quality asparagus is thick and apple green with tight purple tips. Thinner spears are useful for salads and dishes such as risotto.
  - \* To produce white asparagus, a luxury item more popular in Europe than North America, sandy soil is mounded up around the asparagus plants so that the emerging shoots remain white.
  - \* Steam-boil upright in tall pot or horizontally in shallow saucepan for about 4 minutes or until tender but crisp. Or roll in olive oil and roast in a single layer on baking sheet in 425-degree oven or grill over medium-high heat for about 8 minutes, turning once.
  - \* For an impressive side dish, bundle 5 spears of asparagus & wrap with a layer of prosciutto. Drizzle with olive oil, and season with salt and pepper, before baking.



- ▶ **Rhubarb** - Is technically a vegetable, not a fruit. It is a relative to the buckwheat and sorrel family. It is rich in antioxidants, and is high in fibre, calcium and vitamin C. The stocks are the edible part. The leaves are poisonous. Rhubarb is most often used in desserts, yet it is also great in savory dishes such as chicken, pork or lentils. Rhubarb pairs beautifully with pears, apples, berries, ginger & cinnamon.

## The Best Dates to Plant Vegetables and Fruit in the Garden

Source: Farmer's Almanac

The Farmer's Almanac offers a free planting calendar which calculates the best time to start seeds indoors and outdoors, as well as when to plant young plants outside.

### How to Use the Planting Calendar

Simply put, a planting calendar is a guide that tells you the best time to start planting your garden. Most planting calendars are based on frost dates, which dictate when you should start seeds and when it's safe to plant outdoors in your area. Our planting calendar is customized to your location in order to give you the most accurate information possible.

**Planting Calendar:** <https://www.almanac.com/gardening/planting-calendar/ON/Perth>

The Frost Dates indicate the best planting dates based on your local average frost dates. Average frost dates are based on historical weather data and are the planting guideline used by most gardeners.

The Moon Dates indicate the best planting dates based on your local frost dates and Moon phases. Planting by the Moon is considered a more traditional technique.

The Plant Seedlings or Transplants dates indicate the best time to plant young plants outdoors. This includes plants grown from seed at home and plants bought from a nursery. Although frost dates are a good way to know approximately when to start gardening, always check a local forecast before planting outdoors!

When no dates appear in the chart, that starting method is not recommended for that particular plant. Some crops do best when started outdoors rather than indoors, while others prefer the opposite.

Click on the name of a plant to see the Farmer's Almanac corresponding Growing Guide.

To plan your garden more accurately in the future, keep a record of your garden's conditions each year, including frost dates and seed-starting dates!

**Note:** On average, your last spring frost occurs on May 22 at Drummund Centre, ON Climate Station.

According to the Farmer's Almanac here are the planting dates for a selection of early planting vegetables, a full list of vegetable is featured on the Farmer's Almanac site:

Vegetable Type	Frost Dates	Moon Dates
Beets	May 8-29	May 8-21
Carrots	April 17- May 1	April 17-21
Green Beans	May 29- June 19	May 29-June 5
Onions	April 24- May 15	May 8-15
Potatoes	May 15- June 5	May 15-21
Radishes	March 27- April 17	April 8-17
Spinach	April 10- May 1	April 22- May 1



Tomato Seedlings

## What is the Difference Between an Heirloom and a Hybrid Tomato?

Jane Avery consulted with Brandon Lobo of Dengarden and Wikipedia to answer this question.

When it comes to the classification of tomatoes, heirloom tomatoes are not a variety on their own. Instead, it is a term that encompasses all varieties passed down from generation to generation by farmers through the years.

Heirlooms are seasonally grown and usually have a shorter shelf life and are less disease resistant than hybrids. Heirloom tomatoes tend to be pricier, as they need greater care in transport and storage than hybrids. They come in a variety of shapes and sizes and a rainbow of colours. They are prized for their taste. Yellow heirlooms tend to be milder than the tart, sharp reds, and greens have a light zesty bite. The darker varieties have more savoury qualities than that of the sweet. Popular varieties include Black Krim, Cherokee Purple, Sun Gold Cherry, Yellow Pear, and Brandy Wine.



Hybrid tomatoes are grown from hybrid seeds, seeds from fruit that are cross-pollinated between two different varieties. In this case, there is no attempt to develop a seed line such that the seeds from the seed you plant produces fruit like its parent. Hybrids are usually a mix of varieties to provide some optimum blend of the following traits: maturity time, yield, flavour, disease resistance, skin thickness, required care plant size, etc. There are fewer varieties of hybrids than heirlooms.

For more information:

<https://guide.michelin.com/sg/article/features/what-you-need-to-know-about-heirloom-tomatoes>

## Our local farmers are a super source of gardening know how and inspiration

### Vintage Vittles

Your newsletter editor, Jane Avery reached out to Joe and Diane Martin of Vintage Vittles on the Scotch Line in Perth, to learn about heirloom tomatoes and the other crops they grow.

Vintage Vittles grew and sold 7,000 pounds of heirloom tomatoes last year, including 10 types of cherry tomatoes. Joe and Diane's produce is available at their roadside stand and they sell to top restaurants including Rocky River, Whalebone and Farooz.

The Martins start their tomato seeds indoors with seed starter, in late March. When seeds grow to 5" tall they are transferred to 4" pots. The tomato plants are then grown in Pro Mix with a pinch of "Mycos" (Mycorrhizal), one tablespoon of Epsom salts and one tablespoon of bone meal. Joe swears by bone meal to enhance the rooting of all plants. Joe recommends that warm weather vegetables such as tomatoes, be planted outdoors after the last full moon in late May or early June. The earth needs to warm up to 70 degrees. Planting too soon can stunt root growth.

This spring's full moons occur on these dates:

May 7 the "Flower Moon"  
June 5 the "Strawberry Moon"

The Martins plant their warm weather crops in batches, one week apart for one month. Watering is key. The Martins use drip lines and ensure that plants are given a thorough soaking



every five days. The 2020 Vintage Vittles' crop of heirloom tomatoes will be available from mid-August through until the first frost.

Also currently growing at Vintage Vittles are onions, radish, carrots, beets, asparagus and rhubarb (these cold weather crops are already in the ground). Vintage Vittles supplies Sunflower Bakery in Perth with Rhubarb for their muffins, cakes and other delicious delights.

Zinnias will be planted the first week of June and Dahlias will follow at the end of June. The Martins also grow sunflowers, corn, zucchini, pumpkins and a Thai high broad bean called "Dragon's Tongue". It is yellow/green with purple stripes and has a wonderful buttery flavour.

### Miller's Bay Farm

Shannon and Robert Miller run a substantial farming operation at 65 Rideau Ferry Rd, in Lombardy, [www.millersbayfarm.com](http://www.millersbayfarm.com) Jane Avery connected with Shannon in early May.

Miller's Bay Farm (MBF) typically offers Asparagus and Rhubarb for sale beginning in mid-May. They are seeing a bit of a delay this year, due to the cool temperatures. Normally asparagus and rhubarb would be available 'self-serve' at the roadside stand, but this year more than likely will be available on a pre-order basis.

Folks can follow MBF on Facebook or Instagram or may sign up for MBF emails to be kept 'up to speed' on produce and flowers as they come to market.



Miller's Bay Farm will open their roadside stand this summer, starting with Strawberries in mid-June. This date may be pushed back to June 20, due to the cool start to the season. The Millers are considering online ordering and curbside pick up, but also expect to be selling from the roadside stand (with modifications in place of course, to respect safety protocols and physical distancing.) They are also optimistic that they will be able to offer their popular Pick-Your-Own Strawberries as an option (again with necessary modifications)

When asked about growing the quintessential summer flower, Gladiolas, Shannon explained, "everything we have learned has been by trial and error and through the helpful advice of our suppliers L.M.Bolle & Sons. They have a great page on their website <https://www.lmbolle.com/resources/> with anything you would ever want to know about how to grow glads, either in the home garden, or commercially."



When asked about vegetable cultivation, Shannon said "MBF is all about encouraging people to enjoy growing their own gardens." In these uncertain times everyone is trying their hand at growing a vegetable garden. For beginners she recommends this source of straight forward advice.

<https://www.dummies.com/home-garden/gardening/the-five-ss-of-vegetable-gardening-success/>