WEEDER'S DIGEST

APRIL 2025

A publication of the Kelowna Garden Club www.kelownagardenclub.ca

March winds

April showers

May flowers

(March winds and April showers bring forth May flowers)

April Meeting:
Tuesday, 1 April 2025

Evangel Church, in the Fellowship Room

3261 Gordon Drive (south of KLO)

Enter through southwest door

Doors open at 6 pm,

meeting starts at 6:30 pm

HAVEN'T PICKED UP YOUR MEMBERSHIP CARD YET? This is the card that gets you discounts at some nurseries. Stop by the membership desk at the next meeting to pick it up. If you can't attend meetings, your card can be mailed to you. We try to avoid the cost of mailing but if it's the only option for you, please let me know. Bev Thomas 250-762-7610 membership@kelownagardenclub.ca

PLANT SALE: all the details. Page 2

KGC Flower Show 2025 is a GO! See page 3

April's Speaker

DON BURNETT

The Garden Expert

"Backyard Greenhouses"

Don was born and raised in Kelowna into a family greenhouse and nursery business that was started by his grandfather Arthur Burnett in 1922.

In 1997 the property was sold and Don became a consultant with a Landscape certification, a certification in Arboriculture, and an ISA certification in Tree Risk Assessment.

The family business had over 1 acre of heated greenhouses so when Don semi-retired in 2017 he decided to build his own back yard greenhouse. Not just any greenhouse but a computer-controlled environment which operates 12 months of the year.

He has shared this experience many times to private homeowners who wish to build or have one built in their yard.

His presentation will include small unheated cold frames to the greenhouse he built in his own yard.

The plant sale is coming

Saturday, May 3, 9 am until noon

Guisachan Heritage Park
1060 Cameron Ave, Kelowna
ltomlinson45@gmail.com 403-845-0233

Please bring your donations of tropicals, cacti, succulents, perennials, shrubs, trees, annual/ vegetable seedlings to the park **on Friday May 2 from 4 – 6 pm where volunteers will price them for the sale.**

Pot up the plants a couple weeks in advance and put as much information as possible on the containers or popsicle sticks. Color of flower is always helpful, especially with irises and daylilies, as people are more likely to make a purchase if it's a different colour to what is already in their yard. If you plan to start cuttings, do it now so they have time to grow as many roots as possible.

If you have extra pots, please let Linda know or bring them to the April 1st meeting. Do not bring them into the meeting but let Pam, Jim or Linda know and they will help you connect with people who need them. People who want pots can collect them on the way home. The alternative is to let Linda know and she will pass on the information to those who need pots.

In addition, we have a donation of soil from Joshua Langfield, of SiteOne Landscaping for members who are potting up plants for the Plant Sale. The soil is available at Linda's house. Call/text/email before you go: ltomlinson45@gmail.com 403-845-0233.

If you have plants but need help with digging or delivering, we will help you. Just add your name to the list at our April 1st meeting. If you can help at the sale you will have the opportunity to sign up at the April meeting. **All help is appreciated**.

Last year there was an impressive number of plants for sale and as many customers. Please help make this one just as successful by bringing plants, buying plants, and encouraging others to attend. BONUS: SiteOne Landscaping offers wholesale prices to KGC members.

Photos from last year's Plant Sale

THANK YOU TO OUR NEW ASSISTANTS

Thank you to the following club members who volunteered to fill some of our open positions:

Marilyn Degraw for volunteering to be our Flower Show Coordinator
in addition to all the other positions (Grow and Show, Christmas Party, Flower Show Judge) she covers for our club.

Victoria Roscoe for volunteering to be our Reviewer of Books
even though she is also our Technical Assistant.

Christine Ransom and Esti Blackburne for volunteering to be our Snack Assistants.

HELP WANTED!

We are still recruiting for the Vice-President position

Please let Marian Morry (President@KelownaGardenClub.ca) know if you are willing to fill this position or if you have any questions about it.

The Vice President recruits monthly speakers (4 already signed-up) and 5-minute tip speakers, coordinates with the workshops and excursions assistants, assists with events as needed. The Vice-President will become the President the following year. Time commitment is approximately 5-10 hours a month as Vice-President (and 5 hours a week as President).

OPEN GARDENS

2025 would be a great time
to open your garden!

We all love to visit other's gardens and get new ideas for our own. Have you considered sharing your garden with other members? You can choose the time and date that works for you. A two hour window is the usual length of time for members to visit. Perhaps springtime planting is a great time to show your vegetable garden or June is the best time for your perennial beds or your garden is glorious in the Fall.

Any size or stage of development would be of interest to members!

Please contact Nancy Kummen at nancykummen@gmail.com
or
Nancy Webb at nancywebb1@hotmail.com
to discuss your open garden ideas!

2025 Events, Speakers, Workshops

April 1	April Meeting
May 3	KGC Plant sale
June 14	Flower Power Garden Tour
June 28	KGC Flower Show
June	TBA
No meetings July and August	
November 4	AGM and Year in Review
December 2	Christmas Party

Speakers 2025

April 1	Don Burnett – Backyard Greenhouses 5 minute topic: Facts & Fictions about Wildflower Mixes
May 6	Rachael Fleming - Ornamental Grasses 5 minute topic: TBA
June	TBA
July and August—no meetings	
September 2	Radna Jevdevic —Gardens for the 21st Century
October 7	Elaine Sedgman—BC Native Bees

Workshops

Thursday, April 17, 1-3 pm **1449 Aspen Court**	**Plant Sale Succulents Workshop** Put together succulent pots for the plant sale
Tuesday, May 13, 3-5 pm	**DIY Herb Container (**maximum 15 people)
Wednesday, June 11, 1-4 pm	**Painted Pots, $10 plus bring your own pot** (maximum 14 people)

Excursions

NEW Wednesday, April 2, 10 am **The Greenery Tour (max. 20 people**)
there will be a sign up sheet at our April 1 meeting for this new event.

FULL ~~Wednesday, April 9 The Greenery Tour~~ FULL

Ideas for Excursions and Workshops

Do you have an idea for an excursion or a workshop? Have you been on an excursion in the past that you believe club members would enjoy? Do you have a craft that you could share in a workshop?

Contact Jane Linden at jdlinden@shaw.ca and pass your ideas along.

NEWS FROM THE MEMBERSHIP DESK

The winner of our annual 'Early Bird Draw' was Patricia Campbell. Congratulations!
Denise and I processed 38 applications at the March meeting. Eight of these were from new members (6 singles and 2 family). We were also very busy on Seedy Sunday. Always such a popular event. There, we happily accepted 10 applications, five of which were for new members.
I was very grateful to have assistance from Richard and Shane, Kathy Kennedy and Janette Dascent at this event.. Bev Thomas

Dividing Perennials:

Did you lose March 2024's information about dividing perennials? Just in case you did, here it is again.

Dividing perennials is determined by the plant and its basic root structure.

Clump forming perennials
can either be divided by cutting off a section of the plant with a shovel or digging up the entire root and cutting it apart with a sharp knife or shovel. To be viable, each clump must have at least one eye or shoot.

Low growing, spreading groundcovers
can be split without removing the original plant. Look carefully at the plant to find where it is rooted and scoop up the plant and roots.

Plants also spread via **underground rhizomes** resulting in small plants or suckers appearing near the parent plant. Dividing this plant is as easy as digging up the offshoot and cutting the connecting root.

Bearded Irises have **fleshy rhizomes** that sit at soil level. To divide these plants, dig up the roots, and cut the fleshy rhizomes with a sharp blade. Each section must contain an eye or shoot. All bulbs can be dug up, separated and replanted.

Plant Sale Succulents Workshop

Do you have any succulents to spare?

Do you want to put together succulent pots for the plant sale?

Rachael Fleming has offered to host another succulents' workshop.

Thursday, April 17 from 1-3pm:

1449 Aspen Court.

Please contact Rachael at

coronation@shaw.ca

to donate succulents

or help with potting them up.

Who is in your yard?

By Marian Morry

Living in the Okanagan there is a lot of wildlife around. Deer and quail are very common but what else is visiting? For a few years we had marmots living across the street; they eat anything. Luckily, they moved on a couple of years ago. We also have racoons that cross our yard. So far, they haven't done much damage: they leave my green pail and composters alone, they do eat some Italian prune plums, but I have so many it doesn't matter. This year we had a black bear! We saw it up a neighbour's tree but know it was in our yard as it left us a pile of scat. I don't know if the cougar was in our yard, but it was in the yards across the street. Recently we have found tracks for a bobcat. Then there is the squirrel. He/she eats all of my hazelnuts. That would be bad enough but it seems to taunt me by getting a hazelnut and then sitting in front of my kitchen window to eat it and leaving a large pile of shells. We also have swallows who nest in our rock wall and can be seen diving for bugs. Unfortunately, this year my backyard camera caught sight of a rat. Only a few sightings but we believe it's coming from one of yards above us.

There are other visitors to our yards as well and certainly the pollinators are welcome. Many visitors though you may not see very often. Every year I see at least one Praying Mantis. I have even found a couple of their egg sacs in my yard. While the ones in my yard have been green or brown in colour, they can be hard to see. If you look carefully at this photo from my vegetable garden, you will see one hanging upside down.

I also get small frogs in the garden; I found this one sleeping on a Brussel sprout leaf. This summer we had a bat taking a nap in our outside blinds. They are nocturnal so we don't normally see them.

All three of these visitors eat insects so are very welcome in my yard.

I used to have a lot of problems with snails and slugs until the garter snakes started appearing more often. If fact, in 2023 we had 2 adult and 1 baby garter snakes in the yard. Last year 1 adult and 2 babies. There could be more but all snakes look the same to me so I can only count the ones I see at the same time. Starting in 2023 my snail and slug problem basically disappeared. No more half-eaten lettuce, cabbages full of slugs, strawberries with slug holes. For those of you who don't like snakes you should know they are more scared of you than you are of them. They also cannot hear so stomp your feet when you are walking so they can feel the vibrations and they will leave before you even know they are there.

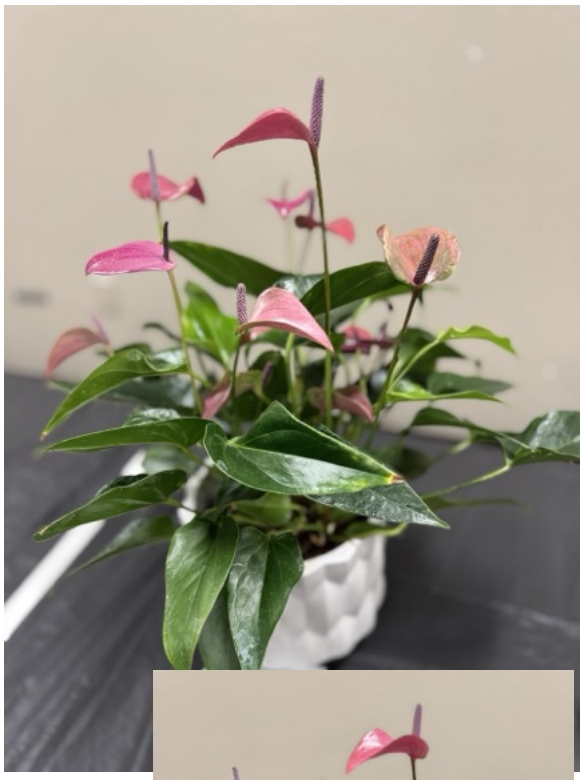
So, how do you encourage these beneficial visitors to your yard? Just like us they need access to food, water, and shelter. If you don't spray insecticides, your yards will naturally supply the food. For water, many of us have fountains or water bowls, but these may not be easily accessible for the Praying Mantis, frog, or snake. Consider a bowl at ground level to help them out. Shelter is also an easy one as the plants themselves provide shelter. For snakes, they like gaps in rock walls or piles of sticks to hide in; I have even seen them go under my Snow-in-Summer ground cover and disappear.

Finally, if you want to help the local bats, provide them with a bat house.

April 1, 2025 **Grow and Show**

Class 1**: "Lenten Rose"** - one stem of Hellebore with its own greenery; any variety, any colour.
Class 2: **"Blooming Branches"** - a display of up to three (3) branches in full bloom or forced into bloom, in a vase. Cut more than 3 branches to force into bloom, as sometimes no flowers or only 1 flower may bloom on a branch.
Class 3: **"Dancing Daffodils"** - a bouquet of one or more colours or varieties of Narcissi/Daffodils in a suitable vase.
Class 4: **"Happy Easter"** - an arrangement of flowers and greenery from your garden incorporating Easter accessories.
Class 5: **"Spring Tea"** - an arrangement of delicate flowers (all the same or mixed varieties) from your garden in a teacup.
Class 6: **"Wild Edibles"** - displayed in a mason jar. Wild edibles can be found in your garden, lawn, in the wild-bush, ditch, or creek.
Class 7: **"Show and Tell"**

Photos from March's Grow and Show



Diatomaceous Earth: A Natural Pest Control

Laurel Braun

Many of us are looking for ways to reduce or eliminate chemicals in the garden, but when slugs, cutworms, and other pests are eating our precious plants, we often get desperate and turn to chemicals.

A natural, effective way to deal with several pests is **diatomaceous earth**, a white ultra-fine powder. Diatomaceous earth is made from the fossilized remains of tiny aquatic organisms. When the fossils are ground into an ultra-fine powder, the particles are extremely sharp at a microscopic level. When used correctly, the diatomaceous earth will physically cut up and dry out the exoskeleton of the insect you are trying to kill. Diatomaceous earth is almost entirely made up of silica and some trace minerals; it is non-toxic and safe when applied correctly.

With any pest control, there are guidelines to application that must be followed to ensure beneficial insects and pollinators are not harmed as well as your own safety. Since the silica particles from the fossils are ultra-fine like glass, getting it in your eyes or lungs can be quite uncomfortable and cause irritation. Apply on a non-windy day and use gloves. If you are concerned, you may wish to use a mask to avoid inhalation. Despite this, people have been known to eat or feed diatomaceous earth to their farm animals and mix it in with grains in storage; food-grade diatomaceous earth it is not harmful when consumed.

How to Use Diatomaceous Earth

DE works by dehydrating soft-bodied insects like aphids, slugs, and beetles. You must use **FOOD-GRADE Diatomaceous Earth**, not the stuff for pool filters. Trust me, they are not the same.

- Lightly dust plant leaves, stems, and soil around the base of plants. You can apply by hand or using a sifter very close to the ground. Be careful not to get it on any flowers.
- Focus on plants and areas where the pests are typically gathering, make sure the area you are applying to is dry. Re-apply after rain or watering.
- To deter slugs, sprinkle the diatomaceous earth in a ring around the plants you want to protect; the slugs will not want to cross since it is so sharp.

Other Benefits of Diatomaceous Earth:

- **Improves Soil Health**

DE contains **trace minerals** that enrich the soil over time, supporting plant growth. It also helps aerate compacted soil, improve drainage and improve root health.

- **Safe for Organic Gardening**

Diatomaceous earth is an **approved organic solution** for vegetable gardening. It can be used directly on edible plants, just be sure to rinse your veggies before consuming.

- **Helps Control Moisture & Fungal Issues**

DE's absorbent properties make it a great **moisture regulator**. Sprinkling it around plants prone to rot or fungus can help keep excess moisture in check, reducing the risk of mold, mildew, and root diseases.

Diatomaceous earth is one of those **simple, time-tested garden hacks** that can make a real difference in plant health and pest control. Just remember to apply only to areas you know pollinators and beneficial insects will not be landing. Give it a try, and let nature do the work!

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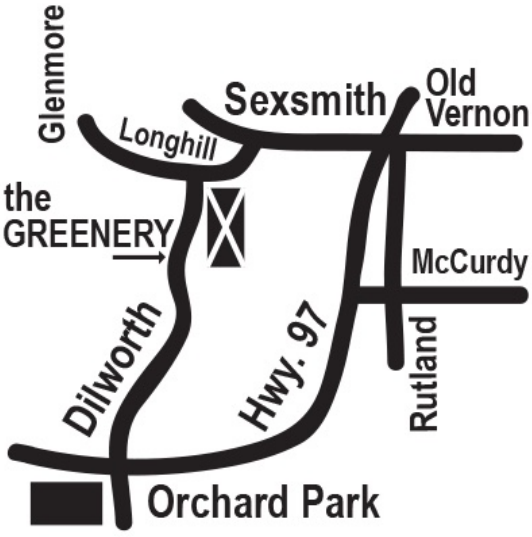

www.thegreenery.ca
facebook.com/greenerykelowna

How and Where to Get Fresh Produce

Food does not have to come from the grocery store. Fruits and vegetables can come from a variety of places including: a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) garden, community or individual gardens, Farmers Markets, fruit stalls, and u-picks.

CSA gardens are set up for individuals to partner with a market gardener. Individuals put up cash, or a guarantee of weekly cash, or both; in return they receive a portion of the produce grown on a weekly basis during the growing season.

It sounds and is usually great but there are risks involved. In the case of crop failure, regardless of the reason, the investment or money is not given back. While the gardener will do their best to grow an abundance of produce, they cannot control late frosts, too much rain, or hail storms. In other words when you sign up for a CSA garden you assume the same risks as the farmer.

Community gardens can be private, run by a board, or by the local municipality. Each garden will have their own rules with regard to pesticides, fertilizer and weed tolerance. A community garden works on the concept of renting a piece of land to plant, grow, weed and harvest a garden very similar to individual backyard gardens.

Before signing on, ask about the cost, size of plots, start up dates, fall clean up, and hours of operation.

There are Farmer's Markets and fruit stands throughout the valley. Try a number, they are not all equal.

U-pick is a market garden that is open at certain times for people to come in and harvest the crop. Some u-pick gardens will provide prepared produce for an added cost. (Linda Tomlinson)

Buying Bags of Bulbs (and corms and rhizomes)

Linda Tomlinson

Retail stores put out displays of bagged tubers, corms, bulbs and roots before it is possible to plant them outside. Usually there is a mixture of tender tubers, corms and rhizomes that need to be dug in the fall along with perennials that can grow in the garden for years. The roots have been kept in dark, cool storage since they were harvested in the fall.

The warmer temperatures and more light in the stores signals the roots that spring is on the way and dormancy is over. How fast the corms, tubers, bulbs and roots sprout is dependent on the variety, and temperature of the room.

Before making a purchase, look closely at the root. Leave the package on the shelf if the contents are shriveled. moldy, blemished or wrinkled.

A root that has just started to break dormancy can be placed in a cool or cold area to slow down the process. Roots that have developed sprouts will need to be planted either outside or in a pot until it can be placed outside.

Often perennial roots are packed in an opaque bag. It is impossible to look at the root but it is possible to feel new growth by gently feeling the shape of the root through the plastic.

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