



Ontario Horticultural Association – District 6

Lynden Horticultural Society Newsletter

Established 1928

November 2020 – 7th issue

Website: www.gardenontario.org

Facebook: Lynden Horticultural Society

Message from the President: Its official summer is now over! The first frost has come. We have put away and cleaned up our gardens for this year. Sorted out the garden shed, put away the patio furniture, decorated for the fall and Halloween and now thinking about Christmas decorating. How time flies!!!

Our gardens have moved indoors as we bring in those plants that won't survive the winter, dry out any bulbs or tubers that needed to be stored over winter. Some of us have been canning, preserving, and drying herbs and seeds, some for the first time, others are pros. This has been the year for experimenting. There have been a lot of people who have decided to garden for the first time and grow vegetables and others who have expanded their beds. This could be the way of the future as food costs rise and the uncertain future, we look back to our roots. A friend mentioned to me, that a friend from Europe had visited once and was astounded that we had all this land, big backyards and it was mostly lawn. No gardens, no vegetables, fruit trees, just mostly grass. He's right, why don't we?!? I think of that as my yard each year gets slowly eaten up by gardens and I plant another tree!



Book: This is not your typical garden book. My mother found this little gem at a book sale from the Library and it looked like it was never opened.



It's called "Flower Hunters" and it's by Mary Gribbin & John Gribbin. The book is a fascinating story about men and women from the middle of the 17th century to the end of the 19th century who scoured the world in search of extraordinary plants and helped establish the new science of botany. Some of these adventurers risked and lost their lives searching for new and undiscovered plant specimens. This book focuses on 11 of these flower hunters, each chapter is about one explorer. Many plants that are so familiar to us were found in distant regions of the globe, from the Douglas fir (named after one such explorer) to exotic orchids and azaleas, often found in wild unexplored country or impenetrable jungle in the face of hunger, disease and hostile locals. The flower hunters helped build the great botanical collections we have today. Who knew there was such a thing as a flower hunter?!?

I'd say you can find this book at the Library but not sure since it this one was a discard, but try anyways, if not you can always get it from [Amazon for \\$12.48](#); [Indigo \\$21.95](#).



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Trivia:

1. Vanilla flavouring is derived from which flower?
 2. What makes cranberries float?
 3. Avocados and pumpkins are vegetables. True or False?
 4. Why do we cry when cutting onions?
 5. What the heck is Salsify???
-



Website: Since we are unable to have a meeting this month and it would have been a Christmas demo, I thought I would try to find some videos of Christmas decorations demonstrations you could try.

The first one is of a door swag and you don't need much in the way of supplies. It's simple and has a nice little added touch of fake snow and glitter added to the live branches. [Front Door Swag](#)

Ok, so this next one is Martha Stewart and she is promoting a flashlight but she has some good tips on hanging your evergreens without damaging your wood railings by using zip ties and adding lights: [Martha Stewart](#)

The next two deal with planters and have two different techniques of assembling. The first one is for a planter insert. The video is by a greenhouse and they use a lot of greenery!!! But it looks great when it's done. They do use some different materials for the pot base and really cram in the greenery. There is a slight sound problem, part way through you may have to increase the volume to hear what she's saying. [Spruce Top Pots](#)

The second one is done in an urn. They do things a little differently and use a different soil base materials and plant materials to the greenhouse video, to create a different look. [Christmas Urns](#)

Recipe:

We all have lots of herbs this time of year, all dried and ready to use. Here is a great recipe I use all the time!

Herbs de Provence is a combination of herbs considered typical of the Provence region of southeast France. It can have many different combinations depending on where you buy it or if you make it. You can add or leave out an ingredient to change the flavour. Here is the combination of herbs I use on all kinds of foods: roast chicken, roast potatoes, garlic butter, sauces, etc. and pairs well with Mediterranean cuisine. Great with roast potatoes and grilled vegetables, just toss with some olive oil add seasoning and roast or grill!



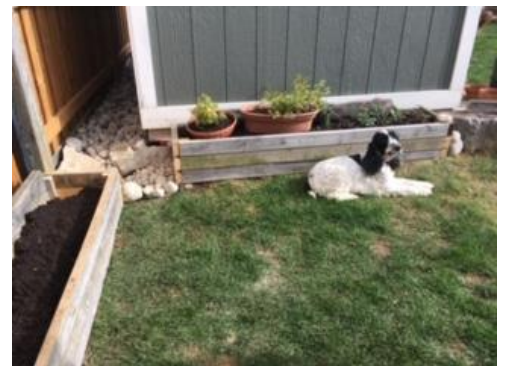
Herbs de Provence:

- 1 Tbsp dried Rosemary
- 1 Tbsp dried Thyme
- 1 Tbsp dried Savory
- 1 Tbsp dried Basil
- 1 Tbsp dried Marjoram
- ½ tsp dried sage
- ½ tsp lavender

Mix together and store in a jar with a tight-fitting lid. It will last between 6 months to 1 year in a cool dry place away from light and heat.

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle Part II: Last month’s newsletter I wrote about using my mother’s old fence for a raised bed, not thinking about possible chemicals in the wood until it was mentioned to me. So, I decided to do a little research on several garden and lumber sites and learned some interesting things. While there is no right or wrong depending on who you talk to the answer is not so simple, this is what I came up with.

December 31, 2003 the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) banned the sale of lumber treated with chromated copper arsenate (CCA) for residential use, over concerns of arsenic leaching into the soil. Wood today uses alkaline copper quat (ACQ) and copper azole (CA-B), both contain copper and a fungicide but no arsenic. The copper keeps insects at bay and the fungicide prevents soil fungus from attacking the wood. In ACQ, the fungicide is quat, which is also used in swimming pool chemicals and as a disinfectant. CA-B uses copper tebuconazole, a fungicide used on food crops.



Does this make it unsafe for human consumption? John Harrison, President of JRH Toxicology, a consulting firm specializing in scientific advice to the industry and government wrote in 2017, “Scientific evidence and data have shown that using pressure treated wood for raised bed or box gardening is safe to adults and children...”, “In fact, small amounts of copper are necessary for human and plant life and termed ‘an essential trace element’”.

Consensus among researchers is that low levels of chemicals in treated wood that leach out into the soil are likely to be taken up by the plant only in very small amounts. There has been no evidence to suggest that the level of chemicals is significant enough to be of concern for human health. If plants take up too



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much copper they will die before they mature. In addition, homegrown vegetables make up a small percentage of the diet, therefore exposure is insignificant. However, do not use copper near ponds or streams because it is toxic to aquatic life.

In a 2014 study at Oregon State University found that growing radishes, carrots and potatoes in a copper azole treated planter, the copper levels were higher in the soil next to the treated wood as opposed to the center of the bed, but the copper levels did not differ in the roots or tubers compared to beds constructed from untreated wood. Copper levels were elevated in the carrot foliage, but this is not normally eaten.

One solution recommended but not necessary is to line the inside of the bed with plastic, it can be used if there are safety concerns. This will also extend the life of the raised bed. For proper drainage, the plastic should not be used underneath the raised bed.

The only mention where treated wood is not safe is where it may come into direct or indirect contact with drinking water or a component of food, animal feed or beehives. It is also not recommended for growing organic vegetables, you must choose a different wood for this.

Finally, if you already have the older arsenic-treated wood in you garden, don't panic. Plants will not take up arsenic unless the soils are deficient in phosphorus. That is not a problem for gardeners who use compost generously. A wood that is 20 years old has also leached out most of the chemicals already. If you are going out and buying wood you will most likely not go and buy pressure treated for a raised bed as it is more expensive so this is moot, but if you are using old pressure treated wood i.e. from a fence then you can go ahead and use it and feel safe in the knowledge that it won't cause significant harm. While the scientific consensus is it's safe, it really is your own personal preference, what you feel comfortable with. Gardening can be just as much an act of faith as it is science and the opinions of all the scientists in the world may not convince you to use pressure-treated wood.

For more info check out these 2 videos:

Alberta Urban Garden – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KCXDo1Qjdm8>

Garden Fork - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3mcZ9Lrc8t4>

Sources: <https://www.finegardening.com/article/are-pressure-treated-woods-safe-in-garden-beds>

<https://woodpreservation.ca/residential-use/raised-bed-gardening/>

<https://www.treatedwood.com/news/yes-you-can-use-treated-lumber-for-your-raised-vegetable-garden-beds#:~:text=He%20stated%20in%20a%20bulletin,explains%2C%20%E2%80%9CAI%20chemicals%20in%20consumer>



What the heck is Salsify??? When I was writing the ‘Seed Storage’ column last month, I came across, Salsify. I had no idea what it was! So, I googled it and came across this “What the heck if Salsify and how do I cook it?”. It is referred to as an “ugly brown stick”, sounds appetizing, “but don’t judge it by its appearance they say”. Its a skinnier relative of the parsnip, comes in black and white and described as delicious, creamy and a versatile winter vegetable. Salsify is nutritious compared to many starchy alternatives and is a member of the dandelion family. It’s also known as the ‘oyster plant’ because of its faintly oyster flavor when cooked. The Romans and Greeks used salsify for its medicinal properties (usually for gallbladder and liver complaints) and the Spanish used it for snake bites.



After peeling it immediately submerge the vegetable in acidic water (lemon water works) to prevent oxidation. It can be boiled, mashed, or fried like a potato and makes a yummy addition to soups or stews. Salsify is easier to grow than parsnips and carrots and it’s pretty too! Available in season from October to January like most root vegetables from farmer’s markets or online specialty stores.



If you can find some here’s some recipes to try:

- [Pan-Roasted Salsify recipe](#)
- [Roasted Salsify, Toasted Walnut and Lemon Tahini Dressing](#)
- [Rich and Creamy Salsify Gratin](#)
- [Gordon Ramsay: Crushed Celeriac and Roasted Salsify](#)

Trivia Answers:

1. Orchid.
2. Small pockets of air inside cranberries cause them to bounce and float in water.
3. False. From a botanical standpoint, avocados and pumpkins are fruits, because they bear the plants’ seeds. Rhubarb on the other hand is a vegetable.
4. Sulfuric compounds are to blame for cut onions bringing tears to your eyes. According to the National Onion Association, chilling the onion and cutting the root end last reduces the problem.
5. See above for answer.