

September 2013 Newsletter



Lanark Orchid

Renals

Perth & District Horticultural Society

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District #2 of the
Ontario Horticultural
Association



A garden requires patient labour and attention. Plants do not grow merely to satisfy ambitions or to fulfill good intentions. They thrive because someone expended effort on them. Liberty Hyde Bailey



October Meeting

Our next meeting will be on Tuesday, October 8, 2013 where we will be "Exploring the Gardens of Cuba" with Mary Ann Van Berlo so be sure to join us in the Auditorium of the PDCI to enjoy the lush gardens of Cuba.

A Fun Day Away

Beachburg is having their Fall Flower & Vegetable Show and Tea on September 14, 2013 from 2-4 p.m. The theme this year will be Fall Splendor. The Show will be held in the Lions Hall, 9 Hannah Street. If its a nice day, it would be a nice day outing and a way to support one of our local Horticultural Societies.

Volunteer for the PDHS

If you are interested in the Horticultural Society and would like to help out, please contact Madeline Archer, President or any other board member to ask what kinds of things we do. We have ongoing jobs and once in a while jobs and one time jobs. Something for everyone. So why not think of

joining us? Lots of new friends are awaiting you.

Mosaïcultures Internationales Montréal 2013

If you weren't part of the PDHS Group that went to Montreal Botanical Garden to see the spectacular mosaiculture sculptures there you still have time to go. Over 200 horticultural artists works are on display from around the world. The fabulous horticultural exhibit is open until September 29, 2013. Check the website at: <http://www.mosaiculturesinternationales.ca/en/>

The Modern Victory Garden

During World Wars I & II, vegetable, fruit and herb gardens were planted in private residences and public parks in Canada, the United States and United Kingdom to reduce the pressure on the public food supply that was brought on by the war effort. In addition to indirectly



President: Madeline Archer
Secretary: Peggy Clark • **Newsletter:** Pam Pratt, Irene Hofmann

aiding the war effort, these gardens were also considered a morale booster as gardeners felt empowered by their contribution of labor and were rewarded by the produce grown. This made Victory Gardens a part of daily life on the home front.

Today, the desire to grow our own food is gaining in popularity for many different reasons. We are becoming more concerned about the environment and more and more people are aware of the need for a sustainable food culture.

Slow food is a popular catch phrase and community gardens are springing up all across Ontario and across the country. Modern Victory Gardens are growing as fast as we can prepare the soil.

Planting a Modern Victory Garden to fight global warming reduces the amount of pollution your food contributes to this global warming. Instead of traveling many miles from farm to table, your food travels from your own garden to your table. Vegetable plants are combined with flowers in a home garden. With limited yard space, containers grow vegetables on porch, patio or balcony. Some plants, such as pots of herbs or sprouts, can even be grown indoors on a sunny window sill. Community garden space is available in many neighbourhoods.

Garden Self Sufficiency has many benefits. It is frugal in that it can save money. It is healthful. A diet that is composed of higher portions of fresh vegetables and fruits has proven to be live extending. It is better for the planet. The average produce item travels 2400 km to get from the field to the table, so growing it close to home saves petroleum and refrigeration. It also keeps non organic fertilizers and pesticides out of the soil. It is good for the Soul. A garden is a wonderful place to reconnect with what is important in life.

And the greatest benefit of all—IT TASTES SO GOOD!

If you would like to learn more about growing the Modern Victory Garden, join us in Carleton Place on **Saturday October 26 from 9-4** when the Master Gardeners of Eastern Ontario will present an all day seminar on growing your own Modern Victory Garden. Come learn about permaculture, bringing "victorious vegetables" to the people, and, of course, organic techniques for dealing with

those pesky veggie pests. Renowned author Janette Haas will serve up her recipe for the Modern Victory Garden. Mix and mingle with local MGs at the Read and Seed exchange, and enjoy your hosts' luscious pot-luck lunch, which helps to keep registration prices rock bottom! The cost for this day long seminar, including lunch is only \$35. For details Visit www.lanarkmastergardeners.mgoi.ca or call Dale at 613 264-8135 for details.

October In-House Flower Show

Section I: Horticultural Specimen

- Class 1 Last rose of summer,
1 stem or spray
- Class 2 Any perennial, 3 stems
- Class 3 Any annual, 3 stems
- Class 4 A collection of gourds
(minimum 3)
- Class 5 Squash, 1 cultivar

Section II: Design

- Class 6 "Family Gathering" - a
centrepiece using fall colours
- Class 7 "Starry Nights" - a
luminary design
- Class 8 "Candy" - a miniature design

Storing Winter Squash

By: Paul Pospisil

The centuries' old practice of putting food by for winter has disappeared from many households for a number of reasons; with an abundance of supermarket food, fewer people are growing their own; the time pressure of having both mom and dad working out leaves no one at home to do the gardening, harvesting and storage or preserving; and, technology has made our homes so warm and dry that the old cool basement or root cellar used for food storage is no longer there.

For the avid gardener, however, growing and eating your own vegetables is a delight. Winter squash is one of those traditional winter keepers that is relatively easy to store with a little preparation.

Winter squash includes such popular types like buttercup, butternut, acorn and spaghetti to the huge, 25-30 lb. ones like the

green, orange or blue hubbards as well as many newer hybrids. It is delicious and has endless uses in cooking and baking. It is high in vitamin A, potassium, iron and riboflavin and in the fall, also high in vitamin C.

This near-perfect vegetable is full of nutrition and doesn't deteriorate very quickly in storage.

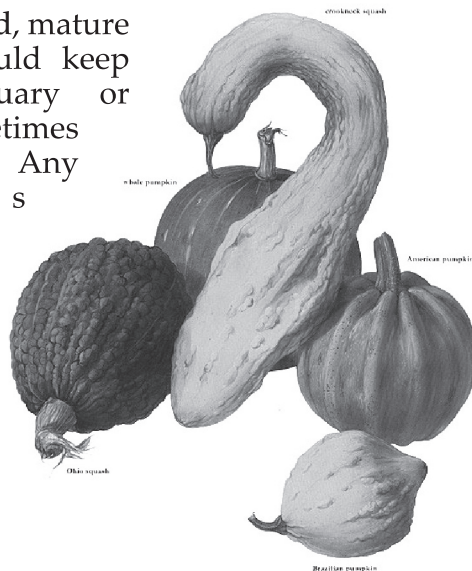
The squash should be harvested and cured before the first fall frost. You can check to see if it's ready by pressing your thumbnail against the rind. If the rind breaks easily, the squash won't keep so use it up first. You can also tell by the rind colour once you become familiar with growing them. Store only the fully-matured ones.

Choose a dry, sunny day for harvesting. Cut the squash from the vine, leaving 2-3" of stem. If there is no risk of frost, roll the squash over to expose the pale side and leave in the garden for a few days. Take the squash indoors to cure. I wash and dry ours to remove any garden dirt or spores that could cause decay.

Cure the squash by keeping in a warm, dry and ventilated area for two weeks. Then, move it into cool storage, around 50-55F degrees, if possible. The ideal storage is a cold room in a corner of your basement with a window. Otherwise, any cool place will do – an unheated bedroom, a cool pantry or attic or a corner of the basement far away from the furnace or any heat vents. Store squash on racks so they don't touch. Check the stored squash frequently and use up any that show signs of starting to soften. Squash loses flavour quickly once it starts to soften.

Well-cured, mature squash should keep until February or March, sometimes longer.

Any surplus squash can be cooked, packed in serving-size Zip-Loc bags and frozen for ready use.



Fall Fruit Gardening Tips

*Dr. Leonard Perry, Extension Professor
University of Vermont
Department of Plant and Soil Science*

In addition to harvesting many tree fruits, and even some small fruits, fall is the time for some other crucial activities to keep your fruit plants healthy and productive the coming year.

Whatever the fruit plant, fall is not the time to prune, unless you must or for the 3Ds—to remove diseased, damaged, or dead branches. Pruning in early fall may stimulate growth that won't harden before winter. By pruning later in fall, the wounds won't heal so diseases can enter and get established. If pruning is needed, mark your calendar for next late winter to early spring. Then is the time to fertilize too, not in the fall.

As with pruning and many other gardening practices, patience in covering strawberries is best (but often hard for gardeners). Wait until late fall to cover them, about the time hard frosts start to freeze the soil—perhaps late November. Covered earlier, the strawberries often don't harden properly for winter. You can purchase straw, one bale covering about 100 square feet about 3 to 6 inches deep. Make sure not to use hay, as it often contains weed seeds.

If you're growing fall (also called two-crop or everbearing) raspberries, such as 'Fall Gold' or 'Heritage', you'll hopefully be picking some this month. If you prune such fall raspberries to the ground after harvest, you won't get an early crop next year but should get a larger fall crop.

The other one-crop raspberry cultivars, as well as blackberries, won't fruit on the same wood again, so you can cut these "canes" that have fruited back this fall. Again, have patience, as cutting back these canes in late fall will let more nutrition from the stems go back into the roots for the coming year. Since pests can overwinter in these older canes and may be present, don't compost them but either burn (if allowed in your area) or take to your local recycle center.

Perhaps one of the key practices to reduce future pests on fruit trees, if you do nothing else, is to remove the "drops" or fallen fruit. Make sure to pick all fruit too, as it will

eventually fall, or may attract deer browsing on fruit and stems. If you have grapes, pick any fruit and rake up fallen fruit. Rake up fallen leaves too. Many types of pests and diseases overwinter in fallen fruit and leaves, so removing them (burying, or to a local recycle center) greatly reduces these potential problems without having to use many or any chemical sprays.

Fall is a great time to get back on top of weed control if you haven't been able to keep up. I love weeding this time of year as it is cooler, and the weeds don't regrow. If you have grassy areas around fruit trees or between rows of small fruit bushes, mow them so the grass will go into winter short (3 inches high, or so, is fine). This reduces habitats for both pests and critters such as field mice and voles. In particular, trim or keep grass (and mulch) away from trunks that the latter love to chew on during winter.

You can mulch around trunks of trees with wood chips, bark or similar, just don't mulch up against the trunks. A couple inches deep is fine, particularly if you use a weed fabric underneath. If you have time for this in the fall, it will be one less activity to worry with during the busy spring season.

If you planted new fruit trees this year, you may wish to wrap the lower trunks with a tree wrap material, or tree guard, available online or from full-service garden stores. They help protect the tender bark from possible chewing by animals when the snow gets deep, as well as protecting from winter sun injury ("sunscauld"). Such injury happens on the south side of trees with rapid temperature fluctuations from sunshine on cold winter days.

For older trees you can just use cylinder of wire mesh, such as hardware cloth, around lower trunks to prevent mouse damage. Try to avoid using poison baits for mouse control, as non-target species (such as pets) can get into these.

If you have deer in your area, you may need to protect shrubs and trees with some sort of repellent or fencing. If just a few deer, and plenty of alternative food, and a mild winter, repellent sprays, fragrant soap in cloth bags (don't hang directly on plants, as the dissolving soap attracts rodent feeding), or similar solutions may be sufficient.

Otherwise, some sort of fencing may be needed. If individual trees, a simple cage of 5-foot deer fence around plants may work. Larger plantings may need taller fencing, or other versions such as electric fencing.

Before this past growing season becomes a foggy and distant memory, evaluate your plantings and how they performed, and make notes for the coming year. Did you have pests or problems you need to watch for next year, and be ready for handling? Did some plants not perform well or produce, so perhaps need a change in culture, or maybe another partner for cross pollination? Did you have enough fruits, or do you have space and time for a few more?

You can find more details on all aspects of growing fruits in The Fruit Gardener's Bible, by Lewis Hill and Leonard Perry.



—It's a Snap!—

A series of tips on garden photography.

C,mon, Get Closer

The most common photography mistake is not getting close enough to the subject. Look at your lens and decide how close you can get without changing the focus. Move your body closer to the subject until it is in focus. For each lens, learn its minimum focal distance and move your body to that position. Do you always use a 50mm lens in the garden? Next time try your 200mm. A long lens causes the foreground and background to visually compress. That's a nice effect. Explore each of your lenses and use them at their minimum focal distance. For example, close your eyes and smell a rose. Now do it with your eyes open. How close are you and what do you see? Now try the same thing with your camera. Set the lens to its closest focal distance and walk toward the rose until it is in focus. Now you have an intimate view of the rose as well as its special fragrance. Capture it all!