



Brooklin-Whitby Garden Club Newsletter

Volume 24 Issue 2 May/Jun/Jul 2022

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BHS meets the 4th Wednesday of the month at 7:30 p.m. at the Brooklin United Church; except January, July and December. The November meeting is at St. Thomas Anglican Church.

Visit us on the web at:
www.brooklinwhitbygardenclub.ca
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Keeping Ontario Beautiful

Trees, A Wise Investment Wed May 25, 2022 7:30pm

Join us in person or via Zoom for a presentation by **Jeff McMann**, a recipient of the ISA Ontario Chapter Maple Leaf Award for his leadership and commitment in promoting and improving arboriculture and urban forestry for more than 10 years. Jeff is a graduate of the Niagara Parks School of Horticulture and he is an International Society of Arboriculture certified arborist. Jeff will talk about tree selection, pruning and maintenance of trees, benefits of trees, climate change and the LEAF programme.

All BWGC members will be sent a Zoom link prior to the presentation. The link will be available starting at 7:00pm. We hope you will attend in person to enjoy coffee/tea and treats - don't forget to lug-a-mug - as well as the spring flower show after the presentation.

The BWGC 100th Anniversary Red Oak planted at the northwest corner of Rotary Centennial Park, 800 Brock St South in Whitby. Later this spring a marker will be installed to identify our tree. Drop by and have a look.



BWGC Plant Sale

After 2 years of cancellations our Plant Sale is back! It will take place on **Saturday May 21** in a new location as Grass Park will be under construction. We will be in **the municipal parking lot opposite the Brooklin Library and Community Centre on Vipond Rd.** in Brooklin. The sale will be from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm

The success of the sale depends on the generosity of our members. Once again we are asking for donations of perennials, annuals, herbs etc. This is the perfect time to divide your plants and put some aside to donate to the plant sale. Some of our members no longer have gardens and choose to purchase a plant to donate to the sale. We gladly accept all plant donations.

Drop off of plants will be the evening of Friday May 20 from 6:00 to 8:00 pm at the Brooklin United Church. We would ask you to please identify the type of plant you are donating so it makes it easier to organize everything for the sale on Saturday.

We are hoping to have several vendors at the plant sale this year. All in all, we are expecting the plant sale to be as successful as our previous sales, perhaps even better! This is a major fundraiser for the Whitby Brooklin Garden Club and it's success depends on the support of our members. Donating plants, volunteering to help at the plant sale and of course coming to purchase plants on May 21 are all ways in which you can help! For more information contact **Paul Cloutier** at 905-665-9735.

President's Message



May and spring have finally arrived and the demands on our time each day seem to increase exponentially! Will we keep up? We do, but we also need to take time to enjoy the results of our energies. So take this Newsletter and your cup of tea, or other, and sit back with the beauty of your outdoors and your planning and execution, and refresh!

The BWGC is also very busy this time of year. We've participated in a District 17 (Durham) Club Presidents' meeting, and the D17 Annual General Meeting, both in person. We've resumed our monthly General Meetings at the Brooklin United Church, getting ourselves reorganized in all the finer details. We have a Rain Barrel Sale ongoing, and we resume our Plant Sale later in May.

Brooklin United Church has been a staunch ally for many decades, but especially now as we resume a level of normalcy with our meetings. Their technology has allowed us to provide a hybrid session, with live presentations by BWGC at the Church, yet with on-line speaker webinar capability shared with Whitby in Bloom and our members choosing to remain at home. Years from now we may look back at these days as an experiment, or we look at it as an early execution of a more sophisticated future.

BWGC is working to develop a Civic Beautification project in a more southerly part of Whitby, and I'll provide more details as they solidify. What is important is that we find opportunities across the full Brooklin and Whitby areas to support, and offer a chance for members closer to those areas to participate in CB projects.

The Plant Sale is coming up May 21st, and we need everyone to consider what they can contribute, especially in plant material, to offer for sale. We'll be stationed in the Municipal Parking lot across from the Post Office in Brooklin for our sale, but have other drop-off options available. See the Plant sale article in this edition of the newsletter.

Finally, don't forget to renew your membership, and on the form, indicate areas where you may be able to assist the BWGC in the execution of our projects, our meetings, or our Club elements. We have Facebook and Website pages that are looking for assistance, and we can always use more help at the meetings, and especially at the Brooklin Horticultural Society Park gardens.

Enjoy this edition, one of the best prepared across the District, and remember to take some time to appreciate what you have done, or can do!

Hans Paats

Brooklin Horticultural Society Park

Rumour has it the ground will be thawed and the air will be slightly warmer by May 24 weekend. Of course that may just be effects of all the hot air from our politicians in the run-up to the June election. Nevertheless, we are planning on getting **back into the Garden on Saturday May 7 from 10:00am till 12:00**. The first 2-3 sessions will be for cleanup, and hopefully by the end of the month we will have planting in our schedule. We are planning to split up some of the gardens' perennials and either relocate them in the garden, or maybe even pot some up and make them available for sale to our neighbours in the area (and of course our members). More info will become available as the plans evolve. We have some new trees in the Park, planted by our friends at the Town of Whitby. So we will be giving a greater amount of attention to the nurturing of the new and existing trees. Maybe with some of our TLC, we can get them all to thrive and enhance the area as planned.

MARK IT ON YOUR CALENDAR. Come out and volunteer at the Garden. You don't have to commit to every week, but we sure would like a bit of your time. We can adapt the tasks to suit your abilities. ***Many hands make light work!!!***

BENEFITS? Fresh air, exercise, get to know interesting people, exchange gardening tips and knowledge, help the environment, and bask in the glow of appreciation from the community. ***What's not to like?????***

Gardening sessions - through May, likely Saturdays, 10am-12 noon until evenings get a little warmer, THEN Thursdays, 6pm - 8:00pm until Fall, when we go back to Saturdays. ALL ARE WELCOME!! Come and reap the BENEFITS noted above. Email bgower@durham.net to get on the volunteer list.

Brian Gower



Wounded Warriors Park of Reflection

As the 2022 growing season begins, the team of volunteers at the Park of Reflection is excited to get things started! We are changing our gardening day from Mondays to Wednesdays to ensure every member of our team can attend.

This year the Wounded Warriors of Canada representatives have asked us to plant some red roses to complement the white ones already growing in the beds. Red drift roses from Sheridan Nurseries have been ordered and will be planted in the coming weeks.

The Town of Whitby will be rejuvenating a bed in Cullen Park that we are responsible for by replacing some overgrown junipers with a ground cover sedum at our request, for easy maintenance. They will also be trimming down the dogwood hedges behind the wall circling the monument of the Park of Reflection.

The team would welcome any new volunteers interested in joining us. We will be meeting on **Wednesday mornings from 9am to 10am** starting April 20, 2022. Contact me if you are interested in joining us: rahe.richards@yahoo.com

Rahe Richards

Oshawa Peony Festival

The **18th Annual Oshawa Peony Festival** will be held **June 11&12, 2022** at the **Oshawa Valley Botanical Gardens, 155 Arena St, Oshawa, open 10am to 4pm both days**. There will be a judged flower show, photo and art competitions, artisans, and food vendors. **Parking and admission are free**. Come to the gardens anytime in June to see early, middle and late blooms. For more information and details of the peony show schedule, visit <https://www.oshawa.ca/things-to-do/peony-festival.asp>.



BROOKLIN-WHITBY GARDEN CLUB

presents our annual

Rain Barrel Sale

Conserve water!

Save money!



On-line sales: rainbarrel.ca/BrooklinWhitby

- Delivery to your home in Brooklin, Whitby or Oshawa
- helpful instructions and how-to-install videos at www.rainbarrel.ca
- sales portal open from March 22 to May 9
- sales benefit our local garden club (the BWGC)
- questions? Email Mary Thompson, BWGC: secretarybwgc@gmail.com

Upcoming 2022 BWGC Speakers

May 25 - in conjunction with Whitby in Blooms, BWGC welcomes **Jeff McMann**. Jeff is an International Society of Arboriculture certified arborist who will be presenting "Trees, a Wise Investment". With over 40 years of arborist experience, Jeff will share his vast knowledge of trees and make some wonderful suggestions for our gardens.

June 8 - **Ms Emma Biggs** is a 16 year old gardener from Toronto with a passion for growing tomatoes! BWGC welcomes Emma back as a guest speaker who will present "All About Tomatoes" to our membership. We look forward to this fun and informative presentation!

June 22 - our garden club welcomes **Christine Gill** who is a delphinium enthusiast! Christine is a member of the Ontario Delphinium Club and she will share with us many of the secrets to success in growing these tall showy perennials!

BWGC Members' Gardens Visits

This season the BWGC show committee will organize informal members' garden tours. This has been a very popular activity in the past and it is a great opportunity for members to get to know each other, to share garden knowledge and to show off a little bit. The garden visits will occur on a Sunday once a month from June to Sept. The first tour will occur on Sun June 26 from 10am to 2pm. An email will be sent out to all members with the location of the gardens. If you're interested in helping to organize these tours, send me (Sherry Howard) an email at: howard21@rogers.com.



Spring Ephemerals

If You Go Out in the Woods Today...

You're sure of a big surprise. No, you probably won't see any teddy bears and it is too chilly for picnics, but there are wonderful surprises and delights to be discovered in our Ontario woodlands in the spring. I'm talking about the ephemeral blooms that are on view for a short time each spring before the tree canopy shades the woodland floors. They are a true harbinger of spring and the variety and beauty of these flowers are not to be missed if you are looking to verify that spring has finally arrived and sunnier, warmer days are ahead. So what are ephemerals and what types of flowering perennials qualify as ephemeral?

The term ephemeral is defined as something that is short-lived, and refers to plants that grow, bloom and die in a few weeks. The reason for their short-lived beauty is due to the fact that these plants grow and flower before the trees produce leaves in the spring. They require the sun to grow and bloom, but once the trees in a wooded area have grown, the sun is no longer available to these plants and, like magic, they disappear until next spring. This means (depending on what zone you are in), the best time to see these ephemerals is early spring, from mid April into May. But once the leaves have created a beautiful canopy, they will quickly disappear.

Some of the lovely ephemerals you can look for include Bloodroot, Trout Lily, Jack-in-the Pulpit, Lady Slipper, Sharp-lobed Hepatica, Mayapple, Spring Beauty, Striped Squill, Wood Anemone, and Dutchman's Breeches. However, the most familiar spring ephemeral in Ontario is our provincial flower, the White Trillium (*Trillium grandiflorum*). If you are lucky, you might also spot one of the other Trilliums that grow in Ontario, including Red Trillium and Painted Trillium. One word of caution, however, these plants are well acclimatized to their woodland setting. It is best not to disturb them by transplanting and you should not pick the flowers as this can damage the plant, causing them to die off or not to rebloom for several years. This is because taking the bloom will cause the plants to struggle to maintain enough energy to sustain them into the next spring. So if you are out on a ramble in the woods be sure to take your camera and you can capture some of these spring beauties to look at and enjoy in those cold winter months. If you do want to add some to your home garden you can acquire some species at garden centres that specialize in native plants.

One other note of caution, please do not transplant Siberian Squill, *Scilla siberica* (not to be confused with Striped Squill, *Puschkinia scilloides*), which is that pretty purple flower that you can see growing in swathes along ravines and in wooded areas in Ontario. It is pretty to look at but highly invasive and if you add it to your garden you may be setting yourself up for future headaches. It can easily spread into your lawns and is hard to control. In nature it can crowd out our other beautiful woodland ephemerals. We all want to do our part to ensure the survival of our own spring native species.

I hope you find some time this spring for a ramble in the woods. Let me know if do you see any teddy bears having a picnic amid the ephemerals.

Mary Kadey

Clockwise from top left:
Bloodroot, Trout lily, Jack-In-The-Pulpit, Red Trillium, *Scilla Siberica*, Marsh Marigold, Carolina Beauty, Dutchman's Breeches.

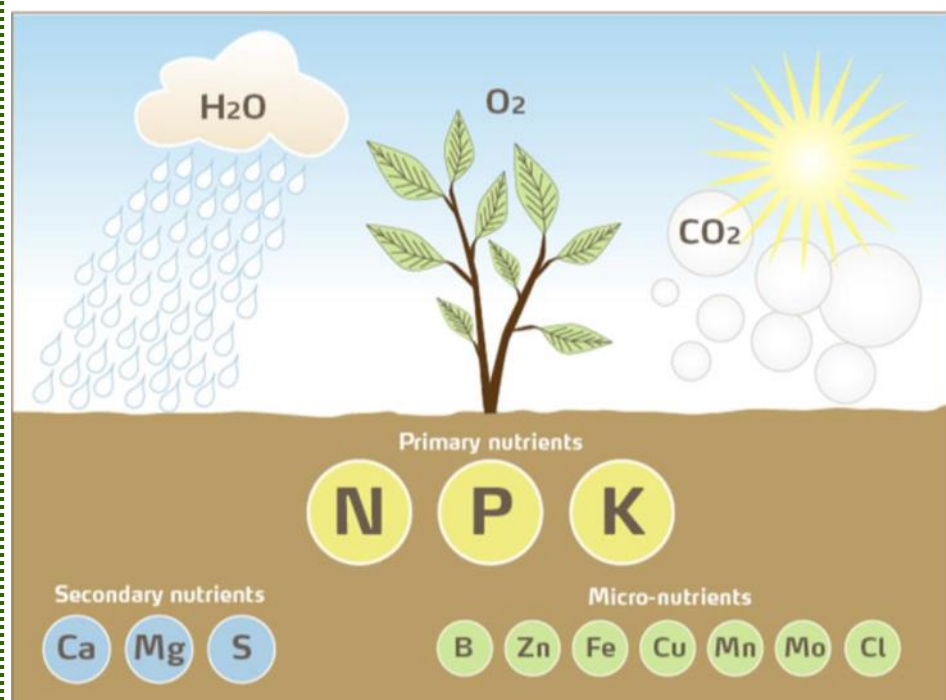


It all Starts with your Soil – Understanding Soil Fertility

This is the 2nd of two articles on how to create healthy soil and understanding what makes up fertile soil by Ingrid Janssen. The first article, 'It All Starts With Your Soil - Tips for Great Gardening' was featured in the Feb 2022 BWGC newsletter.

In the first instalment on soil, we talked about building healthy soil. This time we will focus on soil fertility and plant nutrients. Soil fertility is the ability of soil to supply plants with the essential nutrients they need for plant growth and reproduction. Three elements which are essential to plant growth - carbon, hydrogen and oxygen - are supplied by air and water. The other essential elements which are referred to as plant nutrients are provided by the soil or are added as fertilizers and are taken up by plants through their root systems. In order to grow and thrive, plants need a combination of both macro and micronutrients. The macronutrients are the nutrients that plants need in highest quantities and include nitrogen(**N**), phosphorus(**P**) and potassium(**K**), as well as calcium(**Ca**), magnesium(**Mg**) and sulfur(**S**). Micronutrients, which are required in much smaller amounts, include boron(**B**), zinc(**Zn**), iron(**Fe**), copper(**Cu**), manganese(**Mn**), molybdenum(**Mo**), and chlorine(**Cl**).

Each nutrient plays a specific role in plant growth. Nitrogen, for example, is a component of chlorophyll, amino acids, proteins, DNA and many plant hormones. It plays a vital role in all aspects of plant growth and development and plants need large amounts of nitrogen to grow well. In contrast, plants require only a tiny amount of molybdenum, which is involved in the functioning of a few plant enzymes. Molybdenum is still an essential nutrient and plant growth can be disrupted if it is deficient.



The labels on fertilizer packages show the amount of the three primary nutrients contained in the fertilizer expressed as a percentage of total weight. **N**itrogen is always listed first, **P**hosphorus second and **K**potassium third. A balanced 10-10-10 fertilizer is made up of 10% nitrogen, 10% phosphorus and 10% potassium. Balanced fertilizers are great for annuals and potted plants as well as houseplants while lawn fertilizers are usually higher in nitrogen – 12-4-8 for example. The fertilizer package will also carry instructions on the use of the fertilizer, how much to apply to certain plants and how often.

Organic fertilizers include compost, aged manure, bone meal, blood meal, fish emulsion or seaweed emulsion. Organic fertilizers can also be grown by planting a legume cover crop or green manure which is tilled into the soil. Inorganic

fertilizer products are extracted from natural sources but highly processed and are available from most garden centres and large retailers, either as single nutrients or multi-nutrient fertilizers and are either slow-release or water soluble. Slow-release fertilizers provide the nutrients over a period of time as they break down or decompose while soluble fertilizers are fast-release and are usually dissolved in water and then irrigated onto the plants. Slow-release fertilizers are ideal for broadcasting over large areas such as lawns or adding to the soil in the root zones of specimen trees and plants or incorporating into soil amendments in vegetable gardens in spring, while water soluble fertilizers are great for container gardens, smaller vegetable gardens and houseplants. The best time to fertilize most ornamental landscape plants – trees, shrubs and herbaceous perennials – is in the spring. Fertilizing later in the growing season can lead to a new flush of growth that does not adequately harden off before winter. More is not always necessarily better, especially in the case of fertilizer. Certain nutrients such as phosphorus can actually build up in the soil and create toxicity for plants, create excess salinity in the soil or leach into nearby waterways such as creeks. The best way to know what nutrients your soil is deficient in is to test your soil. There are home soil test kits available or you can send a soil sample to an accredited soil testing laboratory. The key to applying fertilizers is to meet plant needs without creating excesses that can harm the plants or the environment

Ingrid Janssen

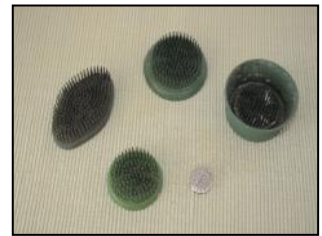
Greening Designs – Saying Good-bye to Green Floral Foam

Effects of everyday materials on the environment has become a primary focus of scientific research. Recent studies have revealed that the green floral foam (aka Oasis block) used in floral designs deteriorates into microplastics, which contaminate water and are harmful to aquatic animals. The dust from this phenol formaldehyde can also be an irritant to the respiratory tract. In response to this information, many of the top ranked floral design competitions are banning the use of green floral foam. So, what is a designer to do?

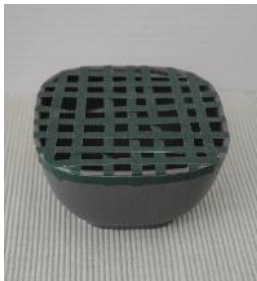
Happily, there are a variety of readily available alternatives and solutions are endless if you let your imagination guide you. There is also a new, environmentally friendly product that is intended to be an Oasis foam replacement.

It is important to remember that unless they are part of the design, any mechanics that you use in your design should be “invisible” to the viewer.

When creating your design, you are looking for a way to provide water and support for the floral material. The plastic or glass tubes provide both, but the amount of water is limited. Kanzans or pin holders may be designed to hold water in addition to providing support but most are often used with a container.



Left to right: Tubes – glass or plastic, Kanzans or Pin Holders



Left to right: Tape grid, Frogs, Chicken wire cushion

The tape grid and the frogs provide support while their associated containers provide the water. Chicken wire can be made into a single cushion and concealed in a container or coloured varieties can be incorporated into the design.

The upright twigs shown in the container, (in this case dogwood) could be part of the design and perhaps even continued above the water line. The vines, glass beads and the sculpted wire would be considered part of the design.



Left to right: Upright twigs, Vines, Glass beads or gel, sculpted wires and tubes



Agra-wool

If you would prefer to use something more like the green floral foam, Agra-wool (a registered mineral wool under the name Sideau) is a new product and it behaves just like the oasis block. It is 97% basalt particles held together with a sucrose glue and is considered totally biodegradable. Oasis has a product too but it is considered to be only 75% biodegradable.

Debi Foster

References:

Feldmann, Rita (Nov 27, 2019) [Flowers Magazine - Floral Foam – the impact on our environment](https://flowersmagazine.com.au/2019/11/27/floral-foam/) <https://flowersmagazine.com.au/2019/11/27/floral-foam/>

Design Competitions In Acknowledgement Of Our 100th Anniversary

The celebrations continue!! In each of the **Rose Show on June 22** and the **Autumn Show on Sept 28**, the show committee has included a special design class as a nod to our 100th anniversary which occurred in 2021. A special prize will be awarded to the 1st place winners of each class. For the Rose show, BWGC members are invited to form a small group of up to 3 members to create a **Pot-et-Fleur** titled **"Celebration"**. If you've never entered a design before, here's an opportunity to join a small group and learn while having fun. Contact Show Committee member Debi Foster if you're looking for a group to join. In the Autumn Show, individuals are invited to create a **Table Segment** titled **"100th Anniversary Dinner"** - if you have ever hosted a party then you definitely have the skills for this class. Definitions of the designs are described in the Definition of Terms in the yearbook. Join us at upcoming meetings for sample displays and 'how to' presentations.

It's Show Time

We look forward to entries from your garden for the upcoming shows: Spring Show on May 25, Iris and Peony Show on June 8, and Rose Show on June 22. Here are some tips to prepare you and remember, **all entries must be in place by 7:15pm.**

1) Conditioning Lilacs:

- Pick stems with blooms about half open, early AM for evening use or late afternoon/evening for next morning
- If large stem, hit bottom of stem hard with hammer on hard surface OR remove bark with sharp knife about 2-3 inches from bottom and split bark up center
- Plunge stem into container of HOT water up to its neck under water - caution, hot water will brown petals
- Leave in a cool dark place until ready to use
- Re-cut stem on a sharp diagonal to approx. size and groom before using



French Hybrid Lilac - *Syringa vulgaris* 'Sensation'

2) Displaying Fruits and Vegetables

- Vegetables must be shown on a plate or other container appropriate to their size and type.
- When more than one specimen is specified in a class, select specimens that are uniform in size and shape.
- Always groom.

3) N.I.P. – Name If Possible - If two specimens show equally, the judge will give preference to the one named on the entry tag. Remember, shows provide educational value too.

4) Groom, Groom, Groom! Above all, **Have FUN!**

Make a Pot-et-Fleur for the June 22 Rose Show

"Go out on a limb" with Floral design! The Show Committee would like to encourage you and a couple of your friends to let your creative juices flow this spring and design a 'Pot-et-Fleur' arrangement for the June 22, 2022 meeting and Show. This will be the first time that this special design class has been included in the Show schedule and we are looking forward to seeing lots of entries! Pot-et-fleur is a Victorian inspired flower arrangement that combines a potted plant or plants and fresh cut flowers in one large decorative container. The potted plant can be a favourite house plant and is often placed in the middle of the arrangement. Cut flowers are then placed around the potted plant in small vases within the larger container. Cut foliage is not permitted but the addition of flowering and/or fruited branches may be used. Mosses, decorative wood and/or rocks are also permitted to complement the arrangement. Many creative pot-et-fleur arrangements can be viewed on the internet for inspiration! The Show Committee plans to do a demonstration of this new design class at May 25th meeting in the hopes of inspiring many members to participate! So we hope you will connect with a creative gardening friend or two and start planning your beautiful Pot-et-fleur entry!

Barb Panowyk



This Pot-Et-Fleur includes: *Sansevieria*, pansies and hosta in soil with cut narcissus, tulips and virburnum branches.

BWGC Members Get Gardening!!



BWGC Members Get Gardening!! cont'd



About the BHS Newsletter

This newsletter is published quarterly - February, May, August and October. **All photos courtesy of BHS members.** You are invited to submit articles, questions and comments about the newsletter to the **Editors: Sherry Howard** at 905-668-7640, howard21@rogers.com, **Mary Kadey** at 416-388-0065, memkadey@gmail.com, **Barb Panowyk** at 905-430-2939, bpanowyk@rogers.com.