



Dogtooth

Newsletter of the Waterloo -Wellington
Wildflower Society

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/~botcal>

December 2007

December Meeting:

Time: 7:15 pm Wednesday December 19

Place: Activity Room #2

Evergreen Center

683 Woolwich Street

Speaker: Our annual Member's night

Program: Next Meeting: - Wednesday

January 16 – Speaker TBA

President's message

I had a close encounter with a European Native Plant last week. The opium poppy, re-manufactured as big white pills, provided me with welcome relief from the pain of a kidney stone! About 50% of the medicine dispensed in Canadian pharmacies today is derived from plants, some native to North America. The Jesuits were eager to explore the New World not only to save souls but to search out new medical plants such as ginseng, goldenseal and echinacea.

Christmas in my home will feature a number of North American native plants used for decoration and food. North American Turkey will be accompanied by potatoes, corn, squash and beans, cranberry sauce and pumpkin pie on Christmas Day. Tomato

sauce will season tourtiere followed by blueberry crumble and maple syrup on Christmas Eve. Pine, Spruce, cedar and holly will provide the decor. How many native plants feature in your holiday traditions?

Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays to All!

Judy Brisson

President

December Meeting – Members' Night

Our December Program is your chance to be a star! Bring along slides, PowerPoint presentation, plant sighting stories, photo album or display to share with other members.

This is also the night to share your best seasonal recipes. Bring along a snack or beverage to share after the presentations.

Seasonal Snacks

Every December we give the social committee (Elaine) the night off and members each bring along a small plate of goodies or bottle of juice to share during the Seasonal Social. Don't forget!

Membership Renewal

Memberships are now due. Please use the form attached to this month's newsletter to renew, either by mail or by bringing it along to the meeting. Thanks to all those who renewed last month.

Store those Seeds and Spores!

The March 2008 seed workshop theme will be "Spring Ephemerals and Ferns". We will be relying on member collected seed. Your seeds should now be in cold moist storage and the spores should be in cold, dry storage until the Seed Workshop.

Collect Swiss Chalet Take Out Containers

Swiss Chalet quarter dinner take out containers are perfect for germinating fern spores; they have dark bottoms to keep out the light, clear tops to let in the light and no drainage holes so they hold in moisture. We will need a lot of them for the March fern workshop, so start collecting them!

BYOM Bring your own mug!

Don't forget to bring your own mug for refreshments after the meeting, reducing landfill and the environmental costs of transporting Guelph garbage to St Thomas.

Plant of the Month

Check our next issue.

WWWS forum for December

Nobody responded to the Question sent out this month - No doubt people are too busy shoveling snow to think about gardening.

Do you have questions? Please submit questions for our members to discuss in future forum columns. Between us, we have a lot of experience with native plant gardening and sharing this enriches us all. Real questions that you have are the best.

Notes from Editor about visitation to Medical Herbalist

This month I visited a medical herbalist (Dip. Phyto, HT, RH) in Mono Mills (Caledon) for the first time. The meeting lasted about 2 hours, most of which was spent going over my medical history. I had been given some forms to fill out prior to the meeting, including a form requiring that I diarize my food and drink intake for a week.

At my age (unstated), a liver and kidney cleanse seemed to be in order. I also had issues concerning my eyesight, especially my night time vision. I was prescribed a tea and a tincture. The tea consisted of dried leaves & flowers of yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), the leaves of nettles (*Urtica dioica*), eyebright (*Euphrasia officinalis*) and peppermint (*Mentha piperita*). The tincture consisted of dandelion leaves (for kidney and liver), and dandelion root (primarily for the liver) in an alcohol base.

None of these plants are native. In my garden, I consider yarrow, nettle and dandelion to be weeds. However, I have chosen not to eradicate them from my garden, although I work at reducing their numbers. I knew that nettle and yarrow were herbs used in biodynamic preparations, and dandelion provides early spring nectar for bees. Now I am getting some ideas about how else I might utilize some of these "weeds." I am watching to see if I notice any subtle benefits from the tea.

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