



Newsletter of the Master Gardeners of Ontario

Inside

MGOI

Welcome to the September 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.

MGOI Board Members:

President:	Karen Sciuk, Waterloo Region
Vice President:	Vacant
Corporate Secretary:	Terri Briggs, Lake Simcoe South
Treasurer:	Sheila Campbell, Algoma
Director of Communications:	Vacant
Co-Directors of Education:	Kate Sault, Halton
Director of Events:	Rhonda Grein, Kitchener
Director of Membership:	Maureen Hulbert, Toronto
Director at Large	Lois Johnson, Niagara
Director of Operations:	Pamela Dallaire, Cochrane District
Director of Marketing & Partnerships:	Kathleen Gorsline, Lake Simcoe South
Director of Central Region:	Robynne Dunn, Durham
Director of East Region:	Anne Craig, Peterborough
Director of North Region:	Gail Cocker, Simcoe
Director of South & West Region:	Jim Fitzgerald, Stratford

Committee Members

Statistician: Rhonda Grein, Waterloo Region
 Webmaster: Jim Cook webmaster@mgoi.ca
 Newsletter Editor: Isabel Belanger, Halton newsletter@mgoi.ca
 Database /Supplies: Kelly Noel, Ottawa database@mgoi.ca, supplies@mgoi.ca
 Twitter: Dale Odorizzi, Lanark County
 Facebook: Claudette Sims, Halton & Cathy Kavassalis, Halton
 Manager of MG Participation in Canada Blooms: Vacant

In This Issue

- Master Gardeners
 - Milestones
 - CCIPR Update
 - Master Gardeners Out & About
 - Upcoming Events
 - CFIA Seeds Alert
- MGOI
 - Board Vacancies: Vice President and Communications Director
 - Messages from the Webmaster
 - Coordinators' Conference/AGM
 - MGOI Celebrates: Year of the Garden 2022

INSIDE MGOI

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

September 2022

Editor: Isabel Belanger, Halton

Milestones

Niagara Master Gardeners

10 Year Anniversary

Chris Clark
Barb Johnston

5 Year Anniversary

Marcey Legett

Master Gardener Status Achieved

Mark Denée



Sue Lusted, Past Coordinator of Niagara MGs presents Mark with his MG Certificate

New Master Gardeners in Training

Jessica Boswell
Karen Epp
Lynn Fournier
Marie-Claire Groulx
Terry Giles
Aleksia Shoalts

Of Interest: A Changing of the Guard

The new executive for MGs Niagara was approved at the September meeting. They are:

Coordinator: Carol Tuck-Riggs
Vice-Coordinator: Betty Knight
Secretary: Bev Campeau
Treasurer: Chris Clark
Past Coordinator: Sue Lusted



London Middlesex Master Gardeners

New Master Gardener in Training

Lara Cochrane

Lara is currently enrolled in the Horticulture Program at the University of Guelph at the Ridgetown Campus. She is very passionate about growing a variety of vegetables, berries and herbs in her backyard garden and in containers.

We are very happy to welcome her to our group and are looking forward to working with her!



Halton Master Gardeners

Retirement

Roberta Roberts

During our visit to the Dundurn Historic Kitchen Garden on August 16th, including a delightful visit in MGiT Pam MacDonald's beautiful garden, we bade farewell to MG Roberta Roberts who is retiring from our group after 25+ years!



Photo by Shirley Novak

Roberta has been a huge contributor, most recently to our program committee.

Many thanks, Roberta, and enjoy your well earned rest and relaxation in your garden!



Guelph Wellington Master Gardeners

Member Profile

Sharon Leggett, Education Co-ordinator



Growing up in Brantford, my family were market gardeners, producing and selling all sorts of fruits, vegetables, and flowers. Along with this, our parents instilled in us a healthy respect and love for nature. I guess that is what whet my appetite for gardening and the outdoors in general. Wherever I settled, I seemed to be obsessed by the

need to grow a garden.

Upon retirement some 13½ years ago, my goal was to continue learning more about horticulture. I joined Guelph Wellington MGs in 2010, completing my educational component through the University of Guelph. It has proven to be one of my better life decisions.

The Master Gardener experience over the years has provided me an opportunity to meet a fabulous group of like-minded individuals who love to 'share the gospel' of horticultural related information, ideas, and experiments. I feel I have grown personally through the wide variety of available volunteer, educational and social opportunities I have participated in. In addition, the Master Gardener experience has enhanced my role as a member of local horticultural societies. My only regret is that I did not take advantage of this opportunity at an earlier age.

Member Profile

Mary Ellen Pyear
Roots and Shoots Garden
Year of the Garden
Committee

At our Spring Plant Sale this year I was surprised to receive my ten-year MGOI badge. The decision to become a Master Gardener was a retirement project – one to keep my brain active after 16 years of teaching high school.



A very good friend, Marg Henshall, and I signed up for the on-line courses through the Nova Scotia Agricultural College. After our first course, Plant Identification, the college became part of Dalhousie University, Faculty of Agriculture. Our next three courses were Science of Gardening, Maintaining the Garden, and the Art of Gardening. It took us four years and an appreciated one-year extension from my group to complete our studies in 2015.

Master Gardeners have taught me a lot: a) about things that I should not have planted in my 'starting-from-scratch' garden twenty years ago; b) to steering me in the right direction when it came to choosing reliable plants that would bring pleasure over the years. Many of those plants, along with a fountain, were chosen to attract birds and pollinators. Like many of you, a daily walkabout of my garden is part of my routine for many months of the year. My favourite flower the rose, of which I have a dozen or more, delighting with their beauty and their wonderful scent. The three varieties of carpet roses in my front yard have thrived for twenty years! While this summer's extreme heat and lack of rain stressed many plants, hopefully they will be able to 'weather' those conditions and bloom and thrive again next year.

I have enjoyed volunteering in the Roots and Shoots Garden at the Arboretum, University of Guelph for several years. Meeting the public and offering advice at numerous garden tours and plant sales over the years has been a great way to meet the public while fulfilling the required number of volunteer hours. I was especially proud to be able to answer questions in June when my son and his wife's garden was one of eight on the Guelph Horticultural Society Garden Showcase tour. As well, my grandson just graduated this spring from Niagara College in the Greenhouse Technician course, and his brother worked as a landscaper this summer—so horticulture seems to be "in the blood" in my family.

Annual bus trips and visiting fellow MG's gardens continue to inspire and delight me. Every garden is unique like every gardener – and a tribute to one's imagination, dedication and hard work. As part of the Committee for **Year of the Garden 2022** I enjoyed compiling lists of all the public gardens in and around Guelph and helping to organize monthly on-line speakers for the general public. Canada should be proud to be the first country in the world to celebrate gardening over an entire year!



Peterborough Master Gardeners

20 Year Anniversary

Gary Westlake
Dianne Westlake

15 Year Anniversary

Etela Vojnic
Judy Bernard

10 Year Anniversary

Emma Murphy
MJ Pilgrim

5 Year Anniversary

Jennifer Guertin
Brenda Thompson

Congratulations! Our group is rich in talent, enthusiasm and dedication!



(L-R) Emma Murphy, Jennifer Guertin, Brenda Thompson, MJ Pilgrim, Gary Westlake, Dianne Westlake, Etela Vojnic, Judy Bernard

Master Gardener Status Achieved

Anne Trudel-Inglis

Anne joined our group in September 2020 and in exactly 2 busy years, received her Master Gardener Certificate. Anne has been a tremendous asset to our group and our community. Congratulations Anne!



Durham Master Gardeners

New Master Gardener in Training

Alison McBrien



Welcome September and with that comes our newest member, Alison McBrien. What a great way to bring in the fall!

Alison lives in Claremont with her family. She has registered for the IPM (Integrated Pest Management) course at Guelph this fall. Alison works from home in the field of Ontario

Health Training and Support.

She has been a Brownie and Girl Guide Leader in her community. Alison is also involved with the butterfly waystation in Claremont and has worked in the gardens at Claremont Public School. She enjoys researching and reading about plants and gardening; her interests include pollinators and their habitats, native plants, peonies, irises and garden design. The other skills Alison can share with DMGs are organizing events, people skills, account management, her creativity, and leadership skills. Alison, we so look forward to you being a part of DMGs!



Mississauga Master Gardeners

20 Year Anniversary

Emma Chow

by Ramona Christiansen
At our meeting in September, Emma was presented with her 20-year pin for serving with the MMGs for 20 years. She joined MMGs when she retired from Ontario Power Generation (OPG).

Emma has held many roles including Coordinator,



MJ Kucerak, (left), our Coordinator, presenting Emma with her 20-year pin



Co-coordinator, substituting Secretary, and currently is our Treasurer.

She loves composting, building her own structures in the garden, and she told me if she had to do it all over again she would have loved to have been a carpenter! Her love of gardening has led her to be the head gardener at her church working with seven dedicated individuals. Emma is also a wonderful and knowledgeable mentor for our MGITs. She is delightful to work with.

Retired, Master Gardener Emeritus with MMGs

Shirley Daniels

Shirley was one of the founding members of Mississauga Master Gardeners in 1994. Since its inception our members have grown and flourished under her quiet yet active stewardship, just like the dedicated teacher Shirley was before she retired.



Her leadership skills had also led her to serve as president of the Cloverleaf Garden Club, Windmill Theatre, and the Ontario Horticultural Association. With the high performance expectations set by Shirley, she had also taken the MMGs to establish strong partnerships with the Riverwood Conservancy (formerly the Mississauga Garden Council), Canada Blooms, Home and Garden Shows, and the CNE.

Retired, Master Gardener Emeriti with MMGs

Diana and Bill Pooke

Both Diana (24 years with MMGs) and Bill Pooke (20 years) had been strong supporters in the educational and personal development aspects among more senior and new members. They developed presentations for garden workshops and hands-on exercises specializing in various areas of plant species (to name a few: Starting Plants from

Seed; Miscanthus Grass; Dahlias), landscaping tips and ideas, and unique gardens they had visited all over the world. Their enthusiasm and willingness to share their vast amount of knowledge made a great contribution towards what we have become as Mississauga Master Gardeners.



Bill and Diana Pooke



Northumberland Master Gardeners

New Master Gardener in Training

Paul Battilana

Paul has been gardening for as long as he can remember. His main interest has always been growing vegetables but over the last 10 years his interests have diversified into native plants, flowers and tropicals. Paul was in the first graduating class of the Vineyard and Winery program at Niagara College. He plans on obtaining his MG status through the self study route. He looks forward to increasing his knowledge of growing plants and maintaining gardens from MGs, and contributing to the group with any knowledge that he has.



A Message from the President

Karen Sciuk, President MGOI

The Vice President (VP) position on the MGOI Board is vacant. As well, the Director of Communications position has recently become vacant; this is an immediate opening. The job description follows on the next page.

A MG who is interested in the Vice President position will be appointed to the Board as a Director-at-Large with a few months of overlap if possible.

The VP job description is on the right. Interested candidates should contact me, Karen Sciuk at president@mgoi.ca.

Board Vacancy - Vice President

I do not expect to continue my term past the end of 2024. I would like to find a VP to start ideally by the October 2022 Annual General Meeting (AGM) / Coordinators' Conference so that they are well aware of how the Executive functions for a few years before they become President.

If MGs are interested in this position we like to appoint them to the Board as a Director-at-Large prior to assuming duties.

Please see the VP job description on the right. Please feel free to contact me, Karen Sciuk at president@mgoi.ca.

Job Description - Vice President

- Supports and works closely with the President to assist with his or her duties, especially regarding governance
- Monitors the progress of the organization's goals and objectives
- Reviews information submitted in Annual Reviews and in the Annual Report in order to recognize achievements, share best practices, and identify potential areas of concern
- Assists the relevant Director to resolve potential areas of concern, and if necessary bring them to the attention of the Board of Directors
- Works with the Membership Director and others to fill vacant Board positions
- Assumes the duties of the President in his or her absence
- Succeeds the President



Job Description – Director of Communications

The Director oversees the Communications Committee which is responsible for managing internal communications:

- **Website** and subdomains – managed by Jim Cook, our webmaster.
- **Newsletter** – managed by Isabel Belanger, our editor.
- **MG membership database** – managed by Kelly Noel, former Director of Communications.
- **mgoi group email** – managed by Kelly Noel, former Director of Communications.
- **Handbook updates** – managed by Past President Claudette Sims with input from the board.
- **MGOI group Facebook** – administered by Claudette Sims and Cathy Kavassalis.
- **MGOI twitter** – administered by Dale Odorizzi.

Currently the Director of Communications is directly responsible for these specific tasks:

- **Coordinators and Board Member contact lists** – manages updates and distribution to the website, newsletter, and internally.
- **Email Communication** – communicates board decisions to Coordinators, e.g. policy changes/clarifications/updates, events, surveys, and reminders in conjunction with Regional Directors.
- **info@mgoi.ca emails** – either responds directly or forwards the inquiry to the appropriate board member or MG group, in particular forwarding new member inquiries to the Membership Committee.

Messages from Jim Cook, MGOI Webmaster

Hello Master Gardeners!

MGOI had been utilizing a donation service called Canada Helps for some time. So far over \$11,000 has been raised and most of that money has gone directly to designated MG groups. Last year we set things up on our own website for donors to direct their funds to the group of their choice. Find this page at: <https://mgoi.ca/about/donate.html>. You'll see a dropdown box listing all 29 MGOI groups and a special project that Stratford has that's been doing very well. Donors can also find us at <https://www.canadahelps.org>. The same dropdown list is there as well.



So, it might be time to point your website visitors to a simple way to receive donations – and Canada Helps handles the tax receipt. So far this has been a great way for the public to thank MGOI groups and individuals for work performed.

If you have any questions I can help at webmaster@mgoi.ca.

Thank you,

Jim, MGOI Webmaster

Master Gardener Group Websites / Links

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 me, Jim Cook, MGOI webmaster, of any changes to your links to keep them up-to-date. My address is: webmaster@mgoi.ca.

Thanks!





Master Gardeners of Ontario Inc. (MGOI)

2022 Coordinators' Conference & Annual General Meeting (AGM)

Finally at last we will be able to meet in person! The details of this year's conference follow.

Date & Time: Saturday, October 29th, 2022, at 9:00 a.m.

Place: The TBG (Toronto Botanical Garden), 777 Lawrence Ave E., Toronto, ON M3P 1P2

Details: AGM Business will include:

1. To receive the financial statements of Master Gardeners of Ontario Inc. for the period ended the 30th day of April 2022.
2. To receive the report of the President of the Board of Directors.
3. To ratify the actions of the Board of Directors.
4. To approve the public accountant's review engagement of our 2021-2022 financial statements.
5. To appoint the firm performing the next review engagement.
6. To transact such further business as may properly be brought before the meeting or any adjournments thereof.



© Janet Davis - All Rights Reserved
<https://torontobotanicalgarden.ca/explore/photo-gallery/fourseasons/>

We look forward to seeing everyone there!

Terri Briggs, Corporate Secretary



Canadian Coalition for Invasive Plant Regulation (CCIPR) – September Update

Our first meeting after the summer hiatus was held on September 20th. We are still struggling to bring the Nursery trade on board as many generalist nurseries do not want to lose the lucrative trade in invasive species.

The key focus of CCIPR is effective regulation. Our 5 key objectives are:

- Effective pre- and post-border invasive species risk assessment;
- Bans on the sale and movement of high-risk invasive plant species;
- Labelling to identify and educate the public about lower-risk invasive plants;
- A verifiable industry-wide Code of Conduct; and
- Public education including alternatives to invasive plants.

This coalition is not about native vs non-native plants. A team of experts is needed to make the decision re: plants to regulate, prohibit or require warning tags at point of sale.

A huge struggle is with the continued sale of invasive plant species because there is no industry-wide Code of Conduct. Many new gardeners are looking for a pretty plant and an easy fix. Perhaps educating the new gardener may be the most important part of this equation. Information provided at point of sale would enable new gardeners to be aware of the consequences and make informed choices.

A local Hamilton area nursery advertised *Iris pseudacorus* this year to plant in wastewater ponds because it absorbs heavy metals. Who actually has these wastewater ponds and have they tested for these toxins?

Yellow iris is quite pretty for anyone who likes yellow, and it spreads so well for the low maintenance newbie gardener. But it will form heavy dense rhizomes thus precluding any other form of wildlife such as bird nesting sites and fish. It displaces native plants and changes wetlands into dry spaces, and it blocks water flow in irrigation and flood control ditches. So it's good if you

want a sterile environment:

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/yellow-iris#:~:text=The%20plant%20has%20since%20spread,Photo%3A%20Dawn%20Sucee%2C%20OFAH%20.>

Per Cathy Kavassilis, CCIPR Lead and Master Gardener:

While *Iris p.* does absorb heavy metals, our native broad-leaved cattail is a better choice as it does not pose additional risks to the environment. There are likely many other native species that would be just as effective but have not been investigated. *Iris p.* is now a prohibited noxious weed in Alberta, British Columbia, and Manitoba. While sales are not prohibited in Ontario, it has been identified as an invasive aquatic plant under the [Public Lands Act](#). Sales are regulated or banned in a number of American states ([U.S. Invasive Atlas](#)).



Yellow iris can form dense stands with very thick mats of rhizomes. Photo: Dawn Sucee, OFAH

The U.S. "Weed Risk Assessment for *Iris pseudacorus*" states: "In production systems, *Iris p.* is toxic to livestock and clogs irrigation channels ... *Iris p.* also has negative impacts in urban and suburban settings, where this plant clogs drainage pipes and flood control ditches ... and outcompetes desirable plants in gardens ... *Iris p.* is toxic to animals; the sap from its plants can irritate and blister human skin... and the plant especially poses a risk to dogs that consume the rhizomes ..." Note that "Composting rhizome pieces is not recommended, because the plants can grow for months

without water."

Please visit our website for a number of resources:

https://ccipr.ca/?fbclid=IwAR1KkP0h5NygI-yY2pw_e-WdNC2h0yILvR1ZUVtXNMZK5Lwz1BYgWRkqAc. Also visit our Facebook and Instagram pages. Facebook is here: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1503444570040194/>. Join the team and become a **supporter** (agree with our objectives), a **partner** (help spread the word), or a **team member** (join us in meetings and doing outreach). Visit our 'Get Involved' tab: <https://ccipr.ca/get-involved/>.



Let's Celebrate

Year of the Garden
Année du jardin

2022

SEEING RED?

We're counting on it!

Across Canada gardeners will be encouraged to join the fun and plant **RED**

Ontario Master Gardener Groups
Here's your challenge!

- Host an event on sustainable gardening
- Capture your experience in words with photos or video
- Winning entry will be featured in Canada's National Magazine - Canada's Local Gardener
- Entries must be submitted between **March 1st and September 30th, 2022**

Canada's Local Gardener

Let's Celebrate – Year of the Garden 2022

MGOI is presenting a challenge to Master Gardeners with a great reward. The winning entry will be featured in Canada's National magazine, *Canada's Local Gardener*. We are hoping that all groups will prepare an entry. It is as easy as hosting an event on sustainable gardening complete with photos / videos and a written write up of your entry.

Entries will be judged by three judges:

1. Year of the Garden – They will provide a judge and will be looking for the colour red, involvement / adoption by local municipal / regional / county governments, and visits to gardens “to share your passion and knowledge”. Their website is www.yearofthegarden.ca and we encourage you to investigate to see the many ways you can celebrate and win their vote.

2. Canada's Local Gardener Magazine – One of the magazine's media staff will be judging. They will be looking for colourful content for their article, content that is well written or an interesting video. They have videos that are about 8-10 minutes in length. We may also be asked to participate in a podcast this year. Visit their website www.localgardener.net or review your magazines so you can recognize their criteria and win their vote.

3. Master Gardeners of Ontario Inc. – Our past president Claudette Sims has agreed to be our final judge. Keep in mind that she will be looking for the values instilled in our vision and mission statements.

Vision: Motivating and Inspiring Gardeners of Ontario

Mission: Master Gardeners of Ontario Inc. is a volunteer organization comprised of individuals who are certified horticultural experts and who provide in depth sustainable gardening information to the general public. To paraphrase Claudette, “Sustainable gardening has a broader definition than planting native plants and eradicating / not planting invasive plants. It includes sustainable watering / fertilizer practices and soil management” and not using pesticides.

So join in and help celebrate the **Year of the Garden 2022**. We have 29 MG groups and we hope to have 29 entries to showcase Master Gardeners of Ontario. As a group, if you have more than one project on the go, send a second entry. I would be happy to answer any questions. Please send them to Kathleen Gorsline at: marketing@mgoi.ca.



Master Gardeners Out & About

Projects & Events

Toronto Master Gardeners

Name: Farmers' Market Advice Clinics

Details: In 2021, Toronto Master Gardeners received a grant to educate ourselves and others on invasive species in our area. Our Invasive Species Group, headed by Lucy Saunders, sent teams of three MGs to local farmers' markets in Withrow and East Lynn parks to talk about invasive garden plants. The initiative was so popular with the public and our MGs that this year we are providing general advice clinics at these same markets.

We have been seeing a real mix of people at our advice tables. New gardeners, sometimes with kids in tow, often ask about native plants and vegetable growing. We've also received questions on everything from chlorotic trees to roses that refuse to bloom. It's been wonderful to connect personally with the public and our fellow MGs after so much time online.



Toronto MGs Heather Crisp & Peter Cox
at the East Lynn Park Farmers' Market
Photo Credit: MG Josée Couture



Toronto MG Tena van Andel at the
Withrow Park Farmers' Market

Photo Credit: Withrow Park Farmers' Market
<https://withrowmarket.ca/>

Simcoe County Master Gardeners

Name: Group Outing to Folklore Farm

Details: Members of Simcoe County MGs travelled to Folklore Farm in Penetanguishene in July to learn about biodynamic and regenerative agriculture practices. The group saw compost tea being made on a large scale, plus many animals, including a guardian llama.

After a patio lunch, the group visited Operation Grow, a vertical farm that provides social support and employment skills for local women in need. We were treated to an excellent presentation and found many products to take home and enjoy. Members were delighted to get together in person!



Simcoe County Master Gardeners at Folklore Farm



Niagara Master Gardeners

Name: Interactive Website for Jobs and Events – Full Descriptions

Details: In August, Niagara completed their interactive website that details the chapter organization chart as well as job descriptions and event descriptions. They include all of the how, when, where, and who details for potential volunteers to understand how to do that position and the responsibility they are taking on. Thanks to Niagara web-master Pat Bowman and Media lead Barb Johnston.



Name: Promoting Ontario Master Gardeners

Details: From *THE LOCAL* (Niagara-on-the-Lake newspaper), August 31, 2022 about how Niagara Master Gardeners help the community in many ways & prepared for their annual plant sale

Condensed from the article by Penny Coles, Editor



MGs Carol Tuck-Riggs, left and Betty Knight in Knight's front garden, with Luna. (Photo credit Penny Coles)

Sitting in Niagara MG Betty Knight's beautiful, sustainable back garden on York Road, with Niagara MG Carol Tuck-Riggs, they explain the rigorous requirements that must be completed before earning the Master Gardener title. In addition to an educational component – the University of Guelph and Dalhousie University run the certification courses – a Master Gardener is considered to be in training for two years while working and fulfilling a number of volunteer hours. Continuing education to keep updated on gardening issues is also necessary, as is volunteering 30 hours a year in your community.

There are many opportunities to complete those conditions, says Tuck-Riggs, including working at the Niagara Parks School of Horticulture greenhouses; volunteering for the Shaw Garden Tour to answer

gardening questions of attendees; helping out at the Start-Me-Up Niagara Community Garden; providing horticultural therapy sessions at Hospice Niagara and looking after the hospice gardens; leading advice clinics at the St. Catharines Public Library and at some of the garden centres in the region, including Country Basket in Niagara Falls and Rice Road Greenhouses in Welland; and even offering a help oversee a phone line and an email hotline for people with gardening questions. Answering questions can be a lot of fun, says Tuck-Riggs, as Master Gardeners take turns handling the requests for advice. "We love doing this. It's our passion. Sometimes I have to do research to answer the questions, and I learn so much doing it." For those who could use some help, the Niagara Master Gardener hotline number is 905-646-2818, or email niagara@mgoi.ca with questions.

Their **Seedy Sunday** is another event they look forward to. This is a seed exchange where seeds are swapped and shared amongst participants. There are also speakers, several vendors geared toward spring sales, and activities for children. It's scheduled for Sunday, Feb. 26, 2023 to be held at St. George's Church, 83 Church St. in St. Catharines. "They are all non-genetically-modified seeds," says Tuck-Riggs, who is also hoping for more native varieties. "That's a main goal of Master Gardeners", says Knight. "We're in an environmental crisis", and each member is trying to do their part to reintroduce native plants.

Knight speaks of keystone species such as oak, cherry, willow, maple and pine – with species native to a Niagara Carolinian forest [Ecodistrict 7-E 5] which she maintains are not the same as Carolinian forests in other areas. She also encourages "redefining what beautiful means", such as her grass-free lawn, and thinking in terms of planting native species that will attract native insects such as monarch butterflies (now endangered) and support native ecology. As an example, she says, "how many people look at milkweed and pull it out? If the word 'weed' is in the name of a plant, it's probably a native species. We need to learn to look at things differently."

Tuck-Riggs promotes initiatives as a Master Gardener: supporting shoreline ecology; replanting and reintroducing native plants; and native tree planting. She talks of the importance of trees as part of the cycle of filtering and absorbing water, putting moisture in the soil, and acting as windbreaks, "and yet we're cutting down trees, not just here but around the world. And wind is a



world-wide system. When we cut down trees we change the wind paths.”

They speak of invasive non-native species we’re still planting, such as lily of the valley, periwinkle, and English ivy, and ones that crowd out other plants. “They are not offering anything for our native pollinators to eat,” says Knight. “English ivy is growing on the escarpment, creating monocultures, where nothing else can grow.”

There is so much to learn about the way we garden, and another one of the many ways local Master Gardeners are sharing their knowledge is with the *Niagara-on-the-Lake (NOTL) Communities in Bloom* committee. They are celebrating *The Year of the Garden 2022* by creating weekly short videos with videographer Rene Bertschi, writing the scripts, and in some cases providing the voice-overs to go with his filming – visit the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake’s Facebook page to view them. Learn about the town’s beautiful hanging baskets, the Chelsea chop, fertilizing plants, jumping worms, and more.

Niagara MGs September Plant Sale, an annual event and major fundraiser put on hold for two years during the pandemic, was held at the Vineland Research Centre, 4890 Victoria North, Lincoln, on Saturday, September 10th. Niagara MGs potted up a minimum of 10 plants from their own gardens. Knight, like many of the Master Gardeners, potted up more than 10 plants – she looks at it as doing a favour for her garden while also contributing to the fundraiser. Members checked plants, priced reasonably, to make sure they were healthy, and were on-hand to answer questions from the public.

Funds generated through the plant sale and speaking engagements support two scholarships for students attending the Niagara Parks School of Horticulture; horticultural therapy sessions; and requests from organizations for funding relating to horticultural projects.



Betty Knight shows off some of her plants she is saving for the MGs September plant sale

Halton Master Gardeners

Name: Dundurn Castle Historic Kitchen Garden Tour

Details: Tuesday August 16th was a beautiful warm sunny day when Halton Master Gardeners met in person and had a great tour of the Dundurn Castle Historic Kitchen Garden. This was followed by a delightful visit in MGIT Pam MacDonald's beautiful garden where we enjoyed cake to celebrate Roberta Roberts' retirement from HMGs. Pam has the great fortune of having a garden with a gate into the grounds of Dundurn Castle.

“Once home to Sir Allan Napier MacNab, railway magnate, lawyer and Premier of the United Canadas (1854-1856) and his family, today Dundurn Castle tells the story of the family who lived above stairs and the servants who lived and worked below stairs. Her Majesty, the Queen Consort, is the museum’s Patron and the great, great, great granddaughter of Sir Allan MacNab.

William Reid was Sir Allan’s gardener for over 25 years. [You can] Explore the lovingly restored two-acre Historic Kitchen Garden where costumed staff grow over 200 heirloom varieties of fruits, vegetables, herbs, and flowers for use in the historic kitchen.”

<https://www.hamilton.ca/things-do/hamilton-civic-museums/dundurn-national-historic-site>



Halton Master Gardeners



Peterborough and Area Master Gardeners

Name: Lang Pioneer Village with Master Gardeners Rachel Burrows and Brenda Thompson

by Rachel Burrows

Details: Lang Pioneer Village held an event on August 14th called “Tying the Knot”, a celebration of Canadian weddings from the early 1800s to the early 1900s. Peterborough and Area Master Gardeners were asked to help out at the event. Brenda Thompson and myself, Rachel Burrows, did a lot of research on pioneer wedding customs and spent the day at Lang. We talked about the meaning of flowers. Who knew that sedums mean “welcome husband, however drunk ye may be!”. If you hold your wedding bouquet at heart level it means happiness and acceptance. However, if you point it downwards it means rejection!

We also made “tussie mussies”, small posies or nosegays that were very popular in Victorian times. Fragrant herbs and blooms were often used to protect the wearer from noxious odours. They were linked with the language of flowers and often conveyed secret messages to potential lovers. They were known as talking bouquets. The village visitors were really interested and the children had great fun finding out the meaning of the flowers. We used quite a lot of wildflowers as that is what would have been available to the early settlers. As you can see from the photo, Brenda and I were in costume, petticoats and all!



(L-R) Brenda Thompson and Rachel Burrows

Guelph Wellington Master Gardeners

Name: Year of the Garden Speaker Series on Zoom

Details: On September 14th Halton Master Gardener Cathy Kavassalis spoke on *Invasive Plants - Prevention Is the Key: How Homeowner's Are Making a Difference*. Cathy is an inspirational speaker who is a passionate gardener and conservationist. She loves to answer questions posed in the popular [Master Gardeners of Ontario Facebook forum](#).



Northumberland Master Gardeners

Name: Gazebo Garden – Result of Collaborative Teamwork

Details: Northumberland Master Gardeners and volunteers at Ed's House Northumberland Hospice Care Centre (Ed's House) partnered up this year to plant a colourful garden bed for hospice patients and their families to enjoy. After the generous donation of a gazebo to Ed's House by Petra Becker in honour of her late parents, a plan was made to surround the Gazebo with colourful flowers like those her parents enjoyed growing in Northumberland County.

Following a meeting with Ed's House staff and their garden volunteers, a plan was laid out, beds were prepared on hot June afternoons, and soil was generously donated. Then Ed's House garden volunteers and NMGs got to work moving 4 cubic yards of soil, spreading it evenly around the gazebo. Months before some NMGs had started a variety of seeds including rudbeckias, sunflowers, zinnias, asters, yarrow, cosmos, and pincushion flowers.



Perennials were dug up from our MG's own gardens and on two very warm early June afternoons the garden came together. Seedlings were laid out and moved around, larger plants were transplanted, and some nasturtium seeds were added near the walkway entrance of the gazebo.



In the days that followed the garden was cared for by staff and volunteers of Ed's House. NMGs stopped by sporadically to answer questions and offer advice. Some seedlings were lost to critters but as summer set in the garden has really flourished and is now a place of serenity and reflection. Plans are already in place for next year's garden.

Name: Northumberland Master Gardeners Sponsor an Herb Box

Details: Two non profits, Cultivate Festival and Greenwood Coalition, have installed pop-up herb boxes throughout Cobourg and Port Hope. Each herb box bears the sign "Community Herb Box", inviting passers-by to help themselves. The boxes, soil, seeds, and plants are provided. Care of the box is left to those who use it.

The herb boxes inspire conversations about gardening and about the culinary use of the herbs. A pair of scissors hangs on the box, inviting passers-by to snip off a piece of an herb and take it home for dinner.

Northumberland Master Gardeners are pleased to sponsor the box located on King Street in Cobourg in the lot next to MacCoubrey's Funeral Home.



MGs include, from left to right starting at the front, Suzi Gabany, Claire Blahnik, Carol Anderson, Victor Freiberg, Mark Gordon, Judy Harris, Len Taylor



UPCOMING EVENTS

Guelph Wellington Master Gardeners

Name: Open Gardens

Details: Members opened their gardens to the public in celebration of the Year of the Garden 2022. The Robert Pavlis garden is **open the first Saturday of every month from May-Oct. from 1-4:30 pm: Aspen Grove Gardens, 8 Megan Place, Guelph.** This is a 6 acre garden with ponds, waterfalls, and a large selection of plants.

Name: Year of the Garden Speaker Series on Zoom: Cottage Gardens


Date: Oct. 12th @ 7:00 pm


Details: This talk will be presented by Sean James, Landscape Ontario's Garden Communicator of the Year for 2020 and 2021. He is a hobbyist, professional gardener, Niagara Parks School of Horticulture Graduate, Master Gardener, writer, teacher, radio / TV garden celebrity!

Master Gardeners of Ottawa-Carleton

Name: Upcoming Events

Details: After two years of COVID lockdowns, MGOC returned to **in-person advice clinics**, holding advice tables at ten local farmers' markets, for a total of about 50 advice shifts over the season.

 We are also running virtual events, including a second season of the very successful [Trowel Talk Live Learn over Lunch Sessions](#), which take place on Wednesdays at 12:30 until November 2.

 We have a new partnership with [CAFESOttawa](#), working with community groups to identify and remove invasive plants from parks and common areas. All in all, we have been busy over the summer!

Looking way ahead 2023 Technical Update: Biodiversity

Details: Our keynote speaker will be [Michael Runtz](#), one of Canada's most highly respected naturalists, nature photographers, and natural history authors. This event is being organized in collaboration with Lanark County Master Gardeners.

Date: Saturday September 9, 2023

Location: Kitchissippi United Church, 630 Island Park Dr., Ottawa, ON K1Y 0B7

Cost: TBD

Registration Information: TBA

Etobicoke Master Gardeners

Name: Virtual Gardening Workshops at Humber Arboretum

Dates: Oct. 15th and Nov. 19th

Address: Humber College North Campus grounds, 205 Humber College Blvd., Toronto

Details: The [Eco-Garden Community Workshop series](#) are virtual workshops hosted by the Etobicoke Master Gardeners and Humber Arboretum throughout the year.



Exciting News from Our Education Director

Name: Webinar Series

Details: A new webinar series, [Introductory Botany](#), beginning with Plant Anatomy and Morphology will be starting October 26th.

Time: 7:00pm via Zoom

Audience: Geared to all MGs and MGITs

Details: Detailed information and zoom signup will be coming soon. Mark your calendars and stay tuned!



Grand Erie Master Gardeners

Name: Seminars, Equal Ground Community Gardens

Details: Our members will be giving brief presentations again this year on various topics about how to grow vegetables and herbs. The Equal Ground Community Gardens (EGCG) provide assistance and support to a network of community gardens maintained fully by community residents and volunteers. Our thanks to Anne Saunders, who volunteers with EGCG, for bringing our two groups together and allowing MGs to share their knowledge within the community.

Niagara Master Gardeners

Name: Seedy Saturday

Date: Sunday, Feb. 26, 2023

Place: to be held at St. George's Church, 83 Church St. in St. Catharines.

Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) Seeds Alert

Canadians are encouraged to connect with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) before sending seeds abroad. Canada's plant health regulator, the CFIA, plays an important role in making sure seeds from Canada meet internationally agreed upon regulations. Over the past year, the CFIA has seen an increasing number of notifications of non-compliance from foreign countries about seeds exported from Canada without proper phytosanitary (plant health) certification. Seeds can potentially be invasive in some countries or spread plant diseases or other pests. That's why it's important to check requirements with the CFIA. Not meeting requirements has consequences.

For example, the destination country may destroy the seeds and issue Canada a notice of non-compliance. All seeds, including those in small packets for gardeners, must comply with the import requirements of the destination country.

Please share this information with the Canadian public to increase awareness of the important steps to take when shipping or exporting seeds to protect international plant resources, our economy and the environment. The CFIA has spokespeople available for interviews, people who are experts in plant health imports and exports.

Our experts are also willing to write and submit a piece if that is of interest. Please contact us if you have any questions. We look forward to hearing from you.

Media Relations, Canadian Food Inspection Agency /
Government of Canada: cfia.media.acia@inspection.gc.ca
Tel: 613-773-6600

- Additional links/Background information: [Shipping and exporting seeds from Canada](#); [Plant health at the CFIA](#); [Chronicle 360](#); [plant health](#); [Canada's plant health hero challenge](#); [Join the plant health movement](#) (Chronicle 360)

Follow:

- [Facebook](#)

- [Twitter](#)

- [YouTube](#)

- [LinkedIn](#)

- [Instagram](#)

- [Email subscription](#)

