

Farm Tribune

Pickering buys tractor-loader

Wild flowers for problem garden

Home owners with larger lots often ask for information on wild flowers as a possible solution for minimum care areas. They are thinking, of course, of native wild flowers, particularly those that grow in shade. It is difficult for them to appreciate that every flower we grow in gardens was originally a wild species: so far man has only been able to improve on what already existed somewhere in the world. To limit our choice strictly to native species is to sacrifice much of the beauty possible in planting uncultivated areas.

Usually the problem is one of shade, particularly where trees are planted too close together. To further complicate matters, much of the native vegetation has been left untouched. Here, about the only plants that can succeed are woodland perennials that make all of their growth before deciduous trees leaf out, produce flowers and either die down completely until the following spring, or barely exist through the rest of the year.

In this group are such plants as the plantain lily (Funkia), bugle weed (Ajuga), bleeding heart and Dutchman's breeches (Dicentra), various lilies, forget-me-nots, violets and creeping Jenny.

Bluebells of Virginia (Mertensia), is one of these wild flowers which should be planted now, since it has died down and is fully dormant.

The ever-popular lily of the valley is perhaps the easiest of these to establish. It, like most of the wild flowers mentioned, can be moved right now if the foliage is sprayed with a wilt-proof chemical, provided the plants are kept well watered, but are not drowned by over-watering.

Where some sunlight seeps through the trees, the wood phlox divaricata is a desirable plant. Above all, consider the Christmas rose, Helleborus niger. The glory of woodland flowers, however, is at its best when the so-called minor bulbs are used. Anyone with a shade problem in woods should make a note on his calendar for this August to order scillas, grape hyacinths, glory-of-the-snow, crocuses and the other little beauties which make such a spectacular show in early spring.

Two plants that have been shamefully neglected on this side of the Atlantic are the golden rods and our beautiful native asters. In England these are treasured exotics. Until you have seen a clump of golden rod in cultivated soil, freed from competition from grasses, you cannot appreciate what a spectacular flower it is. Even in the wild it is worth having. Now that plant breeders in England have developed magnificent new varieties in a wide range of color in our native aster, it is a real garden Cinderella.

Don't limit plantings to wild species; use improved cultivated varieties for more spectacular bloom. For example, our wild Black-eyed Susan, now glamorized into the Gloriosa Daisy, makes a spectacular show when naturalized in untended areas. The improved varieties of our Blazing Star (Harris) are among our most useful plants for this purpose. The native spider wort, Tradescantia virginiana, has gone through a beauty treatment which has given it new colors and improved flower size.

A group of wild flowers, practically unknown in southern Ontario is the Penstemon. Under the common name of beard tongue they are planted rather widely in Colorado, but many species do well here.

Many annuals can be used as wild flowers by broadcasting the seed where they are to grow. I have succeeded with alyssum, calendula, calliopsis, candytuft, bachelor button, spider flowers, cosmos, gailardia, annual phlox portulaca and scabiosa. Some have kept going for years from self-sown seed.

A trick which helps establish annuals or perennials from seed in sod is to cover the area in early fall with tar paper to shut out all light. This weakens the grass enough so that when the paper is removed in April, seed can be sown on the treated area with more of a chance to succeed.

Although wild flower enthusiasts frown upon digging natives in the wild, nowadays so many patches of lovely plants are being bulldozed out of existence that you are really practicing conservation when you rescue these for replanting in your own wild flower preserve.

PICKERING TWP.

The Township of Pickering will purchase a new tractor and front-end loader. On a recommendation by the engineer, Paul Poulson, the tender as submitted by Altona Feed and Supplies has been approved. The tendered price of the complete unit is \$4,983.69.

The township will also purchase two 4 ton trucks from Joe Burrows of Brougham with snow plow wings, subject to delivery within a period of 60 days.

Tile drainage act

WHITCHURCH TWP. — The seldom-used Tile Drainage Act was introduced before Whitchurch Township council on request from Mr. Cecil Smurthwaite, R.R. 2, Stouffville.

Approve grant

PICKERING TWP. — A provincial grant of \$4,330 has been made to the Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Authority for capital improvement in the Clarendon Conservation Area.

Work proposed by the Authority in the 397-acre area in Pickering Township includes, ground development, woodland management, clearing and grading.

All member municipalities will bear the Authority's share of the cost.

Bonnie Anderson, dairy princess

YORK COUNTY — Pretty 19 year old Bonnie Anderson of R.R. 1, Sutton, the 1968 Ontario Furrow Queen, has added another award to her lengthening list of laurels. She was crowned York County Dairy Princess at a ceremony held Saturday at Pioneer Village.

There were four entries in the competition. Other girls included — Carol Sedore, Woodbridge; Janet Phillips, Woodbridge and Mary Lynn Cowieson, Queensville.

The Master of Ceremonies for the occasion was well-known C.F.R.B. announcer, John Dolan. The fortunate fellow took advantage of the opportunity and planted a kiss on the cheek of the pert Sutton Miss. He also displayed some professional ability at milking a cow by hand.

Bonnie was presented with a bouquet of red roses.

The contestants were required to deliver a three-minute speech on a subject related to the dairy industry and then participate in a milking competition before a panel of three judges. The head judge was Mary Humble of Bradford, a former entry in the Dairy Princess Contest. She congratulated the girls on their performance.

At the conclusion of the official crowning, the four 'farmerettes' were transported on a buggy-ride tour through Pioneer Village. Bonnie now advances to the national dairy princess competition at the C.N.E.



C.F.R.B. announcer John Dolan plants a kiss on the cheek of York Dairy Princess, Bonnie Anderson, 19, of R.R. 1, Sutton. Selected from four entries in a competition at Pioneer Village Saturday, Bonnie will advance to the national finals at the C.N.E. in August. —Staff Photo

Editor's mail

Dear Sir: May I take this opportunity to thank you for the coverage you gave to our campaign here in Ontario Riding, and to assure you that now victory has been achieved, it is my firm intention to justify the confidence that has been placed in me through my actions as Member of Parliament. Again, with deep appreciation, I am,

Norm Cafik, M.P.-Elect. Ontario Riding.

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