

SEEDERS AND WEEDERS
NEWSLETTER
SEPTEMBER 2023



Armstrong & District Garden Club



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EXECUTIVE

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

Vice president - Vacant
Secretary - Tracee Andrews
Treasurer - Sue Wiebe
Membership Secretary - Chris Williams
Past President - Glenn Gytenbeek 250-546-9891; gcgardenedge@telus.net
Newsletter Editor - Vacant
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 Jan, Jul & Aug

EXECUTIVE MEETING - 5:30 before General Meeting

Executive Report

It was good to see so many people out for the meeting. Everyone seemed to enjoy an informative talk by Brad Ulmer on the development of Bolean Gardens over the past twenty years. Some great ideas were presented.

Congratulations to Janet Crich for being chosen for one of the whimsy photos in the BCGC newsletter. Her gate feature of the old truck is striking.

Next month our speaker will be providing tips to winterize our gardens. Hope to see everyone out. We are also looking for a newsletter editor(s) and a recording secretary so please consider volunteering or suggesting someone who is too shy to offer. Both these positions are essential to keeping the club functioning.

Carolyn

GUEST SPEAKER

Brad Ulmer from Bolean Gardens which he and his wife have operated for 25 years. He originally worked at Burnett's in Kelowna and fell in love with plants. He completed a four year degree in horticulture from BCIT. When he finished he returned to Kelowna.

They bought a five acre piece of land in Falkland which has absolutely no top soil. Mountains, wind and the layout provided challenges. The first principle is to feed the soil and then the

plants will take care of themselves. He can't use a rototiller or plow so they have had to take into account the micro climate and deal with the land as it is.

Planting trees, making raised beds, putting in irrigation system, fencing to keep the neighbors cows out. One side is bordered by Bolean Creek. Originally there was a few trees and inch high grass. Rocks under water move at will and easily. The government asks for 100 foot set back from creeks which results in being able to use only half of their property to provide the set back. The trees have grown from inches to 8 - 10 feet and this has resulted in the creek moving towards the neighbour's side and so now he helps the neighbour to remediate their side to keep the creek in place. Rocks and rip rap do not support

They currently grow approximately 400 species of plants and have birds, pollinators and small animals. The set back area just grows wild so it encourages growth but does not seem to support invasive weeds as the pollinators feed on the planted flowers.

Good bugs like lady bugs will clean out aphids without sprays. Birds do not destroy raspberries and strawberries if they are picked daily. Their potato patch this year was not destroyed by potato beetles as they were eaten by the robins who were breeding in the trees. Patience and time will make organic farming possible even though ecosystems are declining. Gardeners can make little pockets of places where things can actually be grown. Some areas can be kept immaculate but there is a need to have wild, untouched areas for bees and butterflies to overwinter and thrive the next year.

Pruning trees in mid summer will result in less suckering and result in stronger branches over time. Rejuvenating shrubs such as lilacs is often best done in fall and then cutting down the whole shrub down to about six inches and let it start over. Trees do not require fertilizing unless leaves are pale or there is reduced growth. If required do it just before the buds open and be very gentle and cautious.

Voles need food and habitat the same as squirrels and pocket gophers. They need cover for overwinter. Keep an area very short and well mulched. This year rodents are out of control and small animals that have never been a problem now are. Keep lights out at night and make it as predator friendly as possible. Vitamin D, oatmeal and peanut butter can be mixed to kill voles by throwing it down the hole. Diversity is better in gardens as they look after each other.

Everyone is invited to come to the garden for tours, ice cream and visiting. 2038 Chase Falkland Road and on internet at boleangradens.com.

The Gift That Keeps on Giving

Bob Vila



Perennials are plants that can live for years, even decades, and add beauty to your garden with very little care. Flowering perennials typically produce blooms by the second year, though some will burst with color the very first year. And spring perennials? Well, can you think of a better way to chase away the winter blues than with pretty pink, yellow, and purple hues?

Fall, with its combination of still-warm soil and cooler, wetter weather, is the ideal time to encourage root growth in new spring perennials. So admire the varieties here, pick your favorites, and set the stage for spectacular spring flowers

Say Hello to Hellebores



If you get impatient for posies as the winter drags on, put in **hellebores** (*Helleborus*) now. Also known as Lenten rose, this is one of the first flowers to appear each year, often poking through the snow with big, bowl-shaped pink, yellow, or maroon blooms. Hardy hellebores do best in slightly shaded spots and neutral soils with good drainage in zones 5 to 9.

Power Up with Pasque Flower



Certainly no shrinking violet, **pasque flower** (*Pulsatilla vulgaris*) is a showstopper with purple, bell-shaped blossoms that will flourish in zones 4 to 8. "Pasque" is an old French word for Easter, and this perennial is bound to bloom in time for the holiday (fortunately, it is also **rabbit-resistant**). The gorgeous garden star, which is also known as windflower and meadow anemone, flourishes in fertile soil with good drainage, and full to partial sun.

Take Cover With Creeping Phlox



For colorful ground cover, consider **creeping phlox** (*Phlox subulata*). Phlox is the Greek word for “fire,” and this mat-forming plant will set your landscape ablaze with small, flat, fragrant blooms in purple, pink, red, and white beginning in March. It’s a favorite for filling in **rock gardens** and can be especially pretty draping over a wall. Plant phlox in zones 3 to 9, choosing a spot that receives dappled sun and has sandy soil that gets good drainage.

Ring in Bluebells



For whom do these bells toll? Any gardener in hardiness zones 3 through 8 who doesn't like a lot of toil. In early spring, **Virginia bluebell** (*Mertensia virginica*) pops out flowers that start pale and turn a rich, true blue. They thrive in moist soil and half-sun/half-shade conditions, eventually establishing a colony of pollinator-friendly ground cover with **virtually zero care**.

Welcome Columbine



Prized for its graceful, nodding blooms, **columbine** (*Aquilegia*) is a woodland perennial, meaning it likes a shady or partly **shaded location** and consistently moist soil. Its white, yellow, red, or blue flowers appear in early spring and bloom through mid-summer. The only caveat is that columbine is one of the shorter-lived perennials; if you love them, add a few more plants every year or so in zones 3 to 8.

Be True to False Indigo



Tall, resilient **false indigo** (Baptisia) flowers in late spring through fall with thick stalks and spires of small, dark-blue blooms. If blue isn't your bag, check out hybrids in other colors, including yellow and pink. False indigo likes full sun but can deal with some shade in hardiness zones 3 to 9. Drought-tolerant baptisia beckons bees and butterflies, and is **unlikely to get nibbled by deer** and rabbits.

Add Some Astilbe



It must be those long, fuzzy, pale-colored flowers that give **Astilbe** its common nickname: false goat's beard. This practically trouble-free plant that blooms spring through summer is especially popular as a border plant in partly shady areas. Its flowers contrast well against broad, leafy foliage. Astilbe thrives in loamy, slightly acidic soil in hardiness zones 3 to 8.

Let the Sundrops In



Attention gardeners in the Southwest who can't get by on cactus alone: **Sundrops** (*Calylophus hartwegii*) are a perfect perennial pick, flowering in March through October. A member of the **night-blooming** primrose family, the flower opens with bright yellow petals around sunset and stays that way through the next day. Plant in partly shaded areas with dry soil in zones 5 to 9.

Gotta Love Lamium



Shade happens—and that's not a problem for **lamium** (*Lamium maculatum*). This lovely yet tough ground cover can take on bare spots, such as **beneath trees**, like nobody's business. Lamium boasts variegated foliage in silver, gold, and green along with dainty pink and purple flowers that appear in late spring and summer. This rugged plant can thrive in clay and alkaline soils, and it actually prefers drier conditions in zones 3 to 8. Tip: **Deadhead flowers** once they fade to encourage a new crop of blooms.

Indulge in Dianthus



For a flowering perennial that smells as nice as it looks, let **dianthus** adorn your landscape. This flower family offers clusters of spunky spring-through-summer blooms in a range of hues, including pink, white, yellow, and red against blue-green leaves. Dianthus, a sun worshipper that thrives in well-draining soil in zones 4 to 8, is ideal for rock gardens, containers, and borders. Its rich nectar will **attract pollinators**, yet deer and bunnies won't bother with it.

Weave in Spiderwort



Tap into your spidey sense with this perennial superhero, which grows in clumps and flowers in May through July in zones 4 to 8. **Spiderwort** (Tradescantia) boasts three-petal purple posies that contrast strikingly with its gold-tinged, grass-like leaves. A low-maintenance lovely, it thrives in full sun to partial shade and various types of soil, including sand and clay, but it's fairly thirsty, so keep it moist but not wet.

Look Sharp With Pincushion Plant



Add **pincushion plant** (*Scabiosa columbaria*) to your autumn garden and enjoy the springtime reward of delicate lavender, pink, or white flowers borne on gangly stalks that rise in a bendy way from a clump of gray-green leaves. Perennial in zones 5 through 11, scabiosa is moderately drought-tolerant and needs full sun. The **cut flowers** of this plant make a wonderful, somewhat quirky addition to a bouquet.

Cultivate Purple Coneflower



A springtime profusion of plum-colored blooms greets those who plant **purple coneflower** (*Echinacea purpurea*) before winter winds blow. The daisy-like flowers sit high above the medium green foliage on this clumping plant that reaches 1 to 3 feet in height. Faring well in zones 4 to 10, this hardy perennial can take a bit of shade but needs at least 4 hours of sun daily. Purple coneflower is not terribly picky about soil and is fairly **drought-tolerant**, wilting a bit when it needs water.

Go Crazy for Coreopsis



Occasionally referred to as tickseed but more commonly known by its scientific name, **coreopsis** has both annual and perennial varieties. If you're planting in the fall, be sure to look for the perennial variety. This profuse bloomer produces scads of yellow flowers throughout spring and summer, and even into autumn. Happy in zones 4 to 10, coreopsis is drought-tolerant and likes full sun. Give it some space: It can grow 15 to 18 inches tall and spread 1 to 2 feet.

Mix It Up With Whirling Butterflies



The delicate, intricate flowers on gaura are said to resemble supercharged butterflies. With white-tipped pink “wings” that surround long white stamens topped with yet more pink, *Gaura lindheimeri* (known also as *Oenothera lindheimeri*) provides a touch of whimsy to the garden. This loose, shrubby plant can grow as tall as 4 feet and as wide as 3 feet, making quite a statement in gardens in zones 3 through 9. Not surprising for a native to Oklahoma, Texas, and Louisiana, it’s drought- and heat-resistant

GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

ARMSTRONG AND DISTRICT GARDEN CLUB
GENERAL MEETING AGENDA
TUESDAY, September 5, 2023, 7:00 PM

ODDFELLOW'S HALL, ARMSTRONG

1. Call to Order

President, Carolyn Farris called the meeting to order at 8:15 PM with 18 members and 1 guest present. Carolyn agreed to keep the minutes in the absence of Tracee Andrews. Everyone was asked to introduce themselves to help welcome new members.

2. Approval of Agenda

Nicole moved to approve the agenda. CARRIED

3. Approval of June Minutes

Rea moved to approve the minutes of June 2023 as circulated. CARRIED

4. Correspondence - Thank you from Vegetable Division for sponsorship at the IPE

5. Treasurer's Report

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

Chris Williams moved to receive the Treasurer's report. CARRIED

6. Old Business

a. City Planters - Thanks to all who watered and weeded over the summer. They looked great for IPE as lots of people came to our community over the five days of the fair.

b. Garden Tour(s) - Thank you to Glen and Colleen; Heather Hayes and Mike Kelliher and Janet and Buck Crich for hosting members at their gardens. If you did not attend you missed some lovely gardens and ideas to think about for your garden.

c. Garden Club Social - thank you to Sue and John Wiebe for hosting and all those who attended

d. Fall Meeting Plans

Carolyn shared the tentative plans for the coming year.

7. New Business

a. Volunteers needed - goodies for meetings, people for the booth on Saturday Sep 9 and 16 and a secretary and newsletter person(s). Thank you to Rea Smith for the goodies. Also thank you to Glen, Paul and Dona for manning the Farmer's Market booth in August.

b. Donations to the community

8. Adjournment and next meeting

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Next meeting Tuesday, October 3, 2023 at Oddfellow's Hall at 7:00 PM.

The Executive will meet at 5:30 PM before the general meeting to discuss meeting plans and elections.

THANK YOU

Thank you to Rea Smith for the goodies and tea/coffee at the meeting.

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.