

SEEDERS AND WEEDERS NEWSLETTER MARCH 5 2024



Armstrong & District Garden Club

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FACEBOOK Ken Barr

EXECUTIVE

President - Carolyn Farris, 250-546-6083; cfarris@telus.net

Vice president - Vacant

Secretary – Vacant

Treasurer - Sue Wiebe

Membership Secretary - Chris Williams

Past President - Glenn Gytenbeek 250-546-9891; gcgardenedge@telus.net

Directors - Heather Freeman, Paul Peacock

Newsletter Editor – Dianne Lockton

Website Manager - Mary Jane Duford

Sunshine - Dianne Lockton and Heather Hayes

Door Prizes - Sue Rook

GENERAL MEETING

First Tuesday of the month, 7 pm, September to June in Odd Fellows Hall, Armstrong except January.

EXECUTIVE MEETING – 6 PM before General Meeting

Next meeting 7 pm May 7, 2024.

EXECUTIVE REPORT

Thanks to Linda Meraw for goodies and tea at the meeting. We are grateful for all those who volunteer to help and step up to take on tasks big and small.

Mark your calendar for Thursday, July 25 for the Summer Potluck and Social. More details to come. Plan to help out with the plant sale on Saturday, May 11. Lots of plants, wagons, wheelbarrows and any good used garden items to sell are welcomed. Set up starts at 6:00 AM and we hope to be done by 2:00 PM.

We will be having a Grow and Share (New version of Parlor Show) at the June meeting to let everyone show off the best from their gardens. Look for details in the June agenda.

ADGC Executive

GUEST SPEAKER

Our speaker for the April 2 meeting was Bruce Hobkirk. He is a firefighter with Armstrong Spallumcheen Fire Department. His experience also includes secondment from ASFD to BC Wildfires, assisting in major fires.

Speaker: Bruce Hobkirk “Fire Smart Your Property and Neighbourhood”

-Every fire has 3 components – heat, oxygen and fuel. To be fire smart, remove one of these elements.

-Clearing out fuel and restricting its reemergence is part of fire-smarting your home.

-Most structures are lost through embers reaching combustible materials. Embers can travel 12 – 15 km.

Tips for around your house:

-clear away fuels (mulch, vegetation, lawn furniture, patio mats etc.) 1.5 metres around your house

-prune lower branches within 2 metres of the ground

-decreasing density of trees by spacing at least 3 metres apart will reduce fire intensity

-clean gutters, needles, cones etc.

-consider covering attic vents with 3 mm mesh to keep out embers

-replace coniferous trees and shrubs

-Note:

The biggest impact would include removing combustible surface materials within 10 metres of your home.

Some website videos that Bruce suggests watching:

<https://waspwildfire.com/>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vh4cQdH26g&ab_channel=Veriskpropertyestimatingsolutions

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PCc1FvZ3g0Q&ab_channel=MC

Preventative Tips:

- irrigate, if possible,
- keep areas saturated to put out embers
- consider getting a gen set as power loss affects pumped systems
- sprinklers can be used to protect structures
- there is fire retardant paint
- cedar hedges, bark mulch and shake roofs are high for fire risk

For more information refer to:

- FireSmart BC Landscaping Tips
- FireSmart begins at Home Manual
- Wildfire Preparedness Guide

Contact: hobkirk@telus.net

- Bruce does fire proofing assessments for properties



**ARMSTRONG AND DISTRICT GARDEN CLUB
GENERAL MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY April 2, 2024
ODDFELLOW'S HALL, ARMSTRONG**

1. Call to Order – Carolyn called the meeting to order at 8:00 p.m.
16 members and 1 guest were present.
2. Approval of Agenda
Rea moved to approve the agenda with additions. CARRIED.
3. Approval of previous minutes
Mary moved to approve the minutes of March 2024 as circulated. CARRIED.
4. Correspondence –
Thank you notes were received from OK Boys and Girls Club and Glad Tidings Church.
5. Treasurer's Report –
Sue provided the Finance report. Suzie moved to receive the report. CARRIED.
6. Old Business
 - a. Planters –
Glen needs 10 volunteers to do a once a week check on petunias. Ensure that they are watered and remove any weak pieces. Be vigilant about CN Police and try to work from outside the planters. Glenn will phone these volunteers once the petunias are available for planting.
 - b. Plant Sale - May 11
The sale starts at 8 a.m. and ends at noon. Sue advised set up will begin at 6 a.m. Heather will price the plants. Bring carts, wagons, watering cans and tents if available. If you need a work party to dig or separate your plants, call Sue or Glenn. Label your plants with their name, light requirements, colour and size and ensure the soil is weed free. There will be a table to sell used garden tools. Black Diamond soil will be available for \$ 7.00, which is less expensive than in stores.
Emily has extra pots and horse manure.
Rea will take unsold garden tools to Glad Tidings community gardens.

c. Summer Potluck

Linda has offered to host the summer potluck on Thursday, July 25th at 5:30 p.m.

The address is 2870 Becker St. Bring a dish for 8 people, your own dishes, cutlery, and chair. Spouses are welcome. Carolyn will provide coffee and tea and Linda will make punch.

7. New Business

a. Volunteers needed - directors, vice president.

Let Carolyn know if you are interested.

b. Volunteer needed to coordinator “Grow and Share” at our next meeting. Heather H. volunteered.

c. IPE sponsorship

ADGC normally sponsors judging prizes at the IPE: 2 floral and 2 vegetables classes, one of which is a youth category. The cost is \$ 100.00 Rea made a motion to continue to support the IPE as we have in the past. CARRIED.

8. Adjournment and next meeting

Moved by Heather to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 p.m. CARRIED.

Thank you to Linda who brought goodies and organized tea.

The Executive will meet at 6:00 PM before the general meeting. Next meeting
Tuesday, May 7, 2024

The speaker will talk about conditioning flowers.
Chris Williams will provide goodies.

GARDENING INFORMATION

The following notice is from the Spallumcheen Armstrong Food Initiative Society. Please share the information with gardeners who would be interested.

Grow a Row

Although the Spallumcheen Armstrong Food Initiative Society (SAFIS) won't be starting the Produce Sharing Program at the Community Garden behind the red caboose until **July 8th**, we are encouraging anyone who has room in their garden to plant an extra row or two. **Any excess produce can be brought to the volunteers at the Community Garden between 9 a.m. and 10 a.m. on Monday. From 10 to 12 o'clock this will be passed on to people** who do not have access to fresh fruits and vegetables.

To accommodate people who are working or who cannot drop off or pick up in the morning, we will also be open from 5:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. for drop off and pick up.

The program will run every Monday from July 8th to October 7th.

This is the 16th year SAFIS has run the program. With the increase in food prices and other commodities, the free fresh produce will benefit people more than ever. Sharing produce not only provides people with fresh locally grown food but generates a conversation about growing food, preparing food and storing food.

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SUBMITTED BY NORTH OKANAGAN BC COMMUNITY BAT PROGRAM

Bat-friendly Gardening in North Okanagan

[North Okanagan, British Columbia, March 8, 2024] – Spring is at our doorstep! This is the most exciting season for gardeners and nature lovers. This year, we encourage everyone to try something new gardening for BATS!

The Okanagan is home to at least 14 different species of insect-eating bats – the highest diversity of bats in the province. Supporting pollinators in your garden helps to support bats as they prey on insects at night. Since bats are active from dusk to dawn, having night-blooming flowers in your garden attracts nighttime moths which are a great source of protein for bats. This practice is called moonlight gardening!

Join us in cultivating bat-friendly gardens and nurturing the rich biodiversity of the North Okanagan:

1. Start planning early. Opt for native perennial plants – contact local plant nurseries to get your seeds.
2. Choose plants with a long flowering season or those that flower at different times of the year.
3. Variety is key! Pick plants with different flower colour, shape, and fragrance.
4. Don't spring into the garden clean up too soon. Wait until temperatures stay consistently above 10°C to start to start raking and pruning. Many pollinators like bees and butterflies are wintering in dead leaves and hollow stems of last-year plants. Bats and snakes sometimes also sleep under leaves and in wood piles.
5. Invasive species like burdock can entangle bats and birds. Regularly remove weeds from your garden. If you plan on harvesting burdock, please be responsible and prune out the flowers before they go to seed and become traps for bats. ([Image 1](#))

6. Pesticides and chemical fertilizers kill insects and poison wildlife. Practice organic gardening by avoiding chemical products. Try composting to provide organic nutrients in your garden.
7. Fact: Bats fertilize gardens with their nitrogen-rich guano (bat poop). Attract bats to have a natural source of guano fertilizer in your garden.
8. Switch outdoor light bulbs to “warm” toned or filtered LEDs (under 3,000K) to reduce light pollution that harms bats and other animals. Dimmers, motion sensors, and timers can help to reduce illumination and save energy.
9. Keep pets indoors or supervised outdoors to avoid predation on bats and birds.
10. Keep dead-standing trees (if it is safe to do so) and mature trees on your property to provide roosting areas for hard-working bats. Peeling tree bark and bark crevices are great homes for bats.
11. If you have a lake, creek or wetland by your house – great! Protect natural water-side vegetation; it provides vital food, shelter and water to wildlife.
12. Consider adding a garden pond to create a biodiversity oasis in your backyard. Ponds need to be at least 3m wide to serve as drinking sources for bats.

For more information on bat-friendly gardening and recommended plants for the Okanagan region, please refer to our informative poster. ([Images 2,3](#)).

Contact

Megan Olson, North Okanagan Regional
Coordinator BC Community Bat Program

www.bcbats.ca

northokanaganbats@gmail.com

1-855-9BC-BATS (ext. 13)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/bcbats>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/gotbats/>

Image 1

Invasive species like burdock can entangle bats. If you plan on harvesting burdock, please be responsible and prune out the flowers before they go to seed and become traps for bats. Photo by: Ken Dzinbal.



(Image 1)

Image 2/3

Front and Back of the Bat-Friendly Gardening Poster.

BAT - FRIENDLY GARDENING IN THE OKANAGAN



The Okanagan is the luckiest region when it comes to bats!

We have the highest diversity of bats compared to the rest of the province. As many as 15 bat species call this area home!

Bats LOVE insects

Every night, bats work hard to control insect populations, benefitting us and protecting agriculture from pests. **One little bat can eat 600 mosquitoes in just one hour!** Can you imagine how many insects a group of bats can catch overnight?

Like all wildlife, bats need food, water, and shelter to survive

A small pond or a riparian area is a great source of food and shelter for bats.

- Build a pond that is at least 3m in diameter.
- Help restore riparian areas with natural vegetation.

Moonlight gardening

Bats are nocturnal, they are active at night feeding on insects like moths, beetles and mosquitoes.

- Flowers that stay open through the night attract nocturnal insects.
- White or pale-coloured flowers can be easily seen by bats at night.
- Moonlight is ideal for bats! Turn off porch lights at night to prevent light pollution.



Safety first

- Keep cats indoors to prevent predation on bats and other wildlife.
- Keep your garden naturally dark at night. Turn the outdoor lights off. Use warm light bulbs.
- If you are ever concerned or find an injured bat, contact the BC Community Bat Program.

Organic gardening

Pesticides and chemical fertilizers kill insects and poison wildlife.

- Your garden benefits from the nitrogen-rich guano of local bats. Remember, to help prevent the spread of White nose Syndrome, do not transport the guano off-site.
- Do not apply pesticides, insecticides and other harmful chemicals in your garden.
- Try composting to provide organic nutrients in your garden.

Cozy homes for roosting bats

Bats often roost under the tree bark, in tree hollows and cavities, wood piles, in old sheds and attics, as well as under roofing or siding of some buildings.

- Keep dead-standing trees (if it is safe to do so) and mature trees in your yard to provide roosting areas for hard-working bats. Loose tree bark and bark crevices also make great homes for bats.
- Consider building a bat house or a bat condo! Learn more about bat boxes on BC Community Bat Program website.

A LIST OF NATIVE OKANAGAN PLANTS FOR YOUR BAT - FRIENDLY GARDEN

Plant a variety of indigenous Okanagan flowers, perennials, shrubs and trees to support local bats, nighttime insect pollinators and overall biodiversity in your garden. See the examples below.

Flowers	Trees	Shrubs
• Canada Goldenrod • Showy Milkweed • Moss Camplon • Spreading Phlox • Evening Primrose • Shrubby Penstemon • Common Yarrow • Desert Yellow Fleabane • Showy Fleabane • Sticky Geranium	• Mountain Ash • Water Birch • Paper Birch • Trembling Aspen • Black Cottonwood • Douglas Maple • Ponderosa Pine • Dead tree snags (if safe to keep)	• Saskatoon • Waxy or Sticky Currant • Chokecherry • Red Raspberry • Prickly Rose, Nootka Rose • Mock orange • Big Sagebrush • Orange Honeysuckle • Red-osier Dogwood

Okanagan Nurseries

• Wild Bloom Nursery Kelowna	• XEN Xeriscape Endemic Nursery and Ecological Solutions - West Kelowna	• Sagebrush Nursery Oliver
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Learn more on bcbats.ca or email us at okanaganbats@gmail.com.



BC Bat-friendly Communities Guide
Appendix B: Tree List

Bats Education Ecological Protection Society

Okanaganbats is the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation's Habitat Stewardship Program. Former endorsement: Society of B.C., the North Okanagan Conservation Fund, South Okanagan Conservation Fund, Regional District of North Okanagan, Regional District of South Okanagan, Province of B.C. and the Environment and Climate Change Canada for providing funding for bat conservation. Photo credits: Natureworks, Pexels, Corbis. This homepage was designed in Coquitlam by Anna Baumann, BC Community Bat Program Ambassador, in 2024.

Member Discounts

Members of the Armstrong & District Garden Club receive discounts at a number of local garden centres:

- Shepherd's Home Hardware Outdoor Living in Armstrong:
15% Discount on Regularly-Priced Garden Plants
- Blue Mountain Nursery in Armstrong: 10% Discount on all products
- Nicholas Alexander Nursery in Vernon:
10%-15% Discount on Regularly-Priced Garden Plants

Show your membership card at the till before the cashier rings up the total and kindly request your membership discount. Let us know if you have any difficulties getting the discount.