

NIGHT BEACON

NEWSLETTER BY TAY HORTICULTURAL COMMITTEE

SPRING & SUMMER 2019

Gardening 101

What to do when

Not quite sure what to do at the start of each year? Try this:

March

Start your planning and your seeds. March is a great month to make your plans so that you're ready to go when the snow is gone.



See *Growing plants from seed* for more information on how to grow plants from seed.

April

If you have gardens, April is a great time to split any perennials, move shrubs, or prune them. It's easier to do the work before they grow.

This is also a great time to add mulch, as you can get around everything. Try to make sure your mulch is a few inches thick. This will help keep the moisture in the ground and your plants from drying out during summer, as well as reduce weeding!

May

Time to buy new plants and annuals to add some colour to your gardens. Try to wait until mid-month, so you don't have to worry about that last frost.

June

If you have done all your planning, moving, pruning, and planting in Spring, you should be able to relax and enjoy! Just remember to water any container gardens you have so they do not dry out.

Growing plants from seed

In Spring, it's great to start with a few seeds to help you get through winter. You can start with an old favourite or something new. By growing from seed, you can grow plants you wouldn't see in a garden centre and it should be cheaper!

Try using snack bags with about a half cup of soilless mix and a little water to dampen it. Store at room temperature and once they start to germinate transfer them to small pots.

Once transplanted be sure to maintain air circulation with a small fan to prevent damping off, which can be a problem with seedlings. Light is important too; so try a fluorescent fixture over a bench or table. You'll be amazed at how easy this process is and how quickly they develop once started.

TAY BLOOMS

Tay Horticulture Committee, with County of Simcoe, invites residents to the annual plant exchange and free mulch pick up on **Saturday, June 1 from 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.** at the Municipal Office Parking Lot (450 Park Street, Victoria Harbour).

Participants will be required to bag and load their own mulch. Bring a cutting from your perennials and exchange it for something new!

Call 705-534-7248 x240 for more information.

Lasagna Gardening

Making a garden without digging

When you start a new garden, there's no need to dig, just add layers! Next time you're making a new garden, try lasagna gardening by adding layers of organic matter to an existing area.

For example, if you want to convert an area of lawn to garden, simply lay down a layer of newspaper on the grass, add a layer of leaves, manure or triple-mix, and then mulch or whatever is available. Just keep alternating layers until you have a depth of eight to ten inches.

Plant your new plants, water them well and let nature do all the work for you. The garden will settle by half, so do not skimp on the layers. No digging, and the grass is gone!

Plant Pollinators

Be good to the bees while attracting all sorts of birds and butterflies!

The best way to do get these to come to your garden is to plant pollinator flowers. There's a vast selection of native plants available at your local garden centre, many of which are pollinators.

Create a plan that will attract bees and birds year-round by planting new flowers such as echinacea, daisies or sedums. Shrubs with flowers or fruits are great too! Leave seeds on perennials during winter to add to bird activity in your backyard.

Try not to use chemicals in your garden and let mother nature take care of insects that can otherwise be a problem.

Tay Horticultural Committee fosters civic pride, environmental responsibility, and beautification through community education and participation in horticulture. Members: Marina Josey, Donna McMaster, Susan Read, Betty Wakish, and Councillor Mary Warnock. Contact them at 705-534-7248 x240 or agray@tay.ca.

5TH ANNUAL LILY AWARDS

Do you know someone whose efforts have produced beautiful gardens that contribute to a more attractive Tay? Nominate them for a Lily Award!

We're looking for a great front yard. It could be your neighbour, someone on your street, or a local business. Whether you're in town or in our rural community, we want to hear from you.

Gardens are judged in early August, based on overall appearance, tidiness, unique features, and environmental awareness. For more information, including the nomination form, visit tay.ca/LilyAwards.

Night Beacon Daylily

Did you know: Tay's official flower is the Night Beacon Daylily

Designated by Council in 2012, the Night Beacon Daylily was selected as Tay's official flower after a public competition because:

- The flower is easy to grow
- Its shape resembles the Township crest and Ontario's official flower—the white trillium
- Its name *Night Beacon* reflects the history of lighthouses acting as a beacon
- The flower is grown by Gratrix Garden Lilies—a business operating in Tay

