

# The Watering Can

February 2013

Newsletter of The West Carleton Garden Club and Horticultural Society  
P.O. Box 326, Carp ON K0A 1L0



## February Meeting:

Tuesday, February 12, 2013  
7:30 pm

## Garden Design:

### *Lessons from the Ramble.*

Rob Caron and Dave Dunn, [Rideau Woodland Ramble](#)



*Photo by Matt McGrath, The Ottawa Citizen*

Dave Dunn, an architect, gardener and artist, is a co-owner of Rideau Woodland Ramble in Merrickville. He also currently serves as co-chair of the Canadensis Botanical Garden Society.

Rob Caron, a graduate of Algonquin's Horticultural Technician Program, is a co-owner of Rideau Woodland Ramble.

As background for this presentation, see David Dunn's article "Rideau Woodland Ramble 2012 Garden Design Workshop" in the Canadensis Botanical Garden Society newsletter sent to members with the January issue of *The Watering Can*.

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### ***Please Note: Refreshments by S to Z:***

Members whose surnames begin with letters **S to Z** are requested to provide refreshments and door prize articles for this meeting.

## Celebrating Our Gardening Friends:

### David Hinks

David Hinks moved to Carp's Westwood area in 2007 upon his retirement from over 35 years as a federal government economist and senior policy advisor. With his move to Carp, exploring his passions for gardening, photography, and the natural environment soon became his daily focus, but he still undertakes some consulting contracts in his specialty field—marine transportation.

David became more active in exploring his local natural environment by taking several birding courses with Bruce DiLabio, Carp's noted bird expert. He also joined a couple of local field naturalists clubs—the Macnamara Field Naturalists Club and the Mississippi Valley Field Naturalists Club. He eagerly participates in their field trips and bird count outings.

For the last 40 years, he has gardened in allotment gardens in Ottawa and still has one in Ottawa's Alta Vista area where he grows garlic, onions, and potatoes.

In 2002 David joined the Master Gardeners of Ottawa-Carleton. This required taking (by correspondence) horticulture courses from the University of Guelph. Prior to that, he read widely to improve his self-taught skills. He is currently starting a two-year coordinator's role for the local Master Gardeners group as well as organizing their attendance at the Carp Farmers' Market and the Carp Garlic Festival. As a Master Gardener, he has written articles on gardening, such as ["How sweet it is \(sweet potatoes\)"](#) for the *Ottawa Sun*.

David, over the last five years on behalf of the [Community Gardening Network of Ottawa](#), has also led workshops for novice gardeners on organic vegetable gardening. His role, says David, "is to convey enough information in the two-hour sessions for new gardeners to have enough first-year success to feel empowered to continue growing some of their own, very local food."

As for his own start in gardening, David says "I was brought up on a dairy farm in southwestern Ontario where I was introduced to gardening at an early age by parents and grandparents, in particular, my paternal grandmother. She liked to take her grandchildren in

*Cont'd on page 2*

hand and show us how to plant beans right-side up, create perfectly straight rows with stakes and a rope, and harvest and shell only the plumpest peas. While she helped to create my love for growing food, I must admit that my techniques are a lot more haphazard than hers were."

David and wife Susan joined the West Carleton Garden Club and Horticultural

Society in 2008 and he is currently our vice-president. Recently he undertook liaison work with the City of Ottawa for the Memorial Hall garden renovation project and assisted with ensuing planning and review of contract tenders for the project, and chaired the 2012 garden tour planning committee's role of arranging ticket distribution and ensuring City traffic management officials were aware of the tour. Just last December, he helped decorate and man our float entry for the Carp Santa Claus parade. David also helps maintain the library's reading garden. For several years, he has done grant applications for the Carp Agricultural Society.

About a year ago, David and his wife moved to one of Almonte's older parts of town. With a rented sod stripper, he removed the grass in the front yard and part of the back yard and bought 20 cubic yards of triple mix. Ten raised vegetable beds in the back yard and mixed beds of perennials, annuals, shrubs, herbs, and vegetables in the front yard were promptly installed. He admits to contemplating what else he might create this spring! His major challenge last summer was watering restrictions imposed in Almonte.

During the summer, David also works about a day a week at Nepean's Green Thumb Garden Centre owned by Master Gardener Mary Sherman-Reid. While working there, he is continually learning about perennials and shrubs and does appreciate the staff discounts on plants.

With retirement comes time for travel. One of his sons attended Arizona State University on a swimming scholarship and never returned to Canada; he is now married and lives in Phoenix with four small kids. Twice a year, David travels to the Phoenix area to connect with his grandchildren and this provides an opportunity for frequent



*David Hinks and grandson Tommy at the Desert Botanical Garden, Phoenix*

visits to Phoenix's Desert Botanical Garden—one of David's favourite southwestern U.S. spots. "At first I found the landscape very uninviting, but I've come to appreciate its diversity" says David. He has taken out a membership in the Desert Botanical Garden and drags his six-year grandson to see the cactus gardens and the birds when he's there. Says David, "I'm astounded at the level of

activity at that botanical garden, its place in the cultural and educational life of the city, and the continuing expansion of gardens and displays funded largely by private donors." He continues "I love learning more about my pet topics (water conservation, use of native plants, attracting wildlife, and growing your own food) within a very different environment and presented and taught in ways that are very accessible to the general public and its youngsters."

While in Phoenix, David also gets some hands-on desert gardening experience in his son's yard, even creating raised vegetable beds. A lemon tree planted three years ago has just borne a crop of over 100 full-size lemons and controlling a bed of Lantana shrubs is a unique undertaking for an Almonte gardener.

Advancing his life-view as a gardener, David says "I believe that as gardeners we can choose to work with nature or see it as the enemy. Hopefully we are moving away from a gardening model where we kill everything that creeps, hops, or flies. We need to realize that a sustainable balance, where we value our bug friends, is more attuned to our long-term survival as a species."

### 2013 Photo Contest Reminder: Winter Themes



Give us your best shot for our June Photo Contest!  
The categories:

1. Berries, Pinecones, or Nuts
2. Friends at your Feeder
3. Ice Storm
4. Outdoor Activity
5. House Plant – named



## Reading Suggestions.

By Phil Reilly

Three relatively recent books that I've read, dealing with vegetable gardening, are worth a few words. They are available through the Ottawa Public Library system,

Markham, Brett L. *Mini Farming: Self-Sufficiency on 1/4 Acre*. New York: Skyhorse Publishing Inc., 2010. 227 pages

Markham's book catches my fancy as I am currently in the midst of experimenting with a season-extending high tunnel (hoop house) to extend vegetable-harvesting opportunities. His book presents ideas to garden more productively and enjoyably while expending less time, effort, money, and equipment than you might expect. It is about intensive planting (beyond square-foot principles) and implementing season-extending practices to grow organic produce. I am motivated by his, and others', observation that we are physically placed at a latitude equal to much of Europe's food production region and thus have the requisite daylight to grow vegetables earlier and later in the season, providing we can temper spring and fall frosts.

I am also a bit of a "competitive gardener"! Markham reports that from April through September, a 4-foot x 14-foot bed (56 square feet) produced 22 pounds of broccoli, 8 pounds of cauliflower, 16 pounds of cabbage, 90 pounds of tomatoes, 23 pounds of pole beans, and 15 pounds of potatoes, not to mention onions, beets, carrots, spinach, and swiss chard in prodigious quantities. I look forward to trying to equal his reported harvest.

With other success stories I've encountered, including Markham's recountings of his New Hampshire mini-farm, I have erected, over a portion of our garden, a 21 foot x 16-foot portion of a hoop house (see photo), used



when operating our nursery. Within this, beginning in early March, I plant veggies directly in the ground. I am currently in the third season of this initiative and am enjoying great results.

Carrots and parsnips are currently under [floating row covers](#) that provide a modicum of frost protection. On the 5th of January, I managed to dig, with a 6" layer of frost-filled soil impeding progress, enough tender and very flavourful carrots for a few meals. [Sunset magazine](#) lists the range of cool season-loving vegetables available for me to expand my selection of late-harvestable veggies.

A great book review of Markham's book is available on the [Small Farms magazine website](#) where you can also get sidetracked while exploring numerous gardening-related links to keywords in their article. FYI: The first 18 pages of *Mini Farming: Self-Sufficiency on 1/4 Acre* are downloadable from [Google Preview](#).

*The Organic Gardener's Handbook of Natural Pest and Disease Control: A complete Guide to Maintaining a Healthy Garden and Yard the Earth-Friendly Way*. Edited by Fern Marshall Bradley, Barbara Ellis, and Deborah L. Martin. New York: Rodale Inc. 2009. 408 Pages.

This, an encyclopedic book in format, presents good organic-practice cultural information on growing vegetable and ornamental plant varieties as well as descriptions, photos, and prevention or control of various plant diseases and pests. There is a [Google Preview](#), including much of the first 100 pages of the book, giving a glimpse of the detail in plant portraits. Unfortunately, the Google Preview omits the section of the book that I find most helpful: detailed descriptions of pests and disease portraits and management suggestions.

Overall, this is a book worth having on your bookshelf as a reference – if you are into books. (See next page's [Clickables](#) column for some on-line reference sources.)

Bradley, Fern Marshall. *Rodale's Vegetable Garden Problem Solver: The Best and Latest Advice for Beating Pests, Diseases, and Weeds and Staying A Step Ahead of Trouble in the Garden*. New York: Rodale Inc., 2007. 472 pages.

This book too is an encyclopedic tomb alphabetically conveying excellent information on vegetable gardens and vegetables and their problems.

Unfortunately, I wasn't able to enjoy this book because of its gray text and extensive use of orange text for headings and sidebars. Even the [downloadable portions of this book](#) makes for difficult reading for those, like me, with diminished sight acuity. There is, however, good and useful information in this book.

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Lamb's Tail  
*Chastophyllum oppositifolium*  
Reilly's gardens, 2009.

## “Clickables”

by Phil Reilly

**[Vegetable Gardening: Recommendations for Home Gardeners in Pennsylvania](#)**, from Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences, is a 58-page document on establishing a vegetable garden and has excellent profiles of the common vegetables. It is very appropriate for Ontario gardeners. I especially like the advice on pH preferences of plants and the inevitable diseases and pests to watch for and treat. I also suggest consulting the Penn State series of [Agricultural Alternatives fact sheets](#) with additional vegetable-specific info.

**[2012 Commercial Vegetable Recommendations Pennsylvania](#)**, from Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences, a 326-page manual designed for commercial farmers, is also a great resource but pesticide use information is not relevant to home gardeners.

**[Pennsylvania Vegetable Variety Recommendations for the Home Gardener and Bedding Plant Grower-Supplier](#)** (click and scroll to the document title) is a 28-pager from Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences. I like the tabular alphabetically-arranged format of available varieties of the common vegetables. This is an especially good aid for planning succession harvests. Info on Days to Harvest, Disease Resistance, and Product Characteristics is presented.

**[Extending the Garden Season with High Tunnels](#)**, also from Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences, provides basic considerations for use of high tunnels and the benefits of using them.

**[Landscaping and Gardening Around Walnuts and Other Juglone Producing Plants](#)**, from Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences, offers a wide-ranging list of plants tolerant to juglone.

### **[True or False? Add a Handful of Bone Meal to the Planting Holes Before Installing the Shrubs and Trees.](#)**

In her 2008 book, *The Informed Gardener*, Linda Stalker-Scott, Associate Professor, Horticulture and Landscape Architecture, Washington State University, says the answer is sometimes “**False**.” She says that mycorrhizae-dependent trees and shrubs have a difficult time surviving in soils where mycorrhizae cannot develop. Excess phosphorus (the principal constituent of bonemeal) in soils reduces mycorrhizal penetration into root hairs and thus there can be a negative impact of bonemeal to mycorrhizae-dependent trees and shrubs. She advises having soil analyses done before undertaking fertilizer and pH adjusting additions, especially in clay soils.

## Announcing ....

### **District 2 Advisory Council and AGM, Saturday, April 6, 2013, 11 am to 3 pm Renfrew, ON**

The day's theme, *In Our Backyard*, features Renfrew's Grant Dobson, of Connaught Nursery, speaking about gardening with native plants in our bioregion and Christina Ouellet, of The Flower Factory, doing a floral design demonstration based on the theme and classes of the 2013 OHA Convention floral design competition.

The Registration deadline for this meeting is March 11. Club members wishing to attend this meeting, at a cost of \$15 per person (lunch included), should contact Donna Caldwell to indicate their intention. Donna, at our February 12 club meeting, will also outline plans for car pooling to Renfrew and will collect the \$15 registration fees from those wishing to attend.

Full details of Renfrew's event, including the listing of photography classes, are available at:

<http://www.gardenontario.org/site.php/district2>

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Left: “Pretty Lady”  
Japanese anemone series  
*Anemone hupehensis*  
Pretty Lady series

Right: “Fire & Ice”  
hydrangea  
*Hydrangea paniculata*  
‘Wim's Red’



### **West Carleton Garden Club Holds Monthly Meetings**

Monthly meetings of the West Carleton Garden Club begin at 7:30 pm the second Tuesday of the month (September to May) at the Carp Memorial Hall, 3739 Carp Road, Carp.

Our website is:

<https://sites.google.com/site/westcarletongardenclub/>