

# Time to Get a Handle on Things

by Pat Stachon

*Pat Stachon lives on a sheep farm near Kenmore, Ontario where she has a wonderful garden. She is our Past President, a Master Gardener as well as District President. Even with all these jobs Pat manages to find time to write an article now and then, and they are always fun to read.*

As I squint at my garden from afar, most of the time from the kitchen window, I have a pretty nice view. At close observation, yikes, I see disaster, many weeds, and feel that my garden has gotten away from me. I simply must do something soon. It is the end September and time is running out. I know that plants have this innate desire to reproduce, but I could open a nursery. Have you ever tried to dig up a "Miscanthus Sinensis," a clumping ornamental grass that has been in the same place for 5 years? One pleasant afternoon while digging this monster I dug for a few hours and took a rest. While taking my break my husband drove down the driveway with a tractor and hay spear. Brain wave, he speared the devil and flipped it into my "jardin de refuse". If he hadn't come at that very moment I would have had to visit a chiropractor. How much of a good thing is too much? How about that travelling, "Gooseneck Flower", an aggressive late summer white flowered perennial that spells invasive to me and a flopper as well. It doesn't show itself until late spring and all of a sudden there it is. I shall place this kin of the yellow loosestrife along the river bank or put it in the Horticultural Society Plant Sale! Fifty thousand "Johnny Jump Ups" and " Sweet Violets "are living under my shrubs and oodles of seedlings are blooming everywhere. A naturalized woodland border, this is NOT! My front lawn is creeping Charlie and the back yard is creeping Jenny, duking it out with the grass. There are other plant violators I could name but I think you have the idea.

It is time to get a grip. An inventory of underperforming plants, perennials I do not like, and invaders must go to the composter. Some of these plants might do well in other gardens, but I am determined to sort it all out and bring utter confusion to order. Divide and conquer! At least for a while.