



## Oakville Horticultural Society June 2019

**Date:**

June Monthly Meeting and Flower Show

June 10, 2019

**Location:**

Joshua Creek Heritage Art Centre 1086 Burnhamthorpe Rd.

**Set-up Volunteers:**

**Hospitality Volunteers:**

**Flower Show Clerks:**

Florenda Tingle and Rob Welsh



### Annual Strawberry Shortcake Social

Please join us for the  
June Oakville Horticultural Meeting  
to be held on June 10, 2019 at  
Joshua Creek Heritage Art Centre.

Our Scholarship Recipient will be one of our guest speakers.

Following her presentation, we will commence the meeting  
followed by the Strawberry Social.

**Please bring a fork and a mug.**

### Garden Experts to Answer Your Gardening Questions



**Master  
Gardener's  
Panel**



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Early June has arrived and with it, almost everything a gardener could wish for. After a long, drawn out transition from winter to spring, I've discovered that some trees, shrubs and perennials really love this cool and rainy weather. And I am finally getting to doing some divisions, which will find a home somewhere – maybe in reserve for next year's plant sale.



And speaking of Plant Sales, our 2019 event was a resounding success! Many thanks to co-chairs Sheelagh and Trish for their vision and organizing talents, and all the volunteers who worked in advance and on the day itself to ensure that this important fund-raiser went above and beyond our expectations.

Our plants depots did a great job – thanks Marie, and Margaret! – the new location was great, and the addition of a Green Elephant Table was inspired. I am proud to say that we offered more variety, and at better prices, than many nurseries and pop-up outlets in the area. We met some very enthusiastic new and experienced gardeners and had almost nothing left for sale by 11:00 - the final numbers will be shared at our meeting on June 10<sup>th</sup>. Congratulations to everyone who was involved and thanks for all your good spirits and willing help.

Other Society initiatives are also underway. The Junior Gardeners are up and running with a full complement of six+ year old garden enthusiasts avidly following Helen's expert advice. Elsewhere, and with thanks to Florenda's leadership, work teams are gathering at the Anderson Parkette to clean up and begin restoring the beds there. And finally, we expect to announce the winner of the OHS graduate studies Scholarship Award for the third year since it was introduced in 2017. Spring is certainly a busy season for us!

Our next 'big thing' is the Garden Tour coming up on June 23<sup>rd</sup>. Next to the Plant Sale, this is one of our most important fund-raising activities and a great way to educate and reach out to the community. Florenda, Sheelagh and I have been anxiously monitoring developments. The tickets are at the outlets, and last-minute visits to the 8 lovely and unique gardens are being scheduled. Now we just need to get our volunteers organized. There is still room for a few hosts, if you haven't had a chance to sign up yet. Just write to me at paulaclayton2015@bell.net. And please be sure to tell your family, friends and neighbours all about this not-to-be-missed tour.

We're back at Joshua Creek Heritage Art Centre for our next meeting on June 10<sup>th</sup>. We have our expert panel of Master Gardeners coming in to answer all your gardening questions. This has become an annual tradition and many of you look forward to hearing their advice and solutions every spring. As there should be lots of lovely specimens to bring in from your gardens, we want to see what you're most proud of. It is time to Show and Tell! We're also expecting to see lots of entries in the Design categories. So, be sure to attend for everything the June meeting has to offer, including our fourth annual Strawberry Social! Please bring a fork.

Wishing you many happy hours in your gardens.....

Paula



## FOREST BATHING - SHINRIN YOKU

Visit Conservation Halton website to find out what it is

<https://www.conservationhalton.ca/event-details?>

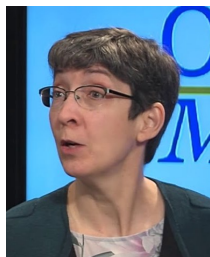


### David Marshall



David has been gardening for over 75 years, since as a small boy in wartime England he helped (?) his father and grandfather in their big garden and greenhouse. He has been a member of Halton Master Gardeners for 25 years and is a member of Oakville and Bronte Horticultural Societies. He has a Diploma in Horticulture from the University of Guelph, but says that he learned much more from his father and grandfather. He has made more gardening mistakes than most people, but claims that is because he has been at it longer!

### Catherine Kavassalis



Catherine Kavassalis is a passionate gardener and conservationist. A scientist, educator and inspirational speaker, Catherine endeavours to stimulate interest and awe in the living world. She is a member of the Halton Master Gardener group, the Past President of Oakville Horticultural Society and a former member of the Board of Directors for the Royal Botanical Gardens. Catherine loves to garden and has had her own eclectic organic garden featured on several tours.

### Lorne Sparrow



Lorne grew up on a farm in Manitoba. He retired after a 35 year career in Electrical Control Technology. He has been a member of the Halton Master Gardeners for over 25 years, a member of Bronte Horticultural Society for over 25 years and a member of the Hamilton & Burlington Rose Society for over 25 years. He was awarded the 25 year Volunteer Service award. Four years ago, Lorne moved into an apartment building and is currently learning the challenges of 14<sup>th</sup> floor balcony gardening .

## Congratulations Mary Rose!

It was a group effort led by Mary Rose at the 2019 District 6 AGM held April 27; Oakville won first place, best special exhibit entry class. Great job!



Photographs attributed to:  
VERONICA HEIDERICH





The 2019 plant sale was a great success! Our new location at Glen Abbey United Church was outstanding. Thanks to the GAUC community and especially Pat Thompson for welcoming us and all her efforts to make things run smoothly and help promote the sale.

Thanks also to McDonald's Iroquois Ridge and VIVA Oakville Retirement Community for providing the coffee and goodies to keep our volunteers' energy up. Your support was much appreciated. Of course, there couldn't be a plant sale without the hard work of the OHS members who made everything fall into place. For all the planning and promotion, plant preparation and donations, transporting, helping buyers on the day, tallying the cash, running the new Green Elephant sale and keeping us all in snacks, THANK YOU!"

more society news (continued)...



**Congratulations!**  
**Well done!**

Photographs attributed to:  
**TRISH BOLTON**





# Secret Gardens Of Oakville

## 2019 Tour

Sunday, June 23  
11 am to 4 pm

Tour some of Oakville's outstanding gardens. This self-guided adventure is sure to inspire and delight both new and experienced gardeners alike.

Tickets \$15 or 2 for \$25 (Cash Only Please)

Available at our May 18th Plant Sale, New location

Glen Abbey United Church, 1469 Nottinghill Gate. ( 8:30-11:00AM )  
or at the following outlets:

- |                           |                                      |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| - Bulow Garden Centres    | 370 South Service Rd. West, Oakville |
|                           | 2667 Lakeshore Rd. West, Mississauga |
| - Cudmore's Garden Centre | 3171 Lakeshore Rd. West, Bronte      |
| - True Flowers            | 118 Lakeshore Rd. West               |



Our next 'big thing' is the Garden Tour coming up on June 23<sup>rd</sup>. We need more volunteers to help us on that Sunday. There is still room for a few hosts. If you haven't had a chance to sign up yet, please let Paula know by contacting her by email [paulaclayton2015@bell.net](mailto:paulaclayton2015@bell.net) or at our next meeting.







## GMO!

There I've said it! I know that I am stepping into a minefield, because very diverse and strong views are held about Genetically Modified Organisms, and truth to tell I have mixed feelings about the subject.

As it relates to agriculture, GM involves modifying the DNA of a plant and its resulting seeds by inserting genes from another plant (usually), in order to give it some characteristic which it did not have previously.

I say usually because the transfer could involve a virus, or a bacterium, or a gene from something other than a plant. The characteristic could be resistance to insects, disease, drought, freezing, increased yield, nutritional value, and so on. There is little doubt that these are all desirable changes, but the fear is that there could also be unintended longer term consequences.

However, there is a general consensus in organizations such as the American Medical Association, The Royal society of Medicine, The World health Organization, and National Academy of Science, that food from GM crops poses no greater danger to human health than food from conventional sources.

Other organizations such as the Organic Consumers Organization, the Union of Concerned Scientists, and the Consumers Association believe that the long term consequences such as the contamination of adjacent crops, the development of super bugs and diseases, the control of the food supply by companies that sell GMO seeds such as Monsanto, (now owned by Bayer), and the impartiality of regulatory organizations, outweigh the benefits. Others object to GM on ethical grounds, such as scientists playing God, patenting of life forms, and intellectual property rights.

Much has been written about Monsanto and others patenting seeds and forbidding farmers from saving seeds for the next year. However, many of the crops which are GM such as corn, cotton, canola, and soybean, were previously grown from hybrid seeds which could not be saved anyway because the seed would not come true. Other crops for which a GM license has been issued include rapeseed, potatoes, rice, sugar beet, alfalfa, squash, tomatoes, roses, apples, plums and tobacco, (the first crop to be licensed, in 1982) However some of these are not grown in North America, or only in very limited quantities. The first GM food product to be licensed was the Flavr Savr tomato, which had a long shelf life, in 1994.

My own view on GM foods is that the benefits outweigh the risks, so long as licensing is done on an individual crop basis and is only done after very careful study, and that we proceed slowly with strict regulation.

Get ready for clean up but not too much. Leave some seeds and shelter for birds and insects.

Happy gardening,  
David Marshall.



## Oakville Newcomers and Our Members in Action



On May 16 Helen Stephenson, our Junior Garden Program lead, led a talk for the Oakville Newcomers Club on how to plant vegetables and start perennial gardens. 11 enthusiastic women came out to the Anderson Parkette to learn how to easily start a perennial bed and incorporate the many wonderful native plants that Halton has to offer. The group, eager to get their hands dirty, started some of the clean up that was badly needed after many long months of construction along Rebecca Road. The

group then drove to the junior garden on Cornwall Road and learned how to grow their own vegetables. It was a great afternoon where lots of information, ideas and love of plants was shared.

**THANK YOU**  
**Volunteers!**  
We couldn't do it without you



Seven people showed up Saturday morning to help with the spring clean-up at the Anderson Parkette. We also planted some left over native plants from the plant sale. Here's a photo of our hard working crew.

**Help  
Wanted**  
**Volunteers Needed!**

We are looking for summer help volunteers to maintain the parkette. At our next meeting, a sign-up sheet will be passed around, and we encourage you to consider donating a few hours to this worthwhile project.





July 19 - 21, 2019

Come to the Deep South Where Everything Grows!

Come celebrate with us at the **113th Convention**  
of the  
**Ontario Horticultural Association**



St. Clair Centre of the Arts  
201 Riverside Drive West  
Windsor, ON N9A 5K4



Registration is NOW OPEN

Download the Registration Form today!!!

For more information, please visit:

<https://gardenontario.org/convention/>

more society news...

**"Volunteering is the ultimate exercise in democracy.  
You vote in elections once a year, but when you volunteer,  
you vote every day about the kind of community you want to live in."**





A couple of years ago we, that is my husband and I, decided to travel to the UK on the Queen Mary 2. It was a wonderful trip good food, plenty to do, and entertainment. On the ship is the "largest floating library" with wood paneling, shelves with glass fronts and comfortable seating. I spent a lot of time there as they had a fairly large section on gardens and gardening. That is when I found the Royal Horticultural Society book "What Plant Where Encyclopedia". This was designed for British gardens but on returning home I found Amazon had a Canadian edition which I promptly bought (\$40). OK a bit expensive but so very useful.

The book is divided into sections:

Gardens in the Sun includes sub divisions for clay soil and sandy soils. Focus is on roses, iris, water lilies, clematis, dahlias, tomatoes, sedums and grasses and sedges. There is discussion on roof and terrace gardens, rock gardens, hedges and much more.

Gardens in the Shade is again divided into clay and sandy soils with the focus plants being hostas, begonias, leafy greens, azaleas and rhododendrons and ferns. There is discussion on a variety of subjects but included are ponds, hedges, rock gardens and exposed sites.

The next section deals with Plants for Special effects, for example, formal, cottage, Asian etc.

The book then moves on to Plants for Seasonal Interest: spring plantings, trees for blossom, flowers for containers, ornamental fruit, winter gardens and more.

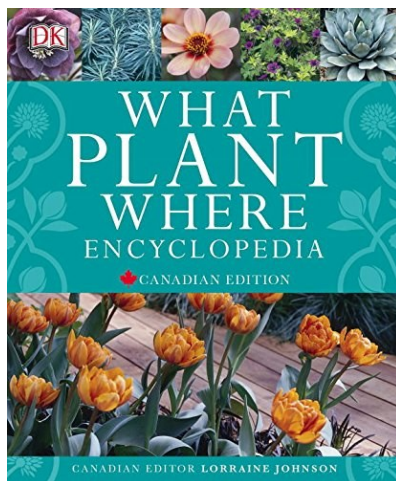
The next section reveals Plants for Colour and Scent and followed with Plants for Shape and Texture.

The final section deals with Plants for Garden Problems which includes sun-baked areas, waterlogged sites, banks and slopes, weed-suppressing ground cover, allergy sufferers plantings and pest-proof plants. Of course one essential section is on slugs and another is on rabbits and deer. Very useful.

With each plant suggested there is a picture (a must for me), a small description, name of plant, key features, plant dimensions as well as symbols for sun preference, zone, moist or well drained soil, whether it is toxic and whether acid soil is preferred.

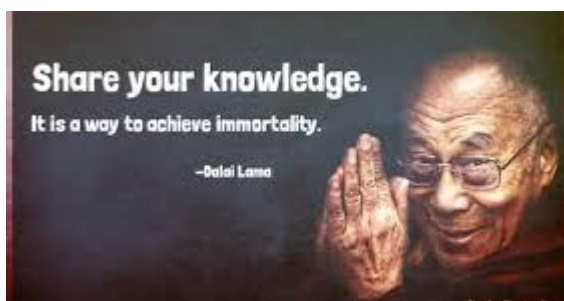
With this book it is much easier to decide on the next purchase for the garden. I use it all the time especially when I need a new plant to fill a space or if I am planning a new section to the garden. In the winter I can update my garden map with its help, and of course the pictures give inspiration for the new season.

Title:What Plant Where EncyclopediaFormat:HardcoverDimensions:400 pages, 11.13 × 9.4 × 1.5  
inPublished:April 7, 2015Publisher:DKLanguage:English The following ISBNs are associated with this title:ISBN - 10:1553632281 ISBN - 13:9781553632283



from the desk of joanne fallowfield

Etobicoke Hort does not sell these plants at our plant sale: vinca, lily of the valley, privet, goutweed, Manitoba maple, Norway maple, English ivy, glossy buckthorn, Russian olive, sweet woodruff. This list is from the TRCA.





## How ethically does your garden grow?

It's harder than it seems to be a responsible steward of the land, when high-minded theory turns to spades in the ground. So what's a simple gardener to do? Liz Primeau explores the question in her books. Liz Primeau's books include *Front Yard Gardens: Growing More Than Grass*, *My Natural History* and *In Pursuit of Garlic: An Intimate Look at the Divinely Odorous Bulb*. She is also the founding editor of *Canadian Gardening* magazine and the former host of *Canadian Gardening Television*.

Now that spring has finally crept over the windowsill, my garden is lifting my spirits again. The daffodils in the front garden, which I started 27 years ago, when all my neighbours complied with an unwritten rule that every house have a perfect lawn, are starting to fade, but hundreds of tulips are showing pink, red, yellow, orange, purple – almost a rainbow. The pink and mauve rhododendrons are pregnant with buds. Large patches of moss phlox and aubretia are breaking open in blue and purple beside the gravel path that curves through the plantings. The air smells fresh, green and sweet, and slightly heavy with the perfume of dying hyacinth blooms. Beside the house, the wisteria on the arbour is sprouting green leaves, and the spring ephemerals – mayapple, Solomon's seal and trilliums – are maturing.

In the backyard, cooler and a little shadier, there's nary a blade of grass. It's older than the front and in spring is many shades of luscious green because it's mainly a summertime garden and its bloom comes later – sweet white phlox, native plants such as echinacea, bee balm and snakeroot, plus stately yucca, hydrangea bushes, volunteer plants such as orange poppies and blue forget-me-nots and ... well, my husband says it's a jungle, and the cats agree. So do the hummingbirds, bees and butterflies that visit, plus squirrels, raccoons, a few skunks and a lot of birds. I think they like it in the back because it's safer – no cars going by. The little fish in the pond at the end of the path aren't aware of the traffic and add to the promise of spring by excitedly darting about, ready to fulfill their biological destiny; in summer they're fatter and lazier, and lurk in the underwater plants, waiting for my husband to come down and toss in a treat.

The veggie peelings and eggshells, leaves and weeds in the two big wooden composters under an arbour near the pond have decayed nicely and the contents have thawed enough to be spread over the garden. It doesn't smell quite as deeply earthy as the manure pile on my uncle's farm, whose sweet yet raunchy odour I loved as a teenager. My uncle, who I helped in his garden and who became my garden mentor, teased me about it and called it my *Eau de Merde*. But once I was married and had my own garden, he happily loaded bushels of *Eau de Merde* into the trunk of the car so I could take it back to the city. The neighbours thought I was nuts, but it was the best compost in the world.

I'm acutely aware of how weather and insects and animals affect my little plot, and how important a good balance of nature is to any garden's success. Long ago, I learned that I need the ladybugs that eat the aphids that dine on the roses, and that worms keep the earth aerated even though they make unsightly bumps in the lawn.

As a gardener, I know that every organism lives on this planet with us, not for us, and I respect that, but it doesn't mean I always practice what I preach. I'll wager that most gardeners are the same – they think we make the right ethical choices because we're stewards of the land, working with nature to make the world more beautiful. But maybe we could do more. Because, when the spade hits the earth, what is an ethical gardener, anyway?

## Spring gardening guide: How to get your garden ready to grow

As someone whose life and livelihood have intersected with the natural world, I am, perhaps more than others, worried about the state of our planet – the one my grandchildren, and their children, will inherit. It seems like every day I read another story about forest fires and floods, hurricanes and typhoons. My son lives in California, and he's described to me how the fires burn out the vegetation, and then rains wash rocks down



## IDENTIFYING AND TACKLING INVASIVE PLANT SPECIES

### WORKSHOP

<https://www.conservationhalton.ca/events>



the mountainside, threatening everything in their path and leaving a barren landscape. Last week, the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) reported that three-quarters of the land on Earth (not to mention two-thirds of our water) has been altered by humans, and a million plant and animal species face extinction in the coming decades. Is it any wonder I'm in a state of despair?

Humans are not dinosaurs. A meteor hasn't struck the planet and changed our climate. We're sentient beings who have been warned, for decades, that we have to do something or we'll die. Maybe not tomorrow, but eventually.

## So what can a simple gardener do?

ears ago, I read Rachel Carson's Silent Spring and learned how monocultures such as big potato or canola farms, or even large expanses of lawn, create dysfunctional environments. They attract only the insects who like to eat that crop, and the others stay away in droves. Later I observed this in my own front yard, which was one big lawn. It was nice enough, but there were no crickets to greet me when I walked around from my floriferous back garden, which I'd been cultivating for years; no bees buzzing; no butterflies flitting. Even the cats ignored it, preferring to doze in the warm earth under the shrubs in the back.

I really wanted to get rid of this no-man's land, but my husband claimed he did his best thinking when mowing it on Sunday mornings. Then, to my good fortune, thousands of white grubs invaded and ate most of it. The "organic" lawn company we called said the only solution was a liberal dose of malathion, which would also kill every nematode and arthropod in the soil, and maybe us.

And so the front lawn became a garden, too – and we got rid of the power mower, an advantage for many reasons, not just because my Sunday mornings became a little quieter. In a couple of years, we took out the asphalt driveway and put in cobblestone. We did this mainly because I liked its cottagey look, but then I realized we'd put in an ecologically friendly, permeable surface.

My new front garden was a traffic-stopper as well as a conversation piece where I got to expound on my conversion to biodiversity to any passerby who would listen.

## Home & Design: How does your condo garden grow?

Ethical gardening means looking beyond your own backyard. It involves not our private property, but our shared spaces – and those spaces we seldom think about. Here's an example: In the eighties, when I took the GO train home from a job in downtown Toronto, the sloping embankment on the railway line leading west was a jumbled but pretty space filled with goldenrod and asters and other wildlings, plus garden escapees and garbage such as food wrappers, whose contents, I imagined, broke down into usable compost. I used to feast my eyes on that embankment and never let myself fall asleep until we were past it. But I'd overhear comments from my fellow passengers, such as: "Look at that mess. When is somebody going to clean it up and plant some grass?"

I wanted to challenge them: Yes, it could stand some garbage removal, but it could be a truly natural garden that brought bees and butterflies and birds. But they got their wish. It wasn't long before that plot became a sterile parade of company logos planted in boxwood and surrounded by grass.

Or how about this: Every time I fly into Pearson International Airport, I look with dismay at the acres of flat roofs below. These could all be green roofs, growing veggies or simply making green getaway spots for the



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for the workers at the same time as they cool the interiors in summer and insulate them in winter. Some eco-friendly businesses have green roofs that do this and more: They recycle rainwater for non-potable use in the building. The Royal York Hotel in Toronto has a green roof where the chef grows vegetables and raises bees. It's not surprising to learn many European countries are way ahead of us: In some parts of Germany, green roofs are the law, and subsidies are available for people who want to make a green roof. This is true in Chicago, as well. Why don't we do that here?

We need more citizens with dedication to follow through on ideas such as these, and that includes me. For a long time, I've looked with longing at the huge expanses of grass on a highway cloverleaf near me. How about putting in allotment gardens? I'd rent one, because my garden is filled with other plants. I suggested this to my local councillor once, and he allowed that it might be a good idea, but who would organize it? Another time, I persuaded someone at Mississauga City Hall to put in some native plants on a narrow strip of land near where I live between the highway sound barrier and the service road. For one summer, we had a small bed of wild roses and three native sugar maple trees on that strip, until an overly zealous groundskeeper whipper-snipped them down.

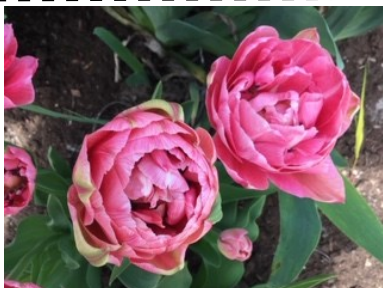
Unfortunately, I let it go. Nor did I do anything about the failure of a hydro right-of-way native planting that was petitioned for by a committee of neighbours, including me, but was scuppered by a vociferous group of NIMBYs. They said the "weeds" that would be planted – in other words, the shrubs and native plants – would irritate residents' allergies or even hide lurking thieves. They didn't care to hear that using native shrubs and trees or sun-loving wildflowers would not only make this mowed-clean corridor more attractive, it would take a giant leap toward biodiversity, attracting more birds and bees and a variety of insects. The project had the co-operation of the landscape department of the hydro company, but the complainers wore them down.

Weeds are an interesting subject. Gardeners, after all, know there is no plant category officially named weeds. Lawn lovers hate clover for reasons that escape me. Just because it's not grass? Frankly, I think clover is underrated: It grows low and flat, like turf, but you can mow it if you must, and unlike grass, it stays green all summer without gallons of water. Its insignificant white flowers sweetly scent the summer evening air. Clover is also environmentally friendly: Because it's a legume and has a symbiotic relationship with micro-organisms in the soil, it can utilize the nitrogen in the atmosphere and doesn't need fertilizer. That's why farmers sometimes use it a cover crop to be plowed into the soil.

We don't appreciate a lot of plants we consider weeds: Every spring, freshly harvested dandelion greens show up on my greengrocer's shelf. A whole hillside of dandelion flowers can look spectacular, although they'd take over the world if they could. A friend of mine is of the opinion that some biologist is missing a big opportunity with dandelions: Hybridize and promote them properly, she says, and they could become the next big border perennial. Purslane, or portulaca, is listed by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs as a weed, but it's long been considered a food by other cultures. I know a couple of gardeners who sauté it in butter for supper, or toss it in a salad.

We also must reconsider the wholesale spraying of what we think of as invasive weeds. For example, eradicating milkweed along highways has had a nasty effect on the monarch butterfly population, which lays its eggs on that plant.

And here's where my superior attitude about being an ethical gardener raises a dilemma. I've been known to go to great lengths to eradicate the pretty but invasive blue campanula that's taking over my garden, painstakingly painting the leaves with glyphosate to kill it. It takes hours and results in more hours of back pain, and usually the campanula gets back at me by regrowing. Glyphosate may seem like a less



Is it a peony or a tulip - that is the question???



trouble some weed killer than most, but the World Health Organization has strongly suggested it may be a carcinogen, and since 2018 the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has been studying it for potential health risks. I think peaceful co-existence might be the route to take with this little devil, digging it out where it becomes too troublesome. Either way, it's going to result in a backache.

I've used worse pest killers than glyphosate. The day I discovered a huge and frighteningly ugly tomato hornworm decimating my tomato plants, I got out the Raid. The beast started to writhe in distress, shaking the plant back and forth. I was horrified, but the Raid didn't kill it. I screamed for my husband to bring the shovel. He did, and smashed that beast dead and bleeding green goo all over the pathway. I felt terrible: What right did I have to kill this poor thing, even though it scared the daylights out of me? He was just trying to survive so he could evolve into the large and beautiful sphinx moth he would have become, pollinating all kinds of plants for miles around.

A more serious ethical issue might be this: In my quest for special plants for my garden, I have been buying from a nursery in Beamsville, Ont. I drive down there, pick out the plants I want and then have the nursery deliver them. That's two return trips to Niagara. What kind of carbon footprint is that? Am I willing to give up unusual plants for more common ones available closer to home?

Considering what our species is facing, the answer to this has to be yes. Yes, also, to learning to live with insects and the plants we consider weeds. It's time that gardeners realize deep in their guts that humans are occupants of the world, not the rulers of it. It's time that all gardening choices must be ethical.

### First Person: Why did the city stop me from tapping my own maple tree?

In recent years, I've developed a weird feeling about my garden that goes beyond thinking of it as a canvas for my creative instincts, where I can try to grow a meadow or design a Sissinghurst-style white garden (neither worked, for what it's worth). It's become more than a haven where I can have a wee cry or a serious weep when something awful happens. It's not just a place to smell nature and calm my anxieties, or enjoy happy hour with friends. It's been all those things to me, as well as a workout room where I've raised a lot of sweat. But it's become a friend, or, more to the point, a community of friends I respect for what they do for my landscape. Maybe not so much the Japanese beetle, who I encourage to drown by offering a pail of water, or the red lily beetle, which suffers a fate I won't describe if I see them. I don't see much of them any more because they've killed the lilies. I do love the earthworms and feel terrible if I mistakenly slice one in two with my trowel. But not everyone can be your friend.

People look askance when I talk like this, and especially when I describe as beautiful the resident skunk, who lives under our neighbour's deck. But he is beautiful, with a huge plume of a fluffy tail that he hasn't so far raised. All of us give him plenty of space, but he's a shy guy and avoids us, too.

I'm often angry with the squirrels, who consider a certain tiny bit of tender green stem just behind the tulip flower to be the tastiest part and aren't against biting off the flower to get it. I yell and throw stones at them for this, but they just stare at me insolently. Then I chase them, but they're faster than me and, I suspect, smarter. Certainly the raccoons are – if they had an opposable thumb, I suspect they could rule the world.

The point is, I like these creatures. Nature is in my blood, and no matter how weird my feelings may seem about the wildlife kingdom in my backyard they may be perfectly normal. There's a name for it, if you can believe it: biophilia, coined by Erich Fromm to describe the connections humans subconsciously seek with other life forms. I thought my connection to gardening came from being descended from generations of farmers.





Yes, of course, I had to be an ethical gardener, someone who respects insects and animals for what they do to maintain nature's natural cycles, and practises diversity in her own garden. Someone who conserves and recycles in ways her grandfather and uncles, all farmers, did.

But deep down, I know that we need more than a loose connection of gardeners to save the world. We need to be united in our awareness and our quest.

My son just spent a week here at home and told me that those barren mountainsides near him in California are growing back. They look absolutely beautiful covered with bright new green growth, he said. It made me think of how nature survives somehow, some way, just maybe in a different guise. It may have taken eons, but the climate change that killed off the dinosaurs eventually introduced other species, including us. We may now be heading down a similar path, but we've been well warned. We've been given a map. Do we have the sense to use it?

As I write this, it's afternoon, one of the first beautiful days of the spring. Outside I can hear the birds chirping as they vie for places at our feeder, and the scent of the trees and the early blooms is wafting through the window, luring me. I think I'm going to turn off my computer and go outside.

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**BREAKING:**

**GREAT NEWS**

DOUG FORD'S ATTEMPT TO KILL THE 50 MILLION TREE PROGRAM HAS FAILED.

LAST MONTH, THE CONSERVATIVE BUDGET CUT SUPPORT FOR TREE PLANTING. THAT LEFT 7.5 MILLION SAPLINGS IN LIMBO. THE BABY TREES WERE ALREADY WAITING IN NURSERIES, AND WOULD HAVE TO BE DESTROYED.

THE PROGRAM WILL NOW GET FEDERAL FUNDING TO PLANT 10 MILLION TREES OVER THE NEXT FOUR YEARS.

**PASS THIS ON IF YOU AGREE CANADA NEEDS MORE TREES, NOT LESS**



June 10	<b>Monthly Meeting at Joshua Creek Heritage Art Centre</b>
	<b>Monthly meeting will be held at the Joshua Creek Heritage Art Centre, 1086 Burnhamthorpe Road East . Doors open at 6:30 pm, meeting commences at 7:30 pm.</b>
June 15	<b>Grand Durand Garden Tour</b>
	10:00 am - 4:00 pm Location: Durand Neighbourhood Hamilton ON 186 1/2 Duke Street Tour 11 private and 2 public gardens in the Historic Southwest Durand Neighbourhood Hamilton ON  Tickets are \$25.00 in advance and go on sale May 1. For Ticket Information and Tour Details – <a href="http://www.durandna.com">www.durandna.com</a> or <a href="mailto:chairgdt2019@gmail.com">chairgdt2019@gmail.com</a>
June 23	<b>Oakville Horticultural Society Secret Garden Tour</b>
	<b>Sunday, June 23<sup>rd</sup> 11:00 am - 4:00 pm a self-guided tour of our lovely gardens. Tickets are \$15.00 each, or 2 for \$25.00 Rain or shine join us for a wonderful day visiting the Gardens of Oakville! For more information, please refer to our web site: <a href="http://www.oakvillehort.org">www.oakvillehort.org</a></b>
June 25	<b>RBG Volunteer Special Garden Tour</b>
	Features gardens in Paris, Cambridge and Copetown, Tickets \$12. For more information, please contact <a href="http://www.rbg.ca">www.rbg.ca</a>
July 6	<b>Niagara-on-the-Lake Horticultural Society Annual Garden Tour</b>
	Saturday July 6 10:00 am - 5:00 pm for more information please visit: <a href="http://www.notlhortsociety.com/garden-tour">www.notlhortsociety.com/garden-tour</a>
July 7	<b>The Secret Gardens of Milton 2019</b>
	Sunday July 7 10:00 am - 5:00 pm for more information please visit: <a href="http://www.miltonhortsociety.com/">www.miltonhortsociety.com/</a>
July 14	<b>Burlington Area Garden Club 2019 Garden Tour</b>
	Sunday July 14 10:00 am - 4:00 pm for more information please visit: Facebook: <a href="https://www.facebook.com/burlingtonareagardenclub/?eid=ARAXnReZUcHzWoYQXD9W4SVv9bfBXdPHNq0VhKkyxyce5prNQgGchnpDhK76kDi5WyBbkR8MCG9_9c1v">https://www.facebook.com/burlingtonareagardenclub/?eid=ARAXnReZUcHzWoYQXD9W4SVv9bfBXdPHNq0VhKkyxyce5prNQgGchnpDhK76kDi5WyBbkR8MCG9_9c1v</a>
July 19 - 21	<b>2019 Annual OHS Convention</b>
	Come to the Deep South Where Everything Grows. Come celebrate with us at the 113th Convention of the Ontario Horticultural Association. For more information, please refer to: <a href="https://gardenontario.org/convention/">https://gardenontario.org/convention/</a>
September 9	<b>Monthly Meeting at Joshua Creek Heritage Art Centre</b>
	<b>Monthly meeting will be held at the Joshua Creek Heritage Art Centre, 1086 Burnhamthorpe Road East . Doors open at 6:30 pm, meeting commences at 7:30 pm.</b>



**Please bring a fork and a mug.**

