

A WORMS EYE VIEW
FERGUS & DISTRICT HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY
MARCH 2024



HAPPY SPRING!

March 27, 2024 Presenting Dr. John Reaume on Birds and Blossoms. Meeting starts at 7:30PM, doors open at 7 at the Fergus Legion.

Come early to check in and pay your **annual dues**, now at \$15/member, cash or cheque. We may also etransfer our payments to fergushorticulture@gmail.com, note name and details in the message box.

“Lug a mug” to partake of refreshments after the meeting.

April 24th, David Hobson on the Chelsea Flower Show.

Fergus & District Horticultural Society – March 27, 2024

President's message

Spring is trying to make an entrance. Mother Nature is always playing with us. A few weeks back I was ready to shine my golf clubs as many golf courses in the Toronto area opened their doors, but now, on the first day of spring, I look out the window at the snow as the northern wind whips through the trees and sends shivers through my spine and say “what was I thinking?”. But not to worry, spring is on its way.

To that end the District 7 Annual General Meeting is in the works. We encourage anyone that would like to go to let me know so we can confirm your attendance. If you need a ride, please let me know and we will find someone carpooling to the AGM. My email is presidentfdhs1857@gmail.com There are more details on the District 7 AGM in this newsletter.

We just finished our most successful Seedy Saturday on March 16. Attendance was double last year's show and by the looks of all the smiles on faces at the show, everyone enjoyed themselves. I could not believe the overwhelming size of the seed exchange tables. The tables were full of seed packets even at the end of the show so that told me many if not most people brought seeds for exchange. Our hats off to Fred Mallett, Jude Dowling and Sharon Leggett. They did a remarkable job organizing and hosting this event. If you haven't experienced our Seedy Saturday before I encourage you to take it in next year. It is a great show.

Up next is our plant sale. Time flies so quickly. I know the snow is on the ground but before you know it, April will be here and the committee and their volunteers will be in full swing for our plant sale in May. Think about your plant contributions to this year's plant sale. This is our one and only event to raise funds so if you can help with anything, it will be greatly appreciated.

That's all for now. Have a great day.

District 7 Spring Meeting & AGM 2024

April 13, 2024

9:30 am to 12:30

hosted by Clifford & District Horticultural Society

Clifford Community Hall

2 William Street N., Clifford

Speaker

Paul Judge

Town Landscape Coordinator for Minto

Plan to attend and plan to enter the Flower Show.

Advise Fergus Hort. President, Ken Johnston, if attending – he may advise of numbers for the hosting Society for set up purposes.

Morning coffee and mid-morning break provided.

***Each Society to bring a door prize value of approx. \$25**

District 7 Annual General Meeting & Flower Show - Saturday April 13th

The District 7 AGM will be held and hosted by the Clifford and

District Horticultural Society at the Clifford Community Hall, 2 William Street North, Clifford. \$10 per person. Registration desk opens at 8:30am. The speaker will be Paul Judge – Landscape

Coordinator for Minto. The new format of 9:30 – 12:30 will once again be followed as that seems to be favoured by all members.

Flower Show Schedule is as follows. We look forward to many beautiful entries. If you have never entered before, review the schedule and enter 1 item to get you started.

Flower show committee members are there to help.

Spring 2024 District 7 Flower Show - April 13, 2024

Clifford Community Centre, 2 William St. N. Clifford

- Entries must be placed from 8:30 - 9:15 a.m. Judging starts at 9:30 a.m.

Division 1 – Horticulture* Points- 1

1st-6, 2nd-4, 3rd -2 Prizes- 1

1st-\$5, 2nd- \$3, 3rd- \$2

Class 1. Hellebore - 1 bloom

Class 2. Any other Spring Flower - 1 stem/spray, named

Class 3. Flowering Branch** – max. 75 cm. (30") including container, named

Class 4. Any Plant Grown for Foliage** – named, 1 pot not to exceed 20 cm/ 8 in.

Class 5. Bedding Plants – cell pack, one cultivar, grown from seed, named (min. 4 plants)

Most Points in Horticulture- Prize donated by Guelph Township Horticultural Society - \$10.00

Division 2 - Design: Points- 1st-8, 2nd-6, 3rd -4 Prizes- 1st-\$7, 2nd- \$5, 3rd- \$3

Class 6. New Beginnings- a miniature design

Class 7. Reaching Out – a satellite design***

Class 8. Rivers Flowing – your interpretation

Class 9. Spring Magic - a small design

Class 10. Winter's Joy – a pot-et- fleur ****

Judge's Choice - Prize donated by Guelph Township Horticultural Society- \$10.00

* Two entries per class are permitted in Horticultural division only but must be from different cultivars. House plants and garden plants must have been cared for by exhibitor for at least three (3) months or have been grown from seed or a cutting by exhibitor. Judging in accordance with Ontario Judging and Exhibiting Standards, 2019. Substandard entries may not necessarily

receive a prize. If interested, please let Ken Johnston know at presidentfdhs1857@gmail.com to confirm your attendance.

Marj Dow turns 100!

May 8th was a special day as Marj Dow, long time member of the Society turned 100. Here she is showing off the card that she received from the Society – signed by many of the members sending her birthday wishes. Happy Gardening Marj! See the March 21st Wellington Advertiser for further coverage of her special day sent in by the Fergus Camera Club.



Jean Collier turns 97!

We are pleased to congratulate Jean Collier on her 97th birthday on March 19th. Gardening has been enjoyed by Jean for many years as she continues to live in her own home. We wish her all the best for another successful gardening season.



BEST BLOOMIN' PLANT SALE 2024

Well Spring is soon upon us, yes there is some more warmth in the sun as we can feel spring coming on. Planning for our plant sale has begun and we are excited to say that the Societies Best Bloomin' Plant sale will be on Saturday May 25 from 8 to 11 at the Stone House by the Sportsplex.

For new members to the society this is our one fundraiser of the year, so it is very important to our society.

We hope you will consider helping by donating plants or lending a hand with the potting up of plants. The potting up days will be Tuesday May 14, Friday May 17 and Monday May 21. The Friday May 24 will be for setting out plants and getting ready for the sale the next day. Mark your calendars now and start thinking if you have any plants to donate. At the April meeting we will have sign-up sheets available.

Michelle Goff



SEEDY SATURDAY 2024

A HUGE SUCCESS

A highly successful Centre Wellington Seedy Saturday was held on March 16th at the Wellington County Museum & Archives. Jointly organized by the Horticultural Societies of Fergus & District and Elora & Salem, this was the 5th event since its inception in 2017.

Seedy Saturday has grown in size and awareness over the years. This year saw 15 commercial vendors in attendance versus 9 in 2023. Plenty of promotion leading up to the event, along with pleasant spring-like weather on the day, led to a remarkable attendance of 583 visitors, which was double the turn-out from the previous year. The introduction of 3 live workshops no doubt also drew in visitors, with many commenting on the quality of the topics and materials presented. There were more free seeds than ever on the swap table, thanks to a generous donation of seeds from the Guelph Seed Library, and there were still plenty of seeds left over by the end of the day.

The organizers always try to make this a break-even event, with zero financial impact for either of the societies, and this was achieved thanks to a Community Impact Grant from the Township of Centre Wellington. Even so, the event could not go ahead without the tremendous support of the volunteers from both societies. Everyone did an excellent job of keeping visitors informed and made to feel welcomed. The vendors also had many good words to say about the support and helpfulness of our volunteers. Well done, everyone involved!



Planning for Seedy Saturday 2025 will begin very soon. The primary challenge will be to find a larger venue, as we have rapidly outgrown the space available to us at the museum. Stay tuned!

Don't Rush Spring Clean-Up

While this spring has been unseasonably mild, it is important to be patient when it comes to garden clean-up. Raking leaves and cutting down perennials and grasses too soon will remove important habitat for pollinators and other wildlife. Don't forget we often get snow in April and beneficial insects need shelter!

SPRING CLEAN-UP FOR YOUR GARDEN

As snow banks melt and the days are warmer, many of us are eager to get outside and kick off a new gardening season with a spring clean-up of the yard. Hard as it may be to resist the urge to head into your garden beds and borders to tidy up, there are good reasons to **BE PATIENT**, especially if you wish to support pollinators and other wildlife.

JUST WAIT!

Depending on the weather, wait until late April/early May to allow time for pollinators that have overwintered in your garden to emerge before raking up leaves and other plant material or cutting down stems.

After several consecutive days with temperatures of **10-15 °C**, most pollinators will have left their overwintering sites.

By waiting for warmer and drier weather, you will also avoid trampling and compacting wet soil.

LEAVE the LEAVES

Add valuable organic matter to the soil by leaving leaf litter and chopped up perennial stems on your beds.

In less visible corners of the yard, leave piles of brush/perennial stems/leaves as nesting sites for various insects, amphibians and small mammals.



S. Severinghaus

KEEP the STEMS

Leave, for as long as possible, standing stems that still hold seed heads from last season. These will continue to feed seed-eating birds during the spring.

When you cut down perennial stems, leave 8-10 inches standing to serve as nest sites for cavity-nesting bees and other insects. This dead material will soon be hidden by emerging new growth.



FILL the GAPS

Identify gaps in your plantings which could be filled with a plant that will extend the season of blooms for pollinators.

Remember that some perennials (such as Swamp and Butterfly Milkweeds) do not emerge until later in the season and can be damaged or mistakenly dug up during early season weeding or planting.