

Hortiscopia

Carver County
Horticultural Society
(CCHS)

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NEWSLETTER OF THE CARVER COUNTY HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY, AUGUST, 2004

"In search of my mother's garden – I found my own." -- Alice Walker

Our First Plant Sale As many of you are aware – because you graciously donated divisions, seedlings and other plants – we participated in an All Garden Club Plant Sale, sponsored by the Ornamental Grass Society of Minnesota, on June 12. This is a sale that we weren't going to pursue initially, because I was going to be out of town, and it didn't look like anyone wanted to head it up. Thankfully, Sharon Hartung and Judy Hart volunteered to coordinate it. I'm so glad they did. Believe it or not, CCHS made \$300 that day on your plant donations. Isn't that amazing? Will we participate next year, if the sale is offered again? I think so!!

What's blooming in the Hentz Garden? Out front, the two daylilies, 'Prairie Blue Eyes' and 'Summer Wine' look great, although I need to switch them. (When I planted them, I didn't know which would be taller – I guessed wrong.) The current stars of the blue island bed are balloon flower (*Platycodon grandiflorus*), monk's hood (*Aconitum*), phlox (*paniculata*) 'Blue Paradise,' and globe thistle (*echinops ritro*). The butterfly garden is bursting with milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*). 'Ice Ballet' is the white one I planted, but there's also a pink one blooming that I didn't plant. (The seed must revert back to the original species.) The south foundation garden is teeming with yellow ox eye daisies (*Heliopsis helianthoides* 'Summer Sun'). It seeds readily, and I had intended to pull up extra seedlings this spring but never did. Good thing. The goldfinches LOVE it! We've had some tremendous goldfinch sightings out the dinette window – as many as 8 finches on one plant, pulling out the yellow rays and munching on the center disks. (They loved the salvia this year, too!) Also took advantage of Mary Lambert's tip, and purchased four 'Endless Summer' hydrangeas (at \$15.99 from Brewery Creek) for my front (NE) foundation bed – replaced four of the six bleeding hearts that get so scruffy by mid-summer.

August To-Do List

- Make sure your plantings get extra water and fertilizer during the stressful heat of late summer
- Keep your mower height at 3 in or higher during the hottest part of the summer
- Keep deadheading and trimming browned leaves from your plants
- Dig and divide now – iris, daylilies. Move peonies now if they need to be moved.
- Also dig and divide spring-blooming plants that are going dormant, such as bleeding hearts
- Keep weeding – they're relentless!
- Start harvesting tomatoes and peppers
- Plant autumn flowering pots – mums, kale, grasses
- Aerate the lawn, if needed
- Late summer is the best time to seed a lawn
- Harvest seed-heads and flowers for drying

Cottage Garden

No cottage garden should be without a clump of Oswego tea, or bergamot (*Monarda didyma*). Also known as bee balm, it is an excellent plant for attracting bees and butterflies into the garden. The deep crimson, thistle-like flowers appear in midsummer and last until early fall. The leaves, stems, and roots give off a wonderful aroma when they are crushed, and the plant is widely used for making potpourri. Oswego tea is also the name given to the aromatic infusion that is made from its leaves. Oswego tea is a native of North American woodlands, and needs a cool, moist soil, in full sun or partial shade. It will grow to a height of up to 4 feet, depending on the variety.

from *Cottage Garden, A Journal*, by Jackie Bennett

Bergamot Tea

Pick a half dozen flowers of monarda, soon after they open, and rinse the blossoms in cool water. Remove stems and leaves, and coarsely chop flowers. Add two tablespoons of chopped flowers to four cups of boiling water. Steep mixture for five minutes (longer for a more intense flavor). Pour mixture through a strainer and discard flower pieces. Serve bergamot tea hot or cold.

Carver County Horticultural Society (CCHS) is a non-profit organization founded to expand our members' knowledge and horticultural skills while promoting civic beauty, community involvement and conservation of natural resources.

Membership is open to all genders, ages and skill levels.

Garden of Weedin'

This column will highlight some common garden weeds -- what they look like, what they're called, and what you can do about them!

Hairy Vetch *Vicia villosa*

Hairy vetch is a member of the legume family, and is often planted on farms as a cover crop, due to its high nitrogen content, and as a grazing crop. It is also often used by highway departments for erosion control. While it may create a beautiful site from a distance, with its blue-to-purple blooms in June & July, those of us who garden in Carver County consider it an insidious weed!

Hairy vetch is not winter hardy; however, it will reseed profusely every year. The best defense against hairy vetch is dogged persistence. Ideally, the plant should be pulled by the roots as soon as it is detected (its stem and leaf structure are distinctive, but it is most easily recognized in bloom). If infestation is too great for individual eradication, then it should be regularly mowed to keep the plant to no more than 6 inches. Eventually it will expire (hopefully before you do!).



Special Meeting Announcement

Tuesday, September 14, 2004

6:30 pm at the Hentz home

414 Ramsey Avenue, Carver

All members urged to attend

AGENDA

Business:

1. Formation of Nominating Committee (for 2004-05 Club Officers)
2. Formation of Program Committee (to select and book 2004-05 speakers)
3. Planning of 2004-05 program (discuss desired speakers and fee budget)

Program:

1. Horticopea Exchange (bring any plants or produce you'd like to exchange with other club members)
2. Annette will have a LOT of plants you can have; bring extra plastic pots!

Late Summer/Early Fall Divisions

You might try to deny it, but we're heading into fall. Two days ago I got my latest issue of *Country Living Gardener*, and there it was – Fall, 2004 issue. The cover is full of pumpkins, with articles on fall ideas and backyard bonfires. (sigh) When the dahlias start blooming, I know the end (of the season) is near!

This is the best time to divide some perennials – most notably, iris and daylilies. While dividing your iris, make sure you check for iris borer. Right about now the borers should be doing damage to the rhizomes, before they move into the soil for winter. Dispose of any plants that show evidence of borer damage. A couple of website links you might find helpful:

http://www.rossde.com/garden/garden_divide_iris.html

<http://www.usna.usda.gov/Gardens/faqs/DaylilyDivided.html>

If you still have the energy, they aren't the only perennials that can be divided or moved now. Some others are:

Astilbe
Bleeding heart (*Dicentra spectabilis*)
Shasta Daisy (*Leucanthemum x superbum*)
Cranesbill (*Geranium sanguineum*)
Jacob's ladder (*Polemonium reptans*)
Lungwort (*Pulmonaria saccharata*)
Monkshood (*Aconitum* spp.)
Phlox
Sneezeweed (*Helenium autumnale*)
Soapwort (*Saponaria officinalis*)
Spiderwort (*Tradescantia x andersoniana*)
Veronica
Yarrow (*Achillea* spp.)

Don't miss our **late August** meeting!

Otto's Flora Dora Gardens Tour
11515 County Road 24, Watertown
Monday, August 30, 2004, 7:00 pm

Make sure you check your local garden center for end of the season bargains. Those close-out perennial might look dreary above the soil, but you know what's underneath. Shop now for next season!