

BATH GARDENING
CLUB NEWSLETTER –
SPRING 2021

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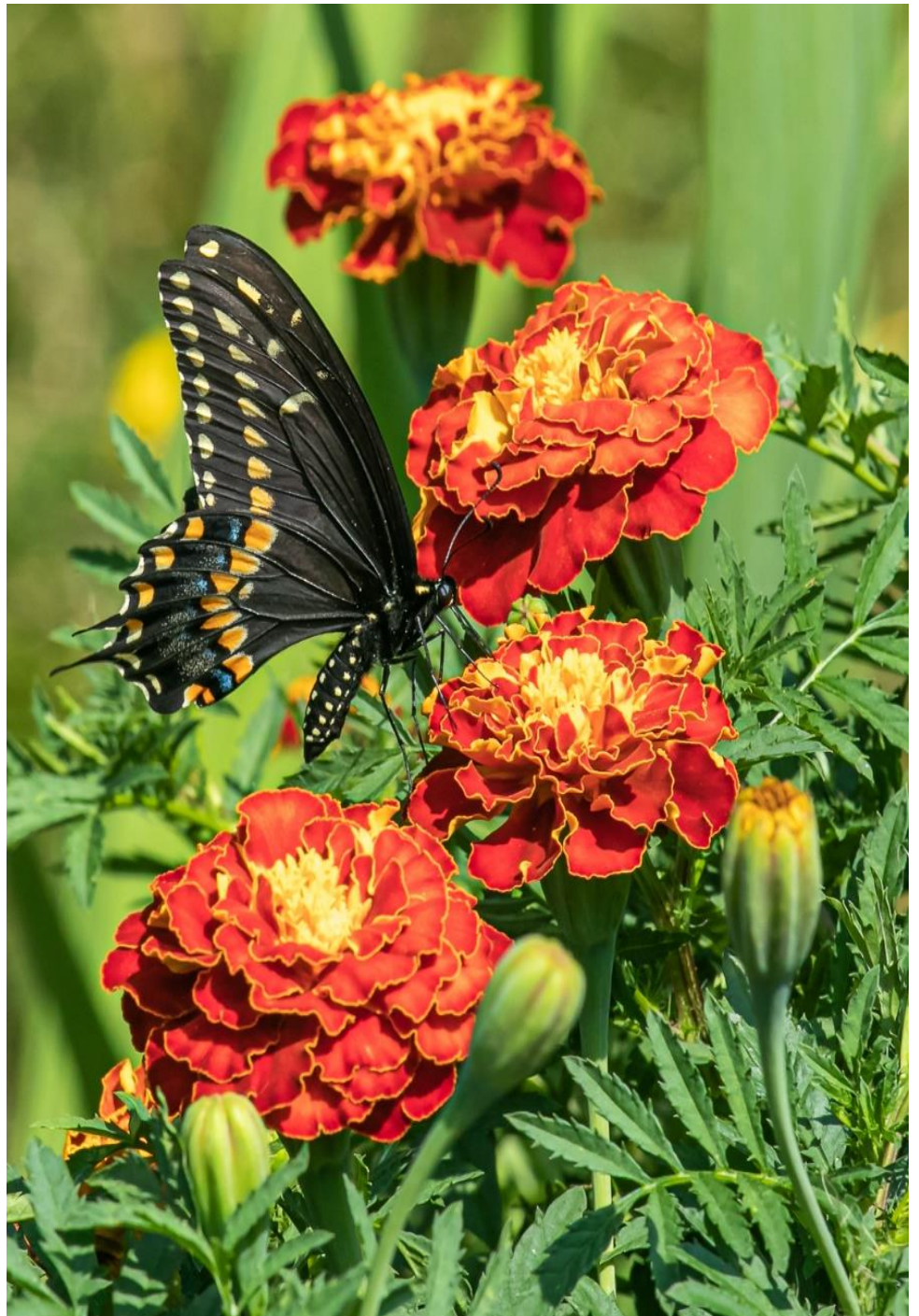


Photo by: Don Taylor

SUN HARVEST – WE LOVE TO GROW & IT SHOWS!

Sun Harvest provides the Bath Gardening Club with the flowers for the village and, in addition, offers a discount to Gardening Club members.

Here is their story:

In 2002, Allison Shannon and her family embarked on a growing journey, and built Sun Harvest Greenhouses on the original Shannon Homestead, at Glenburnie. They started growing hydroponic tomatoes and worked hard to grow and build the Sun Harvest brand for fresh-picked and tastier tomatoes, English cucumbers and lettuces from April to November. Their farm market store expands in the summer months to include a variety of field grown veggies that are the freshest possible, always picked the same day.

“The glory of gardening: hands in the dirt, head in the sun, heart with nature. To nurture a garden is to feed not just the body, but the soul.”

Alfred Austin (1835-1913)



Allison and her family's passion for growing continued with the expansion of their greenhouses to grow annuals and perennials. The Shannon family are proud of their efforts to have an established family-owned centre that has earned a solid reputation for growing plants and creating stunning hanging baskets and container combinations.

This year will be a year of colour for our village! With input from Allison, 358 plants were ordered by the Gardening Club in December and they are currently maturing in the Sun Harvest Greenhouses. These are the flowers that will grace our barrels, planters, gardens and the bridge this summer. Superpetunias – Royal Magenta, Bordeaux, Royal

Velvet, and White. Zahara Double Raspberry Ripple Zinnia and Senorita Rosalita Lavender Cleomes. For more information about Sun Harvest: check out bathgardeningclub.ca (click the downward arrow of Join Us, Membership Benefits section on the Home Page)



SYLVIA WHALEN SHARES HER SEEDING SUCCESS

Four years ago, instead of planting vegetable seeds, Sylvia decided to try growing petunias. When the seeds arrived by mail, she realized that each vial contained only 10 seeds at a cost of \$6. The pressure was on to make these petunias come alive! To her amazement, nine survived and flourished. That fall she left them until little seed sacs formed. Sylvia then harvested the seeds on a dry day and saved them in an envelope so that they would be ready for year two of planting. Sylvia's petunias did not disappoint. She is now into year 4 of seeding!

Here is the nitty gritty of Sylvia's seeding process:

- ✓ Sprinkle seeds in a tray of pre-moistened seedling starter mixture
- ✓ Position a plant heat mat under the tray to warm the soil
- ✓ Cover the tray with Saran Wrap until the seeds begin to sprout
- ✓ Remove the Saran Wrap and place T5 lights (grow lights) over the tray
- ✓ As the seeds begin to grow, raise the lights and keep soil moist

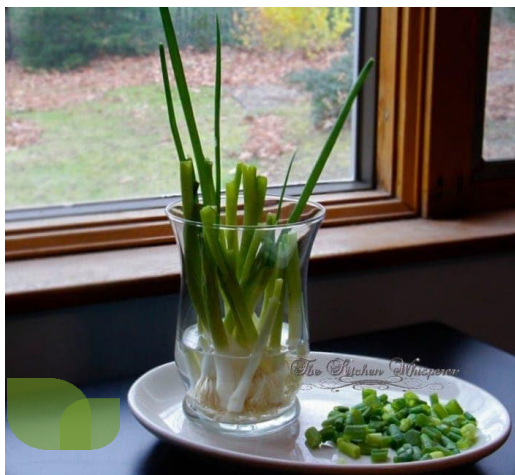
Hints: Weed out some of the seedlings so they are not crowded.

Once the seedlings have produced 3-4 secondary leaves, transplant each plant into a small but deep pot. About 2-3 weeks before they are planted in the garden, take them outside to acclimatize. At this point, be careful that seedlings do not get burned by direct sun or blown away by wind.



JANICE FIRTH – SEEDS, WINTER PLANTING AND GREEN ONIONS!

In March or April, Janice usually begins her indoor planting from harvested seeds that include profusion zinnias and wave petunias. This past February, Janice tried something new: winter planting. She put lettuce and spinach seeds in a container and placed them outside! Stay tuned! Janice published an article about Winter Gardening in her President's Update. This article was graciously provided by the Meaford Gardening Club. For more information and pictures, check out "Winter sowing seeds" online.



Meanwhile Janice is sharing an idea to keep us from running to the store:

Growing Green Onions All Year Round

- ✓ Place the bottom white part of the onion, 2-3" in length with the roots attached in a jar of water
- ✓ The water should cover the bulb and roots, leaving about ½" sticking out of the water
- ✓ Replenish the water daily until new roots are beginning to appear
- ✓ Either continue to let the stocks grow in the water or, plant them in soil
- ✓ Snip off what you need and enjoy!

SHERI WENZL IS GROWING HERBS AND USING THEM IN NEW RECIPES!

Having spent many years creating and maintaining extensive perennial beds in Sudbury before retirement, Sheri decided to focus on container planting when she moved to Bath. Container planting has given her more flexibility to travel, golf, see her grandkids and not bother the neighbours with the task of watering the flower beds! Sheri's focus at the moment is maintaining potted herbs which she picks up when shopping at grocery stores. For example: curly parsley, Italian parsley, rosemary, basil and thyme. She thinks that the secret to their successful growth is placing the plants in a westerly exposure. Sheri has been choosing new recipes using herbs every week. It is really amazing to freshly pick what you eat, especially in the dead of winter. If you like being frugal, growing your own herbs is advantageous. Sheri will be buying potted plants for the outside garden as well.

Hint: Plant mint in a separate container or it will envelope the whole garden.

SEED PLANTING IN THE NILSSON HOME

Sue and Brian Nilsson have been planting seeds indoors for the past two years. They have learned to avoid planting too early as plants tend to become "leggy", and to limit the number of seeds planted. This eliminates ending up with many more plants than needed. They also discovered that by the time the seedlings out-grew the starting tray, it became time-consuming to continuously transfer the seedlings into larger pots and to keep them watered.

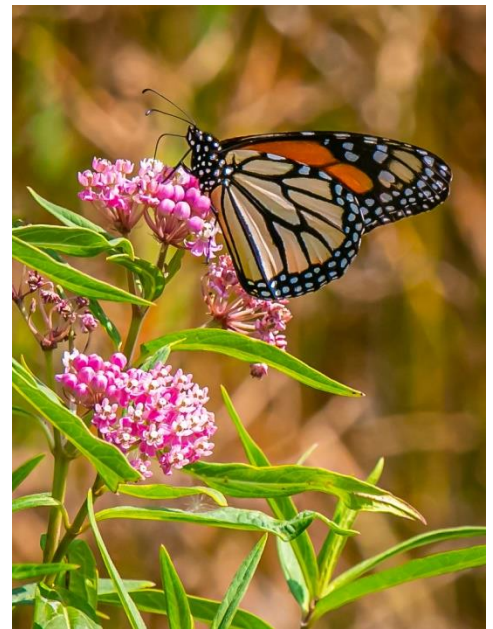
Sue and Brian harvest seeds from marigolds, zinnias, morning glories, sweet peas, scarlet runners, coreopsis, cosmos, blanket flower and milkweed. Other seeds that they start from a package, include tomatoes, cucumber, and zucchini. Dahlia and Cana lily bulbs that are dug up and stored in September are planted in pots in April.

The Nilsson Planting Hints:

- ✓ Fill trays with good potting soil before planting the seeds
- ✓ Try to replicate the greenhouse effect by spraying the soil with rain water to keep it moist and cover it with plastic containers of some sort e.g. empty clamshell containers from fresh produce
- ✓ Placing plants in locations where they will receive optimal sunlight improves growth. (They are fortunate to have an east/west exposure as well as a three-season sunroom. Their plants spend the mornings in the sunroom facing east and then in the afternoon are moved to the front of the house facing west.)

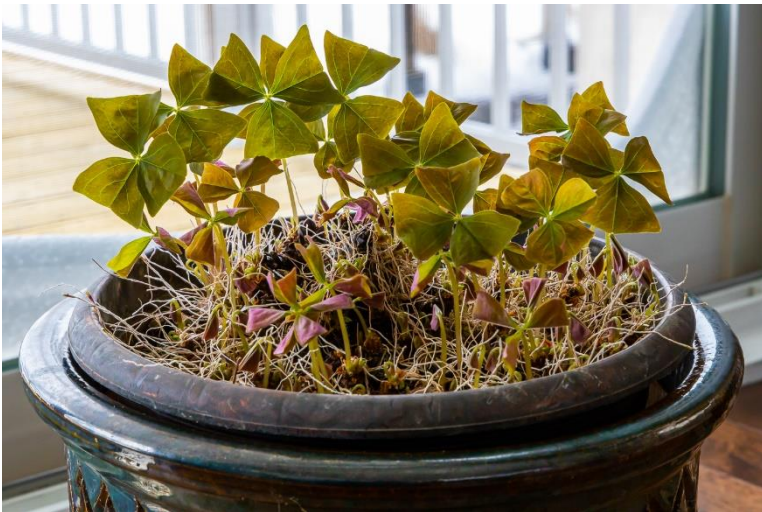
Other learnings from the Nilsson's:

- ✓ Zucchini, cucumbers and beans grow very large quickly so this year, they will be planted directly outside when the ground is ready.
- ✓ Less is more! One zucchini plant is sufficient for an entire household!
- ✓ Dill that was started from seed two years ago now reseeds itself in the garden providing enough dill for pickling
- ✓ Plants feel loved and cared for if they are talked to and they also love having music playing in the background!



ADRIENNE AND DAVE GOLDEN'S TOWER GARDEN

A few years ago, the Golden's purchased a tower garden complete with all of the accessories... starter seeds, small rock wool starter cubes, vermiculite, and timers for grow lights and watering. For Adrienne and Dave, their tower garden provides an opportunity to grow veggies and herbs from the comfort of their living room. They have planted a large variety of lettuce, peppers, cucumbers, eggplant and basil. If there is room, they even have planted tomatoes! Their tower garden, like every garden does require work and maintenance: a periodic check for PH balance, checking water levels and light conditions. Dave also reports that he talks to the garden daily. As gardeners, we know that chatting to your creations is very important for success!



WHO WOULD HAVE THOUGHT! THE SHAMROCK PLANT THAT KEEPS ON GIVING!

Hint: A shamrock plant in a pot can flourish all summer inside or outside, provided it is placed away from direct sun and wind. Once you tire of the plant or bring it inside at the end of season, place it in a dark cupboard for the winter. Do not give it water. Remove it from the cupboard when you want to revive the plant and give it lots of water. Then water when needed. New growth can be seen within a couple of weeks. Thanks to Wendy O'Neill for this great tip!

SOIL YOUR UNDIES CHALLENGE OR, HOW GOOD IS THE SOIL IN YOUR GARDEN?

In the Trillium 2021 Winter Edition, pp 18-20, we read that District 13 of the Ontario Horticultural Society provided each of their 13 societies with a pair of white cotton undies to plant in one of their flower/vegetable gardens for two months. The article continues to say that "if the soil is good, it will have eaten up the cotton panties leaving only the nylon waistband. If the soil is poor, the panties will still be intact".

Bath Gardening Club is interested in “duplicating” the experiment to further scientific research. There is a twist however. At the time of publishing this Newsletter, we had heard that during Covid, many of our members have been decluttering, cleaning out their “drawers”, so to speak. Well, BGC, don’t throw your undies in the trash yet! This is our opportunity to pick up the Soil Your Undies Challenge!



Guidelines for planting your undies: Choose an “about to be discarded” cotton undy, white in colour and plant that undy about 6” deep when the soil is ready. Don’t forget to mark where it was planted. Scientific research dictates that we keep a record of when you planted, where the planting took place i.e. in a vegetable or flower garden, frequency of watering, fertilizing, and the amount of exposure to the sun or shade. After two months, unearth your undy and have a picture taken of yourself holding what is left of your undy. Send the picture along with details of your record keeping to pat.chown@gmail.com. The winner of the best soil award in Bath will be announced during the September Bath Gardening Club meeting. And, of course a final report will be published in the Fall edition of the Trillium.

Helpful Resources:

Growing Zones for Bath and area

- Bath and regions near Lake Ontario: **5b** (-15° F to -10° F)
- North of Bath: **5a** (-20° F to -15° F)
- North of the 401 Highway: **4b** (-20° F to -25° F)

Starting seeds? The Master Gardeners referred to this useful [Seed-Starting Date Calculator](#) from the website of Johnny’s Selected Seeds, of Winslow, Maine.

Kingston Area Seed System Initiative (KASSI) <http://seedsgrowfood.org/>
For information about seed saving and sharing from the experts.

For more information about seed planting, harvesting and sharing, visit our new and improved website: bathgardeningclub.ca (Click on the downward arrow of the Notice Board section on the Home Page).

Check out the following links for great recipes using herbs from your garden:

<https://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/ina-garten/tomatoes-roasted-with-pesto-recipe-1924091>

<https://www.epicurious.com/recipes/food/views/herb-roasted-lamb-chops-351253>

<https://www.thekitchn.com/recipe-15-minute-parmesan-thyme-mushrooms-250961>

<https://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/ina-garten/roasted-salmon-with-green-herbs-recipe-1925053>