

Armstrong & District Garden Club



Welcome! While we are staying close to home and reducing the spread of COVID—19, we will not be holding meetings in person until further notice. This newsletter shows that we can still share our stories and love of gardening! And enjoy gardening in our own yards!

Executive 2021

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Glenn Gytenbeek

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Paul Peacock

Secretary (Interim):

Carolyn Farris

Treasurer:

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Mary Jackson

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In this issue:

P. 2– 6 Plant Sale Results and Photos

P. 7 Membership Profile

P. 8 Local Nurseries

P. 9—10 Garden Q and A

P. 11 Garden Tasks for May

P. 12 Plant of the Month

P. 13 Warm Up Exercises for Gardening

P. 14 Recipe of the Month

P. 15 Events & Announcements



Preparing for the Plant Sale:

There's a lot of work behind the scenes prior to the Annual Plant Sale. Members pot up their plants for sale in the fall or spring and nurture them until the sale. Other members grow plants from seeds and prepare them for sale—like the tomatoes Heather H. brought. It takes a community to make this event happen and we're grateful for so many in the club that contributed their plants.



The hybrid daylilies that we sold at the sale were generously donated by Bob Raymond. His plants were split and re-potted into 134 pots by Glenn, Judi, Gene and Mary J. With the help of coloured photos, we were able to sell them all!



Our Annual Plant Sale:

A massive THANK YOU to everybody who contributed in so many ways to the plant sale. It was great to see everyone again, and meet new members in such a fun atmosphere.

Definitely a team effort today, has made our 2021 plant sale 2021 a humongous success. Well done!!

Thank you all! Glenn



Plant Sale 2021:



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Plant Sale 2021:



Thank you to Val at Black Diamond Soil who generously donated 2 pallets. Thanks to Carolyn and John who picked up and delivered the soil.



Thanks to our student volunteer, Mary, who worked tirelessly throughout the sale—delivering soil, cashing and washing tables and price tags!



Happy customers!! Great garden stakes—thanks to Heather H. for providing them to the sale!



All that was left...WOW!!! What a sellout!



Member Profile: Mary Paradis

Member Name: Mary Paradis

A bit about myself: My husband and I moved to central Armstrong three years ago. Prior to that I lived in the Rockies, the Kootenays, and the coast. When I'm not gardening or skiing at Sovereign Lake I work for the Certified Organic Associations of BC in Vernon.

Gardening interest: Everything about plants! Food, flowers and medicine, building & maintaining healthy soils, planting for bio-diversity, garden design.

Why I joined the Garden Club: To meet local gardeners, learn and share, and contribute to the community.

Demonstrations or information you can share with other Club members: I've started a lot of gardens from bare lawns, using the sheet mulch or 'lasagna' method.

My Favourite Plant: (such a hard question!)

Name: **Lady's Mantle**

Latin Name: **Alchemilla Mollis**

Description: (height, width environment, etc): Lady's mantle is a versatile perennial that makes a lovely border or filler plant, especially when planted in groups. 12 – 18 inches tall and can get as wide as 24 inches; grows in full sun or part shade and is not fussy about soil.

What I like about it: Grows almost anywhere, and the leaves are a pretty shade of grey-green that compliments lots of different flower colours. The delicate lime green flower sprays last a long time and look fantastic in bouquets. And I love how the scalloped leaves hold dew and raindrops!



An Update from Heather F. on our local Garden Centres:

While I have been up to my elbows weeding and keeping the hummingbird feeder filled, a recent visit to two local nurseries was proof that 'spring has sprung' and life was more than weeds and brewing sugar water!

Armstrong Home Hardware Outdoor Store [Downtown Armstrong] was hopping with activity the morning I visited. Staff were busy restocking seed racks and rolling out spring and summer merchandise. A steady stream of customers were snapping up the flower and veggie seedlings along with looking at the bigger ticket items.

Apparently, shopping patterns have changed due to the current health directives. The focus has shifted from purchasing seeds and seedlings for garden borders to completely redoing outdoor spaces so folks can enjoy the good weather in their backyards! Lawn furniture and accessories are particularly popular as are hanging baskets, a shift away from the focus on vegetable gardens.

The Store has a great selection of indoor succulents. I was told they do well outdoors in the warm weather and are good house guests when the temperatures cool in the fall.

However, the store is stocking lots of seedlings for local gardens. Both vegetable and flower seedlings, too numerous to mention as the selection is so broad, are replenished as often as necessary by a local grower. The Store likes to support local business as it is "good for all of us".

Two parting thoughts: "**Yellow**" is **the** colour this garden season. **Use slow release fertilizers** as they are activated as the soil warms and your plants are able to use them!

Blue Mountain Nursery [1871 Pleasant Valley Road] had a full parking lot when I arrived and it was only 11 am.

The greenhouses were very busy with both workers watering and replenishing stock while folks were making purchases for their flower and vegetable gardens.

What a variety of nursery stock – which is also procured from local growers from Kelowna, Vernon and Revelstoke. Blue Mountain has a great selection of trees and shrubs, both ornamental and fruit; flowers – annuals and perennials and of course, starter vegetables of many varieties! There is probably much more but I was bedazzled by all the colours of the geraniums and super petunias.

I did inquire about the any outstanding fruits or vegetables. Apparently **cherry tomatoes** continue to be a favourite although no specific varieties were named, along with **Jewell cucumbers**. This prolific cucumber variety grows quickly and is ready to eat at the perfect size of 6 inches. Of course, they are delicious!



ADGC members get a 10 % discount from Blue Mountain Nursery and a 15% discount on plants from Shepherds Garden Centre—another benefit of membership!!

Question and Answer: What is the difference between June bearing and Everbearing Strawberries?

Strawberries are classified as June bearing or everbearers. June bearing strawberries form flower buds in the fall as the day length decreases. Everbearing strawberries begin bearing at the same time as June bearers. The difference is everbearers will continue to produce berries throughout summer and into fall.

Established in Garden

Spaced 18 to 20 inches apart, different strawberry varieties planted in a garden allow you to take advantage of the spreading runners. As these daughter plants populate the soil, you gain more fruiting chances. It is important, however, that you prune away any runners that begin to overtake other strawberry plants which do not spread, like everbearing types. Runner foliage easily shades other plants and compromises their growing abilities.

History of Planting Area

Although your various strawberry varieties grow in harmony together, the planting area must not have a recent history of growing nightshade plants. The Solanaceae family, including peppers, eggplants and tomatoes, may leave verticillium wilt disease in the soil. This disease decimates strawberry plants, so it is best to choose a gardening area that has been free from nightshade plants for at least 3 years to prevent any contamination.

Care of your Strawberries

Water the strawberries when the top 1 to 2 inches of soil becomes dry, or when less than 1 inch of rain falls in a week. Apply 1 inch of water from a garden hose. Water the plants during the late morning or early afternoon to allow time for their leaves to dry before nightfall. Keep the soil consistently moist, but never soggy, preventing the plants from experiencing any periods of dryness.

Fertilize the strawberries with a 10-10-10 nitrogen, phosphorous, potassium slow-release granular fertilizer in the spring, just after new, active growth begins. Apply the fertilizer at a rate of 1 tablespoon per square foot of soil. Broadcast the granules on either side of the plants, 3 inches away from their centers. Rake the fertilizer into the top 3 inches of soil. Water the area thoroughly. Apply the fertilizer again after harvest.

Prune off runners, or long side shoots, beginning in the spring as the plants produce new growth. Use pruning shears to cut through the base of the runners, 1/4 inch above the point where they emerge from the main plant. Remove all runners once per week until after harvest is complete. Pull weeds from the soil around the strawberry plants to reduce competition for nutrients and water. Use a rake to spread a 1- to 2-inch-deep layer of mulch around the plants to reduce future weed growth and slow soil moisture evaporation. Keep the mulch 2 to 4 inches away from the plant stems to allow adequate air circulation.

Q & A contd: What is the difference between June bearing and Everbearing Strawberries?**Care of your Strawberries Contd.**

Check the plants weekly, and pull any new weeds.

Harvest ripe strawberries to encourage unripe or newly set berries to grow bigger.

Check the plants every other day, picking all mature, fully red berries. Pick any damaged, weak or rotting berries from the plants at the same time, to divert the plant's energy to the developing, healthy berries.

Replace the strawberry plants with new starts every three to five years, as their growth and fruiting begin to wane. Plant individual starts with their crowns just above soil level, 14 to 18 inches apart. Space rows 24 to 30 inches apart.



June Bearing "Wendy"



Everbearing "Eversweet"



Everbearing "Quinauet".



June Bearing "Honeoye"

Garden Tasks for May: (Source: <https://www.almanac.com/gardening/tips#>)

- Fertilize your rhododendrons and azaleas with an acid-based fertilizer if needed.
- If soil temperature is above 70 degrees, you can now plant eggplants, melons, tomatoes, squash, and peppers.
- Manage weeds while they are small and still growing.
- Watch out for pests in the garden. Trap moles and gophers as new mounds appear.
- Check your plants for any insects, such as aphids, cabbageworms, black beetles, and root maggots and control as needed. (See our Pest pages for advice.)
- When the soil is warm, apply a layer of mulch around your plants as long as there are no weeds. Mulch discourages weeds and helps to conserve moisture.
- Continue to mow your lawn regularly. If you use any lawn food, be sure to keep it away from your plants.
- Lay soaker hoses or drip lines on garden beds to conserve water.
- Plant bedding flowers in moist soil and remember to keep them well watered.
- Prune your flower shrubs after they have finished blooming—azaleas, forsythia, lilacs, and rhododendrons. You can also prune evergreens once new growth appears.
- Fertilize your roses and check for diseases; treat if needed.
- Cut back spring-blooming perennials to about 3 inches in height after they finish blooming. Sow more perennial seeds and set out new perennial plants.
- Plant dahlias, gladioli, and tuberous begonias.
- You can sow annual seeds now, such as calendula, cosmos, and sweet peas.



Plant of the Month: Companion Plants for Peonies

(Source: <https://homeguides.sfgate.com/what-flowers-grow-in-the-month-of-may-13404312.html>, by Caryn Anderson)

Peonies brighten the early and mid-spring landscape with their showy, large, fragrant flowers. When planning your garden, select a bright, sunny spot to place your peonies and choose beneficial, companion plants to grow alongside them. Seek out attractive additions to your peonies' planting area. Such plants should grow in similar conditions and extend the bloom time of your garden, camouflaging dying blooms and adding color to the planting area once peonies die.

Showy Perennials

Crape myrtles also like full sun and well-drained soil. The plants grow from 3 to 25 feet tall, depending on the variety, and can add a little light shade to peonies growing in warmer climates. Blooms add pink, white, purple or red color to the landscape on this long-blooming tree, flowering from mid-summer through fall.

Daffodils have characteristic trumpet-shaped flowers that bloom dependably every spring on plants that range from 6 to 20 inches tall. Bloom times and colors vary depending on the variety that is planted. Flower colors include white, yellow, pink or salmon.

Evergreen Perennials

Camellias bloom on evergreen shrubs that can help provide structural support for peonies. Some varieties bloom early, and others bloom late into the growing season. Staggering varieties of camellia with your peonies can extend bloom time in the garden by providing season-long color in addition to their shiny, green leaves. Plant them in well-drained, nutrient-rich soil.

The long-lasting white flowers and glossy, evergreen foliage on Nandina plants make them an attractive companion for peonies. The small shrubs have green foliage that changes to a reddish-purple during the fall, adding autumn color to your landscape. They are resistant to deer, drought and rabbits.

Later-Blooming Perennials

You'll want bright color to fill the planting area after your peonies stop blooming. Yarrow blooms from mid-summer until fall, with flowers in shades of yellow, salmon, red and pink. These perennials grow up to 4 feet tall with fern-like leaves. Yarrow is low-maintenance and can tolerate moderate drought.

Iris plants bloom in early to late spring before going dormant through the summer and blooming again in fall. The size of your iris depends on the variety that you plant. Some grow only a few inches tall, while others can reach heights of 4 feet. Flowers bloom in colors ranging from white to almost black, with nearly every color combination available.

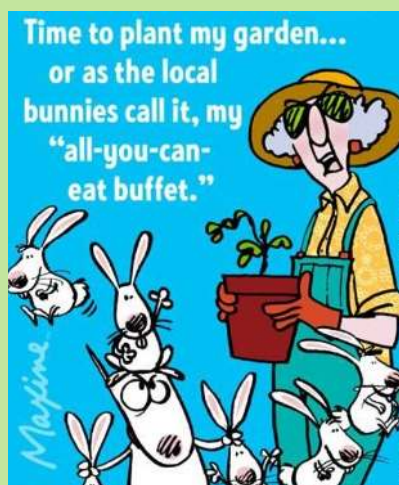
Warm Up Exercises for Gardeners:

Although gardening is often cited as a relaxing pastime, it can still put quite a bit of strain on the body and leave you with a few aches and pains the day after.

To help minimise this, here are some tips to help your favourite hobby stay as relaxing and pain-free as possible.

Source: <https://www.housebeautiful.com/uk/garden/a1857/gardening-warm-up-exercise/>

1. Warm up to gardening: It's important to stretch and warm-up before carrying out any tasks.
2. Hydrate and feel great: It's not just plants that need water in the garden so keep hydrated.
3. Gardening is good for your mind, body & soul: Watching wildlife in the garden is a great way to de-stress, relax and unwind.

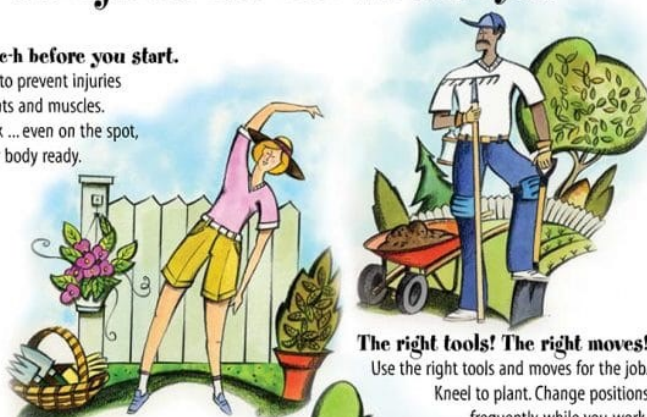


Plant and Rake Without the Ache

Smart tips to avoid sore joints, aching muscles and injuries. Your back will thank you!

Stretch before you start.

Loosen up to prevent injuries in your joints and muscles. Take a walk ... even on the spot, to get your body ready.



The right tools! The right moves!

Use the right tools and moves for the job. Kneel to plant. Change positions frequently while you work.

Bend your knees to lift with ease

When lifting, keep your back straight and bend your knees. Always carry the load close to your body and avoid twisting.



Take a break so you won't ache.

Give yourself and your back a break. As a rule-of-thumb take a brief rest or stretch break at least three times each hour. Drink fluids frequently.



Ontario Chiropractic Association
Association Chiropratique de l'Ontario
1-877-327-2273

For free tips sheets
go to the OCA web site
www.chiropractic.on.ca

Chiropractic.
Treatment that stands up.

Recipe: Courtesy of Sue L.

Try this pickled rhubarb as a Chutney with meats.

Pickled Rhubarb

12 ounces rhubarb

1 1/4 cups of distilled white vinegar

1 1/4 teaspoons kosher salt

1/3 cup sugar

1/2 teaspoon whole black peppercorns

1 star-anise pod

3 cloves of garlic, smashed and peeled



Remove rhubarb peel in alternating 1/2 inch strips (creating stripes). Cut rhubarb into 4 - by- 3/4 inch pieces. (if thick, halve or quarter lengthwise, then cut into 4 inch pieces).

In a saucepan, bring vinegar, sugar, 1/3 cup water, salt, peppercorns, and star anise to a boil. Fill heatproof quart jar with the rhubarb and garlic. Pour boiling liquid in to cover.

Let cool completely, then cover and refrigerate at least 24 hours and up to 1 month.

ADGC FACEBOOK PAGE: Have you visited or “liked” our club’s Facebook page? Special thanks to Ken Barr who regularly adds interesting information and events to the page!
Visit: <https://www.facebook.com/ArmstrongandDistrictGardenClub/>

Upcoming Events:

No scheduled Garden Club meetings until further notice.

For gardening books, visit the Armstrong Museum Book Sale from Tuesday to Saturdays, 10 am to 4 pm.

Stay distant and healthy!

ADGC members are now eligible to receive 15% off regularly priced garden centre items and plants. Show your ADGC membership badge to the cashiers.



ADGC members are eligible to receive 10 % off plants at Swan Lake Market and Garden.

THANK YOU!

Thank you to this month's newsletter contributors—Heather F., Sue L., Glenn, Mary P, and co-editors Heather H. and Mary J.

ADGC members are eligible to receive a 10 % discount at Blue Mountain. Show your membership card before your purchase is made.



About ADGC:

The Armstrong and District Garden Club was established in 1927 and is an active, fun group with over 60 members. The club supports the community through donations, student bursaries, planting along PV Boulevard, and supporting initiatives such as Communities in Bloom.



Garden Exec: Front Row: Brenda, Glenn, Judi and Heather Back Row: Mary, Heather, Ken, Judy, Dianne and Paul