



The Spade & The Hoe

Volume 7 Issue 5

May 2009

From the Desk of Pamela Frank

A couple of months back I received a call from a man asking for a rescue. He had gone on the internet starting with 'gardeners' and ending up with Glenview Gardeners and my phone number. Daniel was moving to Florida and he desperately needed a new home for his house plants — about twelve aloe plants, four asparagus ferns and a very large poinsettia — and worms. Yes, I said worms. Daniel had a successful worm farm, or vermiculture, going made up of redworms. The vermiculture is what really caught my attention because my husband Larry was talking about taking up this hobby. He found a good website for learning all about composting with redworms, <http://whatcom.wsu.edu/ag/compost/redwormsedit.htm>, where they discuss a worm box system. Kitchen wastes can be converted to rich humus with the help of redworms. Daniel's worm bins were about one year old and filled to the top with dirt (worm castings) so Larry removed one half of the dirt from each of the boxes. He has filled up six five-gallon buckets so far. On the empty half of the box he put in shredded newspaper bedding, leaves and kitchen food scraps. Also some sand is needed for grit because the redworms have no teeth. If you are lucky you might end up with a bagful of worm poop from me. What do worms like to eat? Most things that would normally go down the garbage disposal can go into your worm bin. We have been 'feeding' our worms coffee grounds, fruit and vegetable scraps and egg shells. I've been hawking the aloe plants and ferns as you should know if you were at the April meeting. I still have some aloes and the poinsettia that need a home.

May Program

On Tuesday, May 12th, at 7:00 P.M., we will meet at the home of Gloria & Len Tralmer for a members' plant exchange.

The greatest service anyone can render his country is to add a new plant to its culture.

- Thomas Jefferson

April Program

Adele Klein presented a program on Let's Grow Shrubs. Thanks to Ginny Hindman for providing refreshments.

The lesson I have thoroughly learnt, and wish to pass on to others, is to know the enduring happiness that the love of a garden gives.

- Gertrude Jekyll

Membership List Additions and Changes

Rosette Swanson
3931 Brett Lane
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Helpful Hints

Bothered by chipmunks or squirrels in your pots? A few drops of Pine-Sol can do the trick. Or put a small vial of ammonia next to the plants in your pots. The Pine-Sol may work in your bird feeders.

To keep deer away, sprinkle your garden with a mixture of crushed garlic, garlic powder and dill pickle juice.

Through the Garden Gate

It is so curious how April can be warm one day and chilly the next. We certainly have had our fill of April showers!

Now we are anxious to see our May flowers. The clean-up of my beds went rather easy this spring, or maybe I'm just getting the hang of it. Dividing some of the plants is what takes so much time. The secret of a really great garden is to divide and replant your plants all over the garden. That's what makes all the beds tie in together, and makes for a lovely garden that's easy on the eyes. A mistake that new gardeners always make is to buy 'one of these and one of those'. You can't have a nice garden with onesies. It looks too chopped up. It's better to get a few plants, and repeat them in every bed.

There is no rule that says veggies must be in their own bed. I have had tomatoes in the middle of a flower garden, peppers growing along side cone-flowers, cucumbers and squash climbing into shrubs. Be innovative in your garden!

Esther



For Sale/Giveaway

Pam has lots of large aloes to give away and also a big poinsettia. Marjorie Cox wants to sell an extra rain barrel for \$45. Please call them.

Give me a spark of Nature's fire. That's all the learning I desire.

- Robert Burns

Heads Up on the Garden Walk and Plant Sale

Brigitte is in need of two more gardens for the garden walk. Sunday, June 14th, is the date of our annual garden walk and plant sale. Please call her and offer yours. It really is no big deal to put your garden on the list this year. She also needs two more hosts for the gardens. Call Brigitte if you have any



questions about this. Gardens in any condition are needed! Please help! Just a reminder: kindly label each plant you provide with its name and preference of sun or shade. And, think about potting up those plants as you divide your overgrown plants. We need lots of plants for the sale.

There is not a sprig of grass that shoots uninteresting to me.

- Thomas Jefferson

More Helpful Hints

To get rid of aphids, leafhoppers, mealybugs, spider mites and whiteflies, mix 1/2 cup of rubbing alcohol with a quart of water and lightly mist infected plants.

Another way is to mix 1/3 cup cooking oil and 1 tsp. baking soda and store in a jar. Combine 2 tps of mixture with 1 cup water in a sprayer and lightly spray the infected plants.

Place used dryer sheets or coffee filters in the bottoms of flower pots to keep the soil from falling out.

If you don't have a compost pile, during the winter save banana peels in a bag in the freezer. Then when it's time to plant tomatoes, dig a hole 2" deeper than usual and lay the peels in it, cover with some soil, then plant the tomatoes. You'll be surprised how vigorous your plants will be.

Cut off the bottom of plastic milk or soda bottles and use them on seedlings as cloches. Remove the caps during the day.

Use plastic berry containers to start seedlings. The clear covers help keep the soil moist for germinating.

Nothing is a better lesson in the knowledge of plants than to sit down in front of them and handle them and look them over just as carefully as possible.

- Gertrude Jekyll

New Feature at Garden Walk

The board decided to feature garden books and garden magazines along with our plants for sale at the Garden Walk. So, cull through your books to weed out those you don't use as reference and add them to your list of plants to donate to our sale. Please pot up good-looking plants, just the kind you would purchase yourself. Remember to identify each pot as your mother isn't working here to mark your plants for you.

Gardeners' Container Challenge

Fill a container with plants early this season. After a summer of tender, loving care, a photographer will photograph them in August. Members will vote on a few winners and prizes will be awarded. The containers may be hanging, patio pots, window boxes, etc., but must be planted by a member.

Japanese Beetles

The beetle overwinters here as a grub in the soil below the frost line. In the spring, the grub resumes feeding on the roots of grass mainly and then pupates near the surface. Emerging in early July they fly to trees, shrubs and rose bushes in the rose family and begin feeding. They live for about a month. After mating, they lay eggs in small groups in the ground near the surface. Each female can lay 40-60 eggs. These hatch in 2 weeks and the young grubs feed on fine rootlets until frost drives them deep into the soil. Adult feed on about 300 species of plants, from roses to grape vines and shrubs to trees. They feed on plants in the sunshine. Roses are their favorites, but also crabapples, flowering cherry, Japanese maple, Norway maple, sycamore, pussy willow, linden, elm, Virginia creeper, azalea, quince, weigelia, wisteria, privet, bayberry, viburnum, mountain ash, and flowering almond. However, they do not like to eat dogwood, forsythia, holly, snowberry or lilac.



Control for Japanese Beetles

The best control for beetles is systemic insecticides that are applied to the foliage of the host plant, including Bayer Rose & Flower Insect Killer, or, Ortho Systemic Insect Killer. These work as contact killers when wet and stay in the foliage for 30 days killing insects that eat the leaves or suck juices from them. Bayer Tree & Shrub Insect Control is drenched at the root collar of trees and shrubs, where the trunk enters the soil, and is absorbed in 1-2 months and stays in the plant for 1 year. Other insecticides like Sevin are effective if applied whenever insects are present. Neem Oil is an organic that repels but does not kill insects. To kill the grubs, the best product is Milky Spore applied in late July or early August. Also try Scott's Grubex or Bayer's Season Long Grub Control which are absorbed into the grass roots and stay there for 8-10 weeks. If you already have grubs, use Bayer 24-hour Grub Control.

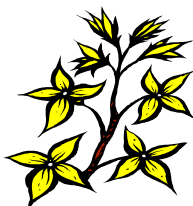
- Chalet Garden Center

Eventually, a gardener becomes a philosopher.

- Barbara Dodge Borland

When to Plant Herbs

Basil — 1 week after last frost
Borage — 1 week after last frost
Chives — 1 week after last frost
Dill — 1 week after last frost
Oregano — 1 week after last frost
Parsley—a month before last frost
Rosemary—1 week after last frost
Sage — 1 week after last frost
Tarragon— 1 week after last frost
Thyme— 2 weeks before last frost



In May, remember to:

- plant summer- and fall-flowering bulbs after the 15th;
- prune spring blooming trees and shrubs after they bloom;
- remove spent flowers from spring bulbs but leave the foliage;
- pinch back fall bloomers once a week until mid-July (mums, asters, tall sedums);
- when cutting the lawn, do not bag up the grass so you will not have to apply fertilizer;
- plant tomatoes, peppers and eggplant transplants after mid-May;
- plant seeds of vine crops after the 15th (cucumbers, melons, pumpkins, squash);
- plant containers, adding a slow-release fertilizer when planting them;
- plant string or pole beans 1" deep.

We would be happy if we studied nature more in natural things and acted according to nature, whose rules are few, plain, and most reasonable.

- William Penn

When to Plant Vegetables

Asparagus — now
Beans—1 week after last frost
Beets— 2 weeks before last frost
Carrots — now
Corn — 2 weeks after last frost
Eggplants—a month after last frost
Lettuce — now
Onions — now
Peas— 2 weeks before last frost
Peppers — a month after last frost
Potatoes—2 weeks before last frost
Radishes — now
Rhubarb — now
Spinach — now
Squashes — 2 weeks after last frost
Tomatoes — 2 weeks after last frost
Turnips — now

The last frost date in our area is usually mid-May, around the 16th.

What's Blooming Table

Thanks to Carol Tafel for showing her bromeliad and to Pam for an aloe at our April meeting.

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