

BATH GARDENING CLUB NEWSLETTER – WINTER 2021

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Bob Willis



The Village is Aight for the Holidays!





THE NEXT GARDENING CHALLENGE: NOT UNDIES BUT GARDENS OF RED FLOWERS!

During our recent in person October meeting which was also conducted on Zoom, we welcomed Brad King, our Ontario Horticultural Association (OHA) representative from District 3. Each year, the OHA suggests a theme that clubs across the province might be interested in pursuing. Brad King announced that the OHA has decided that the theme for 2022 will be the “Year of the Garden” and, that RED is the colour of the flower that the OHA is hoping many gardeners will plant! Brad stated that if people plant RED flowers, they are encouraged to take a picture of their garden, send the picture to their local gardening club who will then submit the picture to the OHA. A pin will be placed on the map of Ontario to indicate where the red garden exists. We have been encouraged to try and acquire as many “pin markings” in our area as possible. This sounds like a challenge and we know Bathers are always up to a challenge!



JOIN US! THE BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP ARE PLENTIFUL!

Where to begin? Our members will tell you what a great club we are and how belonging to the Bath Gardening Club is truly “giving back” to the community. To begin with, dues are just \$10 for a single or \$15 for a family. You will enjoy so many benefits: discounts at several garden centres, monthly meetings with engaging speakers, workshops, meeting new friends, and, by volunteering on one of our many committees, the beautification of the village.

At our Annual Meeting held in October we elected our officers and directors. Our next fiscal year commences in September, 2022 and we will be seeking to fill a few vacancies. We are always looking for new ideas so if you are interested in gardening or helping out in our great community, please visit our website: www.bathgardeningclub.ca or check us out on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/Bath-Gardening-Club-Horticultural-Society>.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL/NEW MEMBERS: Don't forget to renew your membership before December 31, 2021. You can renew or [join us](#) in one of several ways:

- Send an e-transfer to treasurer@bathgardeningclub.ca
- Drop your cheque payable to the Bath Gardening Club off to 297 Main Street (Jane Ledingham) or 45 Country Club Drive (Laurie Minorgan)
- Mail cheque to the Bath Gardening Club, P.O. Box 3, Bath, ON K0H 1G0
- Pay in person at our monthly meetings, held the third Monday of every month at St. John's Hall



OCTOBER'S GUEST SPEAKER: NANCY LOUWMAN

During October's meeting we were privileged to welcome Nancy Louwman from the Rideau 1000 Islands Master Gardeners, to speak with us via Zoom. Her topic? Asters. Her presentation reminded us how beautiful asters are in our fall gardens and also how beneficial they are to the insect population. Asters thrive in all kinds of soil. Nancy provided information on a variety of asters some of which might be best suited for your soil conditions. Here are a few facts.

Plants in the "Asteraceae" family include: lettuce, daisies, sunflowers, chrysanthemums, asters, dandelions, goldenrod, coneflowers, thistles, artichokes, sunflowers, dahlias, marigolds, zinnias, asters, chamomile, chicory, sage, tarragon, ragweed, thistle, sagebrush, and yarrow. There are about 350 species of asters worldwide, of these 150 are native to North America.



Butterfly and moth caterpillars are highly attracted to aster leaves as a food source.

Bumblebee Queens depend on the plant's fall blooms for energy just before entering their hibernation period. Monarch butterflies are often seen on aster blooms as they store up energy for their migration to Mexico.

The following are a few samples of asters that are native to our area: For this and more information check out: (<https://www.inournature.ca/>)

1. Calico Aster (*Symphyotrichum lateriflorum*) white flower, Aug-Oct

Growing conditions: Part shade-sun, thrives in sand, loam or clay moist to dry soil. **Height:** 2-3ft

2. Large-leaved Aster (*Eurybia Macrophyllis*) light blue-white flower, Aug-Sept. **Growing conditions:** Part shade-sun, thrives in sand, loam or clay, dry to medium soil. **Height:** 1-2ft

3. New England Aster (*Symphyotrichum novae-angliae*) purple, pink, Aug-Oct. **Growing conditions:** Full sun - Part sun, grows well in sand, loam or clay, moist-average soil. Tolerates dry soil but may look scraggly. **Height:** 2-5feet **NOTE:** If the plant is becoming too tall, cut it back in June.

4. Smooth Blue Aster (*Symphyotrichum laeve*) lavender to light blue, Sept- Oct. **Growing Conditions:** Full sun-light shade, grows well in sand, loam, or clay. Dry to medium soil. **Height:** 4feet

5. Heath Aster (*Symphyotrichum ericoides*) white, Aug-Oct. **Growing Conditions:** Full sun-light shade, thrives in sand, loam. Dry – average moisture. **Height:**1-2feet

Asters do not need rich soil to prosper and many are drought resistant. These plants are an excellent choice for our Bath area. Nancy suggested that using a species name when shopping helps you to find the plant that best meets your planting/soil conditions.





MILKWEED SEED BOMBS – A FUN WAY OF HELPING OUR MONARCH BUTTERFLY POPULATION PROSPER: SUE NILSSON



Sue and Brian Nilsson are considered by some, to be the monarch butterfly ambassadors in Bath. We are grateful that they have given their time and expertise to raise awareness of the need to maintain and also replenish milkweed to keep our monarchs population viable. Milkweed leaves are the critical food source for a developing monarch caterpillar. Since Sue and Brian have moved to our area, they have “saved” hundreds of monarchs by fostering them in their home, feeding them milkweed leaves as they grow and then releasing them back to the same spot where they were originally found once they emerge from the chrysalis. Construction projects, the misuse of chemicals and climate change, to name a few, diminish the habitats of all of our pollinators. Specific to the monarch, the growing area of milkweed is also reduced. For more info about pollinators and the importance of their work for our food system check out: <https://www.pollinator.org/>

So how can we help? Sue Nilsson presented a fun way to grow our own milkweed. Milkweed Seed Bombs! We know that many gardening enthusiasts all over North America are involved in this project. Here is the recipe:

3 parts compost material

2 parts dry clay (for the clay, non-clumping kitty litter can be used or subsoil clay from your yard)

A sprinkling of local milkweed seed (about 1/5 of a part)

Method: Mix all ingredients well while dry then add just enough water to form a ball. Divide this mixture into smaller balls and allow these to dry for a few days. Now you are ready to go! Where do you put these milkweed seed bombs? In or on your garden, tossed on an abandoned field.

When do you plant? Fall: after a few frosts so seeds do not start to germinate

Winter: while snow is on the ground so that seeds will cold-stratify before spring arrives

Spring: after the frost has passed

How do you plant the bombs? Toss them on the ground. They do not need to be planted in soil. With a little water, compost and sunlight, the bombs will begin to germinate.

For more information, check out:

<https://www.saveourmonarchs.org/blog/milkweed-seed-balls-101>



Photo courtesy of Guerilla Gardening

Note: Bombs can be made with many native seeds so instead of only making milkweed bombs, try Joe-Pye Weed and other wild flower seeds.

More helpful tips are found in the following link:

<https://www.communityworkshopllc.com/goodstuff/2021/how-to-seed-bombs>

Stay tuned for an update about the milkweed “bombs” that have already been planted in our community!



BUGTEL, PALLET ART AND MEMORIAL GROVE UPDATE: JANICE FIRTH

During the summer, the Gardening Club renovated the Bugtel in the park behind the fire hall. This renovation was completed as a result of a generous grant from Lafarge, one of our Club’s valued corporate sponsors. Native plants were selected for our Bugtel garden and, boy did they grow! The flowers attracted a number of insects and the gardens were literally humming with insect activity. Why were native plants chosen? Native plants are adapted to local growing conditions. Because of this, they are often easier to grow, require less maintenance and are less susceptible to challenging conditions than plants that are not native to our area. With climate change, we need all the help we can get! To help visitors identify the native flowers in the garden, Bonnie Fredenberg graciously used her pallet art skill to illustrate all of the plants growing in the Bugtel garden.



Work on the Bugtel area continued into the fall. To create our Memorial Grove, four serviceberry trees which were purchased through the LaFarge grant were planted by the Loyalist Township.

The gardens are now resting with the dead foliage and the Bugtel providing a home for the insects during the cold winter months. The Gardening Club is planning an official opening of the Lafarge Memorial Grove and Pollinator Garden in the spring when the weather is warmer.

This beautiful pallet art was created by Bonnie Fredenburgh



NOVEMBER CHRISTMAS WORKSHOP – T’IS THE SEASON!



Thanks to Judy Hume and Mary Drinkwater, our Program Coordinators, twelve members of our Gardening Club got into the holiday spirit while making festive centerpieces and hanging baskets during our November workshop. The workshop leaders were Dawn Ford and Janice Firth. It was a magical afternoon of reconnecting with friends, sharing ideas and leaving the gathering still humming to the Christmas music that had been playing in the background. Thanks to our organizers and to those who came out to participate in a fun activity.



BATH IS GEARING UP FOR THE HOLIDAYS!

Over the course of many days in November, a team of dedicated volunteers brought our village alive with decorated wreaths, overflowing planters and Christmas lights. It all began with the making of 56 bows, then attaching several of those to wreaths, followed by filling the iron planters throughout Main Street with winter foliage and hanging hundreds of lights in Centennial Park and along the fence at the Fairfield Gutzeit House. Finally, wreaths were hung and the finishing touches were put on the planters. The many compliments received on the village Christmas décor certainly makes us proud Bathers. Many thanks to the Gardening Club volunteers, the Bath Lions Club and Loyalist Township for this labor of love.



Up and coming Gardening Club events:

Our Christmas luncheon will take place at the O'Connor Tea House in Deseronto on December 10th.

Our annual Christmas carol singing is on hold, pending approval from KFL&A Health. Stay tuned!

Join us on Monday, January 17th at 2:30 p.m. for our first meeting of 2022. Details to follow. Guests welcome!



RECIPE CORNER

Recipe Corner: Many of us are ardent herb growers and harvesters. The following link is a food, herb and spice pairing chart. (Ctrl + Click to follow the link)

http://bkcd-media.vhost.psu.edu/documents/HO_PE_foodherbspicepairing.pdf

The Gardening Club has received permission to share the link from *The Penn State Better Kid Care Program* <<http://extension.psu.edu/programs/betterkidcare/>>, Penn State University, Christine Anthony, Ph.D., Program Coordinator.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM THE BATH GARDENING CLUB!

