



Newsletter of the Master Gardeners of Ontario

Inside

MGOI

Welcome to the April edition of *Inside MGOI*, the Master Gardeners of Ontario, Inc. (MGOI) newsletter.

The Newsletter focuses on you, Master Gardeners! This is your venue for providing updates, insights and the inside scoop from MGOI Board & Committee members, Directors, and the 29 Master Gardener groups throughout Ontario. The Newsletter features member milestones, group projects and activities, short member profiles, upcoming events such as regional technical updates – anything about the functioning and happenings of our groups and our members. Please feel free to submit pictures – they are most welcome!

Contributions to future editions of *Inside MGOI* may be sent at any time to the Newsletter Editor, Isabel Belanger, newsletter@mgoi.ca.

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INSIDE MGOI

**Newsletter of the
Master Gardeners of Ontario, Inc.**

April 2021

Editor: Isabel Belanger, Halton

Milestones

Durham Master Gardeners

New Master Gardener in Training

Roman Halkiewicz



We are happy to introduce Roman as a new member of DMG. Roman Halkiewicz's educational background is in Horticulture and Landscape Architecture, and he works as a seasonal parks staff. Roman is currently developing his knowledge in the field of living walls.

He brings skills in desktop publishing, event planning, fund raising, and public speaking to our group. Roman and his wife are also the busy new parents of a baby boy.

Roman, we are very happy to have you as part of our team!

New Durham Master Gardeners Coordinator

Sherry Dodson

Sherry is rocking it lately. Last month was her 10 year anniversary and this month she is our new Coordinator. Welcome to the role, and way to go Sherry!



Sherry has been an active member with the Durham Master Gardeners since 2011. She completed the Horticulturist Certificate from the University of Guelph in 2014 and received her Certificate in Horticultural Therapy in 2016 from the Toronto Botanical Garden. She has been the Horticultural Therapist at WindReach Farm in Ashburn, Ontario. Sherry loves the great outdoors and can be seen exploring it via kayaking, hiking and biking. Like all gardeners, plants are a big part of Sherry's life. Thank you from all your fellow DMG members for taking on this awesome role! We are here to support you!



Grey County Master Gardeners

New Master Gardeners in Training

Susan Cox

Leslie Anne Dexter

Welcome to our 2 new MGITs, Susan and Leslie Anne!



Thunder Bay & District Master Gardeners

15 Year Anniversary

Deanna Hoffman

Ed Hoffman

Congratulations to members Deanna & Ed in achieving 15 years as MGs with our group. Living in Longlac, they contribute to their community and assist gardeners in their area. They are to be commended for their effort in helping beautify their community, not only by growing the flowers for community gardens in Longlac but also by planting them.

New Master Gardener in Training

Theresa Love

Welcome Theresa to our group! Theresa lives in Mine Centre, and now that she has retired looks forward to joining us at our MG events in Thunder Bay when we can hold them again. She comes from generations of gardeners and has worked in the school, gardening with the kindergarten class.

Theresa completed her MG courses in 2014 at Dalhousie University and is happily working to complete her two year volunteer commitment to become certified. She has a keen interest in gardening and is now registered for a course in horticultural judging. We are looking forward to the day when we can celebrate with her in person.



Georgian Bay Master Gardeners

10 Year Anniversary

Anne Bossart

Tracy Bosley



YouTube Slideshows

Now that spring is here MGOI would like to invite Master Gardeners to forward 1 or 2 pictures of your garden, as it emerges now and in full bloom later, for the 2021 MGOI YouTube Slideshows.

This year we would like to suggest you pay special attention to more unusual plants, native plants and pollinator magnets.

Please send your photo(s) to Kelly Noel at noeltoo@outlook.com and put in the subject line:

- Your name and MG group
- Caption
- Date taken

example:

Flora Green Ottawa Hepatica April 14

Note: iPads / iPhones sometimes automatically downsize an image before sending. Try to avoid that – the photo gets blurry when it's increased back to slide-size.

We will send a link to the slideshow each month from May to October with *Inside MGOI*.

Thank you for participating.

*Adrienne Hanbidge,
MGOI Director of Communications*



Master Gardener Group Websites / Links

A Message from Jim Cook, MGOI Webmaster

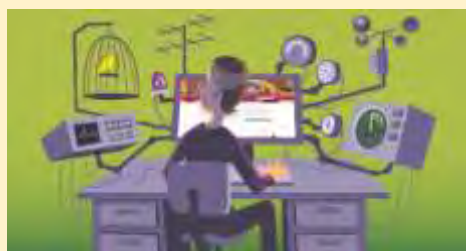
The MGOI website lists current links to group websites and social media, such as Facebook and Instagram:

<https://www.mgoi.ca/groups/groups.html>.

This is a reminder to please inform myself, Jim Cook, MGOI webmaster of any changes to your links to keep them up-to-date. My address is:

webmaster@mgoi.ca.

Thanks!



<https://smejoinup.com/5-google-webmaster-tools-alternatives/>



Double Tulips/fringed edges – courtesy of Thunder Bay & District MGs



Master Gardeners Out & About Projects & Events

Brantford Master Gardeners

Name: Increasing Social Media Presence Project

Details: BMGs have revamped their Facebook page and are also now on Instagram and Twitter. Members are busy writing and posting articles, photos and videos on these various social media sites.

Name: Bite Of Brant

Details: On April 9th, grades 4-6 students in Brant County learned about farming and the agri-food industry. Information on seed starting was submitted and presented to the students virtually.

Name: Equal Grounds Community Gardens

Details: BMG members have volunteered to speak about various vegetable gardening topics followed by a Q&A.

Name: BMG 'Tips from The Watering Can'

Details: In an effort to reach out within the community and recruit new members, the BMG came up with a catchy slogan called 'Tips from The Watering Can'. BMGs are writing articles as well as checking for upcoming webinars/seminars that may be of interest to gardeners. This information is submitted to many local horticultural and garden societies on a monthly basis, to be included in their newsletters to their members.



Master Gardeners of Niagara

A Whole New World

by Susan Lusted

With the pandemic, we here in Niagara have had to face a whole new world for some of us. Meeting online has enabled our group to book speakers from further away. We were able to have Anisse Dobson, a researcher from Yale University, speak on Invasive Worms. We continue to host our monthly meetings on Zoom and have speakers booked until April of 2022.

Our group has 47 members and several MGITs, thirteen in all, who are eager to participate. They bring new ideas and a different perspective to our group.

Currently we have a Social Media group which is developing a Mission Statement and looking at integrating Facebook, Twitter, our website, and Instagram. We continue to use our hotline which is sponsored by Stokes seeds; it is fully manned for the remainder of the year. Our group is again going to provide guides for the Shaw Garden Tour in Niagara-on-the-Lake. We have booked a date for our plant sale on September 11, 2021 at Rittenhouse Hall. Hopefully, this will happen this year.

We are also using Zoom to give online talks. One is a virtual "Ask a Master Gardener" at the Niagara Falls Public Library. MG Betty Knight, who did her talk on *Soils* at the Niagara-on-the-Lake library, also had a great article published on it in the local newspaper. Check this link and see page 10: https://notllocal.com/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Local_030321_Issue9_pg1-20-web.pdf.

Each spring, June Streadwick has arranged for talks to be given at the St. Catharines library. This year our talks are virtual, and currently the library has a slate of four of our members speaking. Dan Cooper is speaking on *Garden from a Hammock*, Kendy Steeves is doing *Container Gardening*, Betty Knight's topic is on *Soils*, and Janet Ennamorato is speaking on *Fusion Gardening*. These talks were immensely popular when given in person and have an excellent attendance online. Our MGITs are also presenting to our group, giving them the volunteer hours they need. One of our MGITs who has completed the courses is now a moderator for the Master Gardeners of Ontario Facebook group.

Throughout the pandemic, our group has remained active, focused and engaged wherever they can. We have a fabulous group who steps up. It has been a whole new world for us and I am proud to say that we have met the challenge.



Zoom Meeting



Thunder Bay & District Master Gardeners

Name: Using Virtual Platforms for the Horticultural Therapy Program and to Touch Base With Regional Gardeners – by Lynda Bobinski, Coordinator

Details: On March 3, 2021 Master Gardeners in Thunder Bay launched their first virtual Horticultural Therapy Educational Workshop for Recreational Therapists from older adult homes and apartments via the WebEx virtual platform. MG Lynda Lahteenmaa initiated an online event with the hope of restoring the enjoyable gardening programs our MGs usually provide in person for elderly residents in Long-term Care Homes to achieve the goal of improving their quality of life.



Master Gardener Lynda Lahteenmaa preparing for the WebEx Presentation

Prior to Easter, under Lynda's guidance Mary Fiorito, lead Recreational Therapist, provided six residents of Bethammi Nursing Home with their first Horticultural Therapy (HT) activity. The activity had to be done individually with each resident since group activities have been cancelled. The HT Program at Bethammi was to be a new initiative for MGs with this becoming the third program in our region supported by MGs Lynda Lahteenmaa, Aili Dampier as well as other members of our group. Unfortunately, it was decided that due to the unusual circumstances of Covid lockdown and unavailability of staff and MGs to perform individualized activities with the residents, the HT program had to be put on hold until further notice. We look forward to being able to implement it in future.



Residents of Bethammi Long-term Care Home who proudly wanted to show off and celebrate their completed horticultural therapy projects

Name: Starting Seeds

Details: Thunder Bay & District MGs support a vast region in the north and we have not always been available to support gardeners in some of our rural towns in the way we would like to. In partnership with the Nipigon Public Library, we were recently able to participate in the Nipigon, Lake Helen, Red Rock and Dorion Family Gardening Program. Using Zoom, the education event saw over 60 new gardeners, along with family members, register to participate.



Prior to the presentation the first 40 families that signed up were given a kit with soil, seeds and a Jiffy peat pellet greenhouse system to get them started.



Hardening Off Seedlings

We presented three stages for seed starting which we felt would be helpful for new gardeners, while still offering strategies for seasoned gardeners. MG Gwen Third presented on *Why Plant Seeds and All About Soil - The Dirt on Dirt*, MG Lynda Bobinski presented on *Getting Started – Planting Seeds Indoors*, and MG Sylvia Goodheart presented on *Taking Care of Your Seeds, Seedlings & Planting Them*. The event was well received with a request for future presentations. At the end of the summer pumpkins grown using Atlantic Giant Seeds and sunflowers grown using Russian Mammoth Seeds will be judged with prizes to be awarded. I like the fact that children can enter their sunflowers even if the seeds have all been eaten by the birds!



Stratford Master Gardeners

Name: Garden Stratford, March 29, 2021

Details: Elizabeth Spedaliere was the guest speaker at Garden Stratford in March. She has been a Master Gardener for 16 years and is currently a moderator on the MGOI Facebook page. Her presentation, *Going Native to Restore Diversity*, was very timely. She emphasized that our ecosystem needs the services of both plants and insects. Without insects there would be a rapid collapse of food webs. Insects, particularly caterpillars, can't overcome toxins on introduced plant species, so gardeners can help by growing native plants to preserve food webs that support Ontario's native species.

Birds also rely heavily on the insects and caterpillars on native plants to rear their young. Unfortunately, invasive species are replacing native species across Ontario. However, the Ontario Invasive Plant Council provides a list of native plants that can replace invasives in the booklet "[Grow Me Instead](#)." Gardeners can also participate in the [eight actions](#) identified by the National Academy of Science to help halt insect decline.

Name: Garden Chat, April 21, 2021

Details: In this month's *Garden Chat* Don Farwell took Garden Stratford members on a virtual ramble through the woods. His enjoyment of the wooded environment was immediately self-evident. First, we looked at the towering Douglas Firs in BC and he asked participants to consider how they managed to take water to their full height every day.

Once he had set the mood by reminding us how cool and relaxing the woods could feel he emphasized all the activity that was taking place: seen, unseen and glimpsed. The forest floor in T. J. Dolan Conservation Area in Stratford is currently teeming with violets and being visited by the great blue heron. Forest floors are covered with diverse communities of plants throughout the year, including bloodroot, May apples and dogtooth violets, but also less appealing invasive plants have appeared, such as garlic mustard, periwinkle and giant hogweed that choke out other plants and are difficult to eradicate.

Don talked about the 39 species of trilliums in North America and how they had different ways of dispersing their seeds, including being carried by ants, which limits the areas that they colonize. Mycelium is a key factor in communication between plants and Don gave participants a glimpse of the role it plays in helping plants to thrive.

There are some impressive projects taking place to improve the quality of our water without resorting to water treatment plants (New York). Locally, Re-Leaf Stratford is a plan to plant 2022 native trees in the Year of the Garden, 2022. More about this from Stratford Master Gardeners and their partners in the coming months. Stay tuned!



Grey County Master Gardeners

Name: Grey County Agricultural Services Spring Educational Series

Details: For the past 5 years we have been part of the Grey County Agricultural Services spring educational series. This year 3 of our members, Vicky Thompson, Paulette Kirkey, and Rebecca Baker, presented “Climate Friendly Gardening”.

Vicky talked about the impact of climate change on plants, and how our gardening practices can mitigate greenhouse gas accumulation in the atmosphere. Paulette presented on feeding and caring for our soil, and how healthy soil is a carbon sink. Rebecca’s topic “Water Wise” dealt with the water challenges we will face – too much or too little – as a result of climate change, and how to cope with both extremes.

Name: The Eco-Responsible Gardener Seminar Series

Details: Our virtual seminar series *The Eco-Responsible Gardener* came to a close with Jen Llewellyn of OMAFRA presenting “If Only Trees Could Talk”. Jen provided insights into diagnosing and dealing with issues affecting trees and shrubs to over 200 gardeners.

We had a tremendous response to this series of 3 seminars and hope to repeat a similar event in the future.

Name: The Eco-Responsible Gardener Articles

Details: The seminar series may be over, but we continue to share information with home gardeners on ecologically responsible gardening through our monthly articles in the “Owen Sound Hub”. April’s article talks about how delaying your spring clean-up benefits pollinators.

Georgian Bay Master Gardeners

Name: Winter Plant ID Walk

Details: We had planned all winter to get our small group together for a winter plant ID walk. We finally met on the first day of spring on the Seguin Trail just south of Parry Sound. It was a lovely warm day that felt like spring but the only sign was melting snow.

Tracy brought an ID key from the Guelph Arboretum course to help differentiate the trees and shrubs we saw along the way. It was certainly great to get together outdoors after the long winter.



“Here we are pondering over an unknown shrub growing with Myrica gale at the water’s edge”

Master Gardeners of Ottawa-Carleton

Name: Trowel Talk Live – Learn over Lunch

Dates: April 6, 13, 20 & 27, 2021

Details: We have been averaging 55 attendees at these meetings. Our participating MGs are enjoying this new way of connecting with gardeners! We are streaming them live to our [YouTube Channel](#). Check them out!



Name: Partnership with the Ottawa Public Library

Details: We were invited by the library to give Zoom talks on gardening in April, May and June. Several members stepped up to provide talks, some in English and some in French. You can check out topics and register for any of the remaining sessions via the OPL website [here](#).



Upcoming Events

Master Gardeners of Ottawa – Carleton

Name: Trowel Talk Live – Learn over Lunch

Dates: Every Tuesday until November 2, 2021



Learn over Lunch with
Master Gardeners of Ottawa-Carleton
Tuesdays at 12:30pm, April 6 to November 2
Live on Zoom

Each session will include a presentation on the topic of the week followed by Q&A - 25-30 minutes total.

Registrants will receive a confirmation email with the Zoom link and a weekly email reminder with upcoming topics.

Click [here](#) to register for these meetings – attend as many as you can!

Durham Master Gardeners

Name: The Happy Garden Workshop Series

Details: The series is presented by Ingrid Janssen in Oshawa and is geared to people who want to become successful home gardeners. May 1 is the last workshop.



For more information please visit:

<https://fareharbor.com/embeds/book/parkwoodestate/items/284057/calendar/2021/03/?flow=504932&full-items=yes>

Guelph-Wellington Master Gardeners

Name: Plant Sale

Date: May 28th & 29th, 2021

Details: The Guelph-Wellington MG plant sale will take place on-line in a Shopify store. We are working hard to set it up.

Name: 2021 Atlantic Master Gardeners Association (AMGA)

Webinar Series: *Spring, Summer, & Fall via Zoom*

Spring: Permaculture for the Rest of Us

Date & Time: Sunday, 2 May 2021 at 2pm ADT

Details: Speaker

Jenni Blackmore is an artist, writer, micro-farmer, and certified Permaculture Design Consultant. Passionate about all things "food," she's an ardent supporter of holistic food production who strives to grow most of her own vegetables. Her most recent book, *Permaculture for the Rest of Us*, follows her journey from industrial Manchester England to a sustainable island homestead in Nova Scotia.



Cost: \$20 for non-AMGA members via e-transfer.

Registration [here](#).

Maximum participation 100



Summer: The Designer's Way: Seven Spatial Archetypes for Landscape Design

Date & Time: Sunday, July 11, 2021 at 2:00 pm ADT

Details: The AMGA Conference was cancelled in 2020. The Keynote speaker was to have been Julie Moir Messervy, award winning landscape designer from Vermont and author of *New Landscaping Ideas that Work* and other books.



Using the landscape archetypes of the sea, the cave, the promontory, the harbour, the island, the mountain and the sky, this lecture will show you how to add form, structure, and interest to your garden planning. Given that the Atlantic Provinces have a great variety of these landforms, Julie will provide ideas that you can incorporate into your garden design.

Registration: Opens May 21, 2021 for non-members and costs \$20 for non-AMGA members via e-transfer. Register [here](#).

Fall: Growing Under Cover - Techniques for a more productive, weather-resistant, pest-free vegetable garden

Date & Time: Wednesday, September 21 at 7:00pm ADT

Details: Join award-winning author Niki Jabbour as she shares her secrets to growing more food, reducing pest problems, and dealing with unpredictable weather in her vegetable garden. She will spotlight a wide variety of season extenders like shade cloth, row covers, cold frames, and polytunnels, as well as show you how to use garden covers to prevent damage from pests. Put Niki's techniques to work in your garden so you can



enjoy a year-round harvest in any sized space.

Registration: Opens July 31, 2021 for non-members.

Cost: \$20 for non-AMGA members via e-transfer.

Register [here](#)

Rideau 1000 Islands Master Gardeners

Name: Nature's Best Hope: A New Approach to Conservation That Starts in Your Yard

Details: Dr. Doug Tallamy, professor in the Department of Entomology and Wildlife Ecology at the University of Delaware and much sought-after speaker will share what his research has revealed about changing how we landscape around our homes. "Nature is built from millions of specialized interactions. But today these relationships, and Nature itself, are on the ropes," states Tallamy.

Date: Tuesday May 4, 2021 from 7 – 8pm
Tickets are \$22.23 and are for sale [here](#):



Toronto Master Gardeners

Name: Toronto Master Gardeners May Meeting

Date & Time: Tuesday, May 4th at 7:00pm

Speaker: Darrell Bley, Niagara Parks Commission

Topic: "Pests and Pathogens That Are Preying on Our Woody Plants in Urban Landscapes and Natural Ecosystems"

Cost: Free to all Ontario MGs

Details: Once again, Toronto Master Gardeners are opening up their meeting to all Ontario MGs via Zoom so that those wishing to hear a great speaker can do so - please see the pertinent information above along with the registration link below. As this is exclusively for Master Gardeners, please do not share this link with anyone. Yes, this lecture counts as one CEU.

Many of us know Darrell from the MGOI Niagara summer workshops but for those of you who haven't heard him speak, you're in for an educational treat. Don't delay and sign up today!

Registration Link [here](#)

Etobicoke Master Gardeners

Name: EMG/Humber Arboretum Virtual Gardening Workshops – 2021

Dates & Topics: Further Workshops include:

May 15 – Bird Friendly Gardening

Jun. 12 – Benefits of Gardening

Oct. 16 – Pruning

Nov. 13 – Pests & Pathogens



Register at: <https://humber.ca/arboretum/events>

Events on Hold until Further Notice

Stratford Master Gardeners

POSTPONED!! Technical Update

Topic: *Gardening for the Planet: Creating Biodiverse Habitats in Our Gardens*

Information: We had asked you to save the date of October 17th, 2020 for our Technical Update. As a result of COVID-19 we postponed the event rather than leave people uncertain as to whether it would go ahead.

Halton Master Gardeners

Postponed! Technical Update! Stay Tuned!

Topic: *Refugia: the future of gardening*

Original Date: Saturday, October 24th, 2020

Location: Waterdown, ON

Speakers:

- Dr. Christina Davy, Research Scientist with the Ministry of Natural Resources
- Catherine Kavassalis, Halton Region Master Gardener
- Paul Gellatly
- Claudette Sims, Past President MGOI
- Other special guests TBA

Of Possible Interest to Master Gardeners

University of Guelph Arboretum

Name: 2021 Virtual Workshops

Details: Guelph Arboretum is running on-line courses which may be of interest. Sign up for a series or for an individual session. MG and garden writer Robert Pavlis is presenting **Garden Fundamentals** on Tuesdays from 7-8 pm until May 4th, 2021. Further information is available [here](#):
Zoom meeting details will be provided after registration.



A Message from the President

Karen Sciuk, President MGOI



It is with pleasure and excitement that the Canadian Garden Council, supported by *Canada's Garden-Family*, is proud to proclaim 2022: Canada's Year of the Garden.

MGOI, as part of Canada's Garden family, is proud to support ***Year of the Garden 2022*** in principle. Interested groups are encouraged to send letters of support to their local Federal MP (see below). I will also post something on the MGOI Facebook page. The following is an excerpt from their website:

<https://mailchi.mp/31db1d978b80/kvutnht865-13371271?e=116ef0a728>

We cannot think of a more appropriate way to honour the Centennial of Canada's ornamental horticulture sector than dedicating a full year to commemorate Canada's rich garden heritage, to celebrate today's vibrant garden culture, and to create legacies for a sustainable future.

We invite all members of ***Canada's Garden Family*** to start thinking about how you will join the ***Year of the Garden 2022*** celebrations via your existing marketing and promotional campaign and activities, and how you will engage Canadians to join you in celebrating the ***Year of the Garden 2022***.

We also invite you to share this ***Year of the Garden 2022*** proclamation with your members and your network. Thank you!

For more information please go to:
<https://gardenscanada.ca/year-of-the-garden/>
and www.yearofthegarden.ca.

Government Recognition

We are in conversation with various ministries, expressing our request for the government to acknowledge the ***Year of the Garden 2022*** with an official designation.

Government needs to hear your voice - we still need your support

If you believe the ***Year of the Garden 2022*** is a good thing for Canadians, please express your support to your Member of Parliament for an official designation of 2022 as ***Canada's Year of the Garden***.

[Contact your Federal MP today!!!](#)

Support Keeps Coming

We keep receiving letters. We are happy to share them with you and quotes from them on [the website](#). The official media release is also available here.

