

# OVER THE GARDEN GATE



The Newsletter of the Valley Gardeners Club

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

**April 9, 2018** - Valley Gardeners Meeting. Speakers are the two Gerry Schofield bursary winners from NSCC, Cody Whynot (Operations) and Megan Moss (Landscape) .

**April 14, 2018** - District 5 Annual Meeting, The Forties Community Hall. Registration 8:30-9:30 am. Closes at about 3:15 pm. A reminder of start time only. It is too late to register.

**April 20-22, 2018** - Saltscapes Magazine East Coast Expo, former RONA building in Bayer's Lake.

**May 12, 2018** - Valley Gardeners Plant Sale. Starts at 9:30 am (new time). This is our main fundraiser so start thinking now what you will be able to bring to sell. Larry Marsters is Plant Sale Chair. See more under Club News below.

**May 12, 2018** - Rare and Unusual Plant Sale. Farmer's Market, Annapolis Royal. 1-4 pm. Freeman Patterson is the guest speaker and will be giving his presentation at Kings Theatre after the sale. <https://www.facebook.com/events/2091242284437711/>

**May 12 2018** - Valley African Violet Society's Show and Tea 2-4pm at the St. John's United Church Hall in Middleton, NS. Admission; free.

**May 18, 2018** - Members of the Botanical Artists of Nova Scotia Association (BANSA) will be taking part in a worldwide botanical art show. 10 am-4pm in the foyer of the K.C. Irving Environmental Sciences Centre and Harriet Irving Botanical Gardens. Nova Scotia Native Flora in Art is a regional show of members art work of the Botanical Artists of Nova Scotia Association (BANSA). It will feature Nova Scotia indigenous plants in small format works. It is part of a simultaneous worldwide art exhibition opening around the world on May 18, 2018.

**June 1 and 2, 2018.** - NSAGC Annual Meeting, Days Inn, Bridgewater. Program, registration form and other info on the NSAGC Website under Convention.

**June 16, 2018** - Halifax Garden Festival, Victoria Park, Halifax. 9am-4pm. <https://www.facebook.com/HalifaxGardenFestival/>

**July 14, 2018** - Champlain Garden Club Show and Tea, Annapolis Royal. More on time & place later.

**August 18, 2018** - Valley Gardener's Horticultural Show, Kingstec. Watch for the Show Schedule.

Please advise us if you know of upcoming events of interest.

## FLOWERS AND VEGGIES? WHY NOT? ALL PLANTS SHOULD BE FRIENDS.

I first realized flowers and veggies could be friends when I was pruning my rose bushes one spring. There, cuddled up to Fantin Latour, were the biggest shoots of asparagus I had ever seen. Did a passing bird drop a seed? I had tried to grow asparagus in my vegetable garden for years. I achieved grass riddled asparagus about the size of a lead pencil. That despite digging a trench, filling it with well composted manure and carefully spreading the roots of the crowns as directed by my handy Reader's Digest guide. They finally became part of my compost heap. But here, unattended, I had the most beautiful shoots. Not many. About enough for two servings. And the ferns wove their way through Fantin Latour to make the most beautiful flower arrangement in the

summer. They appreciated the mulch and compost with which I fed my roses and happily came back, to my delight, each year. Friends supporting each other in the garden.

If you don't have room for a veggie garden, you can make good use of empty spaces in the flower bed to grow the more attractive vegetables. You will have to prepare the spot you choose for vegetables just like any garden: dig in a 2 or 3 inch layer of compost on the spot, trying to disturb the roots of your flower plants as little as possible. Remember that most vegetables require full sun for at least 6 hours a day, so your shade garden is not a good place for most things. You will also have to provide water and consistent fertilization for the vegetables.

Swiss chard, either green or the more attractive ones with coloured stems, make a beautiful foliage in the flower beds as does curly and coloured kale. And as you never remove it completely, but judiciously pick leaves for cooking, it continues to stay attractive all summer long. Choose vegs that are not all picked at once so you don't leave big bare spaces. If you have room for a teepee type trellis runner beans give height and colour to the border. Put it near the front for easy harvesting. Bulls Blood beets have wonderful purple/red foliage and are small enough to plant in the front of the bed as edging. Pick the leaves for salads and harvest the beets in the fall. Peppers and eggplants have gorgeous flowers and foliage and will love the access to pollinators in the flower border. Give them pride of place for lots of sun, not crowded or shaded by other plants.

Don't give up on the large vegetables either. I have a round bed which has many spring bulbs in the middle of the yard. Usually I have to cover the fading foliage with annuals. But this year I am going to plant bush zucchini in the middle. It will stay green all year, have lovely flowers and hopefully a good supply of courgettes. I will plant a few sweet smelling alyssum around the edge to attract pollinators. It may not work, but I don't have room in my tiny veg spot to grow such large plants if I want anything else.

Soooo...give it a try. Never say you don't have room for a vegetable garden. If all else fails, there are always pots. I grew a consistent supply of scallions in a pot last year with seeds from Suttons especially for pot grown green onions. Suttons also has special "Windowsill Seeds" worth giving a try. I found mine at Blomidon Nurseries, although they may be available elsewhere as people stock their seeds.

## CLUB NEWS

You should have received the chart of Program events to stick on your fridge by now. It was sent out to those without e-mail under separate cover. I will bring a couple of extra printed copies to the April meeting in case some of you couldn't open it.

Debra Carey, District 5 representative, has begun meetings with the Old O and Acadia to choose a venue for the 2019 NSAGC Convention. Paul Despres, Philip Longmire and myself took part in the discussions. She will be looking for members from various district clubs who are willing to participate in committees to decide on the venue and other functions of running a convention.

**PLANT SALE INSTRUCTIONS:** Our one and only fund-raiser is coming up on May 12. The plant sale funds not only our speakers and philanthropic activities but the general costs of running the club. Please walk your garden when things start to come up and take note of those which need to be divided and shared. Mark them to dig up a couple of weeks before the sale. You can pot them or use the paper wrap method (as illustrated on our rather outdated website at

<http://www.valleygardeners.ca/events/TestPresentation04.pdf> ). The doors of the fire hall will open at 8:30 am to bring your donations. All plants should be at the fire hall before 9 am. Doors open to customers at 9:30 am.

Only good quality plants should be donated. No goutweed! or other invasive things. We want a reputation for having the best quality and assortment around. Don't bring huge clumps. Divide and wrap or pot. Label everything with name (common or botanical or both) sun or shade, height and colour if you know it.

You may bring perennials, herbs, shrubs, trees, alpines or rock garden plants, annual transplants of flowers or vegs, . There will be a white elephant table for quality gardening items or books.

Larry Marsters is coordinating the sale. Contact him at 902-681-5129 or [amarsters@ns.sympatico.ca](mailto:amarsters@ns.sympatico.ca) if you have questions or you would like to help on the day. He is counting on you all to make this a successful sale. We need to make over \$2,000 if possible. This was do-able last year so should be now, despite the competition.

**Provincial Gardening Week:** Starting in 2013 gardeners in Nova Scotia began to celebrate the first week in June as 'Provincial Gardening Week'. Let your executive know if you have an idea for something we can do as a club to celebrate it.

#### ON THE NET

**The man who demolished Shakespeare's house.** <http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-21587468>  
Sounds shockingly like what is happening in Nova Scotia to this very day.

**Fernwood Garden's new catalogue** is now online: [www.fernwoodplantnursery.ca](http://www.fernwoodplantnursery.ca). Lots of new ferns.

**Garden Making Magazine's newsletter** is at  
<https://mailchi.mp/gardenmaking/newsletter-mar-234473?e=fb16cd0cbb>

#### LEAVES

"It was a splendid landscape to which the first settlers came. The forest presented an overwhelming spectacle of teeming fresh beauty in the spring and flaming glory in the fall. But to those whose hopes and plans were based on its eventual destruction it was a formidable and frightening sight. The making of a small domestic garden in a clearing was a gesture of defiance. Little clumps of marigolds, a doorway shading vine and wispy wands of roses grown from treasured roots and seeds were promises that someday there would be a home" *From "At Home in Upper Canada" by Jeanne Minhinnick, Clarke Irwin & Co. Ltd. 1970.*

#### DID YOU KNOW

Backyard soils can lock in more planet-warming carbon emissions than soils found in native grasslands or urban forests like arboretums, according to Carly Ziter, a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

The results of her research, published Tuesday in the journal *Ecological Applications*, were something of a surprise, given that those of us who have yards generally don't think of them as "nature," or as especially beneficial to the environment. But at least in this case, the things we enjoy for ourselves are also helping the community at large.

The study showed that the soil in forest ecosystems was best at absorbing water. But soil on open and developed land — like golf courses and backyard lawns — was better at absorbing carbon.

### IN THE GARDEN

- As soon as the snow melts, don't forget to top dress your rhubarb with well rotted manure or compost. They are heavy feeders so do the same thing in the fall.
- Take a serious look at your spring display in the garden. Make notes about what should be moved and where new bulbs should be planted in the fall to fill in bare spaces. Take pictures. Put in marker stakes. It is amazing how easy it is to forget where things were in the spring when fall comes.
- Get rid of the roots of perennial weeds in the veg garden as soon as they show up. Cutting off the top just allows it to grow again.

### FROM THE GARDEN RECIPE BOX

#### **MARINATED RED CABBAGE**

Spring is almost here but in terms of seasonal vegetables the pickings are getting slim. The winter vegetables are getting a trifle soft and past their prime and only the lucky few have some mesclum sprouting on their windowsill.

This red cabbage coleslaw is particularly nice when you want to add a little colour to your menu, and is a money saver as a replacement for lettuce based salads in mid winter when the price of imported lettuce is high. In the summer, this salad makes a wonderful, safe picnic salad,.

The day before you plan to use this salad:

Place in large bowl:

4 cups finely shredded cabbage

1 large red onion, peeled and sliced thinly

1/4 cup white sugar

1/2 tsp salt

In a small saucepan combine and bring to a boil:

1/4 cup white wine vinegar

1/2 tsp dry mustard

2 Tbsp white sugar

1 1/2 tsp celery seed

Add to mixture in saucepan:

1/4 cup oil

Return to boil, remove from heat and immediately pour over cabbage mixture in the bowl.

Mix thoroughly.

**Chill overnight. Drain well before serving.**

Will keep refrigerated for up to one week.

### GOT NEWS???

Send to: Editor: Donna Crawford, [sparrowsong@eastlink.ca](mailto:sparrowsong@eastlink.ca).

Opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Valley Gardener's Club.

There are purposely no coloured pictures in the newsletters to allow for less expensive black and white printing.



The Valley Gardners is a member of the Nova Scotia Association of Garden Clubs.  
<http://www.nsagc.com>