



Newsletter of the Master Gardeners of
Ontario

Inside

MGOI

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

The Newsletter aims to be the voice for Master Gardeners! This is your venue for providing updates, insights and the inside scoop from MGOI Board & Committee members, Directors, and the 28 Master Gardener groups throughout Ontario. *Inside MGOI* features member milestones, group projects and activities, short member profiles, upcoming events such as webinars/conferences – 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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Facebook: Claudette Sims, Halton & Cathy Kavassalis, Halton
Manager of MG Participation in Canada Blooms: Vacant

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INSIDE MGOI

May 2024

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

Editor: Isabel Belanger, Halton

Milestones

London Middlesex Master Gardeners

New Master Gardener in Training

James Hannay

James is currently building a tiny garden in the yard of his childhood home in downtown London. Vegetables are his plants of choice, but he would like to try hops and fruit trees. He is very interested in soil health and the soil food web. James feels that as climate change effects intensify it is essential to have a better idea of how to adapt and mitigate the effects. While gardening is a small act in comparison to other solutions, it is certainly an important step, especially in urban areas. Plant biology is something James would like to investigate further in his studies to become a Master Gardener.



Peterborough & Area Master Gardeners

35 Year Anniversary

Beryl Harris

15 Year Anniversary

Sylvia Green

5 Year Anniversary

Marilyn Homewood



Marilyn, left receiving her 5 year pin from Lois Scott



Durham Master Gardeners

Master Gardener Status Achieved

Tanya Bignell

Roman Halkiewicz

Congratulations to **Tanya** for completing her MG courses through U Guelph, and contributing the required volunteer time, making her a full MG. Tanya has been a very active member since she joined DMG, being one of our awesome presenters. She recently joined our executive team in the role of Events Coordinator. Tanya, DMG is honoured to have you as a member and look forward to working with you.



More congratulations are in order with **Roman** becoming a MG! He passed the self study program – excellent job! Roman has been very active creating amazing presentations and being one of our star presenters. DMG is honoured to have you as a member and look forward to working with you.



Halton Master Gardeners

New Master Gardeners in Training

Morag Johnson

Janet Padiak

A very warm welcome is extended to our new MGITs!



1000 Islands Master Gardeners

Transfer In

Gail Walker – Welcome Gail!





A message from the President

Karen Sciuk

I want to thank everyone who was involved in making the April Conference a huge success, from all the participants who contributed to the positive energy, to the learning and sharing that we all experienced throughout the two days, to those exceptional few who were part of the organizing team. Turn out was tremendous, with about one third of our membership and 25 out of 28 groups represented.

Communication was key, so we need to acknowledge the efforts of those who manage our notices on our MGOI website, our MGOI Facebook groups, and our monthly newsletter. Direct communication between the various conference planning team members, i.e. board members and other members at large, group Coordinators and on out to individual MGs was also significant. Without that communication network we can not function as an organization.

Roles

In that regard every MG needs to consider the possibility of taking on a future role on the MGOI board, or a position on an organizing committee such as the communications team. The public MGOI Facebook group always welcomes more MGs to take a turn as a moderator. A great learning opportunity! The position of Director of Communications has been vacant for three years, and in that absence the rest of the board has stepped up to fill the gaps as best they could.

By the end of 2024 we will also need a new Webmaster, and new candidates to fill the roles of President, as well as the Directors of Education, Events, and Marketing & Partnerships. According to ONCA (see last month's newsletter) our four year terms on the board are up! Turnover is always important to keep ideas fresh. Without the dedication of new volunteers in these diverse roles, we will not be experiencing another inspiring conference like the one we just enjoyed.

Bring your fresh ideas and make a difference. We need you!

*Regards,
Karen*



MGOI Board Vacancies

Karen Sciuk, President MGOI

As noted above, MGOI will have a number of Board vacancies in addition to the current 2 vacant positions: Director of Communications and Vice President (VP). The VP job description follows below. The Communications job description is posted on the MGOI site; the other job descriptions will be posted soon. The URL is <https://mgoi.ca/>; members' login is on the far right (coordinators have the password); scroll down to Board Vacancies.

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 and would like to find a VP to start as soon as possible so that they will be well aware of how the Executive functions prior to becoming President.

We like to appoint MGs interested in this position to the Board as VP before they transition into the President's position.

Please see the VP job description and 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 Director of Membership and others to fill vacant Board positions
- Assumes the duties of the President in his or her absence
- Succeeds the President



MGOI Webinars / MGOI Members Facebook (FB) Private Discussion Group / Webmaster Wanted

Access to Past MGOI Webinars

All MGOI Webinars have been recorded, and the link is on the MGOI website, <https://mgoi.ca/>; members' login is on the far right. If you don't have a password your Coordinator will be able to provide it. Once you're in the members' section, scroll down to the bottom and click on workshops/webinars.

The MGOI Members Facebook (FB) Private Discussion Group

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1329062317277822/>.

This is a private group: 'A discussion page for registered members of the Master Gardeners of Ontario Inc., Canada; this includes current active MGs and MGITs. To join, you must be an active member of the Master Gardeners of Ontario and belong to a local MG group.' You must also answer 2 questions that you would know the answers to.

The group is:

Private - Only members can see who's in the group and what they post. **Visible** - Anyone can find this group.

History - Group created on January 3, 2020. Name last changed on October 12, 2023.

See more - May include flagged content. Admins may allow some posts and comments to be visible in the group even if they're flagged by Facebook's systems. [Learn more](#)

Wanted - Webmaster

Jim Cook, our webmaster for the past 13 years is retiring at the end of 2024. We need a new webmaster! Jim is willing to provide support to ease the transition into the job. An individual (or group) with Wordpress knowledge will transition well.

The candidate will be highly motivated and skilled. If you have a passion for web development and are excited about the opportunity to manage and improve MGOI's online presence, we encourage you to apply.

Job Summary

The MGOI Webmaster will manage everything related to the MGOI website to ensure it is running smoothly and effectively. The position works closely with MGOI Board members. The Webmaster:

- monitors performance – functionality, speed and design – and analyzes data to identify opportunities for improvement
- stays up-to-date with the latest web development technologies and trends
- provides technical support and creates content as needed
- manages website hosting, domain registration, and other technical aspects of website management
- creates and maintains website backups and disaster recovery plans
- performs other duties as required



Master Gardeners Out & About

Projects & Events

Thunder Bay & District Master Gardeners

Name: Creating Beautiful Gardens Presentation

Details: Lynda Lahteenmaa and Lynda Bobinski were happy to present “Creating Beautiful Gardens” to the Catholic Women’s League of St. Anthony’s Church in Thunder Bay on May 7th. The hour-long presentation was well received by the full-capacity crowd.



Lynda Bobinski, left & Lynda Lahteenmaa

Lynda Lahteenmaa is actively involved with the committee that selects gardens annually for the Thunder Bay Art Gallery Garden Tour which is celebrating its 26th year. Beautiful pictures from previous tours were shown as well as explaining the criteria for selecting gardens. Different features and structures in the garden were also highlighted.

Both Lyndas promoted the Master Gardeners program, upcoming events in Thunder Bay and the role of the MGs at the garden tour. They outlined the requirements of plants (soil, light & water) as well as explaining that gardening is the combination of science and art.

A sneak peak of the gardens which will be showcased in the upcoming July tour were also presented.



London Middlesex Master Gardeners

Name: May Meeting – Field Trip to Mud Lake Nature Reserve near Salford ON

Details: Several LMMG members were able to attend an informative tour of the Mud Lake Nature Reserve, a 104-acre Oxford County wetland that was generously donated to the Thames Talbot Land Trust in 2019. Members learned about native plants in the Carolinian zone.



Members walk through Mud Lake Nature Reserve



Learning about wetland plants



Master Gardeners of Ottawa-Carleton

Name: Friends of the Farm Plant Sale

Details: It's plant sale season in Ottawa and MGOC participates in the Friends of the Farm plant sale to replenish our coffers. Several members attended the sale including one of the original members of the Ottawa group: Polly McColl (in the centre with khaki pants/blue top). Polly has been with us for 37 years, has a red name badge, was coordinator twice and participated in the Steering Committee that led to the creation of MGOC. She has been volunteering for 24 years at the Ottawa Experimental Farm where the Explorer Series of hardy roses were developed. She's a great contributor to our group's knowledge.



Peterborough & Area Master Gardeners

Name: Earth Day Fair, April 27th

Details: Master Gardeners answered questions and engaged in some very interesting discussions at the table for this event. The attendance was small, but the topics were plenty!



(from left) Sally Rye, Christine Freeburn, and Judy Bernard at the Earth Day Fair

Name: Day For Gardeners, May 4th 2024

Details: 'A Day for Gardeners' (DFG) is a long-standing event for the Peterborough & Area Master Gardeners. Held in the spring, it's an opportunity for PMG members to host a day on gardening for people in the area! DFG is an all-hands-on-deck kind of day with speaker sessions, an MG advice table, book sale, and lots of food largely prepared and donated by PMG members.

The speakers all received rave reviews for their excellent presentations, Deb Fraser and her kitchen volunteers were praised for their wonderful food presentation, and everyone went home happy!

This year 100 registrants had the following choices of topics for the speaker sessions:

- **Creating a Garden Sanctuary** by Sharleen Ward, presented by Leslie Farooq or **Sustainable Gardening and Xeriscaping** by Rachel Burrows
- **Container Gardening Demonstration** by Jennifer Guertin or **Attracting Wildlife to Your Garden** by Thom Luloff
- **Winter Sowing Demonstration** by Silvia Strobl or **Grow Me Instead: Take a Fresh Look at Your Garden** by Anne Craig
- Plenary Session: **Cultivating Tomorrow: "Explore the Future of Gardening"** by Cheryl Harrison.

Comments such as "I loved everything and would have enjoyed all the topics presented today" and "Everyone was friendly and welcoming no matter how experienced we were with gardening" made our day! The DFG committee of Anne Trudel-Inglis, Mary Jane Pilgrim, Deb Fraser, Cheryl Harrison, and Lois Scott are already preparing for April 26, 2025!

PMGs Rachel Burrows, left and Anne Trudel Inglis getting ready for the first presentations





PMG in training Thom Luloff presenting on Attracting Wildlife to Your Garden



Flower themed cupcakes!



PMG Leslie Farooq presenting on Creating a Garden Sanctuary



PMG Sue Flinders-Adams at our books by donation table



The speakers and door prizes were both a hit!



From left to right, PMGs Sally Rye, Leslie Farooq, and Gladys Fowler



PMG in training Silvia Strobl did an excellent presentation on winter sowing



Tri-County Master Gardeners

Name: Spring Workshops

Details: Tri-County MGs have finished the spring Pollinator Gardens 101 workshop series with presentations in Stratford and Innerkip (Oxford County), allowing us to reach out to all three counties in our area. We provided education on invasive plants, the many reasons to choose natives, tips on pollinator garden design, as well as the best native plants for home gardens. The workshops were well received, and our surveys and the positive feedback indicated that audiences enjoyed the workshops. The Innerkip workshop was given to a packed house and our presenters appreciated the participation of the enthusiastic audience.

Lanark County Master Gardeners

Name: Tour of Greenshaus Hydroponic Lettuce – Almonte ON

by Dale Odorizzi

Details: Lanark County Master Gardeners toured the local Greenshaus on May 11th. The greenhouse is used to grow 1000 lettuce plants hydroponically. Each week Rob Lyle, the owner, plants 1000 - 1100 lettuce seeds and six weeks later takes about the same number to 3 large local grocery stores. To have the freshest product possible, he only delivers to stores within 30 km. Rob explained the whole process, including heat capture and sink, watering and fertilizer mixing. It was all very fascinating.

As we were leaving, he prepared a head of lettuce for each of us, putting the lettuce in a paper bag, roots intact and a few tablespoons of water to keep it fresh. One of our members who regularly buys his lettuce told us the bags will hold up for weeks. It was a fascinating tour.



MGs Ankalet Dean (seated) and Judy Wall can't wait to nibble on their lettuce

Halton Master Gardeners

Name: Halton Master Gardeners Gage Park Tree Tour

Details: Our May 1st members' meeting was held in Hamilton's iconic Gage Park. We toured the swale, part of a new (2019) stormwater management facility involving diversion sewers

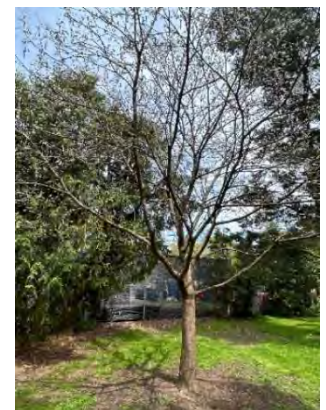


Before the tour. Photo: Claudette Sims

that separate sewage into two streams from the properties abutting the park. Stormwater from those houses is diverted into the stream location identified in the 1920 Dunnington-Grubb master plan of the park. 'This temporary storage swale reduces flooding by allowing a significant amount of the stormwater to be brought into the swale in Gage Park, while native plant material and sediment filtering stone help to absorb the stormwater.' <https://dtah.com/news/2019-08-15-new-gage-park-stormwater-management>. The swale is basically a wildlife zone left to its own. Unfortunately this also means that plants that 'blow in' or otherwise seed themselves down can flourish. There have been problems with *Phragmites australis*.

Brandy Tiffney, Arborist and Forestry Investigator for Environmental Services, Hamilton was our tour guide. She gave us helpful tips, clues and suggestions regarding tree identification, difficult when many trees are not in full leaf. She showed us some of the outstanding and beautiful trees in the park, stopping by some of her favourite trees.

Our first stop was an ironwood tree (*Carpinus caroliniana*) followed by a blackgum tree (*Nyssa sylvatica*) that has branches/twigs arranged in a unique way, giving it a unique silhouette.



Nyssa sylvatica





Liquidambar styraciflua

Next was a sweetgum tree (*Liquidambar styraciflua*), native to south of the border but growing happily here. Not noticeable yet, the leaves are uniquely shaped. The fruit is a capsule and looks like a sputnik, quite hard and spiky.

Further along were 2 huge European hornbeam trees.



Carpinus betulus (Hornbeam)

Next we stopped at a ginkgo tree, an ancient tree from the Jurassic era, originating from China and that withstood the nuclear blast in Hiroshima, Japan.



Then we stopped to observe the outline of the Kentucky coffee tree (*Gymnocladus dioica*) with its seeds still on the tree. It is one of the last to leaf out in spring and one of the first to drop its leaves.

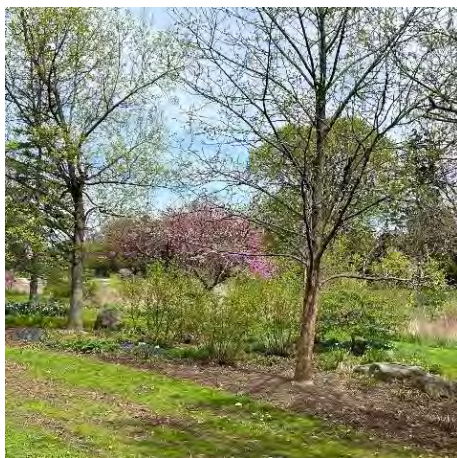


Along the swale we came upon a cucumber tree (*Magnolia acuminata*) in bud.



This is one of only two magnolia trees native to Canada (the other is *Liriodendron tulipifera* or tulip tree, also in the park). Both grow in Carolinian Canada. This is the northern range for cucumber tree; the flowers are subtly beautiful.

A garden comprising mainly native trees and shrubs was constructed in memory of Richard Gadawski who passed away in 2005 after a long career with Hamilton's Forestry and Horticulture programs. The garden is flanked by 2 small native hornbeams (*Carpinus caroliniana*) with 2 redbud trees (*Cercis canadensis*) in the background, in full colour.



Fagus sylvatica

Along the backyards of the Rothsay Avenue homes we came upon a huge European beech tree (*Fagus sylvatica*) that is about 200 years old and a slippery elm (*Ulmus rubra*).





Slippery Elm (*Ulmus rubra*)

Towards the end of the tour was a dawn redwood (*Metasequoia glyptostroboides*), a tree discovered in China in the early 1940s that, like the ginkgo, dates back more than a million years identified from fossils. From that small stand in China (where it is endangered) progeny have been planted all over the world. This is a deciduous conifer – it loses its leaves in fall – similar to larches (*Larix* spp.).



Soft ferny leaf of the dawn redwood

These were just a sampling of some of the notable trees in Hamilton’s Gage Park.



1000 Islands Master Gardeners

Name: John A. Macdonald Buzzline

Details: This May, members of the 1000 Islands Master Gardeners, in coordination with the City of Kingston, planted a roadside pollinator garden we call the John A. Macdonald Buzzline (named after Cornell University’s ‘Botanic Buzzline’).

The City of Kingston had previously sown the Roadside Salt Tolerant Seed Mix from Wildflower Farm: [Roadside Salt Tolerant Seed Mix \(wildflowerfarm.com\)](http://www.wildflowerfarm.com) with mixed results.

After consulting with us, they agreed to purchase 239 additional forbs and shrubs from Natural Themes in Frankford, ON, to fill in the gaps and extend the garden. In addition to the plants in the seed mix, we added the following plant material:

<u>Wildflowers</u>	<u>Shrubs</u>
<i>Agastache nepetoides</i> <i>Anemone canadensis</i> <i>Asclepias verticillata</i> <i>Asclepias tuberosa</i> <i>Cassia hebecarpa</i> <i>Cirsium discolor</i> <i>Euthamia graminifolia</i> <i>Erythronium americanum</i> <i>Helianthus divaricatus</i> <i>Penstemon hirsutus</i> <i>Pycnanthemum virginianum</i> <i>Silphium perfoliatum</i> <i>Doellingeria umbellata</i> <i>Symphyotrichum sericeum</i>	<i>Aronia melanocarpa</i> <i>Viburnum dentatum</i> <i>Viburnum lentago</i> <i>Symphoricarpos albus</i> <i>Prunus nigra</i>
	<u>Grasses</u>
	<i>Elymus virginicus</i> <i>Sporobolus heterolepis</i>

Once plants were watered, they were marked with a flag for easy identification during return visits. We will be returning to the garden throughout the summer for additional planting (our donations) and for site management. We will be submitting pictures of the garden in bloom at a later date. Members of the planting team (two in these photos):

Nathan Nesoldy
 Josh Cowan
 Joanne Whitfield
 Anne Bremner
 Nancy Shepherd



Niagara Master Gardeners

Name: May Meeting: Sean James on Living Soil

Details: At our May meeting we were treated to an entertaining and informative talk by Sean James, landscape designer and consultant, whose topic was 'Talk Dirty: Soil and the Living Things in It.' He touched on the importance of composting, mulching, 'letting it lay,' (i.e. allowing organic material to break down where it falls in the garden instead of neatly clearing it all away), and minimum tilling except in dead, compacted and 'new' soil in subdivisions, for example. He also talked about the concepts of



biodynamic accumulators (deep-rooted plants that draw up nutrients, store them in leaves and release them back into the earth in fall and winter), [hugelkulture](#), and 'structural soil' (carefully engineered mixes of rocks and soil, that protect urban tree roots from compaction in city soils). He also talked about the idea of choosing plants for home gardens that work in the soil you have, rather than adding amendments to try and change it. He illustrated everything with compelling anecdotes and went off on some interesting tangents.

Sean James is a Master Gardener and a graduate of the Niagara Parks School of Horticulture. For more information: Facebook: sean.james.12; Instagram: seanjamesdesigns; or visit his website at: www.seanjames-consulting.ca.

Sean's talk included some suggestions for plants that work in sand or clay.

A VERY partial list of sand-tolerant plants

- Black Oak
- Sassafras
- Trumpet Vine
- Most native grasses
- Goldenrods
- Ironweed
- Milkweed (most)
- Cacti (many hardy cacti)
- Mock orange
- Wisteria
- Asters
- Cedars (*Thuja*)
- Yucca
- Junipers
- Shrub Roses
- Buddleia
- Lavender
- Lamb's Ears
- Coneflowers

A VERY partial list of clay-tolerant plants

- Roses
- Potentilla
- Prairie plants
- Hosta
- Sedums
- Chrysanthemums
- Viburnums
- Hydrangeas
- Junipers
- Most grasses
- Mock orange
- Wisteria
- Asters
- Dogwoods,
- Willows...come to think of it, most plants native to Southern Ontario!
- Cedars (*Thuja*)
- Yucca (surprisingly)
- Lonicera

Name: May Meeting: Presentation to Alan Large, Honorary Master Gardener

Details: Our meeting also included the presentation of an Honorary Master Gardener certificate to Alan Large, who has shared his skills and talents at our various fundraising and other events. You may recall that the April issue of Inside MGOI featured an article about Alan and some of his work. Alan is an avid gardener and husband of Niagara MG Barb Large.



Niagara MG chair, Sue Lusted, presents an Honorary Master Gardener certificate to Alan Large

Name: Ask an MG at Rice Road

Details: Throughout May and June each year, Niagara MG volunteers offer 'Ask a Master Gardener' sessions at a local garden centre, Rice Road Greenhouses, which gives a donation to the group in return. The volunteers walk among the displays and plant tables and offer advice where needed.



Grand Erie Master Gardeners

Name: Update on Activities

Details: GEMGs continue to work hard with their Gardening for Nature and Gardening for Food committees, as well as our monthly general meeting over zoom. The Gardening for Nature committee has three workshops planned this summer, to be led by MG Kevin Kavanagh.

MGs Kim Hutten, Carolyn Bennett and Lynne Goulet-Smith have been hard at work making pollinator plant kits that they will be selling on June 22nd at the Grand Erie plant sale (see below). A plant list will follow.

Our zoom meeting on May 9th featured a guest speaker, Shane O'Donnell of Heartwood Mushrooms, arranged by MGIT Marilyn Park. MGIT Kim Hutten gave a presentation on Permaculture to the Brantford Library on May 9th. MG Len Cole wrote an article (in 2 parts) on vegetable growing that will be added to our website.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Niagara Master Gardeners

Name: 18th Annual Shaw Guild Garden Tour

Date & Time: Saturday, June 15, 2024, 10am – 3pm

Details: This event is organized by the Shaw Theatre Guild with substantial help from the Niagara Master Gardeners. This year the tour will feature 8 fabulous, private gardens, several of which are on historical properties. MGs will be on hand in every garden to answer your questions. Music and plain air artists will enhance your visit. This year, you may take photos for personal use.

Plan your day in beautiful Niagara-on-the-Lake to see all the gardens and enjoy all that the area has to offer! To purchase tickets, please visit <https://shawguild.ca/garden-tour/>. The Garden Tour is the major fundraising event for the Shaw Guild.

Cost: Regular tickets April 1 - June 14 = \$30; Tickets purchased at the gardens on June 15 = \$35

[Watch a short video of the Shaw Guild 2023 Garden Tour on YouTube.](#)

[Download the 2023 Shaw Guild Garden Tour Magazine here.](#)



Grand Erie Master Gardeners

Name: Native Plant Sale

Date & Time: June 22nd, 2024; 1-3 pm

Location: 180 East River Rd., St. George, ON

Details: Bring your own containers. Bookmarks, plant markers, pollinator signs, and grow bags for sale too.



Name: Create Your Own Pollinator Paradise

Date: June 22nd

Details: The Gardening for Nature Committee is planning to hold a pollinator kit sale for creating a pollinator paradise at Kim's property.

Name: Technical Workshops with Kevin Kavanagh

Details: Plans are in the works for 3 technical workshops in June, July and September. These include "A Walk in the Woods", "Creating a Native Pollinator Garden" and "Gardening with Native Plants". Details to come...



1000 Islands Master Gardeners

Volunteer Opportunities

Timeframe: Thursdays at 1:00 for *Ask a Master Gardener* ZOOM series; sessions are 30 minutes.

Description: We are requesting MGs and MGITs to volunteer for presentations to offer outstanding advice and information to a wide audience in the following categories:

- 1) Edible Gardening
- 2) Back to Basics, Gardening 101
- 3) Climate Smart Gardening
- 4) Biodiverse Gardening
- 5) Native Plants
- 6) Bonus Week, topics of seasonal interest

1000 Islands is also looking for volunteers to write up blogs for the Zoom sessions. Our marketing group is also looking for volunteers.

Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA)

Oak Wilt Disease

Reminder – Do Not Prune oak trees (*Quercus* spp.) until November: winter pruning should be the new norm.

Calling anyone who deals with oak trees including nurseries, garden centers, homeowners, [Master Gardeners] and tree professionals!

*Let this be your friendly reminder: you should hold off on pruning your oaks until November to protect trees from oak wilt disease. The pathogen that causes oak wilt (*Bretziella fagacearum*) is now present in the Ontario environment; this is a reminder that prevention is your best form of defense against oak wilt. All ages and sizes of oak trees are susceptible to oak wilt.*

<https://onnurserycrops.wordpress.com/2024/04/02/reminder-no-pruning-oaks-from-now-until-november/#more-6673>

Oak Wilt, or *Bretziella fagacearum*, is a fungal disease that can kill oak trees within one year. Red oaks are particularly susceptible. The Ontario government advises 'you should not prune or wound oaks between April and November,



when the sap beetles that spread the disease are active'.
<https://www.ontario.ca/page/oak-wilt#:~:text=Oak%20wilt%20is%20an%20introduced,Falls%20area%20of%20Southern%20Ontario>. The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) is strongly advising against **pruning oak trees until November** to help prevent the spread of oak wilt.

This disease can cause serious damage to Canada's oak tree population. Pathways by which oak wilt can spread include:

- via **root grafting**, where the fungus travels through the interconnected roots of infected and healthy trees growing in close proximity;
- via **insects**, such as sap and bark beetles that carry spores of the fungus from an infected tree to a healthy one; and
- human-assisted spread through the **movement** of things such as firewood and **pruning** during high-risk periods.

How You Can Help: As a leading voice in the field of tree and plant health, the CFIA would like Master Gardeners to share this message with the public, our clients, and staff.



Oak wilt disease in an oak tree.
Photo credit: Joseph O'Brien, USDA Forest Service, Bugwood.org
https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/oak_wilt_diagnosing_and_preventing



CFIA – Spotted Lanternfly

Also check for spotted lanternfly (SLF). Canada is preparing for the potential arrival of the SLF, present in the United States and getting closer to the Canadian border. The spotted lanternfly would be devastating for Canada's wine, fruit, nursery and forest industries.



early stage nymph



For more information, please visit [Canada.ca/spotted-lanternfly](https://www.canada.ca/spotted-lanternfly). The **Spotted Lanternfly Timeline is:**

Sep to Nov – egg laying; Oct to Jun – egg mass; May to Jul – early stage nymph; Jul to Sep – late stage nymph; Jul to Dec – adult.

The city of Philadelphia has excellent information including identification on their website:



<https://www.phila.gov/2020-10-13-stop-the-spotted-lanternfly-identify-and-destroy-their-eggs/>

The following letter provides a link to CFIA's **digital toolkit** that includes material on invasive species.

A Letter from Maria Kubacki, CFIA

Dear Plant Health Ambassadors, [International Day of Plant Health](#) was on May 12th, and the CFIA needs help and expertise to engage Canadians on how we can successfully keep Canada's natural landscape, bountiful plants, and beautiful gardens healthy and protected against the threat of invasive species. We've developed a user-friendly [digital toolkit](#) full of outreach materials in English and French, including posters, social media messaging and images, and more! Please use these, and share with your customers, clients and friends.

We also encourage you to share our International Day of Plant Health social media content that was posted on all of our channels on May 12:

[Facebook \(@CFIACanada\)](#)

[Instagram \(@cfia_canada\)](#)

[X.com \(@InspectionCan\)](#)

[LinkedIn \(@canadian-food-inspection-agency\)](#)

Feel free to bug us if you have any questions or would like to discuss opportunities to work together!

Maria Kubacki, Manager / Gestionnaire

Marketing and partnerships / Marketing et partenariats
Communications and Public Affairs Branch / Direction générale des communications et affaires publiques
Canadian Food Inspection Agency / Agence canadienne d'inspection des aliments

Government of Canada / Gouvernement du Canada
343-542-3856

Maria.kubacki@inspection.gc.ca

CFIA Seeds Alert

Canadians are encouraged to connect with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) before sending seeds abroad.

As Canada's plant health regulator, the CFIA plays an important role in making sure seeds from Canada meet internationally agreed upon regulations. There have been 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. Not meeting requirements has consequences such as the destination country destroying the seeds and issuing 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. CFIA 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)

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Harrowsmith magazine is offering a 25% discount to Ontario Master Gardeners in recognition of the 2024 Master Gardeners Conference.





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Special Annex

2024 MGOI Conference Reflections

The overwhelming consensus is that the 2024 MGOI Ontario wide conference, April 26th & 27th, was a huge success. The editor would like to thank everyone who supplied stories, notes and pictures; the enthusiasm was catching (I didn't attend the conference).

All who reported wished to thank the organizers for an unforgettable conference that was very well organized. Everyone had accolades for the opening and closing speakers, Paul Zammit and Kevin Kavanagh respectively. Friday's events proved very popular – Sean James hands-on Rain Garden workshop, Darrell Bley's Tree and Shrub Identification tour of the Guelph Arboretum, and Kevin Kavanagh's bird friendly habitat tour of the Arboretum. *Both photos courtesy of Claudette Sims.*



Here is a run down from groups who attended.



Grey County Master Gardeners

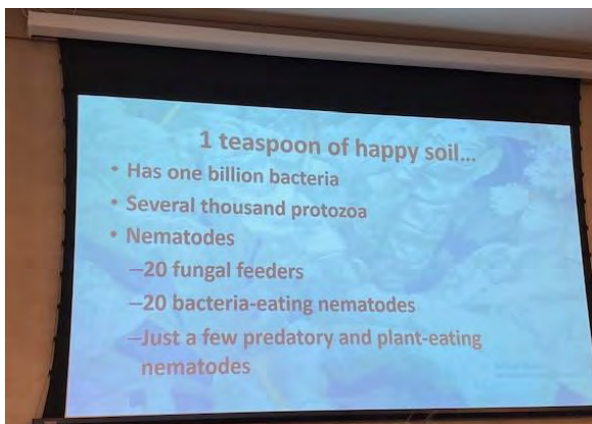
Memories in Pictures



Grey County poster board



Grey County MGs with Paul Zammit, centre after his inspiring presentation



A slide from a presentation that particularly resonated with us



Jenna Vandermey and Paul Zammit at the conference following Paul's fantastic presentation



Reflections from Kate Sault, Director of Education

Sean James Rain Garden Workshop



Sean James



Darrell Bley's Tour of the Guelph Arboretum



Kevin Kavanagh's Bird Tour



Tour Leader Kevin Kavanagh

Grand Erie Master Gardeners (GEMG)

While we are a small group of only 13 members, two of whom joined only a couple of months ago, we had a great representation with 8 of our members attending the conference. Our coordinator, Lynne Goulet-Smith, worked hard behind the scenes and also introduced Kevin Kavanagh to the audience before his closing speech. Kevin is a GEMG member and he not only ran the Gardening for Birds workshop at the Guelph Arboretum, but also gave the inspirational conference closing speech on Saturday. Our other attendees included Kim Hutten, Anne Saunders, Carolyn Bennett, Marilyn Park, Nancy Lee-Colibaba and Laura Rodger. We had a fabulous time and would like to thank the MGOI members who worked so hard to make this event happen.



From left to right: Marilyn Park, Nancy Lee-Colibaba, Anne Saunders, Lynne Goulet-Smith, Kimberly Hutten, Carolyn Bennett





GEMGs display table



Laura Rodger (aka Beechtree) won third place in the Kahoot



Kevin Kavanagh guiding the Gardening for Birds Workshop at the Guelph Arboretum



Lynne Goulet-Smith introducing Kevin Kavanagh



Kevin Kavanagh giving the closing speech of the conference



MGOC (Master Gardeners of Ottawa-Carleton)

A strong contingent of Master Gardeners from MGOC attended the 2024 Master Gardener Conference in Guelph and diligently pooled their notes from the various sessions into a condensed report. Anyone interested in a copy of this report is welcome to reach out to our Coordinator. According to all in attendance, it was a big success!



London Middlesex Master Gardeners

Several LMMG members attended the conference. The group was delighted to win a prize for making the best display, which was compiled by the Conference Display Committee (Rhonda Persichilli, Nancy Abra, Pam Bushell and graphic artists Heather O'Shea and Beth Warner).



Educational poster on oak identification, used in the conference display



LMMG display for the MGOC conference

Haliburton County Master Gardeners

Carolyn Langdon, Haliburton Coordinator, polled the 6 members from the Haliburton County Master Gardeners who attended the MGOI conference. Here are some of their comments:

I was fortunate enough to participate in all three outdoor workshops and was delighted by the information I learned from each presenter. All were clearly experts in their respective fields. The length and depth of each workshop was perfect. Of course, the literal hands-on experience of the rain garden construction was invaluable... nothing quite like learning by doing!

The keynote post-dinner speaker was very entertaining and well informed. An excellent choice!

It was difficult choosing between the indoor sessions as I would have loved to hear every one of them. I was very impressed with the attention to detail by the organizers of the conference. Congratulations to everyone involved! - Rita

Having all the outdoor activities on one day (and the weather cooperated beautifully) was an excellent idea. Perhaps a wine & cheese social on Friday before dinner with lots of time to look at all the displays while networking would work? All the speakers were right into the theme and excellent. I love Kahoot. Great location. - Pauline

I thoroughly enjoyed the 2024 MGOI Conference. It was well organized, with very informative and entertaining sessions. There were lots of opportunities to speak with other MGs and to learn from other chapters. Allowing us travel time on the Friday morning and packing the rest of the day with sessions and events was excellent, and being able to stay at the venue hotel made logistics very easy. There was a good variety of sessions, and I appreciated the general theme. Great job organizers! – Shelley



HCMGs Info Table



Guelph Arboretum walk with Darrell Bley



Halton Master Gardeners

Halton group - 2024 attendees



*Top row L to R, Kate Sault, Lynn Courtney, Allyn Walsh, Harette Henry, Christine Scheewe, Patty King, Janet Hughes-Mackey, Bev Wagar
Bottom row L to R, Alice Hwang, Hedia Balkhi, Giuliana Casimirri, Claudette Sims*

The general consensus from the group was that the event was well planned and managed, especially considering it took place in more than one location. The hands-on offsite tours were a great experience and the busing to and from the Arboretum went smoothly. The conference speakers and topics were well presented, relevant and informative. The accommodations were comfortable for those who stayed overnight. The food was excellent. A great time was had by all!

Some of the important projects members of our group have worked on over the past year were displayed at the event.

The Canadian Coalition for Invasive Plant Regulation, <https://ccipr.ca/>.

The Canadian Coalition for Invasive Plant Regulation – CCIPR.ca – is a group of concerned individuals who are working to protect our environment, economy and public health from invasive plant species. The CCIPR believes that improving legislation and oversight, building a knowledge base, and providing education and awareness programs can all form the basis of a successful strategy to safeguard living creatures and our natural world from the devastating damage caused by invasive plants.

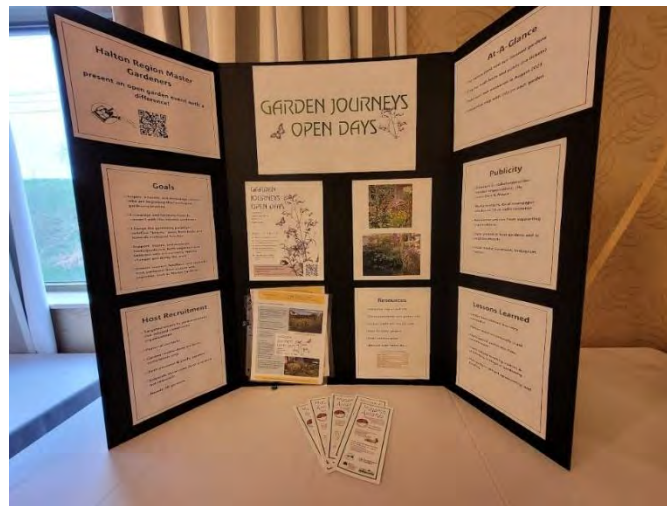
The ornamental/horticultural industry has been identified as the primary pathway for the introduction of non-native invasive plants. Canada must now act on this knowledge and develop a more comprehensive strategy to prevent the introduction and spread of invasive species through nurseries, the pet/aquarium trade, and e-commerce channels.





This initiative was spearheaded by Cathy Kavassalis and Claudette Sims (both members of the Halton group). The posters above were created to help spread the word. To read more on this important initiative go to <https://ccipr.ca/> or search for the Canadian Coalition for Invasive Plant Regulation (CCIPR) group on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1503444570040194>).

Garden Journeys Open Days, a special open-gardens event in Hamilton, presented by Halton Region Master Gardeners in 2023.



Garden Journeys Open Days was a new open-gardens event that took place in Hamilton over two weekends in mid-August 2023. It was initiated by two members of the Halton group, Bev Wagar and Allyn Walsh.

Goals identified early in the planning process for this event were to bring together and build community for gardeners, with a focus on native plants, thereby supporting biodiversity and sustainability. Showing examples of sustainable, biodiverse gardens at various stages of development was also meant to inform the public that the gardening journey from conventional to ecological can start with small steps.

Most of the fifty gardens listed were residential. Hosts, usually the gardeners, were on hand during open hours to answer questions and give informal tours. Nearly all hosts mentioned how much they enjoyed meeting other gardeners.



New Promotional Poster

A new promotional poster for Master Gardeners of Ontario, created by Halton members Hedia Balkhi and Claudette Sims.



L to R, Hedia Balkhi and Claudette Sims

Simcoe County Master Gardeners

Simcoe County Master Gardener Conference attendees included: Christine March, Cathy Krar, Inez Marckini, Scott McIntaggart, Cynthia Lauer, Joan Sundeen, and Pat Scott. Seven SCMGs joined about 125 Master Gardener colleagues from across Ontario to participate in the MGOI conference.

To say the conference was a success would be an understatement. The entire event was incredibly well organized with an extremely impressive line-up of speakers. The highlights for our group were:

- The guided walk with Darrell Bley where we developed our winter tree identification skills
- The woodland walk with Kevin Kavanagh where we learned how to borrow details of natural habitats to support native and migratory birds
- The soil presentation by Robert Pavlis where he discussed carbon in soil

Outstanding speakers, great food, pleasant surroundings, and the camaraderie of our fellow MGs made for an excellent conference!



The Simcoe County Table Poster



A bee enjoying the Cherry Blossoms



Darrell Bley led the Winter Tree ID walk



Peterborough & Area Master Gardeners Head West

by Anne Craig, PMG, East Region Director

In late April, seven Peterborough & Area Master Gardeners headed west to join the MGOI Conference in Guelph. The first joy was seeing how far along Spring was compared with home. It's also rumoured that some cars may have stopped at nurseries along the way to get a plant fix.

For most of us, this was our first opportunity to attend a Master Gardener Conference. It was both humbling and inspiring to see the work being accomplished by MG groups around the province. For a couple of us who are moderators on the MGOI Facebook page, it was a chance to meet, in person for the first time, people with whom we have become close to online.

Peterborough & Area Master Gardeners are currently developing a strategic plan that will guide us in years to come. The conference presentations reinforced many of the themes that are emerging in our planning process. It was great to see so many presentations that encouraged incorporating native plants in gardens and that viewed home gardens as part of a wider ecosystem.

We came home feeling a bit tired but invigorated and inspired. The conference reinforced the role that MGs can play and the strength of the MG organizations across the province.



Kevin Kavanagh leading the Bird Tour



Peterborough MGs at the conference – from left to right – Silvia Strobl, Emma Murphy, Anne Craig, Anne Trudel-Inglis, Mary-Jane Pilgrim, Margaret Higgins, Grant Murphy



Lanark County Master Gardeners

Thanks for organizing the MG Conference in Guelph. The bus tours, speakers, and food were all exceptional!



The picture of the aspen tree was taken at the Arboretum



Attending from Lanark County were, L-R, Gerda Franssen, Kathleen Lang and Judy Wall

Tri-County Master Gardeners

Six members of Tri-County Master Gardeners attended the MGOI conference in Guelph. It was an excellent conference and the speakers were informative and engaging. On Friday the weather was perfect for outdoor education at the Arboretum. Two of our members enjoyed the walks with Darrell Bley on tree ID and Kevin Kavanaugh on attracting birds.

TCMGs would like to give a special shout out to our very own Dianne Wheler who worked tirelessly at the conference putting together the swag bags, organizing the group displays, the silent auction, the door prizes and many other tasks behind the scenes.



Darrel Bley, left, at the Guelph Arboretum with Don Farwell

