

Armstrong & District Garden Club



Welcome! While we are staying close to home and reducing the spread of COVID—19, we will not be holding meetings in person until further notice. This newsletter shows that we can still share our stories and love of gardening! And enjoy gardening in our own yards!

Executive 2021

President:

Glenn Gytenbeek

Vice-President:

Paul Peacock

Secretary (Interim):

Carolyn Farris

Treasurer:

Judi Cogan

Membership:

Paul Peacock

Newsletter Editors:

Heather Hayes &
Mary Jackson

Directors:

Judi Cogan
Heather Freeman
Heather Hayes
Brenda Hobbs
Mary Jackson
Sue Lendrum
Judy Wilde

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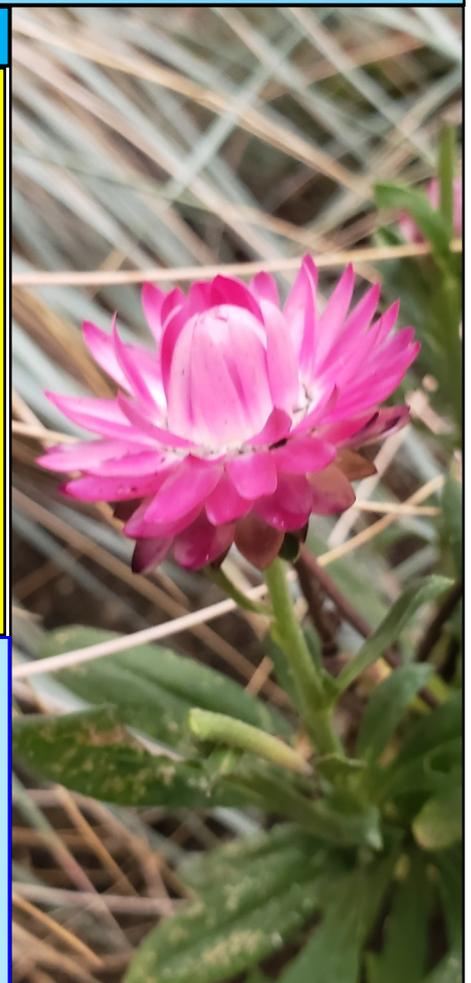
Upcoming Get-Together:

When? September 14, 2021

Time: 5 pm

Where? Memorial Park

Bring a snack and a friend and come and re-connect with fellow garden club members. Distancing and mask protocols will be in place.



LIFE IS A GARDEN



Dig In.

Update from the President:

Isn't this summer one to remember?! Lack of rain, unrelenting heat and smoke took a lot of enjoyment out of gardening this season. As I write this note it is raining! What a refreshing relief. We had to water our xeriscaped front yard more than we ever thought necessary. Looks like most plants survived just fine. I notice the sun is lower in the sky already, increasing the shade in the shade garden, so the end is in sight, fall is rapidly approaching. Bring it on!

Glenn

Club Get-Together

When: Tues., Sept 14

Location: Memorial Park

Time: 5 pm

Let's get together and catch up on what has been happening!

Bring your own refreshments.

We hope to start meeting in October, subject to COVID



Glenn, with Paul on Left and Heather on right

Volunteer Positions Available

You're needed! There are a number of roles that help our club function and provide fun and educational outings as well as support for members.

Please consider volunteering for one of the following positions:

- Sunshine person sending thank you cards, get well cards etc..
- garden tour co-ordinator.
- meeting speaker organizer

Contact Glenn for more information or to volunteer: 250- 546-9891.

Update from the President contd.:**Pleasant Valley Boulevard Petunia Planting:**

A huge thank you to Brenda H., Judi C., Judy W., Heather F., Paul P., Mary P., for their fine work maintaining the petunias in the city planters.

They look great!

**Membership Update: (Paul P.)**

We welcome one new member, Betty Reheis, who joined the club this year.

We currently have 36 members and 6 honorary members. 33 persons were removed from the membership for non-payment of 2021 dues as per our bylaws.

More Volunteer Positions Available

Our newsletter editors, MARY JACKSON and HEATHER HAYES, are stepping down at the end of December 2021. They have been doing an exceptional job for the last seven or so years! The newsletter has been an informative and colourful update for club members, and area clubs, which has been especially valuable in keeping us in touch over these last two years. They deserve a huge thank you from each and every one of us.

Mary has offered to orient anyone who would like to take on this opportunity. For more information, email malgar@telus.net.

Contact Glenn for more information or to volunteer: 250- 546-9891.



Executive Meeting Update:

While we're not holding regular meetings, the executive is continuing to work in the background to maintain club functions and perform club business.

One of the topics discussed at the September 8 Executive meeting was the distribution of surplus club funds to support community programs in areas related to gardening and community beautification, food production and supply, and to support youth studying agriculture and environmental fields.

The Club is in great financial shape and the Executive believes that we have funds to carry the club over the next year in addition to donating up to \$4,000 to support our community.

It is proposed to make donations as follows:

Armstrong Food Bank	\$500
Good Food Box - Armstrong	\$400
Community Garden	\$250
Communities in Bloom	\$250
Glad Tidings Breakfast Program (PVSS)	\$400
AES Breakfast program	\$400
Highland Park Breakfast Program	\$400
Len Wood Breakfast Program	\$400
Bursary x 2	<u>\$1000</u>
Total	<u>\$4000</u>

If you have any concerns or questions, please contact an executive member or President Glenn to get answers or let us know about your concern. The executive will make a final decision at the October 13, 2021 executive meeting as we are not currently meeting with all members.



Glenn, Brenda, Carolyn, Sue W., Heather F Missing: Mary J.

Sell, Swap, Trade or Give Away's:

The editors saw another garden club add this feature to their newsletter and thought it was a great idea.

What gardener doesn't want to share their favorites or trade a plant for another one?

Please send the editors a note (malgar@telus.net) if you have a plant to swap, donate or sell and we'll include it in the next newsletter.



32 x 24 inch quality soil screener for sale.
\$ 20 donation to garden club.
Contact Glenn at 250 546-9891.



16 x 16 x16 inch old cedar garden box. 4 wheels on bottom rolls on flat surfaces.
\$ 20 donation to garden club.
Contact Glenn at 250 546-9891.



10 inches wide and 7 inches deep, 48 inches long, rustic pine garden box.
\$ 10 donation to garden club.
Contact Glenn at 250 546-9891.



A reminder to garden club members to pot up some plants for next year's plant sale while you are doing your fall clean-up.



Planting a lawn: (excerpts from Mary Jane Duford’s blog, Home for the Harvest)

Waiting for grass to grow is admittedly not the most exciting part of lawn care. I was curious about how long it takes for grass seed to germinate once a lawn area has been seeded and watered. Here’s what I found.

How long does it take for grass seed to germinate? **Some varieties of grass seed will germinate in under a week, while others can take up to a month just to germinate!** And of course, the grass seed varieties that tend to make the nicest residential lawns are the ones that take quite a while to start sprouting.

Each type of turf grass has a different expected germination time under ideal conditions. A mix of different grass seeds won’t necessarily all sprout at once! Read on to learn more about the seed germination times for common types of turf grass.

Cool-season grasses are generally sold in a mix of different species of grasses. Grass seed mixes could contain Bluegrass, Ryegrass, AND Fescue – all of which may germinate at different times once the seeds have been initially moistened. Remember that difference in duration when you’re outside watching and waiting for the grass to grow!

“Straight warm-season grasses produce the best lawns in the South, but in cool climates, mixtures or blends are better choices.” *Rodale’s Successful Organic Gardening: Lawns, Grasses and Ground-covers*, by Lewis Hill & Nancy Hill

The highest quality turf grass for sunny areas is Kentucky Bluegrass (at least 6 hours of direct sun). Look for a mix that contains about 80% Kentucky Bluegrass, with the remaining 20% (or less) Perennial Ryegrass. The Ryegrass will germinate within a week, while the Bluegrass portion will take at least two weeks to sprout.

The highest quality turf grass for shady areas are Fine Fescues (Creeping Red Fescue, Hard Fescue, Chewings Fescue, Sheep Fescue). Shady areas are generally seeded with 100% Fine Fescue (less than 2 hours of direct sunlight per day). Partially-shaded lawns can be seeded with a mix of about 40-50% Kentucky Bluegrass, 40-50% Fine Fescue, with the remaining 10-20% Perennial Ryegrass.

For high-quality turf grass, avoid mixes with over 25% Perennial Ryegrass. **Avoid mixes that include any Annual Ryegrass or Rough Bluegrass**, as these are low-quality filler grass seeds. Also avoid mixes that aren’t weed-free or that contain filler material (stuff that is not grass seed).

Climate	Turf Species	Expected Germination Time (days)
Cool-Season	Annual Ryegrass	5-10
Cool-Season	Perennial Ryegrass	5-10
Cool-Season	Tall Fescue	7-14
Cool-Season	Fine Fescue (Creeping Red Fescue, Hard Fescue, Chewings Fescue, Sheep Fescue)	7-14
Cool-Season	Rough Bluegrass	7-10
Cool-Season	Kentucky Bluegrass	14-28

For the full article, visit: <https://www.homefortheharvest.com/how-long-for-grass-seed-to-germinate/>



Welcome! I'm Mary Jane Duford. I've built a handful of gardens over the last few years and have totally fallen in love with gardening. My gardening blog, Home for the Harvest, has grown alongside my indoor and outdoor gardens. Welcome to my online abode :)

Garden Tasks for September: (Source: Farmer's Almanac)

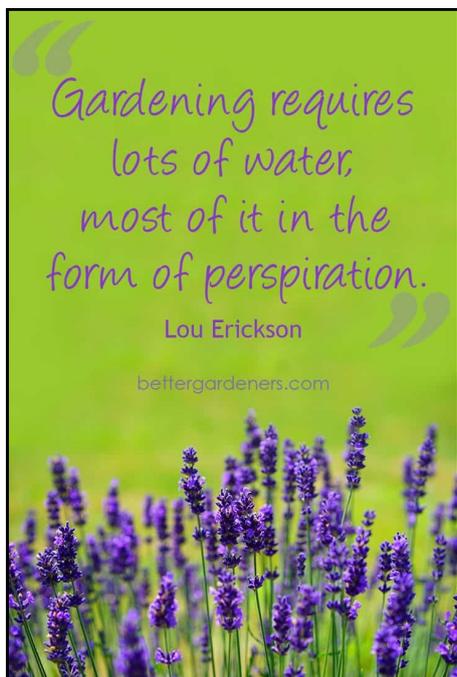
- Continue to harvest. Winter squash is ripe when the ground spot turns from white to a cream or gold color. Potatoes are ready when tops die down. Store in a dark location.
- Mulch carrots, parsnips, and beets for winter harvesting.
- Protect tomatoes or pick green tomatoes if frost threatens.
- Begin reducing water on trees, shrubs, and vines to harden them off for winter.
- Mulch trees and shrubs with wood chips, ground bark, or fall leaves to protect and nourish the soil.
- September is a good time to plant new trees and shrubs for healthy root growth over winter.
- Plant or transplant woody ornamentals and established herbaceous perennials.
- September is the best time to fertilize lawns for strong roots. Use an organic or slow-release fertilizer that rain won't wash away.
- Improve poor lawns with a fall round of core aerating, reseeding, and top-dressing with ¼ inch of compost before October 15.
- Lawns seeded by early October will grow strong roots to survive next summer's weather.
- Plant hardy spring-flowering bulbs such as daffodils, tulips, and crocus; add bulb fertilizer and be sure to water them before the ground freezes. Select big, hearty-size bulbs.
- Stake tall flowers to prevent them from wind damage.
- Dig, clean, and store tuberous begonias if frost threatens.
- Divide peonies and iris.
- Keep checking your plants for diseases and insects, and treat them when necessary. Slugs are often still a problem and need to be baited or removed.
- Bring your houseplants outside to clean, fertilize, and repot them, then bring them indoors for the winter.
- Once the weather gets cooler, dig and divide your perennial plants and herbs.
- Do a final weeding before winter and clean up any debris from your garden and lawn to avoid disease come spring.
- Mix organic materials into your soil before the ground freezes. Don't forget to turn your compost pile to quicken decomposition! Compost piles need air.

To prepare your garden for winter: <https://www.almanac.com/10-tips-prepare-your-garden-winter>

What I've Learnt from My Garden:

I often “discover” a plant I’d like to try out in my garden, and so it comes home with me—from the garden centre, from another garden or our annual plant sale! One such find lived in my front yard, tucked behind a bird’s nest spruce. For several years, it never bloomed or thrived and I even forgot what I had planted. I have threatened many times to remove it, but I remember I must have been intrigued to have planted it at all. So this unknown plant was relocated to the back yard, by the deck, where it was able to thrive in sunlight. To my delight, it not only grew larger but it flowered and became a wonderful addition to my cut flower collection.

Let me introduce you to baby’s breath—one of the many varieties of *Gypsophila paniculata*. It taught me to be patient and to experiment with different environments.



Plant of the Month: Strawflower (*Xerochrysum bracteatum*)

One of my “new” favorite flowers is strawflowers— a perfect addition to our sunny climate and drought environment. I grew a variety of strawflower from seed and purchased some shorter varieties from the garden centre. They are delight to watch when their leaves (which look like petals) open each morning. Perfect form and vibrant colours! *Mary*



Botanical Name	<i>Xerochrysum bracteatum</i>
Common Name	Strawflower, golden everlasting
Plant Type	Herbaceous perennial usually grown as an annual
Mature Size	2 to 3 feet tall, 6 to 18 inches wide
Sun Exposure	Full sun to part shade shade
Soil Type	Any well-drained soil
Soil pH	5.5 to 6.5
Bloom Time	Spring, summer, fall
Flower Color	Yellow, orange, red, white, pink
Hardiness Zone	8 to 10 (USDA)
Native Area	Australia



Xerochrysum bracteatum. This mixed strawflower blend is selected for uniform growth and uniform flowering, so it's ideal for flower arrangements both fresh and dried. Sultane strawflower seeds produce a bright and festive looking range of flowers in copper-red, orange, yellow, pink, salmon, and white. The stems are tall and straight, and perfect for cutting. As dried flowers, they keep their colour and crisp nature better than most. In the garden, strawflowers are highly attractive to wild and domestic bees, butterflies, hoverflies, and other beneficial insects. Sultane grows to about 90-100cm (36-40") tall. To dry strawflowers, simply gather them in small bunches and hang upside down *indoors in an airy room away from direct sunlight. Once dry, these will last for months.*



A Day in the Life of a Cut Flower Gardener: Mary J.

The sun hasn't yet risen when I quietly pull myself from bed, don my garden duds and make my way to the greenhouse, coffee in hand. It's a quiet and peaceful time and a great way to start the day. As I sip on my coffee, I bleach the flower pots and fill other containers with fresh water for today's flower cuttings. What's on the menu? Well, that depends on the time of year and what plants are blooming.

Now, the fun part begins. I wander through the garden, checking on all the plants. Who's bloomed today? Who's not feeling so well and who fell over... As I tend to the plants, I'm deadheading them, picking blooms for today's bouquets and ensuring blooms for tomorrow and the day after that.

I've been keeping a cut garden for over seven years, with a break in between. I re-opened the roadside stand in May this year— it was a perfect time to reach out with positivity, share some beauty and take time to reclaim a purposeful goal. Initially, the cut garden involved planting over two thousand seedlings, but that job became overwhelming. We've reduced the number of plants we start from seed and supplement with annual and perennial starter plants.

The cut garden was initially added onto our existing garden, deer-fence and all. Since that time, fruits have inherited most of these beds, so now the whole garden becomes the plant source for bouquets.

When I've filled up the containers with fresh blooms, the creative hat comes out. Whatever flower is in season is what I'm working with, so ensuring a season long variety of plants is key to a cut flower gardener. There are so many textures, colours, and flower varieties to choose from.

Make no mistakes, this is a hobby of love, not financial rewards. But rewards and satisfaction come in many forms—especially in the joy of growing, making and sharing bouquets.



Craft of the Month:

Fall Succulent Wreath

For this particular succulent wreath example, we'll use a purchased grapevine wreath. This allows for plenty of places to stick our succulent cuttings and to wire or glue our larger succulents. Leave the top mostly bare to get the look we desire. You'll find many succulent door wreaths just have decorations around the bottom third with a single element on the top right. such as the orange Coppertone stonecrop.

Cover the bottom third with sheet moss also. Hot glue it on and use a sharp tool to make spots to anchor the cuttings. Use 4-inch (10 cm.) firestick cuttings that still have great reddish orange color from summer sunshine. Euphorbia tirucalli, also called pencil cactus, cuttings are available online fairly cheap. I try to keep this plant growing every year just for the beauty of the plant but it's great to have for projects like this. They don't overwinter well here in zone 7b.

Secure three to five firestick cuttings in all areas of the bottom part of the wreath. Leave spaces for bigger Coppertone sedum (Note: you can use whatever succulents you have readily on hand too) in between. These may be glued or wired onto the wreath and should point upward and outward. Save one to place on the top right of your wreath, along

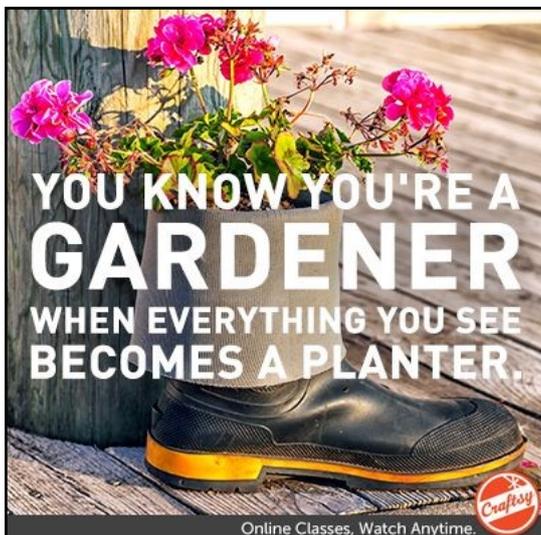
Sunlight for the Autumn Succulent Wreath

Sun is necessary to keep it colorful. In too little light, the orange and yellow cuttings will revert to green and growth will be stretched and spindly. However, too much sun may scorch the plants. Try to hang the fall succulent wreath in a morning sun only area to provide just the right amount.



Left: Succulent Wreath

Below: Another Fall Wreath Option



Recipe of the Month: (Courtesy of Sue L.)

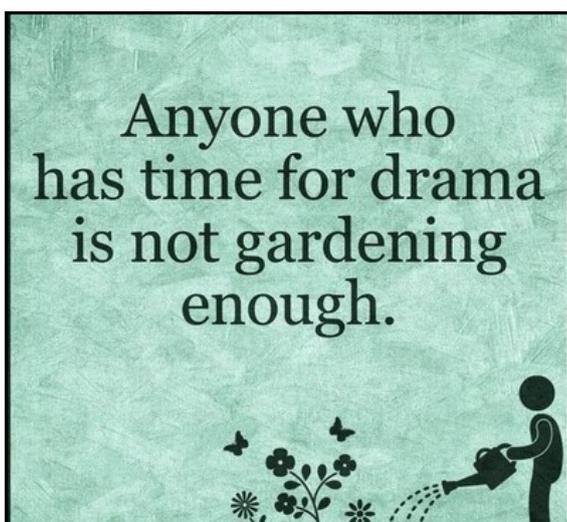
Light Peach and Berry Crisp

3 cups sliced peeled peaches
 1 cup raspberries or blueberries
 2 T all-purpose flour
 1 T granulated sugar
 1/3 c rolled oats
 1/4 c packed brown sugar
 2 T oat bran
 1 tsp cinnamon
 2 T margarine or butter



In 8-inch (2L) square baking dish, combine peaches and berries. Combine 1 T of the flour and granulated sugar; stir into fruit. Combine rolled oats, brown sugar, oat bran, remaining flour and cinnamon; cut in margarine or butter until crumbly. Sprinkle over fruit. Bake in a 375 degree F oven for 30 to 35 minutes or until peaches are tender and topping is browned and crisp. Makes 6 servings.

Serve with ice cream or yogurt.

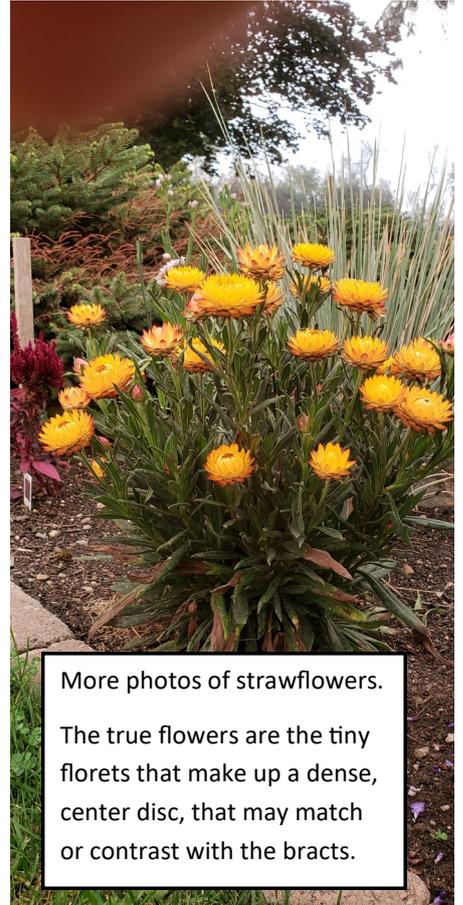


ADGC FACEBOOK PAGE: Have you visited or "liked" our club's Facebook page? Special thanks to Ken Barr who regularly adds interesting information and events to the page!
 Visit: <https://www.facebook.com/ArmstrongandDistrictGardenClub/>

Garden Related Trivia:



100 year old rhododendron and the women who planted it.



More photos of strawflowers.
The true flowers are the tiny florets that make up a dense, center disc, that may match or contrast with the bracts.



Benefits of Volunteering

The benefits of volunteering are huge – improved physical and mental health, new friends and avoiding loneliness, a sense of purpose and deeper self-confidence. In turn, *all* of these things will help to boost your overall happiness: a win-win situation for all involved.



Upcoming Events:

Please stay posted on the proposed event at Memorial Park on Tuesday, September 14.
Also, see your email for upcoming meeting information.

ADGC members are now eligible to receive between 10% and 15% off regularly priced garden centre plants. Show your ADGC membership badge to the cashiers prior to sale.



THANK YOU!

Thank you to this month's newsletter contributors— Heather F., Sue L., Glenn, Paul, Mary Jane D., Carolyn F., and co-editors Heather H. and Mary J.

About ADGC:

The Armstrong and District Garden Club was established in 1927 and is an active, fun group with over 30 members. The club supports the community through donations, student bursaries, planting along PV Boulevard, and supporting initiatives such as Communities in Bloom.

