

Keeping Ontario Beautiful

Trillium

Ontario Horticultural Association

Summer 2026



Sherrard

OHA President's Message

Rooted in Community, Growing Together This Summer

Dear Members and Horticultural Enthusiasts,

As summer unfolds, it brings renewed energy, fresh growth and countless opportunities to reconnect with the beauty around us. It is a season for sharing ideas, celebrating achievements and taking pride in the gardens, projects and community spaces that reflect the passion of our members across Ontario.

Please be sure to mark your calendars for the many wonderful events organized by member Societies and Clubs this summer. From garden tours to flower shows and other seasonal gatherings, there will be many opportunities to learn, connect and celebrate horticulture together. Be sure to watch your local communications and the GardenOntario website for dates and details.

Our Earth Day celebration on April 24 featured a special Webex presentation by Mark Cullen, who shared reflections on two inspiring books, *The Light Eaters* and *Our Green Heart*, and on the natural world we all value so deeply. The event offered an inspiring reminder of the importance of environmental stewardship, and the presentation was recorded for those who would like to watch it. The link is available on the GardenOntario website.

Registration is now open for the OHA Convention and Annual Meeting, taking place July 24 to 26 at Durham College in Oshawa. This year's theme, *Gardening for Life*, will come to life through an exciting program of speakers, workshops, competitions and educational tours. It promises to be a meaningful and enjoyable weekend, and I hope to see many of you there.

The Association also continues to offer supplies and recognition items that help honour members for exceptional volunteer service and years of dedication. These small acknowledgements make a meaningful difference, and additional information is available through the GardenOntario.org website.

If you have not yet purchased your ticket for the summer 50/50 raffle, now is a great time to do so. Proceeds help support grants and educational initiatives that strengthen gardening communities across Ontario. Please consider sharing the opportunity with friends and family as well.

We are also pleased to share news of a new partnership with Equinox Industries Ltd., the OHA's official supplier of selfwatering planters and inground watering systems. This partnership offers member Societies and Clubs access to special discounts while also supporting greener, more beautiful communities across the province. More information is available on the GardenOntario.org website.



In my conversations with members of Societies and Clubs across Ontario over the past year, I have been reminded of how important recruitment, recognition and thoughtful succession planning are to the future of our organization. Summer is an ideal time to build momentum, welcome new participants and strengthen community connections through tours, excursions and local garden projects.

Thank you for your continued support and for the care, energy and enthusiasm you bring to the Ontario Horticultural Association. It is both inspiring and rewarding to be part of an organization that continues to lead, educate and encourage gardeners and affiliated Societies and Clubs throughout the province. Serving as President over the past year has been a true honour.

Warm regards,

Vicky Culbert
OHA President



W.H.PERRON

W.H. Perron offers our Societies/Clubs and their members a 10% discount on all purchases.

To take advantage of this offer, simply provide the code number when placing your order by phone or enter it when ordering online. Code is 4633.

<https://whperron.com/en/>

Cover photo by Rhu Sherrard, Ancaster Horticultural Society



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To Subscribe to the Trillium

The online Trillium is free – just sign up and it will show up in your inbox 4 times a year. To subscribe today, email a request to – **The Trillium Distributor:**

secretary@gardenontario.org

The Trillium is also available on the OHA website: <https://gardenontario.org>

The Trillium is the quarterly online newsletter of the OHA where you’ll find the latest gardening news.

The Trillium welcomes contributions from members of all Horticultural Societies and Garden Clubs across Ontario, in every district. If your Club or Society has a special project to share, we encourage you to submit a story along with photographs.

Articles and opinions included in this issue are those of the authors. They are shared to encourage learning and conversation, and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Ontario Horticultural Association.

Deadline: The deadline for the next issue is **September 1st**, but submissions are welcome at any time.

Articles: Please email in Word, PDF, or plain text format.

Photographs & Graphics:

Submit as separate files (not embedded in Word or PDF). Minimum resolution: 1000 x 800 pixels; full-size originals are preferred.

Include signed waivers from the photographer or artist. <https://gardenontario.org/wp-content/uploads/Media-Release-and-Indemnity-Form-2024-01-26.pdf>

Provide the author’s name and photographer’s name(s) for proper credit.

To avoid illegal copyright issues, please do not submit articles, artwork and photographs copied from the internet or elsewhere unless written, signed permission from the writer, artist or photographer has been given. Special Note: For images featuring minors, signed parental permission is required.

Send all articles and photographs to:

editor@gardenontario.org

Submission dates for 2026:

March 1	Spring Issue
June 1	Summer Issue
September 1	Autumn Issue
December 1	Winter Issue

Editor's Message



Summer always feels like the season when Ontario's gardening community shows its true colours: bright, determined and wonderfully diverse. As I read through the stories shared in this issue, I was struck again by how much passion and creativity our Societies and Clubs bring to their communities. From bustling plant sales and pollinator projects to youth education, native plant initiatives and milestone anniversaries, this edition is overflowing with the energy that makes horticulture such a powerful force for connection.

Across the province, volunteers are digging in, sometimes literally, to make their towns greener and more welcoming. You'll read about societies transforming public spaces, supporting schools, hosting markets, restoring habitats and celebrating decades of community service. These stories remind us that horticulture is about far more than plants. It's about people, learning, stewardship and the joy of working together.

This summer also brings us closer to the 2026 OHA Convention and Annual Meeting, taking place July 24 to 26 at Durham College in Oshawa. I'm genuinely looking forward to meeting members from across the province, hearing from this year's speakers and taking part in the workshops. I'm especially excited about the bus tours, which will give us the chance to explore local gardens in the Oshawa area.

As always, thank you to everyone who contributed articles, photos and updates. The Trillium is a reflection of your enthusiasm, your generosity and your commitment to keeping Ontario beautiful. I hope you enjoy this issue as much as we enjoyed putting it together.

Wishing you a season filled with growth, colour and community.

David St Amand
editor@gardenontario.org

Garden Ontario
50/50 Raffle
Heat Up Your Summer with a Big Win!
Bring the Heat, Bring the Fun
It's a Summer Win Waiting to Happen
Draw: July 26, 2026
Get Your Tickets Today!!
Ticket Prices:
700 for \$75
200 for \$50
40 for \$20
10 for \$10
50% Goes To the Winner!
RAFFLE
Proceeds support Garden Grants and Education in Ontario
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Tickets will be sold beginning at 12:00 PM on March 29, 2026, and ending at 11:59 PM on July 25, 2026. All tickets purchased between March 29, 2026 at or after 12:00 PM and July 25, 2026 at or before 11:59 PM will be entered into the grand prize draw. Draw to take place on Sun. July 26, 2026 at 11:00 AM.

Licence # RAF1533331

For your chance to win, visit

<https://www.rafflebox.ca/raffle/ontario-ha>

Your ticket purchases for the OHA 50/50 Draw not only helps us keep Ontario Beautiful but it supports education for youth and adults. It also supports environmental programs, awards and grants assisting with pollinators, tree planting and community beautification.

2026 OHA Convention & Annual Meeting

Join Us at the 2026 OHA Convention & Annual Meeting – July 24–26 at Durham College

The Ontario Horticultural Association invites all Society/Club members to gather in Oshawa for the 2026 OHA Convention and Annual Meeting, hosted at Durham College from July 24–26. This year's event brings together the best of learning, celebration and community, rooted in the spirit of horticulture across Ontario.

Early Bird registration is open until July 10, giving members the opportunity to secure their spot at a reduced rate. Complete convention information, including meal selections, accommodations, speaker profiles, bus tour descriptions, Friday night entertainment and details for our Saturday Awards Celebration and Keynote Speaker, is available on the GardenOntario website.

You will also find all Resolutions, Nominations, candidate biographies and the Proxy Form on the same page, ensuring delegates have everything they need to prepare for the Annual Meeting.

Visit: GardenOntario.org/convention/2026-2 for all the details!!

Inside this issue, you'll also find important details on nominations and resolutions for the Annual Meeting. These materials, along with all official Annual Meeting documents, are available on the convention webpage.

We look forward to welcoming you to Oshawa for three days of inspiration, learning, and connection as we celebrate the strength and creativity of Ontario's horticultural community.

Kelly Taylor
Ontario Horticultural Association Secretary



ONTARIO HORTICULTURAL ASSOCIATION
2026 ANNUAL MEETING & CONVENTION
Hosts: Districts 4 & 17



GardenOntario®



Resolutions To Be Voted Upon At The 2026 OHA Annual Meeting

RESOLUTION 26-01:

Be it resolved that:

A new By-Law be created as follows:

By-Law 13, 13.10 (2)

Notwithstanding By-Law 13, 13.10 (1), a District may establish a voting procedure at its Annual Meeting whereby all attendees In Good Standing with a Society/Club In Good Standing within the District may vote on any matter put to the assembly.

AND

By-Law 13, 13.10 be amended as follows:

Current By-Law 13, 13.10 be re-numbered to 13.10 (1)

Rationale:

- 1) This still protects the minimum number of voting delegates as established in current By-law 13, 13.10.
- 2) Allows attendees to more fully participate during the District Annual Meeting.
- 3) By using the “all vote” option or the delegate numbers as established in By-Law 13, 13.10 (1) & (2), this eliminates the confusing and unwieldy situation where more options for voting may be sought. It is simple and straight forward.

M/S: Phyllis Garton, Dryden & District HS / Diane Couch, Dryden & District HS

RESOLUTION 26-02:

Be it resolved that:

Article VII be amended as follows:

Current wording:

The Constitution may be amended or revoked provided that the changes are approved by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast at an Annual Meeting or Special Meeting called for that purpose. A notice of motion in writing of such proposed amendment or revocation must be submitted to the Association Secretary at least 60 days in advance of the meeting so that all Societies/Clubs may be notified within a period of 50 to 40 days prior to the meeting. Any member in good standing of an Affiliated Society/Club may submit such a notice of motion.

Proposed amendment:

The Constitution may be amended or revoked provided that the changes are approved by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast at an Annual Meeting or Special Meeting called for that purpose. A notice of motion in writing of such proposed amendment or revocation must be submitted to the Association Secretary at least 60 days in advance of the meeting so that all Societies/Clubs may be notified within a period of 50 to 40 days prior to the meeting. Any member in good standing of an Affiliated Society/Club **in good standing** may submit such a notice of motion **in addition to the Officers and District Directors.**

AND

Be it resolved that By-Law 16, 16, 2. Be amended as follows:

Current wording:

Any member of an Affiliated Society/Club which is in good standing may submit such notice of motion in addition to the Officers and District Directors.

Proposed amendment:

Any member **in good standing** of an Affiliated Society/Club which is in good standing may submit such notice of motion in addition to the Officers and District Directors.

Rationale:

- 1) Ensures that the submitting member and that member's Society/Club are both in good standing.
- 2) Allows for the Officers or the OHA Board of Directors to also submit notice(s) of motion under proper circumstances to propose amendments to the OHA Constitution.
- 3) In the case of a member in good standing of a Society/Club in good standing submitting a notice of motion, the identity of the mover and the seconder and their respective Society/Club is noted. In the case of the OHA Officers or the OHA Board of Directors seeing the need to submit a notice of motion the identity of the mover and of the seconder would be noted as well as their position such as "OHA Officer" or as "Member of the OHA Board of Directors". This would hopefully remove any confusion as to who submitted the notice of motion, what group the person(s) are identified with and what possible perceived or actual support may or may not exist for the proposed amendment. ***Currently there exists the misconception that all Resolutions brought to the members at the Annual Meeting come from or are supported by the OHA as an organization and this may or may not be the case.
- 4) It should be remembered that discussion of any proposed amendment needs to center on the benefits/effects of the motion on the OHA as a whole and not to the benefit of who may have submitted the proposed amendment.

M/S: Penny Stewart, Gananoque HS / Dennis Miluck, District 4 Director

RESOLUTION 26-03:

Be it resolved that:

A new By-Law, By-Law 1.2. be created as follows:

“Annual Meeting” (AM) means the Annual Meeting as is referenced in the Agricultural and Horticultural Organizations Act RSO 1990 c.A.9.

AND

All subsequent sections of By-Law 1 be renumbered to continue numerical uniformity.

Rationale:

1) Gives a reference for the Annual Meeting.

M/S: Dennis Miluck, District 4 Director / Penny Stewart, Gananoque HS

RESOLUTION 25-04:

Be it resolved that:

Article VII be amended as follows:

Current wording:

The Constitution may be amended or revoked provided that the changes are approved by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast at an Annual General Meeting or Special Meeting called for that purpose. A notice of motion in writing of such proposed amendment or revocation must be submitted to the Association Secretary at least 60 days in advance of the meeting so that all Societies/Clubs may be notified within a period of 50 to 40 days prior to the meeting. Any member in good standing of an Affiliated Society/Club may submit such a notice of motion.

Proposed amendment:

The Constitution may be amended or revoked provided that the changes are approved by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast at an Annual General Meeting or Special Meeting called for that purpose. A notice of motion in writing of such proposed amendment or revocation must be submitted to the Association Secretary at least 60 days in advance of the meeting so that all Societies/Clubs may be notified within a period of 50 to 40 days prior to the meeting. **The notification shall include a recommendation from the OHA Board that indicates support or non-support of the proposed amendment.** Any member in good standing of an Affiliated Society/Club may submit such a notice of motion.

AND

By-Law 16, 16 3. be amended as follows:

Current wording:

The Secretary shall cause all Affiliated Societies/Clubs to be notified of proposed amendments 50 to 40 days prior to the meeting.

Proposed amendment:

The Secretary shall cause all Affiliated Societies/Clubs to be notified of proposed amendments 50 to 40 days prior to the meeting. The notification shall include a recommendation from the OHA Board that indicates support or non-support of the proposed amendment.

Rationale:

- 1) It became apparent during and after the 2025 Annual Meeting that many Societies/Clubs as well as many of the members of the Societies/Clubs believe that all proposed amendments are in the best interest of the OHA and are supported by the OHA Board. This is not necessarily the case.
- 2) Currently, the Mover of a Resolution indicates the Rational which supports their proposal and by having the OHA weigh-in with comment, this would open the door for discussion to allow all persons entitled to vote the ability to make a more informed decision.
- 3) The Board acts in the best interests of the OHA and thus is the first level of determination regarding the benefits to the OHA or any concerns with any proposed amendment(s).

M/S: Robert Heil, Stoney Creek HS / Dennis Miluck, District 4 Director

Nominations Report 2026

To: All Affiliated Societies/Clubs

From: The Nominating Committee

Date: June 5, 2026

RE: NOMINATIONS RECEIVED

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Please be advised of the following:

As per OHA By-Law 6, 6.3

Nominees for Office shall have been a past or present Director, having served on the Board for at least two years, or a past or present holder of an executive position on the Board. (25-01)

As per OHA By-Law 6, 6.4

A nomination must include the following information:

1. Name of the Office and the nominee.
2. A signed statement of the nominee's acceptance.
3. A brief outline of the experience and qualification of the nominee.
4. A nomination must be proposed and seconded by current executive of an Affiliated Society/Club.
5. A nomination from the floor at the Annual Meeting shall comply with By-Law 6.3 and By-Law 6.4.1 and By-Law 6.4.2 to be considered to be complete. (25-01, 25-06)

As per OHA By-Law 6, 6.5

Should the need for a vote arise, the candidate receiving a simple majority of votes cast by the voting delegates and including all proxy votes in a secret ballot shall be declared the winner. The election shall be carried out according to the Association's By-Laws. (25-01)

As per OHA By-Law 6, 6.6

A serving Director, other than the two Directors identified in By-Law 5, 5.2, who is elected to provincial office of the OHA shall resign the directorship, and the District affected shall rely upon the process set out in By-Law 13, 13.5.1. (25-01)

Elections will be held on Sunday, July 26, 2026.

As of this date, I offer the following information regarding nominations that have been received:

For the Position of OHA President:

Sandra Mazur has been properly nominated by the Dryden & District Horticultural Society to run for this position at the 2026 Annual Meeting.

All documentation as noted in By-Law 6, 6.4 has been received by the OHA Secretary.

For the Position of OHA Vice-President:

Catherine McGill has been properly nominated by the Haldimand Horticultural Society to run for this position at the 2026 Annual Meeting.

All documentation as noted in By-Law 6, 6.4 has been received by the OHA Secretary.

For the Position of OHA Second Vice-President

Karen Redmond has been properly nominated by the Auburn Horticultural Society to run for this position at the 2026 Annual Meeting.

All documentation as noted in By-Law 6, 6.4 has been received by the OHA Secretary.

Nominations, properly proposed, may be made from the floor during the election process at the 2026 Annual Meeting.

Thank you,

Sharlene Desjardins, Immediate Past President
Ontario Horticultural Association
Chair, Nominating Committee

Sandra Mazur For President

Nominated for President by her home society, the Dryden and District Horticultural Society, Sandra Mazur brings more than five decades of volunteer service, leadership, and community engagement to her role as President of the Ontario Horticultural Association. Her long-standing involvement at the local, District, and provincial levels reflects a deep commitment to the Association's mission to support horticultural societies/clubs across Ontario.

Horticultural Leadership and Experience

Sandra joined the Thunder Bay Horticultural Society in 2004 and served for many years on its Executive, where she played an active role in event planning, public outreach, and member engagement. She later served six years as District 14 Director, supporting societies throughout the region and helping guide them through periods of growth and challenge, including the COVID-19 pandemic.

At the provincial level, Sandra has held a wide range of committee and governance roles. She has served on the Competitions Committee for eight years, including as Chair of Creative Writing, and has contributed to the Donation, Fundraising and Sponsorship Committee, Officers and Finance Committee, Awards Committee, and Conservation and Environment Committee. She also worked collaboratively to establish a new scholarship program for OHA members and their families and has been actively involved in establishing and expanding the reach of the Association's 50/50 fundraising draw.

Provincial Governance

Over the past three years, Sandra has served one year as OHA Vice President and two years as OHA 2nd Vice-President, participating in officer-level governance, financial oversight, and strategic planning. Through this role, she has worked closely with fellow officers, committee chairs, and volunteers across the province to support transparency, fiscal responsibility, and effective communication.

Vision and Commitment

Sandra is passionate about strengthening horticultural societies/clubs for the future, with a particular focus on welcoming and engaging new and younger gardeners. She believes the recent increase in home gardening presents an important opportunity to mentor new members, share knowledge, and ensure the long-term sustainability of the Association. Her leadership style emphasizes collaboration, inclusivity, and respect for the contributions of volunteers at every level.

Community Involvement

Originally from the Thunder Bay area, Sandra has lived in Kakabeka Falls, Dryden, and now Atikokan, Ontario. She continues to be actively involved in her communities and hopes to support the development of a local garden club in Atikokan. Her extensive volunteer background also includes decades of service with Girl Guides of Canada, local agricultural societies, school and youth organizations, and The Royal Canadian Legion. An avid gardener since childhood, Sandra continues her passion through raised-bed gardening, fruit trees, preserving, and jam making.

As President, Sandra looks forward to working with members, societies/clubs, and partners across Ontario to advance the mission of the Ontario Horticultural Association and support its continued growth and success.



Catherine McGill for Vice President

Aging, round, and fuelled by humour—me in a nutshell.

I'm the mother of three amazing adults who all love gardening—or at least keep their houseplants alive—so I consider parenthood a complete success. I'm also the proud grandmother of a two-year-old grand-puppy named Millie, who is either missing one screw or only has one left. Either way, she fits perfectly into the family dynamic.



Over the years, I've worn more hats than most people keep in their closet: Chef for over 20 years, Blacksmith, Horse Trainer, Riding Instructor... but the roles you probably care about most are the 40+ years I spent running my own garden maintenance business, working primarily with seniors, and my training as both a Horticultural and Design Judge. In short, I know a little about a whole lot of plants. I'm the Past Director of District 6 and currently serve on the OHA Board as 2nd VP—steadily moving on up, as the song goes.

Now officially retired from the jobs that actually paid money, I keep myself busy as an admin on several Facebook pages (GardenOntario, District 6, and the Haldimand Horticultural Society), competitions chair for my home society, and a speaker across Ontario on all things horticultural. My chef background means I also run the kitchen for Seedy Saturday events and other volunteer gatherings—because someone has to keep the troops fed.

I sit on both the JCO and OHA Judges groups, where we answer questions, review rules, and host judges' updates to keep everyone sharp, current, and confident.

If you're looking for someone hardworking, endlessly curious, and determined enough to find the answer if I don't already know it—and who brings a healthy dose of sarcasm and humour to everything—I might just be the person you're looking for.

My motto is simple: If you can't see the humour in what you're doing, why are you doing it?

Karen Redmond For 2nd Vice President

Karen's love of horticulture began at a young age, nurtured by her family and a neighbour who was a Life Member of the Goderich and District Horticultural Society. That early inspiration grew into a lifelong commitment to gardening, community involvement, and sharing knowledge with others.

Since joining the Auburn Horticultural Society in 1997, Karen has been a dedicated and valued member, contributing in many leadership roles. She served as Treasurer for several years and later became Auburn's District 8 Representative at District Board Meetings. In 2011, Karen was elected District 8 Secretary, a role she carried out with care and consistency for the 11 years.



Karen became District 8 Director in July 2021 and, in 2023, further extended her service as Southwest Regional Representative for the Ontario Horticultural Association. She was proud to co-chair the successful 2024 OHA Annual Meeting and Convention in Guelph alongside District 7 Director Kathy Bouma, helping bring members together in a spirit of learning and connection.

A Past President of the Auburn Horticultural Society, Karen continues to be an active and enthusiastic participant, well known for her role as auctioneer at the annual plant sale. She remains a committed volunteer and leader, currently serving on the OHA Board of Directors, contributing to the Conservation and Environment Committee, and chairing the Youth Committee, where she is especially passionate about encouraging the next generation of gardeners.

Outside of her horticultural work, Karen is a proud parent of two sons and enjoys the lively energy of five busy grandchildren. She has had a rewarding career in nursing and is nearing full retirement from her role as a Victim Services Client Services Coordinator. In her spare time, Karen enjoys gardening, spending time in nature, and caring for her beloved pets—a Bernese Mountain Dog and a senior ginger cat—both of whom have become familiar companions during virtual meetings in recent years.

Karen brings warmth, experience, and a genuine dedication to supporting members and strengthening the horticultural community across Ontario.

Ancaster Horticultural Society

Submitted by Rhu Sherrard

Photos by Rhu Sherrard and Betty Howitt



Spring and Summer seasons are officially here, and our volunteers are in full swing.

The AHS Plant Sale was held on a sunny Saturday, May 16. This is one of our most successful events, which brings our community together in a lovely way.

There were over 1,000 perennials, most dug up from our members' gardens, and over 800 heirloom tomato plants offered.

For the first time, there was a large native plant section and a toonie table section. Both were well received. By the time we opened at 8 a.m., there was a lineup of eager gardeners. By the time we closed at noon, all the plants were sold. A tremendous effort by the AHS volunteers, who put in hundreds of hours to make the sale a huge success.

Happy customers; happy volunteers. Thank you, Jeanne Robertson, for the report.



Our Plant Sale also includes heirloom tomatoes, and this year we tried peppers to support our fundraising:

- Ordered 800 tomato and 90 pepper plants from grower (R. & W. Kuntz)
- Received 827 tomato and 109 pepper plants on May 10. The additional plants were provided at no charge in recognition of the changes made to the order by the grower.
 - As of 3 p.m. on May 15, AHS pre-sold:
 - 497 tomato plants (62% of total tomatoes)

- 67 pepper plants (74% of total peppers)
 - Provided 2 plants gratis to the printer
- The remainder went to the Plant Sale held on May 16:
 - 324 tomato plants and 42 pepper plants
 - At the conclusion of the Plant Sale, 14 tomato and pepper plants remained unsold. These plants were donated to the Bob Kemp Hospice by AHS.

Thank you, Elizabeth Martin, for the report.

The volunteer gardeners are responsible for four gardens in the community: Fieldcote, Millenium, Brandon Park and the Town Square. AHS has support from donated plants from the Ancaster Oddfellows Group for the Town Square, and from Harper's Garden Centre, who supply not only plants but potting soil, peat moss and starter fertilizer to our Plant Sale.

Donations from the City of Hamilton and the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Farm and Rural Affairs offset the costs of our Trillium Awards and monthly speakers.

Thanks, Bob Wilt, for reconfirming the details.

April 21, 2026, Guest Speaker: Melissa North spoke on "*Wild Edibles*"

Melissa North is a Holistic Health Practitioner, Nutrition and Lifestyle Medicine Coach, and Organic Gardener of fruits, vegetables, native and medicinal plants.

After many years of chronic health issues in her early years, she was overweight, weak and dependent on medications. Through a change in lifestyle and the use of herbal and food medicine, she was able to reclaim her health and find a purpose and a passion for life.

Melissa offers seminars in all aspects of healthy living with a foundation in Growing Things. She believes in empowering people with the knowledge and the tools to take control of their health and well-being through the healing power of plants.

The growing acceptance that plant-based eating offers numerous health benefits has many of us planting gardens and visiting our local markets for delicious and nutritious ingredients. Often overlooked, though, are the numerous wild plants that we walk by, or on, every day.

In this seminar, we uncovered the unique benefits of some of these wild plants that are easily found and identified in our local area, and how to forage and prepare them.

April 25, 2026, Annual Fieldcote Museum Clean Up

Our efforts are focused on the front two and a half acres. The City of Hamilton provided approximately two truckloads of mulch to assist with the cleanup and beautification.

We had over 15 volunteers from our society membership, and the Ancaster Scouts offered 10 to 15 volunteers, including Scout leader and organizer Jenn Ayres.

Thank you to Mara and the staff at Fieldcote, who provided the volunteers with a pizza lunch.





Annual Fieldcote Museum Clean Up



May 19, 2026, Guest Speaker: Kirsten McCarthy, Master Gardener, spoke on “How to Judge a Biodiverse Garden and Support Pollinators.”

Kirsten McCarthy is a Halton Region Master Gardener with a passion for native plants and a talent for transforming outdoor spaces. A Toronto native, she now calls Dundas home, where she continues to learn about best gardening practices with a priority of building habitat for wildlife.

Kirsten caught the gardening bug over 12 years ago when she traded a row of bridal wreath spiraeas in her Toronto backyard for a thriving butterfly garden. Today, her enthusiasm has grown into a deep commitment to learning about biodiversity, native plant communities, food webs and invasive species. Last year, she took that passion one step further by building a backyard pond, creating a new habitat for pollinators, birds and (hopefully) other creatures that will call her garden home.

Kirsten’s talk was an introduction to the importance of biodiversity and native plants. She also touched on host plants and keystone species, and explained the connection between insect populations, host plants and keystone species. Kirsten provided a few examples of good native plants to start a native plant garden, for sun and shade. Thank you, Betty Howitt.

Note: Four trays of flowers were donated by the new owner of Canadian Tire, Ancaster, ON.

Trillium Awards 2026

Trillium Committee Lead is Carolyn Bondarenko

2026 Trillium Award entries are accepted from May 26 to June 7, 2026.

If a garden was judged last year, it will automatically be re-judged this year.

New this year: If community gardeners have a natural or biodiverse garden, they are encouraged to participate in the Monarch Awards program run by Halton Master Gardeners. Please visit their website: [Halton Region Master Gardeners](https://www.haltonmastergardeners.com/)

Upcoming Events

June 16, 2026: Colin Phillips and Mandey Moote, Sycamore Hill Flower Farm
From Garden to Farm, Scaling up the Love of Flowers

June 2026: Road trip to Purple Haven Lavender Farm and Beth Powell's garden in Canfield, ON

September 15, 2026: Dr. Mike Dixon, University of Guelph, Professor Emeritus and Director
The Contribution of Plants to Life Support in Space

October 20, 2026: Irene Kicak and Veronica Tunzi, Fancy Farmerettes
Growing with Hemp



Aurora Garden and Horticultural Society

“Super Pollinator” Supports Plants and Communities

Submitted by and photo by Cindy Scythes

Garden Aurora and District 5 would like to introduce you to our best publicity personality and membership recruiter, “Super Pollinator”.

Donna Lewis has been the President of Garden Aurora since 2018, and an Assistant Director of OHA District 5 since 2019.

District Director Ursula Eley recently presented Donna with a District Service Certificate, saying, “Donna is a true ambassador for our horticultural societies and clubs. She has a special gift for engaging with people of all ages. Much of her free time is spent in supporting gardening, pollinators, environmental concerns and more.”

At outreach events, Donna dresses as a Monarch Butterfly and is our star attraction. Resplendent in the dazzling orange and black of this beloved garden creature, she flits around these events delighting onlookers, eliciting smiles and attracting delighted comments and questions about the Monarch and pollinators in general. Donna is a living fount of knowledge on gardening, horticulture and pollinators, and shares her knowledge and passion freely and creatively with the community. In addition, Donna is an Ontario Master Naturalist and a passionate protector of Trumpeter Swans, following in the footsteps of her mentor, the late, renowned Trumpeter Swan champion and long-time Aurora resident, Harry Lumsden.



Donna supports the protection, preservation, sustainability and conservation of our natural environment in so many ways, and is completely committed to creating a greener community in Aurora and Ontario.

The Aurora Farmers' Market has included Donna in their Pollinator Month since 2023. Donna, in her many costumes, including Mother Earth, brings attention to Garden Aurora in the local Canada Day Parade and the Aurora Home Show. Donna's costume brings smiles and requests for photos at all events she attends.

At the Markham Fair in 2025, Donna captured attention and drew people to the District 5 table as well as the Master Gardeners' table. Ursula Eley observed that she made such a great impression on Fair visitors that people came to our District 5 table because they had heard she was there.

As the iconic "Super Pollinator" at events and meetings such as Get the Jump on Spring at the Toronto Botanical Garden, Canada Blooms and the Markham Fair, she is approached by other attendees, and this allows her to engage in conversations and provide education promoting responsible gardening, the positive impact of gardening, environmental sustainability and the benefits of garden clubs.

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Bath Gardening Club

Helping Gardens Grow

By Kim Bonner, photo by Don Taylor

Each spring, members of the Bath Garden Club look forward to our club's popular fundraiser: the annual Fritz's Fertilizer sale. More than just a chance to stock up on a trusted gardening product, the sale helps support the club's many community projects and educational initiatives throughout the year.



The fertilizer is well known among gardeners for its high-quality, water-soluble formula that provides plants with the nutrients they need for healthy growth and abundant blooms.

Members and local gardeners eagerly place their orders each year, taking advantage of the opportunity to purchase an excellent fertilizer while supporting a good cause. For many local gardeners, the Fritz Fertilizer sale has become an annual tradition, one that signals the start of another growing season.

The fundraiser is also a wonderful example of the club's community spirit. About 25 volunteers helped secure the ingredients, mix and bag the fertilizer, organize orders, coordinate pick-ups and ensure that everyone received their fertilizer in time for the busy spring gardening season.

Sunday Market in Bath Returns for Another Great Year

by Kim Bonner

The Village of Bath came alive on Sunday, May 10, as the Sunday Market in Bath officially opened its 2026 season. Centennial Park was filled with the cheerful sounds of conversation, music and kids' laughter as residents and visitors gathered to celebrate another year of this lovely community tradition.

Each Sunday from May through October, more than 30 local vendors will be offering fresh produce, baked goods, preserves, plants, artisan crafts and specialty foods.

Here's what shoppers and vendors had to say about opening day.

Shoppers:

"Our family comes every Sunday morning for Lei's dumplings, it's a tradition."

"We came to check out the vendors and see what's available this year."

"I'm hoping to find handmade gifts for my daughter's upcoming birthday."

"Our kids had fun getting their faces painted and decorating a tote."

Vendors:

"The location is excellent, with strong visibility from the street. We really enjoy the live music and the beautiful park setting. The organization of the market is top notch."

"We're new to Bath. We're here to grow our business, network with other vendors and make new friends."

"This is our second year in business and our first year at the Sunday Market in Bath. We're here to sell our plants and share our passion for gardening."

To find out which musicians are performing live each week, and to explore the kids' crafts and activities running all season long, visit the market's website for the latest lineup, updates and special events: <https://sundaymarketinbath.com/events>



Generated using Microsoft Copilot, June 2026

Pollinator Garden Update – Growing Something Beautiful Together

by Kim Bonner, photo by Kim Bonner

A big thank you to the OHA for helping our Pollinator Garden and Memorial Grove bloom a little brighter this season through their generous funding support.

We're fortunate to have a thriving community of native bees and hoverflies at the PG & MG, but we'd love to encourage more bumblebees, butterflies and hummingbirds to visit as well.



Little bluestem

Ruby spice summersweet

Baptisia australis

Generated using ChatGPT, June 2026

This spring, with the help of an OHA Pollinator Habitat Grant, we planted two False Indigos to serve as host plants for six species of hungry butterfly caterpillars, two ruby spice summersweet bushes to offer late-season nectar for hummingbirds before they fly south, and two little bluestem grasses to provide cozy overwintering shelters for bumblebees.

Thanks to an OHA Tree Grant, two new eastern redbuds have joined the Memorial Grove, and we think they're going to steal the show.

These native trees pack a lot of charm into a six to nine metre size, making them a perfect fit for the space. In early spring, they're covered in brilliant pink flowers that provide an important early-season food source for bumblebee queens, like the one at left spotted on one of our new trees.

By summer, the trees trade blossoms for graceful heart-shaped leaves. All in all, they're beautiful, wildlife-friendly and perfectly sized for the Grove.



Love Where You Live: Bath Earth Day Clean-Up

by Pat Chown, photo by Don Taylor

On Sunday, April 19, approximately 30 Gardening Club volunteers joined other community volunteers for the annual Great Bath Clean-Up.

Hosted by Fast Freddy's (Free Flow Petroleum) and in partnership with Loyalist Township, the Great Bath Clean-Up takes place annually, coinciding with Earth Day. This is a special event where we work together, meet new friends and neighbours and have an opportunity to honour and celebrate Planet Earth.

Teams of volunteers spread out across the area, combing streets, parks and green spaces to collect bags of litter and debris left behind over

the winter months. It did not take long to spruce up Bath from Finkle Shore, the Marina area, behind the shopping centre and north on Church Street past the school.

Over the years, an assortment of articles has been unearthed. This year's great find was a computer printer left sitting in a ditch.

Thanks to the Township for our reflective vests and for scooping up the bags we had deposited curbside. Many thanks to Chandra Brown, Manager of Fast Freddy's, for organizing the event, and to Country Style for providing drinks and goodies after our work was completed.

A Very Busy Bee Geocache

by The Bath Garden Club, photo by Kim Bonner

Geocaching is a real-world treasure hunt that uses GPS coordinates to help people find hidden containers called "geocaches." This fun activity combines technology, exploration and problem-solving, making it a fun way to discover new places.

Placing a geocache in the Pollinator Garden area encourages outdoor exploration, environmental education and community stewardship by connecting visitors with pollinator conservation initiatives and native habitat restoration efforts.

Our cache includes educational information about bees and their essential role in supporting healthy ecosystems.

From time to time, we'll place a Travel Bug in our geocache.



It's a tracking tag with a goal for geocachers to try and complete. The first tag is already on its way to the Oyamel Fir Forest in Mexico.

Our club's geocache went live on the Geocaching app and geocaching.com website on May 10, 2026. Since then, we've had several people find it. Here are some of their comments:

"A lovely peaceful place that we did not know about."

"I had no idea this little garden was back here, but once I found the gate I was at the GZ in no time. The redirect took me a while but there it was, nice and obvious when I looked in the right spot."

"This cache was so well done and super cute! I had no idea this place was here and my kids loved it too! Big favourite point from me!"

"... one of the nicest multicaches I HAVE DONE IN ALL MY YEARS OF GEOCACHING... I ALSO loved the scavenger hunt that was available too. What a great place to bring cachers with family."

A link to our geocache can be found here:

https://www.geocaching.com/geocache/GCBP43T_a-very-busy-bee-by-the-bath-gardening-club

Carson Arthur Speaks About Food Insecurity

Members of the Bath Garden Club, along with community members and teachers and students from Bath Public School, attended an engaging and thought-provoking presentation by Carson Arthur on one of the most important issues facing gardeners and communities today: food security, including the availability, accessibility and affordability of food for all.

Known to many Canadians through his television appearances on *Room to Grow* from 2003 to 2006, he is currently the owner of Carson's Garden and Market in Bloomfield and host of *Take It Outside with Carson Arthur* on CJBQ Radio. You might also want to check out his book *Vegetables, Chickens and Bees: An Honest Guide to Growing Your Own Food Anywhere*.

Throughout the afternoon, Arthur combined practical advice with humour and inspiring examples, making complex sustainability issues both accessible and motivating. His message was optimistic: meaningful change does not require vast farmland or expensive equipment. It begins with small actions such as planting potatoes, composting leftovers, preserving harvests and making thoughtful choices about the food we buy and grow.

According to data he shared, food prices in Canada have risen by 34% since the COVID-19 pandemic and are expected to increase by another 15% in 2026. Carson Arthur noted that middle- and lower-income families are now spending up to 30% of their monthly income on food, leading to a significant increase in food bank use. In many local communities, one in three families relies on food banks to help supplement groceries, while seniors are also facing growing financial hardship due to rising food costs.

While the phrase "Buy Canadian, Support Local" is widely recognized, Carson Arthur explained that Canadian farmers often struggle to compete financially with large-scale farms in the United States, Mexico and Peru. Combined with Canada's relatively short growing season of about 95 days, this makes it difficult for Canadian producers to grow enough food to fully meet domestic demand.

While approximately 80% of processed food is produced in Canada, access to fresh produce remains a major challenge. Canada imports 75% of its fresh vegetables and 50% of its fruit, much of it from the United States. Carson explained that with the American government promoting a “U.S. First” approach, the cost of imported food is expected to continue rising as demand increases and export availability decreases.

To help address food insecurity, Carson Arthur encouraged communities to revive practices like the Victory Gardens established after the Second World War. He believes Canadians should once again grow food for their families, and “some to share,” while also freezing, canning and preserving homegrown produce to provide healthy food throughout the winter months.

Carson also highlighted the importance of food banks, programs such as United Way’s Fresh for All, community gardens and community garden stands in supporting individuals and families experiencing food insecurity.

Arthur emphasized that food sustainability begins close to home. Even small gardens, raised beds and containers can make a meaningful contribution by reducing the distance food travels from farm to table. Growing herbs, vegetables and fruits not only provides fresh and nutritious produce, but also deepens our understanding of where our food comes from and the resources required to produce it.

In response to questions about raised garden beds, Carson offered the following guidance. Because local soil contains a high amount of clay, he recommended building upward using raised garden beds. Wood is preferred, especially hemlock or white cedar, as it typically lasts eight to twelve years and does not retain heat the way metal can. Beds are best filled with triple mix soil, then topped with sterilized hay to help shade the soil, retain moisture and gradually break down to add organic fibre. Additional amendments such as sheep’s wool can also contribute fibre, while alpaca manure is considered an excellent natural fertilizer option.

Suitable crops for this type of setup include beets, carrots, potatoes, gooseberries, haskap and shrub cherries, which tend to grow well in raised beds and cooler-climate conditions.

He invited members interested in learning more about canning, preserving and related skills to explore the courses offered at his garden centre.

Members left the presentation with fresh ideas and renewed enthusiasm for creating gardens that are not only beautiful, but also productive and environmentally responsible.

The Bath Garden Club extends its sincere thanks to Carson Arthur for sharing his knowledge and passion. His presentation was a powerful reminder that every garden, no matter its size, has the potential to nourish both people and the planet.

Belleville Garden Club

The Belleville Garden Club Celebrates 150 Years!

Submitted by Stephen Clare (member), Chris Green and Barb Hayward (Co-Chairs)

Established as the Belleville Horticultural Society on January 5, 1876, the Club predates the incorporation of the City of Belleville. The founders recognized the need for outdoor recreational space in urban areas while educating members on new gardening plants and techniques. In its inaugural year, the Club planted trees on public properties and at the train station. Once the City was incorporated, the Garden Club took an active role in horticultural affairs, planting more trees, working to establish a Parks and Recreation Department, and annually planting flower beds at public buildings, schools and parks with the aim to beautify the properties.



Later, the Garden Club cleaned and planted vacant lots, bought the City a power lawn mower in 1927 to allow a gardener to work on flower beds in parks, bought roses for the Corby Rose Garden, and during the Wars planted Victory Gardens. Trees were purchased and planted across the expanding city was an on-going activity by Garden Club volunteers. The establishment of chrysanthemum beds at Riverside Park and the resulting "Big Dig" in the fall, where the public purchased the mums to transplant at home. This resulted in Belleville becoming known as the Chrysanthemum City.

One of the longest on-going works of the Club was the flower beds at the VIA Rail station. These were originally established by members to give a good first impression of Belleville to rail passengers arriving or passing through on the Grand Trunk Railway. Volunteers planted and maintained these beds intermittently until the old station and beds were maintained by a landscape company.

Today, members of the Belleville Garden Club have a few ongoing projects. We plant and maintain the courtyard at the Belleville General Hospital as well as the gardens at the Belleville Cemetery.

To celebrate the year, we held our anniversary kick-off meeting in February with cake and faux champagne. Belleville Mayor Neil Ellis thanked the Club for its efforts over the years and presented a Certificate of Appreciation. Councillor Garnet Thompson was also on hand to congratulate the Club. Brad King, District 3 Assistant Director and President of the Lennox and Addington Horticultural Society, brought with him a letter and certificate of congratulations from James Kimmerley, District 3 Director, and Vicky Culbert, OHA President. Susan Robinson, a member who has been rummaging in the Archives, presented a summary of the evolution and the activities that the Club has been involved with over its 150-year history. The accomplishments are many.

The Belleville Garden Club will be holding several events for members and guests. A violet show, a summer flower and rose show, and a garden tea will remind members of the "good old days," while a bus trip, a plaque dedication and new flower beds celebrate the present.

Information about our Club and our many events can be obtained from our website: BellevilleGardenClub.ca or find us on Facebook.

Brockville & District Horticultural Society

GardenBrockville Hosts Successful OHA District 3 Spring Annual General Meeting

Written by Danielle Laurier. Photos provided by Elaine Visser.

On May 2, GardenBrockville warmly welcomed members of GardenOntario's District 3 societies for the Spring Annual General Meeting. The event was characterized by camaraderie, insightful discussions and a shared appreciation for the beauty of gardening.



The day began with coffee and light snacks at registration, generously sponsored by Layer 8 Solutions Inc. Brad King, Past District Director, extended a warm welcome to all attendees. Following this, an Indigenous Land Acknowledgement was read, honouring the land and its history.



OHA representative Dennis Milluck and the D3 Directors were introduced, and special thoughts were extended to D3 Director James Kimmerly, who was unable to attend due to health issues.

Bruce Wylie, President of GardenBrockville, offered greetings on behalf of the club. "As you make your way from Maitland this afternoon, consider taking a detour to Brockville. Brockville is brimming with history, culture and natural beauty, offering many attractions: the Railway Tunnel, Canada's first railway tunnel; the Aquatarium, Brockville's premier interactive discovery centre; the grand Fulford mansion, filled with original furnishings and family treasures, and a restored Olmsted Brothers garden; boat cruises with stunning views of the 1000 Islands; Blockhouse Island, a hub for festivals, scenic strolls and riverfront relaxation; Brockville's Arts Centre, one of Canada's finest mid-sized theatres and a proud heritage landmark. Make the most of your trip or come back.

Brockville has a lot to offer."



Mayor Jeff Shaver welcomed everyone to Maitland. Initiatives like the upcoming Open Gardens event in July with Van Berlo Gardens and Maitland Garden of Hope help promote local appreciation.

Mayor Shaver was double-booked to also attend a native plant event the same day. The Augusta Township and Area Butterflyway Project Committee, in partnership with the Maitland Tower HippoCampus, hosted "Powering Up with Native Plants, Part 2." Read on for a deeper look into this critical initiative.

Society presidents then introduced delegates, and an In Memoriam Moment was observed to honour those we have lost. During the business portion of the meeting, all motions were passed smoothly, and the new District 3 Board was officially installed.



GardenBrockville Board member Walter Hare expressed gratitude with "Words of Thanks" before attendees enjoyed a delightful luncheon catered by Food for Thought Catering. The highlight of the afternoon was a presentation by guest speaker Philip Ling, who shared his vision for the Maitland Tower property. His inspiring talk prompted several attendees to express interest in exploring the area further.

The generosity of sponsors was acknowledged, with Coville's Greenhouses, Gemmill's Garden Centre and Van Berlo Gardens donating raffle prizes. Beautiful spring centrepieces, contributed by all societies, served as charming door prizes.

The District 3 Board extended their heartfelt thanks to GardenBrockville for their meticulous planning and warm hospitality, which made the

AGM a memorable event. "The meeting provided a rewarding opportunity for in-person connections, fostering a spirit of collaboration and learning within the gardening community."

The event concluded with a message of appreciation from District 3 Past Director Brad King, acknowledging GardenBrockville for their outstanding organization and generous hospitality. "The AGM was not only an occasion to conduct important business but also a chance to explore the rich history of the Maitland Tower, as shared by Philip Ling. This gathering served as a reminder of the enduring bonds that unite the gardening community, encouraging growth and shared knowledge."



In sum, the D3 Spring AGM hosted by GardenBrockville was a testament to the power of community and the joy of gardening. It was an event marked by warmth, inspiration and a collective dedication to nurturing both plants and people.



Year 1 as a Butterflyway Ranger with the David Suzuki Foundation's Butterflyway Project

Written by, photos, and graphics by Heidi Linnen-MacDonald.

I retired after thirty years in education as a principal. I had watched so many firsts: the tears and laughter of graduations, the excitement of a student reading their first book, the first seasonal recess snowfall. The stories are countless. I loved every minute of the endless successes and new challenges. I wondered, now what? How could I continue to grow, learn and try to make a difference in the world? I searched to find my way and found a new learning journey.

I had been receiving newsletters from the David Suzuki Foundation. In February 2025, they were seeking applications for the Butterflyway Project. I applied, and here I am, one of approximately one thousand eight hundred and fifty Butterflyway Rangers across Canada. Rangers are volunteers working in local communities to help build habitat gardens with native plants in neighbourhoods and spaces such as schools, libraries and offices. As pollinator champions, Rangers learn and share their learning, connecting with local partners to plant native wildflowers, grasses, shrubs and trees.

From last spring to now, I have become an enthusiastic novice gardener. I truly mean novice. I am a new school learner, a Kindergarten gardener. My first action in this new student role was to find gardeners near me, so I joined GardenBrockville. I listened during meetings, asked questions on the side, volunteered, attended events and read their newsletters. Learning and making connections, I began to branch out and bought books by Lorraine Johnson and Dr. Doug Tallamy. I joined a variety of webinars and podcasts and ventured into local woodlands with the iNaturalist app to photograph and learn about native, non-native and invasive species. I discovered "my why." I now garden for nature. I'm an ecological gardener. By learning about and planting native plants, those that have evolved over millennia in a region, we support the pollinators these plants evolved with. Through our own gardening actions, we can support bees, butterflies and moths and, in turn, other insects, birds and the diversity of all wildlife.



This novice gardener is spreading the word: plant native plants, leave the leaves as habitat for overwintering insects, and leave flower heads and stalks for food and cavity-nesting bees. Find ways to include decaying logs, rock piles, watering bowls and brush piles. Rewilding means life can flourish, and we can watch this happen right in our own backyards. It is a positive choice we can make when making choices in our lives can sometimes seem daunting, overwhelming and out of reach. Habitat gardening is something we can all be a part of and share within our clubs, friend groups and conversations. Who knew habitat gardening would be a fulfilling and exciting full-season adventure like this? I sure didn't.



My journey as a Butterflyway Ranger has been filled with beauty and the opportunity to build new relationships with nature and people. From local woodlots and home gardens to GardenBrockville club members, local environmental organizations, librarians, neighbours and friends, spaces and hearts have been open to learning about and growing native plants. My journey has been through novice eyes, those of someone seeing things in new ways. Understanding the cycles of the seasons, such as when to harvest seeds, winter sow, separate seedlings and plant, has been an exciting opportunity for learning and action. Now, with a small yet mighty local Butterflyway Committee, we are making a difference. Native plants are being sought after and planted, and community members are coming together to learn about these plants. I have shared a presentation about my first year as a Butterflyway Ranger with GardenBrockville, a local library and a high school. We culminated the first year of our Butterflyway Project with a spring "Powering Up with Native Plants" event at the historic Maitland Tower. We were beyond excited to have Lorraine Johnson join us, along with a long lineup of amazing supporters of the event. Native plant nurseries, nature-based vendors and environmental groups all leveraged the excitement and expertise, all in one beautiful space in our community, learning and growing together.

I learned in the school yard and have moved to the backyard. I intend to be a novice gardener forever, asking questions, building relationships and learning. I know that any actions building diversity in our gardens, whether big or small, make a difference. Like the Kindergartens I used to watch with

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Maitland Tower HippoCampus

wonder as they laughed and played in the sand, I have come full circle. In the garden with dirty hands, I have rekindled my relationship with nature, and I'm finding others who are curious and ready for action too. Margaret Mead said so eloquently, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."

BTW: You can learn about the Butterflyway Project and find ecological gardening resources at <https://davidsuzuki.org/take-action/act-locally/butterflyway/>

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What is a Food Forest

By Cynthia B. Lauer

The idea of a food forest may sound familiar to many gardeners. One thinks of a garden consisting of edible plants arranged around some fruit-bearing trees. But food forests also feature fruiting shrubs, herbaceous perennials, herbs, ground-covering plants and sometimes vegetables, bulbs and vines. While many of these plants produce food to eat, not all of them have that exclusive purpose.

Food forests are multifunctional ecosystems that also provide pollinator support and habitat, biofuel, fodder, nitrogen and mineral accumulation in the soil. It's about food in the broadest sense.

Food forests are nothing new. Indigenous peoples have managed soils and cultivated foods in forests since time immemorial. Chelsey Armstrong, archaeologist and historical ecologist at Simon Fraser University, has discovered at least nineteen food forests in British Columbia ranging in size from a couple of football fields to a square kilometre. Planted by Indigenous communities such as the Ts'msyen, Gitksan and Coast Salish, and neglected for 150 years, these green spaces continue to provide food for birds, bears and insects. Food forests embody the ancestral Indigenous practice of preserving biodiversity and strengthening resiliency and soil health while producing food and medicines.

To design a green space like this, you need to implement a few design principles and careful plant choices. The result will be a household supply of fresh produce while building soil health and environmental sustainability.

Benefits of Food Forests

Food forests are designed for trees and plants to grow in relation to one another, enhancing the system as a whole. The plants share needs for water, sunlight, soil nutrients and root depth, among other factors. Together, they fix nitrogen, provide habitat, retain water, build soil nutrients, repel pests, attract beneficial insects, create mulch and suppress grass and weeds among other functions.

Like the biodiversity of natural forests, food forests need only minimal interaction from humans. They do not require fertilizers or pesticides or expensive annual outputs of energy. Instead, the system relies on nutrient-accumulative plants, organic matter and diverse intercropping of species that encourage beneficial insects.

Taller canopy trees provide shelter from wind and sun as well as edible seeds, leaves or fruit. Smaller trees and shrubs provide fruit crops, wildlife habitat and shade. Groundcover plants protect the soil from erosion and water loss, prevent weed germination, insulate the soil from extreme temperatures and serve as a living mulch. They also provide habitat for animals, beneficial insects and other useful predators. The edible herbaceous layer consists of vegetables, flowers, herbs, cover crops and soil-building plants. Climbing or trailing woody-stemmed plants grow through the food forest layers, attracting beneficial wildlife and repelling pests.

Once established, trees and shrubs shed their leaves in the dormant season and organic matter begins to accumulate. This natural mulch remediates the soil and protects it from the erosion and degradation so common in agricultural lands. In absorbing large quantities of rainwater, food forests release it back into the landscape slowly in the form of gentle streams instead of the dangerous torrents of water produced by extreme weather events. Food forests are a safeguard against the effects of climate change, providing food sources that are able to endure changing conditions.

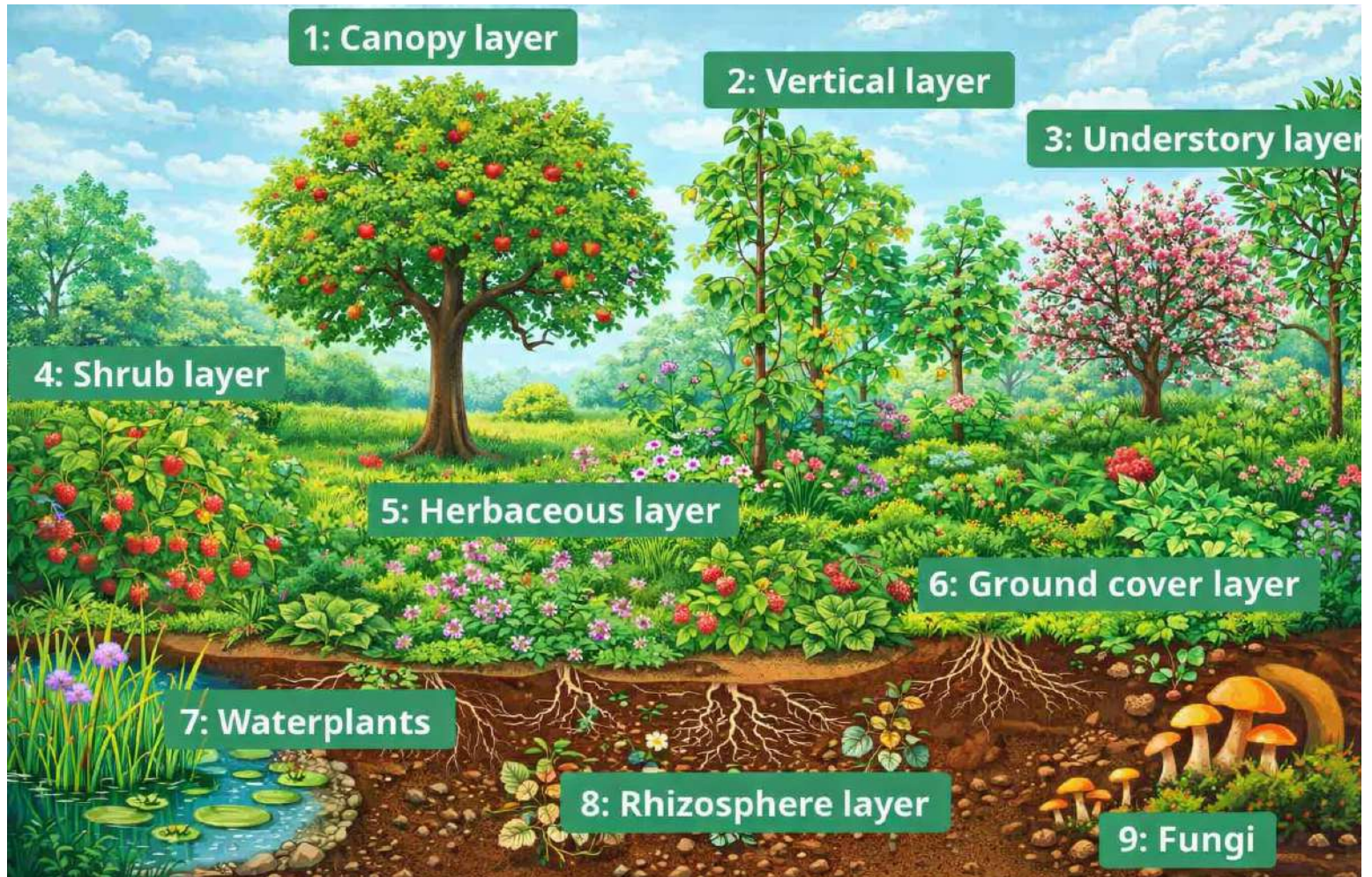
Food forests can make a significant contribution to food security for local communities. Besides the superior quality of home-grown food, they save gardeners money when they can enjoy backyard harvests of fruit, nuts, herbs, vegetables, flowers and roots for food, tea and remedies.



Designing a Food Forest

Food forests are designed with five or more layers: canopy, sub-canopy or understory, shrubs, herbaceous perennials and groundcovers. Herbs, vegetables, vines and a fungal layer are sometimes added. The design is known as a plant guild. An acre of space may accommodate a large guild under tall nut and fruit trees. Smaller spaces can position a dwarf fruit tree or berry shrub as the central element. Something is always sprouting while neighbouring plants die or go dormant for the season.

Planting several guilds together creates a multifunctional, polycultural garden that thrives in low-maintenance perpetuity.



Generated using Microsoft Copilot, June 2026

Following the graphic, the canopy consists of heavy nut or fruit-producing trees like oak and cherry. The photo shows a large *Corylus cornuta*, our native hazelnut. Other options are walnut, hickory, hackberry, butternut, pecan, apple, plum or red mulberry. The next layer is the understory of medium-sized trees like crab apple, Saskatoon berry or silver buffaloberry. Highbush cranberry, pawpaw and alder are other examples. Next come fruit-bearing shrubs like haskap, currants, raspberry, low-bush cranberry, hazelnut and sea buckthorn. Following this are herbaceous perennials and herbs like bee balm, coneflower, borage and yarrow. Comfrey, anise hyssop, calendula and dill are other popular choices. Groundcovers like strawberry, clover and wild ginger come next. Root vegetables like onion, garlic, beets and carrots are planted underground. For variety, a northern kiwi vine or grapes can be added. Naturally, design of the guild must accommodate the unique conditions of individual sites.

Canadian Food Forests

Food forests of all sizes and kinds are thriving across Canada. Here is a list of some I discovered from coast to coast. Quite a few of them can be visited online.

- Jonas Roberts' Foggy Food Forest in St. Phillip's outside of St. John's, Newfoundland
- In Nova Scotia, the Scotsburn Community Food Forest in Scotsburn, Earthling Farm and Food Forest in Forest Hill, and Hummingbird Lane Community Food Forest in Sable River
- The Fredericton Botanic Garden
- Québec Public Interest Group's Food Forest Project at Concordia University in Montreal
- Elle Odyn's food forest located in the Ottawa-Gatineau region of Québec
- Keith St. Jean's food forest in Cobourg, Ontario, where he hosts the YouTube channel Canadian Permaculture Legacy
- Assiniboine Food Forest in Brandon, Manitoba
- The Ness Creek Forest Garden in central Saskatchewan
- The Galiano Conservancy's Food Forest in British Columbia
- The Vancouver Urban Food Forest Foundation
- Needle Mountain Food Forest at Mount Lorne near Whitehorse, Yukon, created by Gertie Scharrer and the late Agnes Seitz



Corylus cornuta (native hazelnut)



currant shrub

The purposes of food forests are diverse. Some allocate space to commerce while others focus on public access. Whatever their intent, whether household consumption, market harvest, community-building, biodiversity and habitat or soil restoration, food forests are making a recognizable contribution to sustainable social, economic and environmental practices in Canadian gardening.

Bio

Cynthia B. Lauer, PhD, is a member of Simcoe County Master Gardeners. A writer for The Gardener magazine, she has been a regular contributor to Trillium since 2022. Her work is AI-free.

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Grand Bend & Area Horticultural Society

Grand Bend & Area Horticultural Society Celebrates 35 Years

Submitted by Susan Courtney, photos by Scott Nixon, Susan Courtney, Christine Wilde, Leslie Haddon

On any given summer day in Grand Bend, bursts of colour spill from planters lining the downtown streets, welcoming residents and visitors alike. These vibrant displays don't happen by chance. They are the work of dedicated volunteers whose passion for gardening has helped shape the beauty of this lakeside community for more than three decades.



**GRAND BEND & AREA
HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY**

This year, the Grand Bend & Area Horticultural Society proudly celebrated 35 years of cultivating not only gardens, but also community spirit. More than 100 people attended the "High Tea" celebration at the Grand Bend Legion Hall on Wednesday, April 22, 2026, including a tribute to the vision created by the group's founders, as well as the enthusiasm and dedication of members throughout the years. Presentations included speeches and displays of historical memorabilia. The society received a congratulatory certificate from the Ontario Premier on behalf of the Government, as well as one from our own Mayor Doug Cook commemorating this milestone.



Board Members. From L to R: Ruby Shreve, Susan Courtney, Rita DoCanto, Leslie Haddon, Christine Wilde, Linda Blumn, Sandy Merida



Rita DoCanto with Grand Bend Mayor Doug Cook

Founded in the early 1990s, the society began as a small gathering of gardening enthusiasts with a shared love of plants and a desire to connect with others. Over the years, it has grown into a thriving organization with more than 100 members at the end of 2025 and growing, all united by a commitment to horticulture, environmental stewardship and civic pride.

One of the society's most visible contributions is its work throughout downtown Grand Bend. Each season, volunteers plant and maintain more than a dozen flower planters, transforming public spaces into colourful, welcoming environments, including surrounding our Chamber of Commerce and

Welcome Centre, and the Centennial flower bed at Main and Ontario Street. In addition, the society enhances the community's iconic Lighthouse welcome signs, ensuring that visitors are greeted with blooms that reflect the beach town charm and vitality of the area. With the widening of our bridge, we are excited about the re-imaging of how we will landscape our main intersection in 2027.

As part of the broader Lambton Shores region, Grand Bend benefits from a strong sense of regional identity, and the horticultural society plays an important role in that connection. Through its efforts, it not only beautifies the town but also fosters a shared appreciation for nature across neighbouring communities.

At the heart of the society's success are its members, especially those whose dedication has stood the test of time. The organization is proud to recognize eight lifetime members, individuals who have contributed more than 15 years of service. In appreciation, the society covers their annual membership fee, a small gesture that reflects deep gratitude for years of commitment and care.

This year we further recognized that commitment to one of our valued volunteers, Cairn Huff, who has supported our Society over the past 13 years. Since 2013, Cairn has served us in a wide range of roles, including Treasurer, Garden Captain, Special Garden Projects, Scholarship Committee, Nomination Committee and the compilation of what is known as the Blue Book for Executive and Committee Guidelines. On April 27, 2026, at our General Meeting, Cairn Huff was presented with the Garden Ontario Horticultural Service Certificate for Meritorious Service to Horticulture.



Cairn accepting the Service Certificate Award

While flowers and gardens are the most visible outcomes of the society's work, its true impact lies in the relationships and community involvement it has nurtured. Members come together to share knowledge, lend a hand, celebrate a common passion and participate in several community events, including the annual Paint Ontario, the Native Plant Sale hosted by the Lakeshore EcoNetwork, as well as partner with local businesses such as Westland Greenhouses. Whether planting a single container or tending an entire streetscape, each effort contributes to a legacy that has been growing for 35 years.

As the Grand Bend & Area Horticultural Society marks this milestone anniversary, it looks ahead with the same enthusiasm that inspired its founding. With strong membership, dedicated volunteers and deep community roots, the future is bright and certain to be in full bloom.

Our motto: To plant a garden is to believe in tomorrow. a quote from — Audrey Hepburn

Haldimand Horticultural Society

Spring Happenings from the Haldimand Horticultural Society

Submitted by and photos by Barbara Wilson

Haldimand members are gearing up for another spring and summer of garden activities. We maintain nine community gardens as well as plant six large pots in Caledonia, Cayuga and Hagersville.

Our "Maintenance Mondays" program, which is in its third year, finds members meeting each Monday to weed and mulch one of the gardens to help maintain them throughout the summer. Those participating enjoy the social aspect as well as the physical benefits of the morning.

April was busy with our 9th Annual Seed and Garden Show, which was once again a great success due to all our fantastic volunteers. The community was very supportive and came out to view all our fantastic vendors, speakers and the children's area, and gave generously to the Food Bank collection.

April was also the time for us to participate in Earth Day. This year, our crew travelled to Cayuga to clean up several areas.

The HHS Plant and Bake Sale held in May was a busy day. Our bake tables were overflowing with delicious items. They did not last long. Our selection of perennials and the Tools and Treasures section also sold out quickly.

Our General Meeting speakers for March, April and May, whom members found interesting and informative, were dried flower card making with Rose Odell, Linda Zelem and the Federated Women's Institute of Ontario, and Introduction to Permaculture with Melissa North.

Upcoming Events

- HHS is participating in the opening of the Hagersville Market in June, celebrating the start of the market season. We will have a booth to offer information about our Society.
- In July, we will be going to the University of Guelph on a tour in place of a General Meeting. We will tour the Arboretum, the Tree Walk and Horticulture Research.

In the summer months, we sponsor "Garden of the Month." Each month, during June, July and August, gardens nominated by the community are judged and winners are awarded a garden plaque for their efforts.

We are appreciative of all our members for their support of our Society. The 2026 membership has grown to 141 members.

Enjoy the summer days ahead!



What We Can Do to Help Pollinators – Summer

By Joyce Morgan, Member of the OHA Conservation and Environment Committee

Photo by Chris Silk

Yay, it's summer! The kids are out of school and they're outside playing in the park, or maybe they're not. Maybe they're researching how best to help pollinators and what plants will fill that need.

So, you ask, it's summer, why do I need to worry about pollinators? There should be plenty to keep them happy. My garden is in bloom, and I have nectar for the hummingbirds. There, I'm done! But are you?

Your garden should have plants that bloom from April through to September. Including some native plants will ensure that your garden has supplies in late summer, such as purple coneflower, bee balm, blackeyed Susans and yarrow. Longblooming plants such as zinnia, salvia, lavender, catmint, coreopsis and a variety of herbs also fit the bill. Plant some milkweed for the Monarch, tubular flowers for the hummingbird and flat topped flowers for the bees and flies. Try to avoid too many hybridized flowers because they are built for beauty in a vase, but bees have a difficult time finding their gold.

It's also important to keep your bee hotel, if you have one, free of debris. Ensure that your water sources, bee cups and butterfly puddles are kept clean and the water refreshed regularly. It won't hurt the landscape to have some brush, dead wood or an undisturbed bare patch to provide shelter in your yard.

It's important to avoid chemical pesticides, as these will harm our already dwindling pollinator population. And don't forget to deadhead for continuous blooming, a job I hated when I was much younger.

Encourage biodiversity in your garden, and here I'm thinking of large and medium sized gardens. I wouldn't recommend trees in your eight by ten garden plot. When planning your garden, include trees if you can, shrubs, vines, wildflowers, herbs and annuals to attract a wider range of pollinators and support resilience in your layered habitat. I'm not suggesting that you rip your existing garden out and start from scratch, but some thoughtful choices and consistent care will achieve the results of a pollinator friendly garden over time.

There are many organizations that can help you become more knowledgeable about pollinators, online and in person. We want to do it right, or we'll have to practice pollinating our plants by hand. Join me next quarter as we prepare for the winter.



Orangeville and District Horticultural Society

Jean Phillips – A Legacy in The Orangeville & District Horticultural Society

*Submitted by Vivian Petho – Archivist & President of The Orangeville & District Horticultural Society
Photos from Archives.*

Words that come to mind when thinking about Jean Phillips, a woman of sharp wit, grace and a nononsense attitude. Born in Dorset, England, in 1937, she grew up during the Second World War. While living in a rural environment spared her from the harsher parts of the war, she was no stranger to the frugality that came with the times. While growing up, her family always had a vegetable garden full of potatoes, beans, green peas and much more.

As an adventurous soul, Jean joined her husband Peter as he migrated to Canada to start his career in the aviation industry. She was only 29 years old when she left England behind to settle in Ontario. She learned very quickly that Ontario was not like England. When she could not garden through the harsh winters, she turned instead to sewing and knitting for her two daughters, Sheila and Hazel. When her daughters joined Girl Guides, Jean did not want to miss out on the fun. She first volunteered as a troop leader and later became a District Commissioner. She provided great leadership for many young women in Orangeville.

In 1982, Jean and Peter moved to Amaranth to a country property, Crosswind. In 1983, they joined the Orangeville & District Horticultural Society. While they transformed the wet and flat land at Crosswind with help from their friends into a veritable summer paradise with bountiful colour and produce to harvest. Her daughter Sheila recounts a favourite memory “when Mum’s friend Lois would fly her bright red vintage plane into Crosswind just to collect some of Mum’s peas fresh picked from the garden!”



As a part of the Horticultural Society, Jean and Peter veritably dug themselves in. They volunteered, shared their plants and made many friends within the Society. Jean was a member of the Board of Directors for 31 years, 20 of which she held Officer Positions. She also held the following Committee positions: Flower Show Committee, Social Committee, Welcoming Committee, Phoning Committee, Program Coordinator and Summer Project Committee. Her Officer Positions included Treasurer for 10 years, Secretary for 7 years and Second VicePresident for 3 years. Additionally, she was very well known for her floral designs. All our trophies feature her name countless times. To add to all of these accomplishments, she was also an accredited Flower Show Judge.



1999 Awards

Kathy Bouma, previous District 7 Director and still current Board of Directors' member, recounted the Phillips' influence on her: "It was Jean and her husband Peter who asked me to join the District 7 Board and follow in Peter's footsteps as Treasurer. I think Jean was Secretary at that time too." She further recounts: "Both Peter and Jean won the OHA Silver Fir medal in different years (...) both are of the highest recognition at the OHA level."



2002 Executive

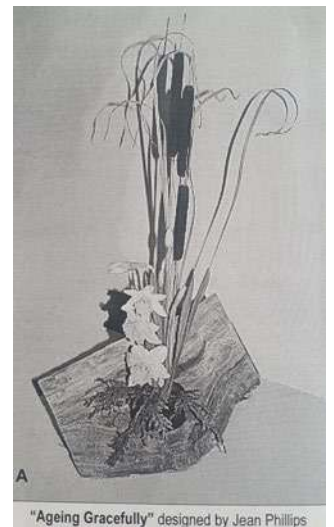
Even in her later years after Peter's passing, her daughter Sheila recounts:

"For many years, during the hottest summer days, I remember Mum would walk from her home on C Line to Greenwood Cemetery with a water hose and tools to help care for the garden there. Her frequent walks along an incredibly busy stretch of Broadway terrified me. But ever the dedicated risk taker, Mum would simply say, 'I'll be careful, but the flowers need water!'"



Greenwood Cemetery - 2002

When I joined the Society with my family in 2018, we had recently purchased our first house here in Orangeville. Entering my first meeting, the President Julia Dimakos approached me and asked if I could occasionally fill in for the summer to water a garden bed at Greenwood Cemetery for Jean. I agreed, and my family and I watered during that summer when Jean was away visiting her grandchildren. Later that year, Jean approached me with, "Would you like to get away from your kids one night a month? Why don't you join the Horticultural Board of Directors." And so, I did, because Jean always just knew the right way to ask. Shortly after that, I became Archivist, then Instagram and Facebook Manager, then later Secretary, Website Manager and finally, in 2024, President. "She is the reason I am here today."



Everyone who knew her at Hort meetings knew to look forward to Jean's famous lemon squares. You had to be quick. Jean added her own special magic; they vanished nearly immediately.

One of the last memories I have of her in Orangeville was her handing me photos of herself winning one of her countless awards, saying to me, "Once I'm gone, no one will want these," as if she did not think she would be remembered. I have to say, for once, Jean was wrong. We will always remember the profound impact she had on all our lives at the Horticultural Society.

In honour of Jean's legacy with the Horticultural Society, we have renamed our Scholarship: The Jean Phillips Memorial Scholarship for Studies in Horticulture. Additionally, next year one of our May Flower Show prizes will be named in Jean's honour.

Jean Phillips died on April 28, 2026. A life spent dedicated to her family, friends and the gardens. A woman with a profound sense of adventure, a desire to teach and a legacy that will be long remembered by all who knew her. In the end, it seems fitting that she be laid to rest in Greenwood Cemetery, the place she spent many years tending the colourful flowers she so loved.

Port Dover and Woodhouse Horticultural Society

Winter Sowing Success in Port Dover

Submitted by Laurene Via. Photos by Laurene Via, Leah VanTil, and Laura Rodger

Last January (2026), the Port Dover and Woodhouse Horticultural Society hosted a workshop on winter sowing, led by member and Grand Erie Master Gardener Laura Rodger. Garden Ontario then published, in the Spring 2026 edition of *The Trillium*, a tutorial that we created explaining the rationale and techniques Laura taught to demonstrate how to winter sow native plant seeds. If you look at the article, you will notice that it concluded with photos of the containers in which the seeds were sown, surrounded by snow. That was early February. The last instruction was to basically leave the containers alone in a somewhat protected location until spring, when some light watering might be needed.

Fast forward to May 2026. Most of the seeds have sprouted at the time of writing. As per Laura's instructions, "as soon as the seedlings are at least a few centimetres high and have two sets of true leaves," they are ready to plant in the ground. This winter sowing technique eliminates the time needed to harden off the plants, as they have already been exposed to varying temperatures and levels of light. It also frees up valuable space that would otherwise be used to start seeds indoors.





Laura suggests that the seedlings should be pulled apart and planted separately a few inches apart. Alternatively, if that is too difficult, you can plant them as small “hunks” of seedlings, and usually the strongest survive. In general, separating the plants before planting results in more and better plants. To remove the seedlings from the containers, Laura’s recommendation is to run a soil knife or trowel around the edge of the container, squeeze it a bit, and gently dumping the whole thing out on a table or tray, then pull apart and separate the seedlings and plant them.



The last challenge, of course, is deciding where to plant these native plant seedlings. Just like the plants we are most familiar with, they have sunlight, soil type, moisture and size requirements that must be met for success. There are many sources online to consult for more information, but keep in mind that Mother Nature generally adheres to her ageold rule: right plant, right place. And don’t be discouraged, as “in the first year they sleep, in the second year they creep, in the third year they leap!” Good luck!

Earth Day Committee

Submitted by Sandra Rammelaere

Thanks to all the society and garden club members who attended our special Earth Day Celebration featuring two inspiring speakers: renowned horticulturalist Mark Cullen and Climate Legacy advocate Betty Plewes. Mark shared thoughtful reflections on the natural world and the importance of nurturing the landscapes that sustain us. Due to technical difficulties during his session, Mark's camera was turned off, but his message remained clear and engaging. Betty followed with a motivating discussion on climate risks and practical actions individuals and communities can take. Together, their presentations offered an evening of learning, reflection and environmental inspiration.

For those of you who were unable to attend on April 24, the recording is now available for viewing.

You can watch the full video here: <https://youtu.be/iK9KRkWWQ4Q>

During the presentations, some excellent resources were provided for your reference:

- *Our Green Heart: The Soul and Science of Forests*, Diana Beresford-Kroeger (discussed during the presentation and noted that it is widely available)
- *The Light Eaters: How the Unseen World of Plant Intelligence Offers a New Understanding of Life on Earth*, Zoe Schlanger (discussed during the presentation and noted that it is widely available)
- *Finding the Mother Tree*, Suzanne Somard, recommended by Mark Cullen (changed his view of forests)
- *The Hidden Life of Trees*, Peter Wohlleben (recommended by Mark Cullen)
- Katherine Hayhoe, *Climate Science: What's New?*
<https://youtu.be/43ak-fceHx8?si=ovbhJlaOsH80vC89> (link from Betty Plewes' presentation)
- Bill McKibben's recent presentation to Seniors for Climate:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vWW524iKvC0> (link from Betty Plewes' presentation)

This presentation link has been added to the GardenOntario website for easy access and future reference.



Image by Eglantine Shala from Pixabay

Schomberg Horticultural Society

“More grows in the garden than the gardener sows.” - Spanish proverb

Submitted by and photos by Margaret Rudnitski and Susan Zweep

At April's meeting, we enjoyed a fabulous talk on Backyard Birds. Speaker Kristen Martyn, owner of Wild Birds Unlimited in Newmarket and Barrie, shared many fascinating facts. For example, did you know that woodpeckers peck up to 12,000 pecks a day but do not get a headache? Or that birds rely on bird feeders for 10 to 20 per cent of their diet year-round, or that cats and window collisions are the biggest threats to birds? We thank Kristen Martyn for sharing her knowledge, photos and humour in an outstanding presentation. We would also like to extend our thanks to Lauren D'Andrea of Nobleton Feed Mill for providing the handcrafted pouches of birdseed for attendees to take home.

The flower show was so impressive that our flower show judge excitedly used the descriptors “excellent,” “amazing,” and “looking forward to future shows”! Well done, participants. After the formal part of the meeting, conversations and connections were enjoyed together with sweet and savoury treats.

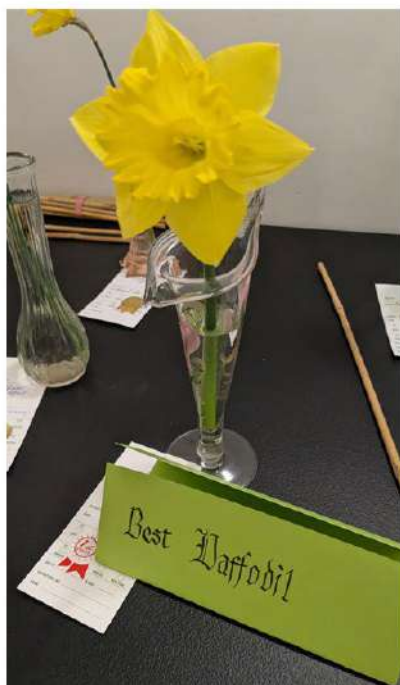
In May, members and guests gathered for an interesting, informative and humorous talk about Square Foot Gardening.

Our speaker, Kathleen Gorsline, is our past president, a longtime member and a Master Gardener. Through her presentation, she took us into her own backyard and learning journey, which began years ago, inspired by the book Square Foot Gardening by Mel Bartholomew. Did you know that switching from row planting to square-foot planting can give the same yield while requiring only 20 per cent of the space?

By breaking down her garden into squared off sections, Kathleen shared how she uses an efficient, space saving, tailored approach to growing vegetables. In a raised garden bed with a width of four feet, the gardener is always within easy reach of the plants. Through the square foot approach, she can plant strategically and intensively. We learned the basics of plant hardiness, cool and warm season crops, planning a garden site, soil amendments, raised garden structures and companion planting.

Thank you so much to Kathleen for sharing her wisdom with us. Thank you also to Carol Rettinger for sharing information and pamphlets on invasive species, a topic we all need to be aware of as gardeners, particularly phragmites and spotted lanternfly. She encouraged us to report any sightings of these invaders.

The flower show entries were spectacular once again this month, impressing the judge and attendees and providing a gallery of beauty for us to browse while snacking on delicious treats at the end of the meeting.



Our Annual Plant Sale was held at the beautiful Community Farm. A sunny day added to this well attended community event featuring many member-grown plants as well as flower baskets. Master Gardeners were on hand selling heirloom tomatoes and offering advice.

Several members joined the Schomberg Agricultural Society's Annual Fair Parade in their flowered hats for a fun day. Many entered the horticultural competitions that define an old fashioned country fair.

The Schomberg Horticultural Society's Annual Garden Tour on Sunday, June 28 showcases some of the most beautiful gardens and properties in and around Schomberg. This self-guided, self-driving tour features nine gardens that are rarely open to the public and is presented in collaboration with ARTS Society King and the Township of King. Tickets (nonrefundable) are available on June 1 on eventbrite.ca and on garden tour day at the Schomberg Library at 77 Main Street at 9:30 a.m. Cost: \$15.00 per person, rain or shine.



THE LAKE SIMCOE SOUTH MASTER GARDENERS AND THE

Schomberg HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

PRESENT THEIR ANNUAL



PLANT SALE

HERILOOM TOMATOES ■ VEGETABLES ■ HERBS ■ PERENNIALS ■ ANNUALS ■ SHRUBS

IT'S IN PERSON THIS YEAR!

At the **SCHOMBERG COMMUNITY FARM** ...
located on Western Avenue in Schomberg.
Enter on the east side of the water pumping station.
Park in the lot. Walk across the bridge to the barn.



Saturday May 9 • 8am - 2pm
PLANTS SELL OUT QUICKLY SO COME EARLY!

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT gorsline@sympatico.ca • land line 905-939-2505

Schomberg HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

SELF GUIDED

2026

GARDEN TOUR

SUNDAY • JUNE 28

RAIN OR SHINE • 10 AM - 4 PM

- Tickets \$15/person
- Sold on Tour Day at the Schomberg Public Library, 77 Main Street, Schomberg or in advance on Eventbrite.ca

In partnership with Art Society King there will be unique displays, artists and pop-up shops in the gardens.



shsgardentour@gmail.com

The Appreciation BBQ following the tour will bring all the property owners, volunteers and artists together for a memorable evening.

Our June speaker, Karen Hollingshead, brings a tremendous amount of knowledge gained from a huge and varied experience in her own garden. Her presentation will inspire us, as everything she shares is achievable.

We would like to thank and acknowledge the many members and supporters who have volunteered their time to beautify, support, educate and participate in their community through the Schomberg Horticultural Society.



Thunder Bay Horticultural Society

Submitted by and photos by Vickie Bureau

The Thunder Bay Horticultural Society has been quite active over the past six months with excellent presentations, outreach events, community gardens and our annual plant sale.

Society members have enjoyed presentations on “Pets and Plants,” “Growing Flowers for Drying,” “Invasive Species” and “A Judge’s View on Flower Shows.” Our outreach events at the Farmers’ Market, Spring Home and Garden Show and the 55+ Centre have been excellent venues for sharing horticultural information with the general public, along with taking an evening to enjoy a Fun Fashion Night at Maurice’s.

We are pleased to report that our NWORSF award winner was chosen as one of the six participants to attend the CanadaWide Science Fair.

Now that the weather has been more favourable, society members have been busy getting the six community gardens ready for the year, with the TBay Auditorium being planted just in time for the start of the 2026 graduations.

There was an excellent turnout at our Annual Plant Sale on May 30, with many plants finding new homes to spread their roots, pun intended.



Tree Trust

Nominations Open for the 2026 Ontario Tree of the Year

Submitted by Hannah Hiemstra

Do you know a tree that deserves recognition? Perhaps it's a stately maple shading a family farm, a towering oak anchoring a neighbourhood park, or a graceful willow beside a favourite stream. The Ontario Tree Pageant is looking for nominations that celebrate the beauty, history and importance of trees across our province.

Hosted by Tree Trust, an environmental charity organization that works to ensure the health and longevity of urban trees, the annual competition shines a spotlight on Ontario's big, beautiful "legacy" trees that enrich our communities environmentally, economically and aesthetically. Mature trees are the heroes of cooling our streets and gardens, storing carbon, supporting wildlife, reducing stormwater runoff and making our neighbourhoods healthier and more inviting places to live.



The poster features a light green background with a faint tree pattern. At the top, two spotlights shine down. The Tree Trust logo (tree trust.ca) is centered. The main headline asks 'IS YOUR TREE THE BEST IN ONTARIO?'. Below this is an illustration of a forest with a purple ribbon banner that reads 'ONTARIO TREE PAGEANT 2026'. The bottom section contains text about the contest, including the deadline (August 3rd), contact information (pageant@treetrust.ca), and a QR code for more details.

tree trust.ca

IS YOUR TREE THE BEST IN ONTARIO?

ONTARIO TREE PAGEANT 2026

Snap a photo of a tree you love and share a few words about why it deserves to be celebrated. All submissions will be entered into a random draw for one of 3 prizes!

ALL NOMINEES WILL TAKE THE STAGE ON TREE TRUST'S WEBSITE

Contest closes August 3rd, with winners announced in the fall.

Questions? Contact us at: pageant@treetrust.ca

Sponsored by: 

TO ENTER:
Scan the QR code or visit
<https://treetrust.ca/tree-pageant/>



Entering is easy. Simply submit:

- A high-quality photo of the tree
- Your name
- The tree species (if known)
- The tree's location
- Up to 30 words explaining why the tree deserves recognition

Nominations must be submitted by August 3, 2026 to pageant@treetrust.ca. Winners will be announced in September, with a celebration planned later that month.

Everyone who enters will also be eligible to win one of several prizes, including:

- A \$100 Lee Valley gift card
- A Royal Canadian Yacht Club gift basket
- A 2027 Ontario Parks Family Pass

This year's judging panel includes respected voices from journalism, forestry, horticulture and public service:

- Judy Maddren, M.S.M., retired CBC Radio journalist
- Mike Schreiner, MPP for Guelph and Leader of the Ontario Green Party
- Terry Schwan, Professional Forester and Director with Forest History Ontario
- Paul Zammit, horticulture instructor at Niagara College

Ontario's horticultural societies have long championed the value of trees in our gardens and communities. This program offers a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the trees that inspire us, shelter us and connect us to the landscapes we love.

For more information, contact Toni Ellis at Director@treetrust.ca or 519-362-9469. Follow Tree Trust on Facebook and Instagram (@treetrusttrees) for updates throughout the summer.



Wingham and District Horticultural Society

The Wingham and District Horticultural Society Celebrates and Thanks These Talented and Dedicated Ladies

Submitted by Joanne Douglas

Since 2012, a storefront in Wingham, Ontario has been transformed into the most imaginative and beautiful displays. It commemorates our seasons, holidays and horticultural events.

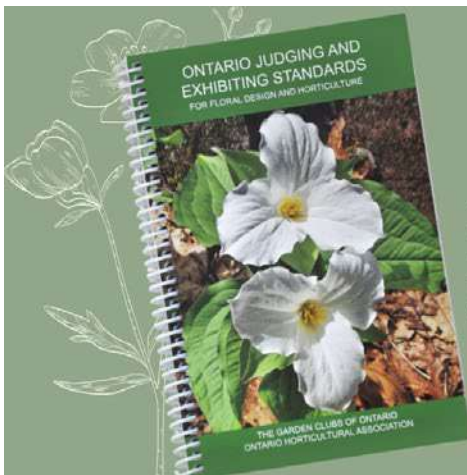
The hard work and creativity shine through the windows. (Somewhere, there is a packed basement with boxes and more boxes of decorations!)

Walking by the windows brings a smile to your face and brightens your day.

It is a special part of what makes our community bloom.



Judy Hahn, Kacie Smith, Ann Inglis and Wendy Herbert



ONTARIO JUDGING AND EXHIBITING STANDARDS

FOR FLORAL DESIGN AND HORTICULTURE

Are you and Exhibitor at Flower and Vegetable Shows? Or would you like to be? This book is what the judges use when choosing the best! If you are a volunteer to set up the shows, choose categories or just an observer, the information in this publication is invaluable. Get your copy from the OHA Garden Shop for only \$12.00 each.

2019 Ontario Judging and Exhibiting Standards
FOR FLORAL DESIGN AND HORTICULTURE
(OJES 2019) \$12

<https://gardenontario.org/gardenshop>



OHA Contact Information

OHA Officers

President	Vicky Culbert	president@gardenontario.org
1st Vice President	Sandra Mazur	vp@gardenontario.org
2nd Vice President	Catherine McGill	2ndvp@gardenontario.org
Secretary	Kelly Taylor	secretary@gardenontario.org
Treasurer	Joy Cosmas Osiagwu	treasurer@gardenontario.org
Past President and PP Council Representative	Sharlene Desjardins	pastpresident@gardenontario.org
Southern and Western Regions Representative	Karen Redmond	swrep@gardenontario.org
Northern and Eastern Regions Representative	Dennis Miluck	nerep@gardenontario.org

OHA Directors

District 1 - Dundas, Glengarry, Prescott, Russell, Stormont, Grenville and the eastern portion of the city of Ottawa	Louise Freeman	district1@gardenontario.org
District 2 - Lanark, Renfrew and the western and central portion of the city of Ottawa	Greg Laws	district2news@gmail.com
District 3 - Frontenac, Hastings, Leeds, Lennox & Addington, Prince Edward	James Kimmerly	district3@gardenontario.org
District 4 - Haliburton, Northumberland, Peterborough, Victoria	Dennis Miluck	district4@gardenontario.org
District 5 - Toronto East of Yonge Street, and York East of York Road No.1 except Georgina East of Park Road	Ursula Eley	district5@gardenontario.org
District 6 - Brant, Halton, Hamilton, Norfolk and that portion of Haldimand known as Ward 1, Ward 2, Ward 3 and Ward 4. (19-36)	Lianne Krane	district6@gardenontario.org
District 7 - Dufferin, Wellington Counties	Doris Cassan	district7@gardenontario.org
District 8 - Bruce, Grey, Huron Counties	Karen Redmond	district8@gardenontario.org
District 9 - Haldimand except Wards #1 & #2 & #3 & #4, Niagara (19-37)	Lisa DeYoung	D9ddoha@gmail.com
District 10 - Elgin, Middlesex, Oxford, Perth	Joyce Schlegel	district10@gardenontario.org
District 11 - Essex, Chatham-Kent, Lambton Counties	Sandra Rammelaere	district11@gardenontario.org
District 12 - Cochrane, Timiskaming, North Nipissing	Catharine Cribbs	district12@gardenontario.org
District 13 - Algoma, Manitoulin, Sudbury	Denise Berg	district13@gardenontario.org
District 14 - Kenora, Rainy River, Thunder Bay	Pat Izsak	district14@gardenontario.org
District 15 - Peel, York Region West, Toronto West	Doreen Coyne	district15@gardenontario.org
District 16 - Simcoe County	Joyce Morgan	district16@gardenontario.org
District 17 - Durham Region	Robin Burns	district17@gardenontario.org
District 18 - Parry Sound, Muskoka, South Nipissing	Sandra Hartill	district18@gardenontario.org
District 19 - Regional Municipality of Waterloo	Christine Webb	district19@gardenontario.org

Other OHA Contacts

Awards Co-ordinator	Sharlene Desjardins	awards@gardenontario.org
OMAFRA Rep.		AHOA.admin@ontario.ca
Convention Registrar	Donna Hussey	registrar@gardenontario.org
OHA Historian	Malcolm Geast	history@gardenontario.org
In Memoriam	Marilyn Cox	inmemoriam@gardenontario.org
Judging School Co-ordinator	Penny Stewart	judging@gardenontario.org
Judges' Registrar	Sharon Nivins	judges@gardenontario.org
Supplies/Speakers	Rose Odell	gardenshopsupplies@gmail.com
Trillium Editor	David St Amand	editor@gardenontario.org
Website Coordinator	Graham Stratford	webmaster@gardenontario.org
Youth Chair & Youth Competition Chair	Karen Redmond	youthchair@gardenontario.org
Past Presidents' Council Chair	Charles Freeman	charlesfreeman4537@gmail.com
Co-operators Insurance Rep.	Dean Ribey	dean_ribey@cooperators.ca

Insurance Questions?

Contact: Dean Ribey

Non-Profit and Charity Insurance

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dean_ribey@cooperators.ca

Additional information regarding the OHA insurance plan can be found at:

<https://gardenontario.org/resources/#insurance>



Complete our online donor form: <https://gardenontario.org/donation-form/> or complete this form and mail to: Ontario Horticultural Association, 1812 Haiku Street, Ottawa, ON K2C 3H2

DONATION REQUEST FORM

DONOR INFORMATION

My donation is (please select one): Personal Company donation

Company Name (if applicable):

Name: First

Last

Address:

Email:

Phone:

DONATION INSTRUCTIONS

This donation is to be used to:

In Memoriam Scholarship Awards & Grants Convention General Other

Support grants, awards, convention, community initiatives, scholarship, website and the general operations of the association. Donate to the OHA In Memoriam Fund (supporting Tree Grants). For more information about In Memoriam donations, email inmemoriam@gardenontario.org or phone 905-476-3000

Name of deceased person:

Year of death:

District No. (if applicable):

This information will be added to the OHA In Memoriam Book

Do you wish to have the deceased person's name acknowledged at the OHA convention?

Yes No

Do you wish a family member to be notified?

Yes No

If yes, complete the following: Relationship to the deceased:

Name: First

Last

Address:

Other:

DONATION AMOUNT & PAYMENT

Payment Method: E-Transfer treasurer4oha@gmail.com

Cheque

Debit or Credit by Paypal

Please choose your donation amount:

\$25 \$50 \$100 \$250 Other Amount

Total Donation

DONOR AUTHORIZATIONS

Permission & Acknowledgment: Please indicate if you give the OHA permission to publish your name and/or company name on marketing materials, our website, on social media, in print, at our convention or in the OHA newsletter. For company contributions, we would be happy to also add a link to your website from ours.

Yes, I give you my permission to use my name as listed above