

# SEEDERS AND WEEDERS NEWSLETTER



## NOVEMBER 2023 Armstrong & District Garden Club

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### EXECUTIVE

President – Carolyn Farris, 250-546-6083; [cfarris@telus.net](mailto: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](mailto:gcgardenedge@telus.net)

Newsletter Editor – Vacant

Website manager – Mary Jane Duford

Directors – Heather Freeman, Paul Peacock

Sunshine – Dianne Lockton and Heather Hayes

Door Prizes – Sue Rook

### GENERAL MEETING

First Tuesday of month Sep to Jun in Oddfellows Hall, Armstrong except January

EXECUTIVE MEETING – 5:30 PM before General Meeting

# Executive Report

Just a quick thank you to Dianne Lockton for taking on the newsletter. We are also encouraged by members who continue to support our meetings and club. The lateness of the newsletter is all my fault as Dianne got it to me in good time but early mornings and late nights for lambing interfered with getting it mailed out.

Hope to see all of you at the December Appie and dessert social for our December 5 meeting

Carolyn

## GUEST SPEAKER — Janet Stoll “Building a Terrarium”

The purpose of any terrarium is to allow plants to thrive in a controlled atmosphere with constant humidity. If closed, they need to be aired once a week but do not require much watering. If an open terrarium, they require more watering and may be more susceptible to disease. Terrariums should not be confused with a dish garden that is simply a flat garden. The soil should be  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the height of the dish so they need to be tall enough to allow plants to grow.

A variety of tools are needed to reach the bottom. A funnel to put the dirt in the bottom of the jar, a long handled spoon for a shovel, a placer or a pair of tongs to place plants on the bottom, a tamping tool, tweezers, baster or spray bottle to water, and a pruner such as long thin scissors, manicure scissors, or a razor taped to a dowel.

Gravel is needed for the base, and some charcoal for keeping the soil sweet. Soil should be a sterilized potting mix and slightly damp. Create a small hole to plant the desired plants and then tamp them into place. A gallon jar will usually hold three plants, but larger containers such as a small fish tank can hold more.

Strawberry begonia was displayed. It is important to get the root bulb down to a small one before planting. Plants chosen need to have similar water, light and heat requirements.

Plants should be small... up to 2½ inch pots. A wide variety of plants will work, but closed terrariums are very good for mosses, orchids, ferns and air plants that

do poorly in the dry atmosphere of a home. Open terrariums are good for almost all other plants except succulents. Don't crowd plants... as size matters. Avoid abundant growers and consider their mature size. Terrariums do not need feeding, as the plants will outgrow the containers.

**FEWER WELL-PLACED PLANTS WILL BE FAR MORE EFFECTIVE THAN A JUMBLED MESS OF STEMS AND LEAVES.**

Once planted... decorative mulch, stones or figurines can be added for interest to decorate your terrarium.

Light:

-Don't place where it will be in direct sunlight.

thespruce.com—a website with a great variety of gardening information including some columns on terrariums.

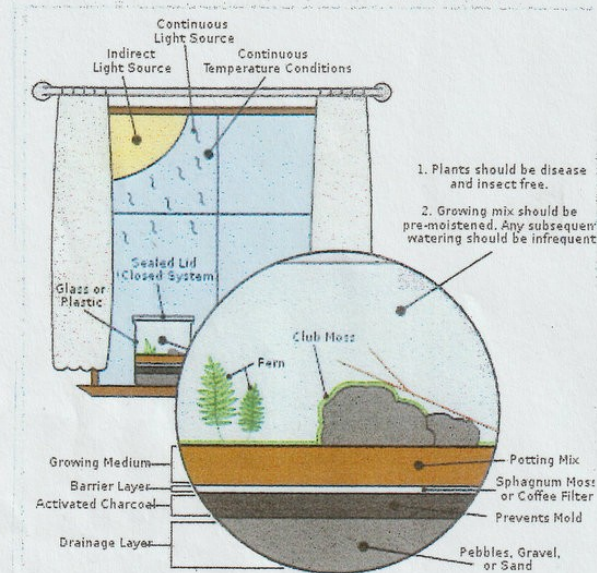


Diagram of sealed terrarium



# GARDENING INFORMATION

Our hot summer droughts have many gardeners interested in plants that might better survive those conditions. The following article is from **Harrowsmithmag.com**

It offers some ideas to consider for next year's landscape.



## Best Native Plants for Your Garden

How to select and buy the best native plants for any sized garden

*By Mark & Ben Cullen.*

Canadians are planting native plants in record numbers, for good reason.

First, they are low maintenance. Think about it: Native plants existed here before European settlement, and they have evolved through millennia to the specific conditions of our Canadian environment, from hot summer droughts to deep winter freezes, depending on the geographic location. Native plants are nature's answer.

Their inherent low maintenance is part of what makes them the choice for environmentally minded gardeners. Most are perennials, which come back year after year, with little disease pressure and without becoming invasive. If planted in the right place, their water demands should be met by rainfall alone; after they are established, most native plant varieties are exceptionally drought tolerant.

Second, Native plants play an important part in a natural ecosystem. Consider this: all plants

and animals exist within a web. This is where the native plants really stand out, since birds and insects, for example, have a strong preference for the plants that evolved with them over the millennia. Research by American entomologist Douglas Tallamy has shown that a native oak tree can support up to 557 different species of caterpillars – an important food source for birds - versus a ginkgo tree, which supports zero. A simple plant selection can have huge effects on the birds on your property.

Third, a balanced ecosystem with a diversity of native plant species can offer continuous blooms throughout the season, as birds and pollinators have evolved to go looking for them. This part requires some planning. Take your time creating a planting plan that creates a succession of blooms from one end of the season to the other.

Roughly 90 percent of insect herbivores are diet specialists, which means they are only able to eat a small number of plant species. When bird and insect populations are in decline, it is important to remember that these dependencies are almost always on native plants.

As you wade into the world of native plants, you will discover that they are not “created equal.” Consider these three categories of native plants, beginning with the “least native” to the “most pure.”

### 1. “Nativars” or native cultivar plants

These are cultivated varieties of native species, i.e., native plants that have been bred for unique or desired qualities such as colour. *Echinacea* 'Sundown' is an example, hybridized for its burnt-orange colour from the purple-petalled native. As with many commercially available native plants, native cultivars are reproduced from cuttings for genetic consistency, and many are sterile. They do not produce pollen for pollinators, and they have a low “ecological value.”

### 2. “Basic perennial” native plants

Available just about everywhere, they are the most popular varieties of native plants, such as purple coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*) and black-eyed Susans (*Rudbeckia*), which are popular for good reason. They are dependable, produce great colour, provide pollinator support and are drought tolerant. Most of these plants are grown from cuttings in commercial nurseries; as such, they grow true to the “parent” plant, which means less genetic diversity and ecological value for supporting wildlife than plants propagated from seed.

### 3. “Seed-sourced” open-pollinated native plants

These native plants appeal to hard-core native-plant enthusiasts. Locally sourced native plants are grown from seed that is sourced in the area where the plant is intended to grow. The benefit of choosing a locally sourced seed is that the specific genotype is better adapted to the local environment. Growing from local seed sources also helps improve the overall biodiversity, as open pollination allows for the continuous evolution of the species. A lot of these species are at risk of local extinction due to habitat loss, so growing from seed is also an act of preservation, which promotes greater biodiversity.

If you are having trouble finding seed-sourced native-plant material in your area, you can always start propagating your own. Pay attention to your favourite plants this summer – in your own yard or perhaps even in the yard of a friend who will let you borrow theirs. Come September, native flowers such as purple coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*) and black-eyed Susans (*Rudbeckia*) can be cut below the flower to dry for a few days before shaking the seeds into an envelope for propagating next spring.

Growing trees from seed can also be rewarding, and often trees grown from seed develop into more robust adult specimen trees (if you have patience). Tree seeds or nuts typically require autumn planting or artificial stratification in the refrigerator for a matter of months.

Gardening is a lifelong project, which is minor in comparison to the multigenerational evolution of the native plant species that support us. Whether you propagate from a local seed collection or simply reach for an attractive nativar at the garden centre, your decision to become a native plant gardener can be enjoyed now while benefitting generations to come.

## MINUTES FROM NOVEMBER MEETING

### ARMSTRONG AND DISTRICT GARDEN CLUB GENERAL MEETING MINUTES TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2023, 7:00 ODDFELLOW'S HALL, ARMSTRONG

#### 1. Call to Order

President, Carolyn Farris called the meeting to order at 7:50 PM with 14 members and 1 guest present.

#### 2. Approval of Agenda

Paul moved to approve the agenda with additions. CARRIED

#### 3. Approval of Sep Minutes

Dianne moved to approve the minutes of Oct 2023 as circulated. CARRIED

#### 4. Correspondence – A thank you was received from the IPE for sponsoring flower and vegetable classes.

#### 5. Treasurer's Report

Carolyn reported in Sue Wiebe's absence that the club is in a good financial position  
Sue Rook moved to receive the Finance report. CARRIED

#### 6. Old Business

a. December Meeting – Everyone is invited to bring a plate of appies or goodies (desserts) to share and their spouse, significant other or friend for an early Christmas celebration. Coffee/Tea and Punch will be provided.

b. Planters – Glen has ordered brilliant yellow and deep purple petunias.

## 7. New Business

- a. Gingerbread contest – Heather Freeman will coordinate and Brenda will help.
- b. Volunteers – Dianne Lockton has agreed to take on the newsletter
- c. Plant Sale Committee – Sue Wiebe will coordinate. Donna Rockwell, Glen Gytenbeek and Heather Freeman will help. Let Sue know if you can help.
- d. Potential fundraiser – Garden Tour for Charity is being discussed. If you have ideas let Carolyn know. Possible partnerships and ideas were discussed.
- e. Tours – Desert Hills in Ashcroft may be arranged. Contact Paul if you are interested. Summerland Research Station Gardens and local gardens were raised as other possibilities but organizer volunteers need to come forward.
- f. Some members have suggested changing the day/date/time of our meetings. Discussion ensued and a motion will be brought to the Feb meeting.

## 8. Elections

President – Carolyn Farris  
Vice president – vacant  
Recording Secretary – vacant  
Treasurer – Sue Wiebe  
Past president – Glen Gytenbeek  
Membership Secretary – Chris Williams  
Newsletter – Dianne Lockton  
Directors – Heather Freeman and Paul Peacock  
Door Prizes – Sue Rook

All were by acclamation and we are still looking for more interested persons.

Adjournment and next meeting  
Glen moved adjournment at 8:25 PM

Next meeting December 5

THANK YOUS – We all enjoyed the treats provided by Carolyn Farris.

## Mark Your Calendars

The Executive will meet at 6:00 PM before the general meeting to set up the Social.

Dessert & Apple Social – December 5, 2023 at Oddfellow's Hall at 7:00 PM. Bring your spouse or significant other or a friend to enjoy food and friendly discussion.

No club meeting in January

# 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

**Swan Lake Market & Garden** in Spallumcheen : **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.