

SEEDERS AND WEEDERS NEWSLETTER



MAY 2023

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 - Tracee Andrews

Treasurer - Sue Wiebe

Membership Secretary - Chris Williams

Past President - Glenn Gytenbeek 250-546-9891; 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 Jan

EXECUTIVE MEETING - 5:30 PM before General Meeting

Executive Report

Thank you to all those who have stepped up to help with the Plant Sale. It is encouraging to have some new faces stepping up to help our long time stalwarts. I am putting in an order for a nice day but not too hot but my connections may not ensure good weather.

We are still looking for volunteers to pick up small or short term jobs such as organizing a garden tour, contacting or suggesting a speaker, helping with set up or clean up. Glen is still looking to fill his roster for taking care of the city planters. Please feel free to offer your help to any executive member.

Many thanks to all who helped with the successful plant sale. The following link will let you look at pictures of the events thanks to Mary Jane Duford.

<https://armstronggardenclub.com/2023-plant-sale-photo-gallery/>

Carolyn

MEMBERSHIPS ARE NOW DUE. PLEASE BRING TO A MEETING OR MAIL A CHECK TO CHRIS WILLIAMS AT #2-2435 OKANAGAN ST, ARMSTRONG, V0E 1B1. Newsletters and notices will only be sent to paid members after this month.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR THE ANNUAL
PLANT SALE ON MAY 13, 2023 ON THE IPE
FAIRGROUNDS FROM 8 TO NOON.

Contact Sue Weibe or Glen if you are planning to donate plants or other items. Help is also needed the day of the sale. Summer potluck being planned for July 22, 2023 from 4 - 7 PM at Sue Wiebe's house. RSVPs will be required by July 10. Bring your lawn chairs and cutlery/plates and a dish to feed at least 8 people. Cold punch and tea/coffee will be provided. Significant others or spouses are welcome.

GUEST SPEAKER

INTRODUCTION TO XERISCAPE - Signia Kendrick from
Okanagan Zeriscape Association

She is Master gardener whose grandfather was a rose breeder in Australia and spent time in Saudia Arabia where water is almost none existent.

Xeriscape is gardening with nature and is the most effective way to garden. Xeriscaping is not just rocks and cactus. It is removing turf and some trees and

Seven Basic Principles are:

1. Planning and Design

It is a big job that requires gradual changes. Mulch and soil improvement are essential but it can save you a lot of money over time. Source information from reliable sources. Missouri and Chicago Botanicals are the most trusted and reliable

2. Assess your needs

Sunlight, drainage - plant water thirsty plants lower, group plants by water needs.

Do you really need a lawn

3. Utilizing existing

Create a sense of place

Biodiversity equals balance

4. Make a maintenance plan

Keep time and abilities in mind along with your budget

Choose minimal maintenance instead of high maintenance

Carefully choose trees you want, deciduous provide summer shade and winter light.

5. Make a working plan

Check plan for future maintenance time, costs and work

Start small and learn as you go

6. Soil improvement will save you money

Its hard to amend soil once you have planted

Clay soil and sandy soil both need mulch

Options is to use raised beds with native plants in native soil

Benefit of mulch is water retention, natural fertilizer, weed suppression ,soft soil,

Keep your mulch away from stems of the plants

Mulch any time and good idea to top dress spring and fall

Rock mulch = heat and leaves

Pea gravel is a better alternative, landscape fabric does not work

Practical turf areas - add organic matter, choose seeds carefully and don't mow, let it grow

Eco lawn

Alternatives to lawn is using ground covers, shrubbery, and hard covers like gravel

Climate modeling is showing increasing heat and the need to be proactive. Use rainwater as a resource.

Design to minimize water needs. Use water wise plants.

Check the zone.

Water early and late and take advantage of professional set up. Drip irrigation reduces 20-30 % of water needed. ALL plants need water until established and fall planting is often more successful.

Yarrow is the best plant for pollinators. Fertilizer should be organic and avoid over fertilizing.

7. Use the right plant in the right place

Four season interest keeps gardens attracting attention for the whole year. Use plants hardy to zone 5 or 6. Plant for mature size. Foliage color is often more important than blooms in xeriscape gardens.

10 Essential Spring Gardening Tasks

Spring is the most active time to be in the garden. Using all the pent-up energy we've accrued over winter, let's head outdoors to clean out and prepare our garden beds, repair landscaping, do a little pruning and moving, and start the growing season off right. Here are ten things you can do to launch the spring season successfully.

Contributors: Susan Martin



1. Time for a spring inspection.

On one of the first warm days of spring, put on your inspector's hat and head out to the garden with a notepad. It's time to see what happened in the garden while you were indoors all winter. Take note of:

Cold, ice or snow damage on plants

Beds that will need to be cleaned out

Landscaping elements—walls, fences, benches, sheds, trellises—that have shifted, bowed or rotted

Evidence of new animal burrows from skunks, chipmunks, moles and voles, groundhogs or rabbits. Also, note any deer or rodent damage on woody plants.

2. Address landscaping issues first.



In early spring before the ground is ready to be worked, focus your energy on landscaping. This is the time to repair damaged retaining walls, level out your stepping stones, clean out your gutters, and fix fences, benches, decks, sheds, trellises, window boxes and raised beds. These tasks are easier to accomplish while your plants are still resting safely dormant. Early spring is also a good time to plan for and build new raised gardens, widen existing ones, and tidy up your beds' edging. When temperatures allow, add a fresh coat of paint, stain or sealant to any landscaping elements made of wood.

3. Do a thorough spring cleanup.

Ideally just before your spring bulbs start to pop up, clean the plant debris out of your garden beds. This includes fallen branches, matted down leaves, last year's perennial foliage, ornamental grasses and perennial hibiscus, and any annuals you didn't remove last fall. Maintaining good hygiene in your garden beds will help to keep pests and diseases at bay.

Now is also a good time to clean out debris from your pond or water feature. While you're at it, scrub and sterilize your bird bath and containers before setting them back out into the garden. A 1 part bleach/5 parts water solution should take care of any lingering diseases or insect eggs in your containers.

4. Test your garden soil.



Experts recommend testing your garden soil every 3-5 years to see what nutrients or organic materials it needs and which it has too much of. You might learn, for example, that your soil is very high in phosphorous, so you would avoid adding fertilizers that contain a lot of it. Or you might find out your soil is naturally alkaline, and need to add aluminum sulfate around your evergreens and acid-loving shrubs like hydrangeas. Detailed instructions on how to collect and submit your soil sample is available on your state's Extension Service website.

5. Feed your soil.

Once you know what your garden soil needs based on your test results, talk with someone at your local garden center about which specific products to use, always following package instructions for best results.

A good general practice is to top dress the soil with an inch or two of compost, humus and/or manure in early spring just before or as your bulbs are starting to emerge. That's also a good time to sprinkle an organic slow release plant food like Espoma's Plant-tone or Rose-tone around your perennials and shrubs. Earthworms and other garden creatures will do the job of working these organic materials down into the soil for you.

6. Get out a sharp pair of pruners.



Spring is a good time to prune *some kinds* of woody shrubs and trees.

We've created a detailed guide for you to follow here: [Pruning Demystified](#).

Here are a few highlights:

Start by pruning out anything that has been broken or damaged by winter ice, snow and cold. Remove dead wood, too.

Follow the general rule that flowering shrubs which bloom on new wood (this year's growth) can be trimmed in spring. This includes summer flowering shrubs like [butterfly bush](#), [smooth hydrangea](#) (*H.*

arborescens), *panicle hydrangea* (*H. paniculata*), *potentilla*, *rose of Sharon*, and *roses*. Their flower buds will be set on the new flush of growth that appears after you prune it.

Spring is also a good time to shear back evergreens like *boxwood* and *arborvitae* once their initial flush of new growth has finished emerging. DO NOT prune early flowering shrubs and those that bloom on old wood (last year's stems) like *azalea*, *forsythia*, *lilac*, *quince*, *ninebark* and *weigela* in spring. If you do, you'll risk cutting off this year's flower buds. You might not be able to see them, but they are there, so resist the urge to prune.

7. Divide perennials and transplant shrubs.



In early spring when they are just beginning to pop up, divide and transplant any perennials that have outgrown their space or grown large enough to split, if desired. In most cases, it's best to divide and move perennials in the opposite season of when they bloom. That means moving summer and fall blooming perennials in spring, and spring blooming perennials in fall. This avoids disrupting their bloom cycle.

Evergreen shrubs can be moved in early spring before their new growth appears or in early fall to give them enough time to re-establish their roots before winter. Deciduous shrubs can be moved almost anytime they are not in bloom and the weather is mild, but generally spring and fall are the

preferred seasons for transplanting. If you move them while they are dormant, there will be less stress on the plants and they will be more likely to spring back into action quickly.

8. Put out any necessary supports like trellises and stakes.

If you've brought a trellis into the garage or shed for winter, early spring is a good time to bring it back out into the garden. Make sure it's sturdy and apply a fresh coat of paint if needed before using it again. If you grow peonies, delphiniums, or any other perennials that require support, set them out now or get them ready to go. Trying to wrangle tender peony stems into a peony ring is tough work once their leaves have unfurled.

9. Plant your spring containers and borders.



Though most annual flowers need the soil to warm up a bit before planting, some cool weather loving plants like [pansies](#), [nemesia](#), and [osteospermum daisies](#) won't mind if you plant them in the garden early. Fill your spring containers with [sweet alyssum](#), [lobelia](#) and [Supertunia petunias](#), too. You'll find six solutions for cool weather plantings [in this article](#). For most other annuals, it's a good idea to wait until your area's last frost date to plant. Your local Extension Service website lists that date on their website.

10. Be ready to take cover if freezing temperatures are in the forecast.

If you garden in an area where late spring frosts and freezes are a possibility, be prepared to cover up plants that have tender emerging buds or foliage if freezing temps are in the forecast. If the buds haven't begun to open yet, there's no need to cover them.

Old sheets and towels that have been relegated to the rag pile are a good option, and professional row cover is available for purchase, too. DO NOT cover tender plants with plastic sheeting or tarps. The effect of the plastic

touching the newly emerging buds and foliage will magnify the cold's effect, rather than mitigate it.

GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

ARMSTRONG AND DISTRICT GARDEN CLUB
GENERAL MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, MAY 2, 2023, 7:00 PM
ODDFELLOW'S HALL, ARMSTRONG

A very informative talk on Xeriscaping 101 was presented by Signia Kendrick from Okanagan Zeriscape Association (OXA)

1. Call to Order

President, Carolyn Farris called the meeting to order at 8:30 PM with 17 members and 8 guests present.

In the absence of the recording secretary Carolyn agreed to take the minutes.

2. Approval of Agenda

Mary Jackson moved approval of the agenda, CARRIED

3. Approval of March Minutes

Sue Rook moved to approve the April 2023 minutes as circulated in the newsletter. CARRIED

4. Correspondence - None

5. Treasurer's Report

Sue Wiebe presented the Treasurer's report. The club is in good financial shape.

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

6. Old Business

a. Plant Sale Committee Plans report

Plans are all coming together. Reminders were given to bring wagons if possible and volunteers are needed at 6:00 AM to help with set up, workers through the sale and to clean up.

b. Banners for City - We are not able to be part of this time around as we missed the deadline. Our hope for better notice next time was expressed to several city personnel.

c. Volunteer to organize Garden Tour(s)

Mark your calendars for June 10 for the Vernon People Place Fund Raiser Garden Tour.

d. Petunia planting and maintenance

Glen will be organizing the planting and a few weeks in August still need people to check the planters.

e. Summer Potluck Social will be held Saturday July 22, 2023 at Sue Wiebe's place from 4- 7 PM. Bring your own chair, dishes and cutlery and a dish big enough for 8 to share. The club will provide punch, coffee and tea.

7. New Business

None

8. Adjournment and next meeting

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM.

Next meeting Tuesday, June 6, 2023 at Oddfellow's Hall.

Garden Club Social - Saturday July 22, 2023 at Sue Wiebes from 4- 7 PM

THANK YOU

Appreciation and thank you to Shirley Fowler for arranging speakers and Sue Rook for the door prizes.

We all enjoyed the treats provided by Chris Williams and Diane Lockton.

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.