

SCOTIA GARDENER

Newsletter of the Nova Scotia Association of Garden Clubs

Spring 2021



Message from the President

Hello my gardening friends, I hope you are all well and enjoying your gardens. I am looking forward to being able to gather again and see you all at the NSAGC Convention 2022 in Truro. Once we overcome this virus, have our vaccinations and begin to gather in person again, we should do so with excitement and inspired ideas in our clubs. In the meantime, we need to follow protocol and stay at home, in our gardens.

We can start making plans with our clubs for next year now. Let's help make next year the Year of the Garden 2022, nationally. You can help by sending a letter, individually and/or as a club to your local Member of Parliament. More information can be found at: <https://gardenscanada.ca/year-of-the-garden> There are lots of ideas and activities on this website. Check it out.

I have been on the NSAGC board now for 12 years and will remain as Past Chair for another two years. It is a wonderful board and has been a pleasure to serve on. Every year we search for new board members to replace those who have served their terms. We thank all those who stepped up to take on vacant positions. This year, we say so long

to Susan Hazelwood, our incredible secretary, who has been in this position for the past ten years. Susan, we can't thank you enough for all you have done for us. You are truly a treasure and will certainly be missed.



Effective following our online AGM, I will turn things over to our new chair, Kathy d'Entremont. Kathy started with us as District Director in the Western District #7 from Bridgetown to Yarmouth. She has brought many great ideas to our board as director and kindly stepped up to fill the Vice Chair position when it became vacant. Kathy has lots of new, exciting ideas and, along with the newly elected Vice Chair, will establish some changes that will help the board going forward.

I want to take a moment to thank the board. You are all volunteers, you do wonderful work and together we make things happen. Thank you for your help during my time as Chair.

Happy gardening season,
Pamela MacLean
Chair, NSAGC

Anticipating Summer in Antigonish

by Sharon Bryson, Antigonish Garden Club

Some of the activities for the Antigonish Garden Club have had to be put on hold due to public health restrictions. In lieu of a regular plant sale, we are now having a Member-to-Member Plant Swap.

A list of people with their contact info, plants they may have to dispense and plants that are on their wish list has been circulated by email. Individuals can contact a fellow gardener and make arrangements to pick up plants. It seems to be working with some members reporting many of their available plants have new homes. This will likely continue through the month of May.

Each year we maintain a garden at the H. M. MacDonald Elementary School in Maryvale. Member Paula Smith co-ordinates a list of volunteers who do some gardening work each week through the season. The garden is a mix of shrubs,

bulbs, perennials and annuals for specific colour. During the trying times of 2020-2021, members of our garden club were able to stay a bit connected via a newsletter prepared by Sharon Bryson using contributions submitted by various members. Our most recent was [Volume 7](#) put out in early April.

One of the most interesting items submitted was one by Lynda MacLellan outlining her wonderful experiences with the monarch butterfly in the summer of 2020. The article can be accessed via this [LINK](#). Anyone interested in the monarch and other pollinators will find it interesting.

If Covid regulations allow, we have several outdoor garden meetings planned for June and July. It is proposed that a host member will highlight a plant or garden feature in their garden and share the details with the visiting members.



Photo submitted by Sharon Bryson



Photos of the colourful H.M. MacDonald School Garden taken in late July 2020

Photos submitted by Sharon Bryson



Thanks to Yarmouth Garden Club member, Vivian Kennedy, for sharing this charming photo of a young gardener hard at work in the rock garden. It reminds us how much youngsters love dabbling in the soil and what an opportunity there is to teach them about plants and gardening at a young age. Many of them will grow up to be avid gardeners in their own right.

Photo by Vivian Kennedy

Paying Homage to Community History

by Susan Donkervoort, Digby Neck and Islands Garden Club

We've broken ground in Sandy Cove at the old village well sight! The well was closed for good in 1977. At one time this site was a place of activity in the village.

The club is in the process of putting in a butterfly garden and has had a wishing well built locally to pay homage to the spot. Framing and adding soil should happen in mid to late May, followed by planting of the pollinator plants. All our members will each donate a few plants. With Covid 19 we've been working in groups of three to keep our numbers low and keep folks healthy. Life is a garden—dig in!



The Digby Neck and Islands Garden Club will feature this locally made wishing well as the centrepiece of their new butterfly garden at the site of the original Sandy Cove well which was a popular gathering spot for villagers.

Photo by Susan Donkervoort

Pictou Plans a Covid Compliant Plant Sale

by Heather Mattie, Pictou Garden Club

The Pictou and Area Garden Club Annual Plant Sale has started to get ready. It will take place at the end of May. Our list of items for sale will be posted on our Facebook page on May 26. People can start ordering on May 30 when we post the email address.

It is a virtual plant sale where members of the club donate items from their gardens. We take e-transfers or exact change in a sealed envelope. NO Money will be exchanged in person. Once the orders are filled, buyers will be notified of their pick up times.

As a group we are excited that more people are taking advantage of the benefits of gardening. Please remember all COVID restrictions apply.

Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/412742595938985>

or under Pictou and Area Garden Club

Webpage: <http://pictougardenclub.weebly.com/>

Preparing for the Pictou and Area Garden Club
Annual Plant Sale Covid style!

Photo submitted by Heather Mattie



Yarmouth Garden Club Keeping Busy

by Sheila Lewis, Yarmouth Garden Club

The Yarmouth Garden Club has had more executive meetings this year than regular meetings. That is not to say we haven't been busy. Everyone is working in their gardens and some members have been keeping the Brown Street parking lot looking beautiful under the guidance of Alvina Robicheau and Helen Cook. The photo contest was judged by Karla Allen (a lifetime member) and the results can be seen on the Club's Facebook page. The overall winner has yet to be announced. Unfortunately the Flower Show and Tea was cancelled.

Our 2020 AGM will be held by email and the new executive will be voted in at that time. Planning continues for public visits to private gardens and will run in accordance with Covid-19 guidelines. Wishing Nova Scotia gardeners a safe summer with bountiful gardens—next year the clubs will be back in full swing with in-person meetings and programs.

Congratulations to the NSAGC new executive and Committee Chairs.

Enjoyable Zoom Presentations

by Donna Burris, Secretary, Bedford Horticultural Society (BHS)

Entering the second year of the corona virus pandemic has put a greater challenge upon us to keep club members interested. The Executive has continued to meet and send out emails and host Zoom meetings for the members. Our hope is that soon we all will be vaccinated and be able to once again meet in person.

February's Zoom meeting was a presentation by Jeff Jabco (President of the International Clematis Society). He spoke on how to grow and care for clematis. He made it all seem so easy!

In March, Pamela MacLean (President of BHS) gave us a presentation called "Herbs In Your Garden." Club members received answers to their many questions.

April's presentation was given by Holly Pender-Love (Past Vice-President of the Canadian Peony Society). She spoke on the three types of peonies, how and when to plant them, disease and how to treat it. She showed many beautiful pictures of her peonies.

I will close showing photos of mine and dreaming of them blooming again this summer.



Gorgeous peonies from Donna's garden
Photos by Donna Burris



Profile of a Yarmouth Gardener

by Helen Cook, Yarmouth Garden Club

The Yarmouth Garden Club last met in October, 2020, but members share photos and advice daily on our Facebook page. Plant sales will take place in individual driveways this year, and our semi-annual Flower Show and Tea must once again be postponed. However, summer garden tours—if permitted—will allow us to admire each other's unique outdoor creations (and commiserate about what we've lost to the local deer). One member's garden in Yarmouth that sets a high standard for beauty and variety is that of former Yarmouth Garden Club president Vivian Kennedy. Here's her story:



Joseph Neal, 1847, said that home is where the heart is. Traditionally interpreted as wherever our loved ones are is home, this saying also means that no matter where we are, our love and affection are deeply tied to the home we live in. For Vivian Kennedy, it is—and always has been—both.

As a self-described “Salem kid” growing up in that Yarmouth neighbourhood, Vivian decided that 176 Argyle Street would eventually be her home. When, decades later, the elderly farmer who owned the home knocked on the Kennedy's apartment door, it was no surprise to anyone in Salem that he, too, knew it was “her” house and was now ready to sell it to her.

So in 1965, despite never having previously been inside, Vivian, Bud and their four children moved into their forever home, today beautifully decorated with art, photographs and a few plants, each carefully chosen for one reason—to fit the house. The property already was set amidst a hedge, rhododendrons, a mock orange, and the neighbourhood climbing maple tree, but at least ten years would pass before Vivian turned her own focus to the gardens outside.

“Gardening is the art that uses flowers and plants as paint and the soil and sky as canvas,” wrote American painter Elizabeth Murray. Vivian, with the artist's eye and her beloved home as the backdrop, began to transform the property into the place now

known to neighbours, family, friends, and fellow garden club members for its stunning colour palette of annuals, perennials, shrubs and trees.

Vivian knew what she wanted: not only gardens all around the house but those visitors and passersby alike would love. She started by hiring local British gardener Joe Grey, who first laid out and prepared the gardens so she could visualize them. Only then did they talk about what would go in them. When Joe first arrived with trailerloads of manure, Vivian asked, “Is that aged?” “Mrs. Kennedy,” he replied, “that's so new, I asked the cow for it.”

Aside from Joe's planting of a front garden specifically to get the Kennedy teenagers off the front lawn, Vivian's every wish was his command: removing rocks, building up well composted gardens and planting not only annuals but also shrubs and perennials. The ragged hedge stayed because, as Vivian told him, “it belonged there.”

Gradually the gardens came alive. Daffodils planted under the hedge, Vivian explained to Bud, were for the neighbours. Today, a grateful neighbourhood also enjoys the wild white roses Vivian planted to provide colour after the daffodils fade.

As 12 grandchildren (and now 17 greats) came along, Vivian dedicated each tree and shrub to one of them. Jared's is the huge crabapple tree, which has produced basketfuls of apples and jelly over the years. The mountain ash is Katelyn's and Mitchell's, while the lawnmower-scarred laburnum belongs to Vivian's oldest grandson, Yarmouth musician Ryan Cook. Not to be forgotten, Vivian's feisty Schnauzer companion and watchdog, Belle, has the run of the garden, keeping it free of squirrels or other such intruders.

Like every piece of carefully selected and strategically placed artwork inside, the rose bushes in pots outside on the deck, the hydrangeas and multi-coloured primroses bordering the back garden, and the hostas along the fence are situated where they



best fit the house. Her choices reflect both what is pleasing to the photographer's eye and what matches each plant's botanical needs. So, too, the platform feeder that attracts the starlings Vivian loves to watch is exactly positioned to entertain her while she observes it from her kitchen. Except for her orchids, Vivian prefers to enjoy her flowers in the garden, although that never stopped Bud from bringing in bouquets to brighten a room.

Travelling to view palace gardens in England and attending both the London Garden Show and numerous NSAGC conventions, including organizing those the Yarmouth Garden Club hosted, expanded Vivian's gardening knowledge. Her conviction that knowledge should lead to responsibility then led to her into numerous leadership roles, including at the Brown Street parking lot gardens in the town of Yarmouth, where she spent hours alone planting the boxes and weeding. As Vivian says, "one position leads to another and it doesn't matter so much what the role is; it just matters to be there. It wasn't for leadership so much as for betterment—to make the organization more fun or productive" that motivated her. Eventually Vivian accepted the nomination to be Yarmouth Garden Club's president. Like all other roles, she loved it and served with enthusiasm and grace.



As an experienced amateur photographer, Vivian organized the garden club's photo contest, as well as photographing countless garden club events and tours herself. Vivian's commitment to leadership extended to the executive of the Photography Club and presidency of Ladies Golf at the Yarmouth Links.

Winter provides Vivian more time to devote to her extensive and eclectic reading list while no doubt also planning and preparing for the next growing season.

Vivian considers herself the "caretaker of something special—a place to which her children are deeply connected," particularly the tree her great grandchildren are now learning to climb as their parents and grandparents did generations ago. "Plants have to blend in to create an overall continuity of garden to house," says Vivian. "Garden is a feeling—an extension of home and worth the lifetime I've invested in it."



Photos by Vivian Kennedy

Provincial Gardening Week

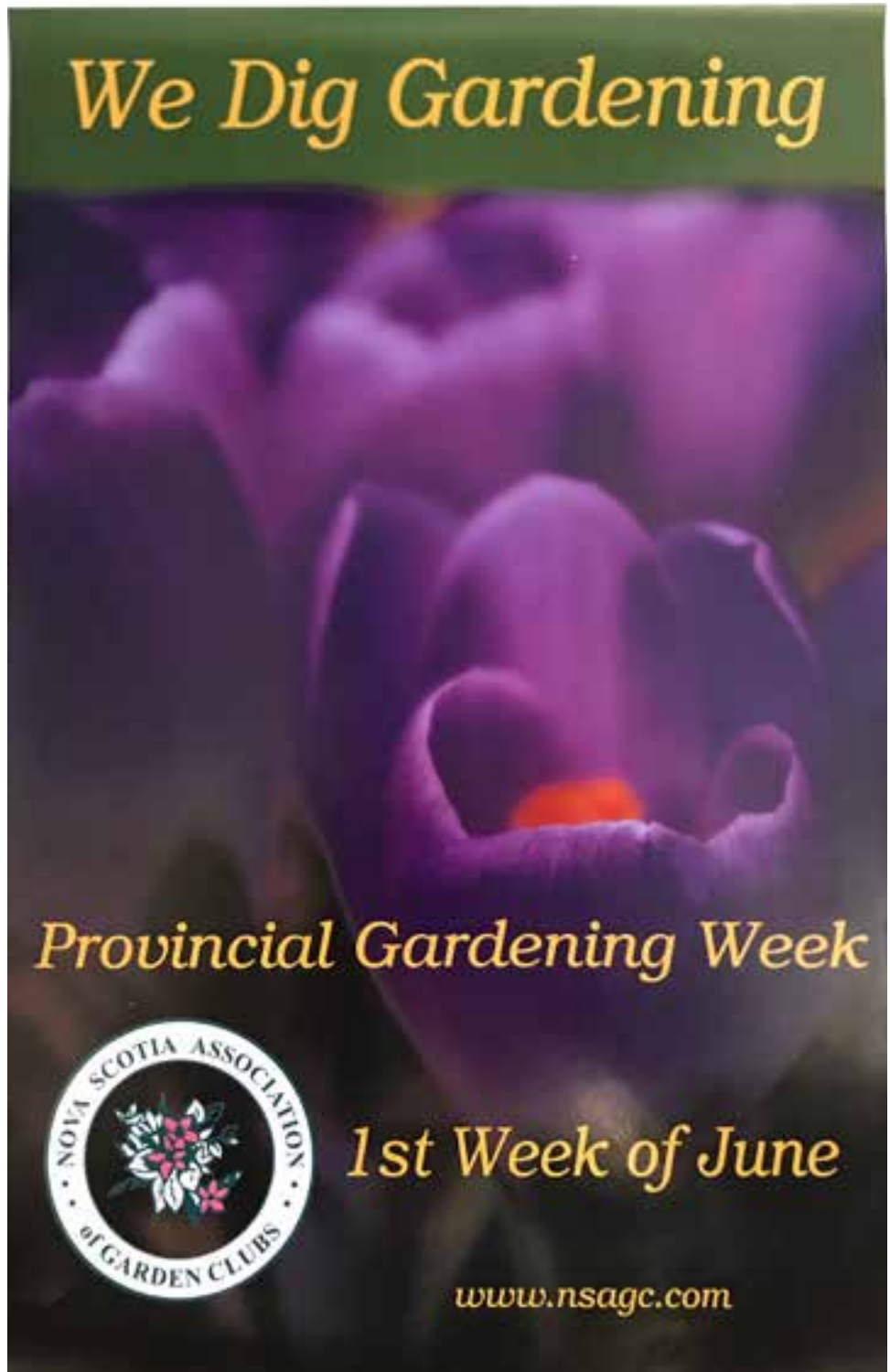
The first week in June is Provincial Gardening Week in Nova Scotia. Although we will not be able to celebrate it this year as in past years, here is some information from the NSAGC website:

Starting in 2013 gardeners in Nova Scotia began to celebrate the first week in June as Provincial Gardening Week. First initiated by NSAGC past President Don Butler, this special week was proclaimed in the Nova Scotia Legislature and received unanimous consent from all parties.

Nova Scotia is blessed with one of the finest climates in North America for growing plants with ample rainfall, moderate temperatures winter and summer, and few major insects or disease problems. In addition to all these positives we have a well educated and skilled gardening community spread from one end of the province to the other. This is not a new trend as gardening has had a large and important role in our province's history. As you drive around the province passing through cities, towns or small communities scattered along the highway, you become aware of the role individual gardeners and garden clubs play in the sheer beauty of our surroundings. Provincial Gardening Week only brings these accomplishments to the forefront and makes us aware of what a wonderful place we make our home.

Garden clubs from across the province hold a number of activities to celebrate this week and it usually closes out with the annual Garden Club Convention. Events have includ-

ed plant sales, gardening demonstrations for the public, and placing flower displays in churches and local businesses. Information sheets on gardening are handed out at farmers markets and libraries where garden club members were sometimes present to answer questions.



Outstanding Natural Beauty



Botanical Latin: What and Why

by Roslyn Duffus

In the last newsletter, I gave a brief description and some reasons why we might make the effort to use Botanical Latin when referring to our native and garden plants. Prime among the reasons is so we all know what particular plant we are talking about. Common names we learn from our parents, teachers and friends are fine within our communities but if you are chatting with a gardener from another part of the province, country or another part of the world, the Latin name will be the one name you will both have in common.

For example, in Nova Scotia, *Mitchella repens* is known as partridge berry. It's a member of the Mad-der family. In Newfoundland partridge berry is *Vaccinium vitis-idaea*, a member of the Heath family

So, how did these plants come by these names in Botanical Latin? *Mitchella* was named for the late 18th century botanist John Mitchell and "repens" means growing flat, creeping and they often root along the stem as they creep. You will also find prostratum and procumbens used to describe other plants that grow this way. Some other common names for this plant are two eyed berry and running box. There are apparently only two species in this genus.

Vaccinium is a large group of plants in Nova Scotia which includes blueberries, bilberries and cranberries. Besides partridge berry, *Vaccinium vitis-idaea* also goes by the common names of foxberry, lingonberry, and low bush or mountain cranberry. In this case, the derivation of the word *Vaccinium* seems to be obscure but *vitis-idaea* comes from Vine of Mount Ida. I get the vine name but the *idaea* takes some imagination unless this plant was originally identified when found growing on this mountain. It is also interesting that *Vitis* is the genus name for grapevines so you can see that these words may be used either as a noun (genus) or as an adjective (species).

As an example, the common columbine, a favourite garden perennial, is named *Aquilegia vulgaris* and meadow rue is named *Thalictrum aquilegiaefolia*. In this case, the foliage of the meadow rue is being described as like the foliage of the columbine.



Mitchella repens, AKA partridgeberry, two eyed berry and running box



Vaccinium vitis-idaea, in fruit
Photos provided by Roslyn Duffus



Vaccinium vitis-idaea, a.k.a. partridgeberry, lingonberry, foxberry, mountain, lowbush cranberry and several other common names

Photo provided by Roslyn Duffus

Cooking with Herbs: Chives

by Emily Walker

It seems that everyone is interested in growing herbs these days. Herbs in pots and herbs in the garden provide fragrance, interesting foliage and colourful flowers. Herbs are a delightful way to add flavour to food. A small amount takes a dish from mundane to marvellous!

Chives are an easily grown perennial. Chives (*Allium schoenoprasum*, of the plant family *Amaryllidaceae*) are a gentle cousin to the onion family. Extremely rich in vitamin C, you can eat both the slender tubular leaves and the mauve flowers. Leaves are most delicate in flavour when young; flowers, when in bud.

Cut back a clump of chives as often as desired, leaving about two inches of stalk to regrow. Divide in the spring—a pot of chives is a thoughtful gift for a friend.

Chives are super easy to use. Slice them finely and sprinkle over potato salad or boiled new potatoes and stir into egg salad. Chop the leaves and pull the buds or florets apart and toss into salads. They are pretty scattered over scrambled eggs or stirred into mashed potatoes.



Cheese and Chive Biscuits

- 2 cups flour
- 1 tsp. sugar
- 4 tsp. baking powder
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1/2 cup shortening
- 1 large egg, beaten
- 2/3 cup milk
- 1/4 cup chopped chives
- 3/4 cup grated cheddar cheese
- 1 tbsp. maple syrup or honey (optional)

Preheat oven to 450 F.

Place the flour, sugar, baking powder, salt and shortening in a bowl and combine with a pastry cutter or fork.

Stir in the beaten egg, milk, chives and cheese. When combined, dump out onto a clean, floured surface and knead a few times to form a ball. Flatten the dough with your hands till it is about one inch thick. Use a biscuit cutter or a glass to cut out biscuits to the size and shape you want.

Place on an ungreased baking sheet. Brush tops with maple syrup or honey. Bake for 10 to 12 minutes in a 450 F oven. Remove and serve warm with butter!

Gardening Under Glass: African Violets

by Donna Burris, Secretary, Bedford Horticultural Society



There are two advantages of African violets: they stay small and they can live up to 50 years! I have one that belonged to my grandmother.

Here are some tips on how to care for them:

- ☞ Use African violet soil. Some people make their own. I just purchase it.
- ☞ Do not over water! I water with tap water that has sat overnight (to dechlorinate it) and is at room temperature. I only water when the ground is dry to the touch. I turn the plants around when I water them as the leaves tend to grow towards the light. So, to keep them growing flat and growing in a nice shape, I give them a turn. I do not get any water on the leaves to prevent water spots. If it does happen, I use a paper towel to wipe it off.
- ☞ I use water soluble African violet food every other week. They have become over fertilized when you see crystals forming on the ground.
- ☞ If they start to grow in a mound, I repot them. I dig all the old soil away from the root and repot, burying the crown up to the

first layer of leaves. If any of the leaves are old, I just pull them off. I do deadhead old flowers so they continue to produce more buds. Mine are in constant bloom.

- ☞ They like to be kept between 65 to 75 degrees. They do need 12 to 14 hours of indirect light each day. Some people put them under a grow light but I just have them on the window sill and the fluorescent light is on in the evening. They are doing fine. Direct sunlight will burn the leaves.

Here is how to propagate an African violet:

- ☞ I start them from a leaf cutting by planting it in moist soil inside a covered plastic container (like a salad container) for about two weeks. I do open the cover every now and again to let in fresh air. Again, they do not like wet roots.
- ☞ Sometimes after a few years when they start to get out of shape you will notice the plant has babies growing off it and you can cut them out and grow new plants from them.

They are definitely my favourite flower!

Garden Art: Web Wonder

by Emily Walker



These days we are spending more time than ever before in our gardens and on our decks and balconies. We enjoy having artwork in our homes. Why not take art outside into our gardens?

Choosing garden art is a very personal thing. Sometimes it chooses you as in the case of Bedford Horticultural Society member Bonie Conrad whose husband found a metal spider web window cover discarded in the curbside garbage. It was obviously handmade and was used to provide a layer of security for a window in someone's house. It is now mounted proudly on the side of Bonie's garden shed. It's an unusual object and provides an interesting focal point in her garden.



The bottom photo shows the real thing—a spider web caught in the early morning sun. According to Oscar Wilde, life imitates art far more than art imitates life. This statement is debatable but we can all agree that both webs are works of art, one fleeting and one much more durable—both amazing.

Photos: top by Bonie Conrad,
bottom by Emily Walker

Perfect Peonies

by Pamela MacLean, President, Bedford Horticultural Society (BHS)

During these times of Zoom meetings and staying at home, we have great opportunities to hear speakers that would typically be difficult to access. BHS was fortunate to have Holly Pender-Love, the past Vice President of the Canadian Peony Society, as our guest speaker for our April meeting, via Zoom. Holly kindly agreed on short notice when we learned our speaker would not be able to make it. This was a very interesting presentation where we learned everything there is to know about peonies, well, almost everything.



There are peony varieties that grow from zones two to eight and many that thrive here in Nova Scotia. There are three types: herbaceous, Itoh and tree peonies. They love the sun and put on a wonderful display. You can actually divide peonies, preferably in the fall. Remove the leaves and dig up the root. You will see a fleshy crown with protruding dormant buds or eyes. Cut the root, making sure you have at least three eyes in each section. Replant the root pieces two inches below the surface.

Peonies are deer and rabbit resistant; however, they are susceptible to Botrytis blight, a fungus that causes young shoots to rot, unsightly spots on leaves, and prevents flower buds from developing. Good air circulation is necessary for peonies. If you know you have Botrytis blight, spray your plants when the shoots are young, daily for 10 to 14 days with a mixture of one tablespoon of baking soda, one tablespoon of neem oil or cooking oil and one tablespoon of dish soap (containing no bleach) mixed with one gallon of water.



Peony photos contributed by
Pamela MacLean

The Canadian Peony Society has a website: <https://peony.ca/> and we have a local board member, Glynis Thomas, from Cape Breton. Anyone can join.

Holly Pender-Love is happy to do a presentation for any club that is interested. She is also a member of our NSAGC Facebook page and often provides good peony information.

This and That

submitted by club members

From Janet Quigg: *I have taken a week off from babysitting my granddaughter to work in my garden. It a lovely morning and I'm out pruning, weeding, mulching and edging gardens. I have twenty two plants to add to the gardens so I'll be out planting tomorrow. Gardening can be challenging, the black flies are quite bad and I have deer wandering through my yard every day. So thankful for insect repellent and Atlantick spray. Happy gardening! (Photos by Janet Quigg)*



From Bonie Conrad: *Clay pots are attractive; however, they dry out much faster than plastic ones. Lining the sides of the pots with small bubble wrap gives perfect insulation in very hot weather and conserves moisture in the soil. When using a large clay pot, cover the hole in the bottom with a dryer sheet or wet newspaper and fill about one quarter of the pot with styrofoam popcorn or used wine corks, cover with a small piece of wire mesh and then the soil. Using fillers of this type lightens the load when the pot needs to be moved.*



From Emily Walker: *On a warm sunny day last fall, our garden club held a workshop outside in the parking lot beside our usual meeting venue. We made small succulent container gardens. My container is eight inches tall and contains three different plants. There is sand for about an inch at the bottom of the container and then soil topped with a scattering of small stones and pieces of coloured glass. The crane is a decorative item generously supplied by another club member. It is a very low care house-plant. I water it about once every ten days and it appears to be quietly thriving. I like the fact that it hardly appears to be growing—it looks just like the day it was planted! (Photo by Emily Walker)*

Winner of the Close-Up Call Contest

It's a Delphinium! Thanks to everyone who entered the close-up call contest. Congratulations to Frances Howard, a member of the Dartmouth Horticultural Society, for identifying the close-up photo to the right below as a delphinium. Frances' name was drawn from all those who submitted a correct answer. She was very pleased to win a useful pop-up garden tote!

Frances could not be a more appropriate winner. She notes that she has been a member of the Delphinium Society UK for 25 years and is growing 30 to 40 delphiniums regularly from English seed.

It turns out that Frances knows a lot about delphiniums! She writes:

I suggest Googling the Delphinium Society UK as they have a good website with helpful hints and photos of the shapes of flowers they are aiming to breed. The UK varieties are different from the Pacific giant (in the photo opposite) which is now degenerate in the same way a wild rose is to a hybrid tea for example. (Well, sort of!)

Nowadays the desired delphinium shape is pyramidal, not cylindrical, and petal count is important, i.e., nothing less than 11 or 13 petals would be accepted whereas the Pacific giant often has only five, similar to a wild one. They also breed for disease resistance and longevity which you won't get in the Pacific giant which was bred to be an annual in California where Frank Reinelt, the breeder, was from. This was in 1940, a long time ago. After he died no one else continued with his breeding in the US and I don't know of any breeding there to this day.

The English hybrids couldn't stand up to the hot winters and lack of frost in California so he had to find a way to get one or two crops a year from the Pacific giant which is why they are so short lived here and don't deal well with the winter. On the other hand, he did manage to get them to breed true to colour which none of the others were able to do. It is hit and miss with the English elatums, although there are always likelihoods of blue or purple or white from seeds.

But the modern ones are pretty stunning. I have hardly ever had any which come close to photos of the prize winning delphiniums at Wisley but I live in hope! Most of those are offspring of named varieties whereas mine have to come from seed as one can't get a cloned plant through customs of course. I can buy seed from named parents however. I always have spare seed/plants if anyone would like to try.

They are incredibly fussy and demanding plants—not like your normal perennial—and staking in this windy corner of the world is tricky. I have worked out ways but the English way would topple the first afternoon here. And they must be staked. No other plant is so fussy but then they flower and all is forgiven!



There is an offshoot of the Delphinium Society in Ontario and Blossom Hill nursery in Peterborough grows them and will ship, I think, but I am not sure of that. They also do some of their own hybridization. There is also Dowdeswell's Delphiniums in New Zealand—they have a good website and will ship seed—although their original aim was to breed short stem plants for people living in apartments. Personally I prefer the six-foot to eight-foot variety as the others still require the same daily attention.

The English delphiniums are happy to come through our winters and don't need any protection. No one knows exactly where they came from but it would have been a mountain side maybe somewhere in Turkey or the Caucasus. There are species delphiniums in Oregon and northern California but they are unlike the elatums and won't overwinter and are generally very difficult.

A Note from the Editor

Spring couldn't come fast enough this year. After Covid curtailments, we were all craving the freedom of being outside. It was such a welcome return to the things we enjoy doing—caring for, creating and curating our gardens.

Something unusual happened in my community this spring. For the first time, thousands of crocuses covered the front lawn of a home in Bedford. Hundreds of garden spotters flocked to see this remarkable sight. There was a steady stream of people oohing and aahing and snapping photos.

This issue contains an article on garden art. Garden art is especially fun when it is a found or repurposed item. If you have something special or unique in your garden, please share it with us.

Thank you to those who contributed photos and club reports. A big thank you goes to Donna Burris for her article on African violets, Pamela MacLean for her informative piece on peonies and Roslyn Duffus for her series on Botanical Latin. Special thanks to Helen Cook for her profile of Vivian Kennedy, an insightful gardener! We are also grateful to Frances Howard who has inspired us to look at delphiniums with fresh eyes!

Please send your suggestions, gardening tips, club information/announcements and photos to: newsletter@nsagc.com

See you in September,
Emily



Photo by Ann Wadden

American Rhododendron Society 2021 Virtual Convention

*Rhodos Down East: Exploring the North Atlantic Region
June 3-6, 2021*

Take advantage of an exciting opportunity to learn about growing, breeding and gardening with rhododendrons. Due to the travel restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2021 American Rhododendron Society Convention will be offering all the presentations, garden tours and networking opportunities available on line to anyone who can access the internet!

Speakers include Ken Cox, famed Scottish Rhodo breeder from Glendoick Nursery in Scotland; Joe Bruso, Rhodo breeder from Massachusetts; Todd Boland from Newfoundland's Memorial University Botanical Garden, Sheila Stephenson on the history of rhodo breeding in Nova Scotia and Dianne McLeod on Rhododendron lapponicum. The Convention will start with a lecture on "Introduction to Mi'kma'ki" by Gerald Gloade, a Mi'kmaw naturalist and educator who will tell the stories of the first people that explain the natural history since the area was covered by ice.

Virtual garden tours will include the Kentville Research Centre, Annapolis Valley Historic Gardens and Peggy's Cove barrens as well as Freeman Patterson's garden at Shamper's Bluff, NB. Networking opportunities will include the Breeder's Roundtable where you can hear about the latest trends in Rhodo breeding and the ARS Next Generation Project which will show how to involve the next generation in your local ARS club.

Registration for the convention is now open!

The Convention includes a "pre-order and pick-up" plant sale from three local nurseries: Insigne Gardens (rare and unusual plants including evergreen azaleas), Dave Veinotte (Japanese maples) and a large collection of 800 rhodos (over 80 varieties) grown by Jack Looye.

See Convention website www.ars2021.org for registration information and link to EventBrite registration page.

2019-2020 NSAGC Executive

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Awards Committee, Vicki Willis
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Historian, Dixie Cress
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Photo Contest Committee, Betty Anne Cameron
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Tags and Seals, Valerie Despres
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Scotia Gardener Newsletter, Emily Walker
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Web Master, James Skinner
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Plant Give Away, Geoff MacDonald and
Jamie McLellan
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Directors

District # 1, Cape Breton Bibiane Lessard
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District # 2, Eastern, Sharon Bryson, Director
email: district2@nsagc.com

District # 3, Central North, Elizabeth Hill, Director
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District # 3, Central South, Elizabeth Hill, Director
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District # 4, Halifax, Kathy Harvie, Director,
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District # 5, Valley, Sandi Carroll, Director,
email: nsagc.district5.director@gmail.com

District # 6, South Shore, Susan Gilmour, Director,
email: district6@nsagc.com

District # 7, Western, Deb Bowes-Lyon, Director
email: district7@nsagc.com



Nova Scotia Association of Garden Clubs Board Openings 2021

The following positions will be open for nominations until the virtual AGM on June 5 (email Board nominations voting via email close on June 4):

President

- candidate Kathy D'Entremont

Vice President

- candidate Deb Bowes-Lyon

Secretary

- candidate Cassia MacDonald

District 3 Director North

District 5 Director

- candidate Sandi Carroll

District 7 Director

- candidate Lisa Doucette

Photo Contest Chair

- candidate Lawrence Spencer

Newsletter Editor

- candidate Emily Walker

More details on the positions may be obtained by contacting any board member. Anyone wishing to be nominated or who knows of a fellow garden club member you think would be a valuable addition to the board, please email Vicki Willis at:

vwillis53@hotmail.com

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Please note that the editor of the Scotia Gardener has exclusive control over the content and format of the newsletter. All information submitted for publication will be thoroughly reviewed by the editor and will be included or excluded in the newsletter at the sole discretion of the editor.

The preference is that all photographs in the newsletter be original. Photos will be credited on the page where the photo appears or below.

Additional photo credits:

Emily Walker—pages 1, 11, 14, 15, 19



One of the many beautiful vistas in the Evers' garden

Photo by Donna Evers