

SEEDERS AND WEEDERS
NEWSLETTER
OCTOBER 1, 2024



Armstrong & District Garden Club

CONTACTS:

EMAIL cfarris21adgg@gmail.com

WEBSITE <https://armstronggardenclub.com>

FACEBOOK Ken Barr

EXECUTIVE

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

Vice president - Vacant

Secretary – Mary Jackson and Yvonne Moore

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 November 5, 2024.

EXECUTIVE REPORT

Due to a series of events the October meeting was small with only 12 members present. Thanks to new member Maizie Thompson and Brenda Hobbs for putting out the tea, lovely treats and fresh fruit. Members shared their success this summer in their gardens and were able to ask questions for help from others. Thanks were also expressed to Glen and the volunteers for all their efforts in keeping the planters on PV road looking great. Also thanks to Linda Meraw for hosting the summer Potluck Social. Those attending enjoyed her lovely small garden and a fun evening.

Two sets of minutes are included in this newsletter as there were technology problems in getting the minutes done.

Please note that elections will be held at the November meeting. If you are willing to let your name stand for a position please let Carolyn know. It is only with willing volunteers that the Garden Club can continue to operate. President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Speaker Coordinator, and Newsletter need folks. Chris Williams has agreed to continue as Membership Secretary.

The December meeting will start at 6:00 PM for the Appies and Dessert sharing.

Please bring your own dishes, cutlery and cup with a plate to share. Christmas attire is welcomed.

Glen, Carolyn Sue W, Chris, Heather F and Paul

ARMSTRONG AND DISTRICT GARDEN CLUB

GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2024, 7:00 PM
ODDFELLOWS HALL, ARMSTRONG

1. Call to Order

President, Carolyn Farris called the meeting to order at 8:10

2. Approval of Agenda

Suzie Sims moved to approve the agenda with additions. CARRIED

3. Approval of Previous Minutes

Suzie Sims moved to approve the minutes of June 2024 as circulated.
CARRIED

4. Correspondence - none

5. Treasurers Report

Sue Wiebe presented the Treasurer Report. The club is in a healthy financial position. Jackie Walkden moved to receive the Finance report. CARRIED

6. Old Business

a. Planters are looking good.

b. Reschedule Summer Potluck - Sep 19 at 5:00 PM at the Meraw residence, 2870 Becker Street

c. Elections in Nov - need a treasurer; either vice president or president and directors

7. New Business

a) Door Prizes were revisited. Linda Meraw moved that 2 door prizes for \$15.00 per month will be bought and a sign up sheet put out to rotate buyers.
CARRIED

b) Help is needed with a booth at the Curling Club Volunteer Fair on Sept 14. Heather Freeman, Brenda Hobbs, Yvonne Wong and Paul Peacock volunteered. Glen will get the banners, etc.

c) Ideas were solicited for community donations. A recommendation will be brought to the next meeting.

8. Adjournment and next meeting

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 PM.

The Executive will meet at 6:00 PM before the general meeting.

Next meeting Tuesday, October 1, 2024

Thank you to the members who provided the refreshments

ARMSTRONG AND DISTRICT GARDEN CLUB

GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2024, 7:00 PM
ODDFELLOWS HALL, ARMSTRONG

1. Call to Order

President, Carolyn Farris called the meeting to order with 12 members present at 7:40 PM

2. Approval of Agenda

Linda Meraw moved to approve the agenda with additions. CARRIED

3. Approval of Previous Minutes

No minutes were available due to computer problems.

4. Correspondence - None

5. Treasurers Report

Sue Wiebe presented the financial report. The club is in a healthy financial position.

Chris Williams moved to receive the Finance report. CARRIED

6. Old Business

a) Planters - Glen thanked all the volunteers who looked after the planters over the summer. They have looked good all season despite the heat.

b) Summer Potluck - Thank you to Linda Meraw and family for hosting. All who attended had a great time and enjoyed her garden.

c.) Elections in Nov - All positions need volunteers. Chris Williams has agreed to continue as Membership. Please let Carolyn know if you will let your name stand for a position.

d) The Door prize sign up sheet was shared and all encouraged to take a turn.

e) Thank yous were expressed to Heather Freeman, Paul Peacock and Brenda Hobbs for manning a booth at the Curling Club Volunteer Fair.

f) Community Donations

Paul Peacock moved that donations for 2024 be made to Starfish for \$500, Food Bank for \$500 and Bursary for \$500. CARRIED

A donation to PV Manor for plants will be considered in the spring and may replace the petunias if we are no longer doing the planters.

7. New Business

a) After discussion it was agreed the December meeting would be an Appie and Dessert Social and would be held at 6:00 pm. Everyone will be asked to bring their plate, cutlery and mug along with a plate of goodies to share.

Tea and punch will be provided.

b) Sue Wiebe is looking for one gallon pots for spring planting for the Garden Club plant sale. She can store them if you don't have space.

Glen and Linda volunteered to help her dig, divide and pot up hostas in the next week.

8. Adjournment and next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM

The executive will meet at 6:00 PM before the general meeting.

Next meeting Tuesday, November 5, 2024

GARDENING INFORMATION

Several gardeners report having many earwigs in their gardens this summer and fall. The following article explains their habits and suggests methods of keeping them under control.

What Are Earwigs?

Earwigs can be found in almost any growing zone, although they are more likely to inhabit warm, humid climates. You might have trouble spotting one—not only are they quick movers, but they are also nocturnal and tend to hide out during the day when you are tending the garden. They like decaying wood and plant material and dark, damp spaces. Oftentimes, they can be found in basements and woodpiles.

Earwigs are the sole members of the insect order Dermaptera, ancient bugs that began crawling around Earth about 208 million years ago. Today, nearly 2,000 species are scattered everywhere but in Earth's polar regions. The name “earwig” comes from the Old English *ear-wicga*, which means “ear wiggler”—so named because the insect was once thought to seek out human ears to reside in. In France, they're called “ear piercers” (*perce-orielles*) and in Germany, “ear worms” (*Ohrwürmer*).

In North America, we're most familiar with *Forficula auricularia*, a European species. Earwigs were first reported in the early 1900s and have now spread to most of the United States and parts of Canada. Earwigs enjoy a lively social scene. They congregate during the day because they tend to find the same hiding places. Their nests can number in the thousands, and they aren't territorial, so they often live together.

What Do Earwigs Eat?

Pincher bugs are omnivores, meaning that they'll eat pretty much anything that's made available to them. In the garden, they primarily feed on dead or decaying plant and animal matter. However, when their population gets out of control, they may turn to feast on living plant matter, especially the seedlings or young foliage of vegetables and flowers. They will also readily prey on aphids, insect eggs, [maggots](#), grubs, and armyworms.

This creates a conundrum for gardeners... Should earwigs be allowed to remain in your garden to eat up aphids and other pests? Or should they be removed before they turn their attention to your plants? Generally, earwigs do not cause enough damage to be worth fighting. However, if you do see large numbers of them around your plants, you can consider taking action.



The pinchers at the end of an earwig's body are called "cerci."

Do Earwigs Pinch?

The pincers at the end of an earwig's abdomen look rather formidable. They are capable of pinching (and sometimes biting) humans, but the pinch is not particularly powerful. Earwigs usually use their pincers to ward off enemies like toads and birds, or—in some species—to catch prey.

The pincers, called "cerci," are also important for romance. They are indicators of gender, like tusks on an elephant. A male earwig's pincers are long and curved, while a female's are shorter and straighter.

How to Identify Earwigs

Earwigs get to be about 3/4-inch long. They're reddish-brown insects with appendages on their tail-ends that look like forceps. Few other insects have a set of scary-looking pincers like the earwig has. This is why some folks call them "pincher bugs" or "pinching bugs." Attached at the insect's abdomen, these appendages are called cerci.

Earwigs run very quickly and can also fly, though they rarely do so. They actually have two sets of wings, and their pincers aid in unfolding the wings.

What do earwigs eat? Nocturnal by nature, an earwig's main meal is decaying plant material and wood, but it will attack living plants, including vegetables, fruit trees, and ornamentals, if given the opportunity. Earwigs are especially fond of flowers, [lettuce](#) and other tender greens, [celery](#), and fruits.

Female earwigs lay 40 to 50 shiny eggs in underground tunnels. Oddly enough, the eggs are diligently cared for and protected from predators by the mothers. They hatch in about a week, making it very difficult to control earwig populations before they hatch.

Nymphs simply appear to be miniature versions of adult earwigs. They shed several skins, and ten weeks later, they reach adulthood.

Earwigs often hide underneath pots during the day and then eat the flowers in the pots at night.

Signs of Earwig Damage

Leaves will appear jagged and full of holes. Plants will become ragged overnight, and some leaves will only be partially eaten. There will also probably be a scattering of earwig excrement, which will be small, black pellets.

Damage will often occur after rainy weather, which forces earwigs to seek dry shelter and climb up into plants and leaves.

You might find earwigs under pots that contain damaged plants.

Earwig damage looks similar to that of [slugs and snails](#). To tell the difference, look for the tell-tale sign of slugs and snails: a trail of slime residue on foliage.



Earwig damage involves jagged leaves with holes, which can be seen on this damaged basil plant.

Photo Credit: Barbara Pleasant.

Control and Prevention

How to Get Rid of Earwigs

Generally, earwigs are not as much of a threat to your garden as other pests, like Japanese beetles and aphids, though they can be as big of an annoyance! They can also produce a foul odor when disturbed, so keep that in mind.

Try these remedies:

Lay one-foot sections of bamboo or garden hose in the beds between your plants. Check these “traps” each morning, and dump the earwigs into a bucket of soapy water.

Spread petroleum jelly around the stems of your plants. Earwigs will hesitate to crawl over it.

If they are infesting your woodpile, try sprinkling borax around it, but keep pets and children away from this area after doing so.

Oil pit traps are a great remedy for earwigs. Combine equal parts soy sauce and olive or vegetable oil, put it in a small plastic container, and secure the lid. Punch holes in the top of the container, near the lid. Make the holes large enough for the earwigs to get in. Bury the container in the soil just up to the holes. The soy sauce will attract the earwigs, and the oil will prevent them from escaping. Change the mixture as needed.

Alcohol controls these pests by acting as a surfactant, or wetting agent, that can penetrate an insect’s waxy coat of armor and kill on contact with the body. Isopropanol (rubbing alcohol) works fine and is easy to find, but be sure it doesn’t have additives. Ethanol (grain alcohol) seems to work best. Alcohol usually comes in 70 percent strength in stores (or 95 percent strength purchased commercially). To make an insecticidal spray, mix equal parts 70 percent alcohol and water (or, if using 95 percent alcohol, mix 1 part alcohol to 1 ½ parts water). The spray must come into contact with the insects to be effective, so target them directly.

WARNING: Before using an insecticidal spray on your plants, test it on a single leaf. Wait 24 hours and observe to see if the plant has an adverse reaction. If it does, dilute your alcohol solution more and test again.

Earwigs are also susceptible to diatomaceous earth (DE), so consider placing a ring of DE around the bases of plants if the soil is dry enough. In wet weather, DE is not effective. DE will also kill pollinators, so refrain from using it around flowers.

How to Prevent Earwigs

Expect more earwigs during rainy years, and prepare accordingly by removing plant debris and other hiding places.

Avoid growing susceptible plants near walls covered in ivy or hedges, as many earwigs might live in these areas.

Birds and toads are both natural predators of earwigs.

Occasionally, earwigs will move from mulch and other moist material outside into your house. They aren't harmful, but can be an annoyance nonetheless. To prevent this, check for bugs on everything you bring inside, especially laundry, lawn furniture, flowers, vegetables, houseplants, and firewood. Also, move mulch away from your house's foundation and establish a zone of bare soil that will dry out. If earwigs do happen to get into your home, vacuum them up.

Author Catherine Boeckman www.almanac.com

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Next meeting: November 5, 2024 7:00 PM

Winter social: December 2, 2024 6:00 PM

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.