

Dwarf Conifers

by Robert Auger

On St. Patrick's Day, 17 March, members of the RDHS were regaled by the talk that one of their own, Cindy Cluett, gave on Dwarf Conifers in the Landscape. Cindy gave a most exhaustive presentation of the different conifer species that are available in our climate zone to enhance the beauty of our gardens and grounds. Dwarf conifers consist of trees and shrubs that are designed to grow other than at their full height; thus, pines that are specifically bred to limit their growth to 30 or 40 feet can qualify as dwarf conifers.

Cindy's talk took the form of a slide show (of nearly 90 slides) with handouts kindly made available beforehand to the audience. The choice of photos was excellent and perfectly illustrated the characteristics, colours and shape of each dwarf species. The slides also provided technical information on growth rate, maximum size, hardiness etc. Several illustrations were of specimens in Cindy's own garden. What was particularly enriching for the audience was Cindy's enthusiasm for these plants, the variety of their colours and the odour and softness of their spring twigs. As a result of the talk, we shall henceforth look at conifers quite differently and appreciate aspects that had escaped us until now.

For more information on dwarf conifers and other plants, please contact Cindy at Beyond The House by e-mail at cindy@beyondthehouse.ca or at 613 448 1745. You can also visit her website at www.beyondthehouse.ca.

Following the talk, our former President, Pat Stachon, made herself available to brief interested members on the principles of flower arrangements in a competitive setting. The purpose of Pat's side event was to encourage members to participate in flower shows in greater numbers. Several members took Pat up her kind offer and benefited from her wise advice and experience. We hope to see more entries in the flower arrangement classes for the RHDS Spring and Summer Flower Shows.