



Oakville Horticultural Society November 2020

November Monthly Virtual Meeting

Date:

November 9, 2020

Location:

Set-up Volunteers:

Hospitality Volunteers:

Flower Show Clerks:

The Oakville Horticultural once again will be holding its Monthly Meeting on line - via Zoom - on November 9th. This is of course due to on-going challenges of COVID-19. The meeting will commence at 7:30, however, you should get logged on 5 to 10 minutes beforehand in case you encounter any challenges. Our guest speaker will be Dan Cooper.



Remembrance Day

11 NOVEMBER

In Flanders Fields

poem by Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae, 3 May 1915

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie,
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

lest we forget

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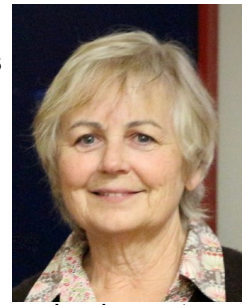
Junior Garden:

Helen Stephenson
juniors.ohs@oakvillehort.org

Website:

<http://www.oakvillehort.org>

Here we are in mid-autumn, enjoying all the bounty of the season. Local produce is abundant, and it has been a splendid year for fall colour. I'm hoping we get a few more weeks of lovely weather. I am also watching the overnight temperatures to calculate the number of days left to get all of my outdoor prewinter chores done. After all, we gardeners want to stretch our outdoor time as long as we can!



We are continuing to hold our meetings using Zoom, and although our attendance numbers are improving, we would like your feedback to find out how we can do even better. If you have not completed our most recent survey, please do that now, so we can implement your suggestions. And do plan to connect with us on November 9th. Look below for this month's door prize – something that every gardener can use, especially at this time of year!

While we are still unable to predict when planning can begin for our usual programs – Fun with Flowers, Plant Sale, Junior Gardeners, and the Garden Tour - there are some things that we can still do. We plan to increase the tree canopy in Oakville. Once again, it is a tulip tree, and we arranged for a suitable spot at Wellspring on Sixth Line. Another OHS constant is the newsletter – packed with interesting articles and advice. If you have photos or stories to share, please get in touch. We want the newsletter to truly reflect our members' interests and talents.

Fall is typically the time for taking stock and looking ahead, so please remember to renew your membership this month. You will be signing up for another year of friendly gardening exchanges, fun volunteer activities and important horticultural learning.

As we approach our year end, we must prepare an annual report and ensure that there is leadership continuity going into 2021. On that note, I am pleased to say that most, if not all the members of the current executive have agreed to serve for another year. Of course, anyone may present themselves for any one of the positions. If you are interested in joining us as a Director, for instance, your responsibilities would include attending and providing valuable input at the executive meetings on the third Monday of every month. This is interesting and satisfying work – and the support of the rest of the Executive ensures that the overall mandate of the Society is met and even exceeded. Because we are not permitted to meet in person, we will not be having our usual swearing in of the executive – rather the positions will be appointed until such time as we are able to conduct an AGM.

The November meeting promises to be quite interesting. Dan Cooper will be talking to us about the exotic flowers of Southeast Asia – just the thing for our vicarious enjoyment!

Until then, I'll be in the garden! Paula



Dan Cooper has been a Master Gardener for over 20 years and is the co-author of *Gardening from a Hammock*, a book on low-maintenance gardening. An avid world traveler, Dan is a published travel writer and photographer who has visited, written about and photographed gardens in North and South America, Southeast Asia, Australasia, China and India. Dan is also a member of the Garden Writers Association and his articles have appeared in garden and travel magazines and newspapers around the world. His photos can be viewed at <https://tinyurl.com/yajruk4z> and his travel blog can be seen

at www.moissecoper.blogspot.com



Please Join US!

**Monday,
November 9, 2020**



It's time to renew your membership.

As you know in this past year many of the OHS spring programs were cancelled due to the pandemic. Where possible others were scaled back or altered. The Junior program had to be cancelled but the space was repurposed to grow vegetables for community members in need. The Anderson Parkette was maintained by a small group of dedicated volunteers (social distanced of course) and an extra "Summer" newsletter was produced this year. Some spring meetings had to be cancelled but we started again in September with some great speaker presentations on "Zoom".

Please rejoin the Oakville Horticultural Society as we find ways in these difficult times to continue our mandate to "further the knowledge of Horticulture, stimulating an interest in gardening in our community's youth and encouraging the beautification of Oakville"... and hope we can get together, in person, again soon.

We now have 3 methods by which you can pay your membership.

- * In person (we are not having in-person meetings so this is not possible at this time).
- * Online: To pay your membership please reply to this email and send an Interac e-Transfer from your bank to memberpay@oakvillehort.org.
- * By Cheque: print this page and mail with a cheque to:

Oakville Horticultural Society
P.O. Box 69605
109 Thomas Street
Oakville, ON L6J 7R4

With Gratitude

your friends at the Oakville Horticultural Society

*Payment of membership fees implies agreement to accept OHS email.
You may unsubscribe at any time.

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A new Facebook group has been created so that members of the Oakville Horticultural Society may post and share information as a private online group.

To join all you need is a Facebook account and request to join the group name “Oakville Hort Sharing” or contact our Administrator Veronica

<https://www.facebook.com/veronica.heiderich> .

Access will be given as soon as possible upon request. Non Facebook members can post information by asking someone who has a Facebook account and is in the group to post on your behalf or contact Veronica by email bvervah7@gmail.com .

Share what is happening in your garden with photos. Have gardening questions, ideas or concerns? Need local or online resources identified? Want to share plants that you are digging and dividing? Do you have advice or proven methods? Anything gardening goes, meeting current bylaws and public health guidelines. The content is only limited by our imagination of what we would like to communicate with other members. The group will be moderated by Veronica our Facebook Administrator.
Let's dig in!

Thank you, Veronica



The OHS Executive has prepared the following proposed budget for next year. Given the impact of the pandemic on the OHS program, the Executive has taken a conservative approach and projected lower revenues of \$9500 for next year. At this time it is uncertain whether revenue generating activities such as the May Plant Sale or Garden Tour will be permitted in 2021. Projected expenses of \$15700 have been reduced from prior years, but the proposed budget will still allow activities to be completed if the pandemic restrictions are lessened. In the event that public activities continue to be restricted, expenses will be adjusted and the potential deficit indicated by this budget will be reduced significantly. This budget will be presented for approval at the society's Zoom meeting in December.

To review the budget proposal, please visit the next page. Should you have any concerns or questions please contact Larry at treasurer@oakvillehort.org



Oakville Horticultural Society: Proposed Budget 2020-2021

Revenue

Description	Actual 2020 YTD	Budget 2020	Variance 2020	Proposed 2021 Budget
Bulbs, Plants & Seeds	0.00	300.00	-300.00	300.00
Draw Table	396.00	800.00	-404.00	400.00
May Plant Sale	0.00	6,000.00	-6,000.00	4000.00
Membership	1,455.00	1,800.00	-345.00	1300.00
Interest	933.32	850.00	83.32	690.00
Donations	415.40	0.00	415.40	0.00
Garden Tour	0.00	2,500.00	-2,500.00	1500.00
Ontario Grant	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00	1000.00
Miscellaneous	803.21	0.00	803.21	0.00
Community Programs	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Workshops	0.00	200.00	-200.00	0.00
Junior Program Registrations	0.00	60.00	-60.00	60.00
Special Events	0.00	0.00	0.00	250.00
Total Revenue	5,002.93	13,510.00	-8,507.07	9,500.00

Expenses

Description	Actual 2020 YTD	Budget 2020	Variance 2020	Proposed 2021 Budget
Publicity	251.84	400.00	-148.16	400.00
Social Convenor	387.51	400.00	-12.49	200.00
Bulbs, Plants & Seeds	0.00	400.00	-400.00	300.00
Public Planting	160.36	600.00	-439.64	425.00
Community Programs	1,062.50	1,500.00	-437.50	1,300.00
OHS Memberships	587.60	700.00	-112.40	600.00
Executive	260.81	1,350.00	-1,089.19	1,500.00
Draw Table Convenor	84.65	350.00	-265.35	175.00
Monthly Shows	854.23	1,330.00	-475.77	670.00
Garden Tour Convenor	0.00	650.00	-650.00	650.00
Newsletter	378.92	200.00	178.92	200.00
Monthly Programs	2,083.35	3,700.00	-1,616.65	3,930.00
Junior Program	54.73	1,000.00	-945.27	800.00
May Plant Sale	136.00	3,750.00	-3,614.00	2,750.00
Equipment/Improvements	0.00	500.00	-500.00	1,500.00
Special Events	0.00	400.00	-400.00	100.00
Miscellaneous	463.83	100.00	363.83	100.00
Contingency	0.00	0.00	0.00	100.00

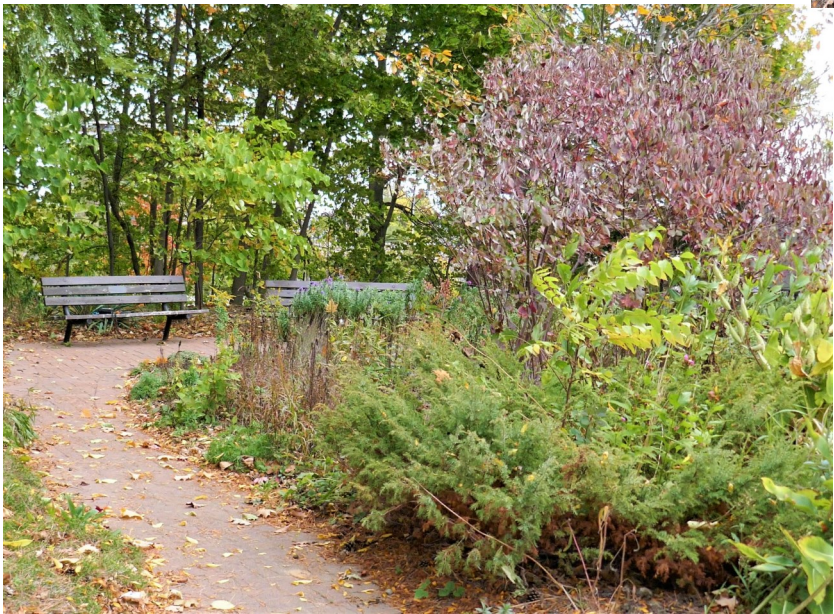
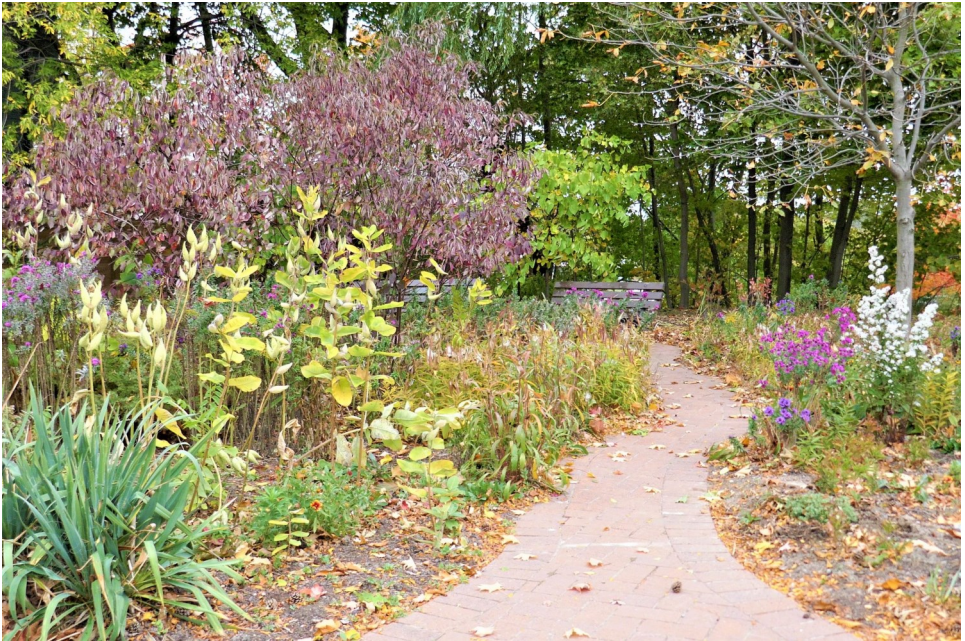


It was November- the month of
crimson sunsets, parting birds,
deep, sad hymns of the sea,
passionate wind-songs in the pines.
Anne roamed through the pineland
alleys in the park and, as she said,
let that great sweeping wind
blow the fogs out of her soul.

L.M. Montgomery
Anne of Green Gables



proposed 2020-2021 budget continued...



along the garden path to Anderson Parkette....



It was a very successful growing season in the Junior Garden. Using 450 sq ft of space, and over 100 volunteer hours, I grew, harvested and donated over **350 lbs** (160kg) of produce for Kerr Street Mission, with additional produce going directly to a HCHC (Halton Community Housing Corporation) site in Oakville. I wish the produce was considered extra food for those who frequent Kerr Street Mission, but sadly, according to a recent study by Halton Environmental Network, 7% of households in the Halton Region experience food insecurity. The vegetables I grew may have been some residents only access to healthy, nutritious, organic produce. I feel proud to help, with the support of OHS, my fellow community members during these awful times.

I wish to thank my fellow Horticultural members for the vegetable seedlings, equipment donations, and for their time helping me in the garden.

Thank you to Nino Zaino, Myroslawa Lukiwsky and Patty O'Connor for the seedlings, Brian Yager for the plant booster, and Paula Clayton for the tarp. Thank you also to Florenda Tingle, Patty O'Connor and Barbara Warden for helping me weed the garden.

A special thank you to the Town of Oakville for advocating on my behalf to the Region to use the junior garden as a food bank garden, and to Galina Tchouprikova for all that she does to support the garden!

Hopefully 2021 will bring better times for all of us!

Helen Stephenson





October 19, 2020

President's Message to the Members of the Ontario Horticultural Association



Hello members, here it is October, and we are still in the COVID-19 Pandemic and all health officials say this will not be going away soon. Parts of Ontario are returning to Stage 2 because of increased positive case counts due to such things such as people having large gatherings, lack of personal distancing, improper mask wearing or poor hand washing. It is a different world we live in and one where everyone has to work to stay safe. And yet, some people do not realize the seriousness of this virus. It has been just announced that the US/Canada border will remain closed until November 21. We are still in a State of Emergency which means that Societies/Clubs and Districts are not required to have their AGM's until 90 days after the emergency has been lifted. Please keep in touch with your local municipalities as to the protocols in place for your area. Each one is different. Wear a mask, wash your hands and keep a safe physical distance and stay within your "little bubble." When we all do our part, we can get through this.

Your OHA Officers have been continuing monthly meetings, virtually, and have held another OHA Board Meeting in early October, and an OHA Awards Meeting, virtually as well. Insurance questions, meeting questions, OMAFRA questions, Society/Club problems, future conventions, among other topics are part of the agendas.

The OHA Treasurer, Jane Leonard, announced she would retire when a new Treasurer was hired. On behalf of the Board of Directors, I want to thank Jane for her tireless work for the OHA for the last two years. I want to welcome Marian Heil, our new OHA Treasurer, to the Ontario Horticultural Association. Marian is a member of District 6 and is highly qualified to take over from Jane. All of the Board of Directors are looking forward to working with Marian!

I am going to repeat what I said in my last message about a new fundraiser in place that has been advertised on the www.gardenontario.org website and our [GardenOntario Facebook](#) page. Beeswax Wraps, instead of plastic wrap for dishes and cloth bags to put vegetables and fruits in instead of the grocery store plastic bags. Plus, there are new items on the [GardenOntario Gardeshop](#) Please check out all the items! You might find something you would like to buy for yourself or give away as gifts.



oha news ...



President's Message to the Members of the OHA continued...

The Board of Directors approved that 4 OHA youth members and/or leaders would be sponsored to attend the 2021 Youth Summit Conference. Catherine McGill, OHA Youth Leader and District 6 Director is the person to contact if interested at youth@gardenontario.org

By now, I think a lot of Societies/Clubs have received their 2021 OMAFRA grants. I want to thank Charles Freeman, the first Vice President, for going through the 227 Society/Club Survey results and tallying up the results to send on to OMAFRA. He is in constant contact with OMAFRA to keep us up to date and regularly champions on behalf of all Societies/Clubs with the Ministry. As you know, Helen Scutt retired and right now there is no one who has permanently taken her place as the liaison between the OHA and OMAFRA. Charles and the Agricultural Societies of Ontario have highly encouraged the Ministry to replace this position with a permanent liaison.

The OHA Officers will be diligent in reviewing the insurance policy for 2021. We have heard about some negative changes and trends in the insurance industry this year due to the pandemic that we will do our best to mitigate.

If anyone has insurance questions, please email Charles Freeman with your questions and he will try to get you an answer.

For those Societies/Clubs who are holding in-person meetings, please make sure the protocols of your community are followed and that you can hold such an event or meeting. All attendee names and contact numbers are to be written down, screening done, masks worn, hand wash provided/used, and physical distancing adhered to. These records are to be maintained for 30 days in case there is a COVID-19 outbreak and contact tracing must be done by the local public health department.

Some Societies/Clubs are trying their hand at holding virtual meetings with virtual speakers, etc. and are succeeding! One Society has noted that they were able to have younger people in attendance who usually were unable to attend because of other commitments. This brings up another point. Please ensure that your Society/Club is represented on the www.gardenontario.org web page. Since there are so many new gardeners out there, they are looking for answers to their gardening questions by contacting a local Society/Club or our GardenOntario Facebook page. Create or update your pages and be prepared. If you have not created your Society/Club webpage yet, please reach out to the OHA Webmaster, April Davies, at april@gardenontario.org who can give you a quick how-to information sheet to get you started.

The Officers' and the Fundraising Committee have put together a donor page for the website to encourage some needed donations. Thank you to them and April, our webmaster, for a good-looking page. Have a look at the [GardenOntario Donate Page](#)

Letters have been received from members questioning our timing for asking for an increase for the membership dues to the OHA. Is there ever a good time? The cost of running the association is getting more expensive and the revenues brought in from the Societies/Clubs

has not kept up with the increased costs. This board is now faced with the difficult task of putting this resolution out to all Societies/Clubs regarding the fees increase. A lot of discussion was held at our October Board Meeting about membership dues in general. Society/Club membership dues pay for venues, speakers, expenses in advertising events, insurance and the OHA dues.



President's Message to the Members of the OHA continued...

What value is placed on your membership dues? I have heard, speakers are asking for more money because they are bringing their expertise to members. Venues have, before COVID-19, asked for more money. When a person is asked to pay a membership of \$5.00, it is like a donation for them. They really see no significance in paying out that amount. But when they are asked to pay \$25.00 or \$30.00 then they want to see the value. They attend the meeting to hear from the experts, including in-house master gardeners who answer gardening questions. They see the value of a floral or houseplant or photo competition and begin to socialize with other members over drinks and snacks. We have to change our perspective of what is valued most in each of our Societies/Clubs and ensure we are not undervaluing ourselves.

The Board of Directors has approved a request to create a Terms of Reference and a Request for Proposal by an outside consultant to look into the structure and operations to determine best practices, cost effectiveness and efficiencies of the OHA. We will monitor this monthly and will let you know of the outcome of the review.

The Awards Committee will be reviewing all the grants and awards given out by the OHA and will be looking at updating and possibly added new ones.

A letter was received from a University of Toronto Research Fellow on a cognitive study on birds. After discussion with the Officers and the Research Fellow, there may be a specific cognitive study conducted on the benefits of horticulture and its impact on the aged. We will keep you informed of further details.

A letter was also received from the Canadian Garden Council asking for a letter of support for the Year of the Garden 2022 initiative. The Canadian Nursery Landscape Association, who will celebrate 100 years in 2022 and the Canadian Garden Council are planning to celebrate Canada's history in garden culture, gardening today and to create important legacies for a sustainable future. Please keep this in mind when you start planning for 2022. A letter of support was sent on behalf of the association. As more information comes out from their meetings it will be passed on to the Societies/Clubs.

There is a designated Volunteer Day – December 5th and there is a designated Volunteer Week – the third week of April. Please think about recognizing those members in your Societies/Clubs who go above and beyond to keep your Societies/Clubs enjoyable and informative. Please note that OHA Supplies has pins and there are awards to recognize these hard-working members. Please check out the [GardenOntario Gardenshop](#).

I kept hoping that the pandemic would be short-lived (silly me) and that we would return to normal, but sadly to say, we may never see that normal return as we knew it.

I want to try to keep you all informed on what the Officers and Board of Directors are doing on your behalf.

I hope you are putting your vegetable and flower gardens to bed for the winter but be sure to leave some plants for the pollinators to hibernate in and for winter interest.

I have moved all my house plants back inside and I am putting on compost and sheep manure on my new flower beds. Maybe you are doing the same. My garden is my solace and my happy place. May it be yours as well. We wear a mask and stay safe. Sincerely,

Catharine Smyth, President, Ontario Horticultural Association





"I think that I shall never see, a thing as lovely as a tree" Joyce Kilmer (who was a man), wrote those words in a rather sloppy poem over a hundred years ago. Although I agree with the sentiments, I have to add that trees are awesome too. It is estimated that there are over three trillion trees in the world, about four hundred trees for every living person.

Just consider these statistics. The tallest tree in the world is a Californian sequoia (redwood), which is 370 feet tall. The oldest is a bristlecone pine, estimated to be over 5000 years old. The largest by volume, a relatively middle aged sequoia at 2000 years old, is 52000 cubic feet, and the leaves (needles) of a Douglas fir can expose three acres of chlorophyll to the sun.

It all starts with the seed, which can be as fine as dust or as big as a coconut. It can wait patiently until it is presented with the right conditions of light, temperature, and moisture for growth. I planted some alyssum under lights in the spring and it germinated in three days. Conversely, some seed carbon dated as being over two thousand years old have been coaxed into germinating.

Fortunately, not all the seeds which a tree produces will germinate, because that lone birch tree which you so love in your back yard will produce over a quarter of a million seeds in a good year!

First the seed puts out a radicle, or tap root which anchors the seedling and draws up moisture, enabling the cotyledons, or seed leaves, which are already within the seed, to unfurl and start photosynthesizing to make food. The tap root starts to grow and branch out. In 1860 during the construction of the Suez Canal, the roots of an acacia tree were uncovered at a depth of forty feet, (or a hundred feet depending which reference you believe).

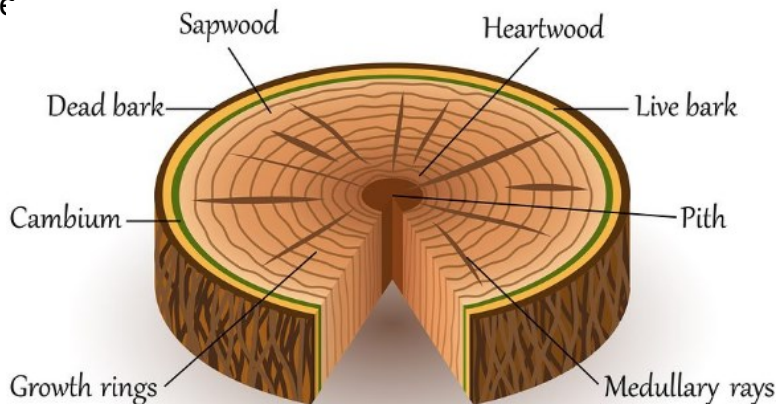
The seed then directs its energy reserves into making shoots and true leaves which begin photosynthesizing to continue the growth cycle. Photosynthesis is the process by which a leaf makes the green chlorophyll which draws carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and converts it to sugar (glucose) which feeds the tree, and carbon dioxide, which keeps us alive.

If you cut through a tree trunk you will see the various components which make up the tree. Starting from the outside, the outer layer is the outer bark, which is the dead protective layer which keeps moisture within the tree, wards off insects and diseases, and protects the inner parts of the tree. Under that is the inner bark, phloem, which is the pipeline which transfers food from the leaves to the rest of the tree. Under that is the cambium layer, which is the growing part of the trunk annually making new bark and new wood. The sapwood under that is the pipeline which moves water and minerals from the roots, and a mature tree can move many gallons a day, much of this is transpired through the leaves and moisturizes our air. As new sapwood is made the old sapwood dies and becomes heartwood, which gives the tree its strength.

Leaves have their own story too. The upper leaves on a tree are smaller than the lower ones, in order to allow more light to fall on the lower ones. The lobes and jagged edges on some leaves help to evaporate any water which is not needed by the tree and to reduce wind resistance. Thick leaves retain more moisture in dry climates and leaves with thorns deter herbivores. So don't you agree, trees are awesome, and our lives depend on them?

Happy leaf raking (they make great compost or mulch)!

David Marshall



Diary of a MGIT(Master Gardener in Training).

Chapter 3



SEEING ... REALLY SEEING

Well I didn't have much to report last month but just recently I suddenly realized I was seeing ... really seeing things and with a new depth of interest. We wander through life with mostly just a quick glance at the beautiful and unique things that are in nature all around us. It's not that we are too busy ... it's just that we DON'T stop to wonder at the wonder that surrounds us. But studying, though sometimes hard work, has reinspired my interest in seeing things and then wondering about them and with the help of Google and other search engines, it is now so easy to delve a little deeper.

An example. I was walking by the Sir John Colborne Centre last week (which I've done many times in the past but never stopped to look) when I spotted some thorns growing out of the trunk of a locust tree.

Now these were huge thorns. Some 7-8 inches in length!!!! They are very sharp and very firm as I gently tested them. First mistake I made ... I thought it was a Golden Locust tree. Turns out it is a Honey Locust and the seed pods are a favourite of some animals. It is thought that the thorns developed a few hundred million years ago to protect the tree from mega sized browsing animals. But it certainly was a wonder to see these giant thorns growing out of the trunk of a tree.



Another interesting thing I spotted in Coronation Park was a Cicada newly emerged from its shell. Turns out there are over 3000 types of cicadas and they come in a wide range of colours. Also, there are annual cicadas, 13 year cicadas and 17 year cicadas. The eggs are laid on tree leaves or bark and when the nymph emerges it falls to the ground, digs itself in and stays there for 1, 13, or 17 years. When ready, it crawls out of the ground and up a tree where it sheds its old exoskeleton and emerges in its winged form. This one that we spotted was a real green beauty. To me, it is the sound of summer when they produce their high-pitched mating sound.

Hope to have more insights next month into becoming a Master Gardener.

Margaret



diary of a mgit



Lucky winner from October virtual meeting

Congratulations on participating in our virtual meeting and winning a prize! See you at our next virtual meeting November 9, 2020!

November's prize is:



Belle of Georgia Peach



ALL BUT ABSENT FROM SUPERMARKET SHELVES, THIS HEIRLOOM PEACH IS A SWEET SECRET SOUTHERNERS' BACKYARD GARDENS.

Blushing from thickly leaved trees at the height of Georgia summer, these peaches are the belle of the ball. Lewis A. Rumph bred the aptly name Belle of Georgia in 1870, after the dreaded boll weevil eviscerated Georgia's staple cotton crops, leaving a wide-open market for other farm products. Upon its debut, the peach variety won fans for its firm, red-veined white flesh, juiciness, and sweet, fragrant flavor. It quickly became the most popular commercial peach in the late 19th century.

Enter industrial agriculture. By the early 1900s, the Georgia Belle was grown throughout Georgia, Texas, California, and Florida. But as the 20th century wore on, commercial growers shunted the heirloom aside in favor of peach varieties dubbed easier for distribution. As far as flavor, those mealy, bland peaches fell far short of the Belle.

But efficiency defeated deliciousness. Today, you'd be hard-pressed to find a Belle of Georgia in supermarkets and even commercial farmer stands. But the variety continues to be a backyard favorite, particularly in its home state, where late summer brings a signature blush to the Belle's fuzzy flesh. The bounty falling from backyard trees overflows into peaches canned to store some sweetness for winter, and peach cobbler bubbling out of the oven, to be enjoyed right now. This variety isn't available at grocery stores, so your best bet is to grow your own—or make friends with the sweet Georgia peach in your life and hope they share.



Need to Know

If you're an ambitious gardener in possession of sandy soil in a USDA zone five to nine climate, you can [order a baby Belle of Georgia](#) to grow yourself.

Accredited to Atlas Obscura-author Reina Gattuso



Our Journey from Oakville to Ferryland, NL.



We did it!!!!

We have finished planting our hardneck garlic crop and we are still speaking to one another. These past two weeks have been our most intense working days on the farm. We set a daily goal and celebrate each accomplishment. On one gorgeous fall day without wind, we managed to plant 3,500 cloves.

We harvested the rest of our onions, cabbages, carrots, rutabagas and leeks, while completing final soil preparations in our garlic fields.

All that remains now is mulching the garlic crop with a couple of inches of fresh kelp from the ocean.

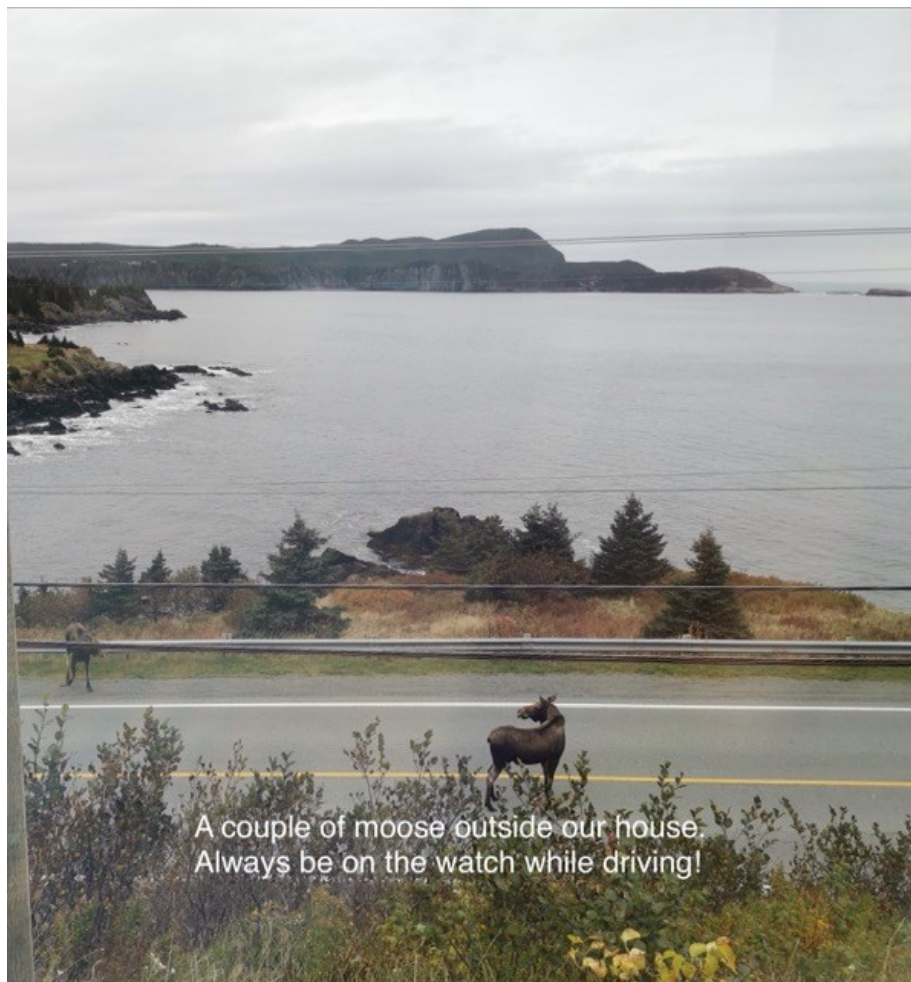
Fortunately, our operation is still manageable. My wife and I can make 15,000 holes and drop 15,000 garlic cloves in those holes and have survived the process. Our major customers for produce are a few local and St. John's restaurants and garden centres. In addition, we also sell our Plant Booster soil conditioner at the garden centres.

We have dug up the last of our carrots and leeks too. The healthy root systems of leeks are always a treat to admire.

We hope you enjoy the photos. We always remind ourselves to "watch out for the moose" whenever we go on the highway!

Looking forward to our next trip to Oakville in December,

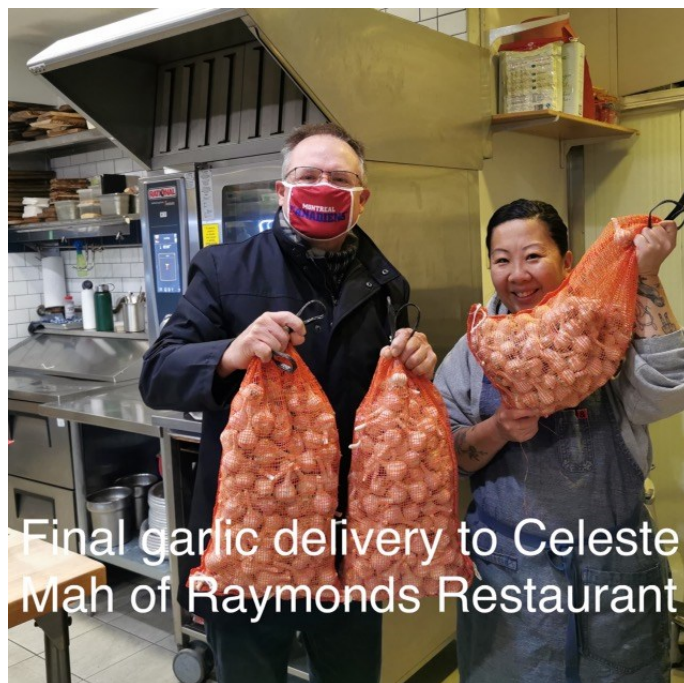
Brian and Jane







Ross Larkin and Celeste, award winning chefs at Raymonds



Final garlic delivery to Celeste Mah of Raymonds Restaurant

brian and jane's journey...

Surf the web for more gardening interesting sites!



Cross Pollination November 2020 Issue

<https://haltonmastergardeners.files.wordpress.com/2020/11/cross-pollination-2020-11.pdf>

[Read Cross Pollination - November 2020](#)

DEALING WITH DRUNK BIRDS AND PIGEONS AT BIRD FEEDERS

[HTTPS://MAIL.GOOGLE.COM/MAIL/U/1/#INBOX/MFCGXWKJBSMXXZKKTJQBBQNRXSVJRJH](https://mail.google.com/mail/u/1/#inbox/MFCGXWKJBSMXXZKKTJQBBQNRXSVJRJH)



DALLYING IN THE DIRT, ISSUE #373 - REBUILDING ROCK WALLS, NECESSARY BUT NOT FUN.

[HTTPS://MAIL.GOOGLE.COM/MAIL/U/1/#SEARCH/KEN+BROWN/FMFCGXWJZJVJRDZJLFMSTNTZPPXJZCJF](https://mail.google.com/mail/u/1/#search/KEN+BROWN/FMFCGXWJZJVJRDZJLFMSTNTZPPXJZCJF)



Lilactree Farm Garden Notes, No.6, 2020

* * *

"Droughts do end, and the end of a drought is almost worth the nuisance of it." Geoffrey Dutton,
Some Branch Against The Sky (David & Charles, 1997)

In January 2017, I ordered fourteen kinds of seed from Chiltern Seeds in the UK. The Chiltern catalogue that year listed hundreds of different kinds of seed; annuals including herbs and vegetables, perennials, shrubs, trees, climbers, grasses, plants that can only be grown under glass, almost anything you can think of, including plants that you will never be able to grow because they are too tender for your location, have soil, sun and moisture requirements you cannot provide, are too large for the space you have, and will resent being dug up by your dog. There were 39 varieties of poppy, 27 columbines, 20 zinnias, 36 campanulas, 22 geraniums, 34 cosmos, 34 primulas, 38 cyclamen, 30 sunflowers (*helianthus*), 35 salvias – these are common genera, many easily grown from seed – as well as genera you have never heard of unless you are the Mr. Casaubon of the plant world. All of January can easily be filled by making long lists of seeds you intend to order.

The average price per package that year was around £2.50. I tend to avoid the most expensive seed; by the middle of January your list will be suggesting a bill, before taxes and postage, of several hundred £s, you are only at the Gs, and you will be paying unprecedented hours of attention to the exchange rate. The good news, you will explain to your partner, is that the *postage cost per package of seed usually falls with the number of packages purchased*. Another reason for avoiding the most expensive seed is that it is expensive because it is scarce, and it is scarce because there are few plants of that particular species to produce seed, and there are few plants because the seed rarely germinates and, if it does, the seedlings mostly dwindle and die. The ambitious gardener must learn to bear failure bravely.

The 14 packages I ordered (total bill £40.70) included two annuals. I have tried for years to persuade a California poppy ('very tolerant of poor, dry soils') to establish itself through re-seeding on a south-facing roadside slope where thyme and pinks do well, but without success. The other was a peony-flowered poppy which was to enfold clumps of regale lilies in its gloriously vulgar purple flowers but its seedlings, without rainfall and with my neglect, dwindled away. (An American gardener to whom I once sniveled that I lost lots of seedlings said, 'Stop growing so many'.). *Salvia forskaohlei*, described as 'a splendid plant from Greece and Turkey' with 'lovely rosettes', grew frighteningly fast, its large leaves reaching out to smother anything within a meter or two, its roots nearly indestructible; I should have known how to interpret 'splendid.' It had to go. That strangely neglected shrub, *Lespedeza thunbergii*, has struggled; I can only dream of a specimen to bear comparison with that of the Inglis' (left) in their renowned Port Perry garden.



Lilactree Farm Garden Notes, No.6, 2020 continued...

A great success has been the Japanese *Geranium yoshinoi*, 'a great success' meaning that it has formed a mat 60cm across and no more than 15cm in height of tender green leaves that become red-edged as the year moves on. The whole plant, with small, deep rose flowers darkly veined in late summer, would make an admirable flow'ry bed where one might have one's amiable cheeks caressed. A plant for moist shade. If it grows more strongly in the months to come, it will, I hope, be easy to move pieces to neglected spaces.

Meconopsis cambrica, the Welsh poppy, came easily from seed and speedily adapted to life in a shady area under our native catalpa. We have had it here before, but though nominally perennial, it can disappear quickly in a dry period. It is sometimes said to be invasive, a prospect devoutly to be wished. Included in our Chiltern order was a tree, *Idesia polycarpa*, whose heart-shaped dark green leaves on a two year-old seedling and its common name of Chinese Wonder tree, lured me on; neither its small yellow flowers nor its reddish-orange fruit on mature trees would be outstandingly beautiful. By this summer, it had struggled to 25cm in the protected Nursery Garden, when the belated discovery that it was from Western China lead us to bestow it on friends more horticulturally skillful than we and who might have a better chance of growing it on.



I have saved the best to last. In my *hoch-näsig* fashion, I usually avoid best-selling plants, yet I was immediately attracted by the Catalogue's description of *Patrinia scabiosifolius* even though it was prefaced by 'Best Seller'; warning or invitation? A sun-loving Japanese plant, its varied descriptions ('very beautiful and trouble free'; 'a showstopper in the August garden'; 'tolerant of hot and humid



conditions'; 'grows in sun to light shade') make it sound like the garden's utility player, not able merely to play effectively in any position but to contribute surprisingly well. It came easily from seed – some commentators suggest too easily – so that I was able to set out plants in their intended locations by mid-summer. They didn't flower until their second year when I had forgotten about them, so that their billowing umbels of cheerful yellow flowers at the end of long stalks on 90-120cm plants came as a joyful surprise. You have probably been growing patrinia for years and are amused by my johnny- come-lately enthusiasm.

* * *

The second half of June, all of July and much of August conformed to a pattern of difficulty, and my garden diary records the usual mixture of *pleasure* ('*The days are hot, humid and buggy but the garden is ravishing, a biased appraisal acceptable in the privacy of a diary*') and *pain* ('*I'm not sure how we are managing. Today was yet hotter; the garden is wilting, water as I can.*'). As I see dark storm clouds approaching from the west, I rush out with the hose, knowing – it's a gardening fundamental – that the best way to ensure rain is to spend hours watering by hand, but it is futile, the clouds divide two concessions to the west, half sliding to the undeserving north, the other south towards



Toronto so that the six o'clock news can show pictures of flooded streets. In July, we were lucky to escape the ravages of the Gypsy Moth invasion, a treasured mountain ash, *Sorbus* 'Apricot Lady', whose cultivar name precisely captured the colour of its berries, died inexplicably, and we went on transplanting:



did you know continued....

Lilactree Farm Garden Notes, No.6, 2020 continued...

baptisias from the shaded White Bed to the sunny Maple Bed; white digitalis from Shrub Bed #1, newly flooded with sun as a result of cutting down three large conifers, to the White Bed; divided hostas to the north-facing Daphne Bank; *Digitalis lutea*, languishing behind a large mock-orange, to the east end of the Catalpa Bed. I am disgracefully willing to inform you that a map of almost all of these locations can be found on page 220 of *Minding The Garden: Lilactree Farm* by Bixley and Townshend. A sensible gardener would not, of course, be moving large numbers of plants during periods of drought.

By the middle of August the diary records the annual beginnings of panic. *August 16: Mostly grey, not hot, but the forecast rain did not come, which is a bit of a disaster. August 18: More unfulfilled forecasts of rain. August 19: A dry day... August 20: Cool, dry. August 21: Warm and dry.* I ate my daily square of dark chocolate, 85% Cacao. But droughts do end, and on August 22 the diary notes: *Magnificent clouds surrounded us, and soon after 4pm we had a good downpour for close to an hour, and so began a sustained period of great garden beauty, weeks filled with placid sunlight and recurrent rainfall, days to take a chair and *The History of Henry Esmond* into the shelter of a hedge and the shade of the Nikko maple.*



Kirengeshima palmata eagerly awaits September rains. A Japanese/Korean plant for deciduous shade, its yellow shuttlecock-shaped flowers stand out against its dark maple-like foliage. Christopher Lloyd insisted that it 'is unhappy given high alkalinity,' though there isn't much evidence for that here. Francis Cabot (*The Greater Perfection*, 2001) had 'a fifty-foot swath..(flowing) down over the wall to the pond's edge,' a feature we have not been able to duplicate.

We admire the brilliant red foliage of *Euonymus alatus*, a shrub that doesn't long survive with us before being eaten by rabbits each winter. Our friends Paul and Jacqueline gave us *Euonymus oxyphyllus*, now grown to 3m, whose foliage does not quite take on the fiery colours of *alatus* but, as compensation, produces masses of deep-rose capsules that hold the orange seeds. There is an ancient, heroic feeling about this plant.



We rarely buy plants (bulbs are a different matter), so a plant has to be very special to be purchased. *Acer x pseudosieboldianum* 'Ice Dragon' is apparently a cross between a 'Japanese maple', of the palmatum group, and *Acer pseudosieboldianum*; it bears little resemblance to the latter, an example of which you can see in our Nursery Garden. 'Ice Dragon' came to us from a Quebec nursery though I see it is available locally. It is said to remain small – under 3m – with an annual growth, shown here, of about 9-15cm. with 'late fall foliage a kaleidoscope of yellow, orange and red.' It came as a present for my 117th birthday; I already have the gifts for the intervening years.



Garden pleasures come, perhaps like most others, in unexpected ways. The nobby seed capsules (right) are from 'Sunsation', one of the yellow-flowered magnolias. They are crosses with the species *M. acuminata*, and the capsules appear to differ in size, shape and colour from cross to cross.



Lilactree Farm Garden Notes, No.6, 2020 continued...

But September is, for us at Lilactree Farm, the colchicum month. You know the story, that they grow in the South Jungle under a fleece of geraniums, waiting for the rains of autumn to shoot through the earth and leap into flower as 'Naked Ladies', without their foliage to protect them. You will come to see them and insist they are autumn crocus, but they belong to a different botanical family. "This is Paradise," said a visitor. Let me leave them to speak for themselves:

Brian Bixley

October 2020



did you know continued.....



Article Attributed to: Bill Bixley



Dispute erupts over natural garden as city asks: What's up, buttercup?

The professor made a peace offering to the mayor of a city of three million people: Tea in the garden she loves.

Or face the legal wrath of one of the region's top environmental lawyers.

The root of this horticultural dispute on Hillcrest Drive began on a typically warm, clear summer day in August when a city bylaw officer arrived at the Wychwood-area home of Nina-Marie Lister and Jeremy Guth with a problem. There had been complaints about the grass and weeds being too long and they would have to cut them under the city's bylaws.

Problem is, the city might have finally messed with the wrong gardener.

Guth and Lister - a landscape ecologist, urban planner and director of the ecological design lab at Ryerson University where she is an associate professor - have worked to create an example of their home landscaping, designing what's called a "natural garden" that acts as a habitat for wildlife as well as being a pollinator-friendly space.

They have spent more than \$5,000 annually to maintain the green roof, terraced planting beds and a large, sloping "natural meadow" in the front yard.

That's explained in their lawyer's letter sent Monday to Mayor John Tory.

The list of plantings in the letter is long. It reads a bit like a lyrical poem or tongue twister, depending on how you look at it. There are bluebells, black-eyed susans and bee balm. There are sunflowers and purple coneflowers, foxtails and patriotic red and white clovers. Still more flowers, ranging from buttercups to violets, peonies and forget-me-nots.

Goldenrod and vibrant sumac were on display when the Star visited on Tuesday.

Later in August - in the middle of a pandemic where bylaw officers have been in short supply - the city told Lister she had been found in violation of the grass and weeds bylaw.

After asking to see the advisory notice, Lister said she was told weeks later the garden was being given an exemption under the rules after all - which she never sought nor wants. The whole situation bothered Lister.

Under the bylaw, "grass" and "weeds" - which are undefined - that exceed 20 centimetres in height must be cut unless there is a specific exemption for a "natural garden" by application to the executive director of the city's municipal licensing and standards divisions. If a notice is not complied with, the city, under the bylaw, has the right to forcibly remove the offending greenery at a cost to the property owner.

"What kind of barbarian would mow buttercups, forget-me-nots and lambs quarters?" asked lawyer David Donnelly in the letter to Tory he wrote on Lister and Guth's behalf. Donnelly has fought some of the province's biggest environmental battles, including over the Oak Ridges Moraine. "This garden actively provides habitat for at-risk monarch butterflies, nesting bees (including Toronto's official bee, the green metallic sweat bee), various nesting birds, and urban mammals such as rabbits, chipmunks and squirrels."



Dispute erupts over natural garden as city asks: continued.....

It wasn't enough to Lister that the city's bylaw enforcement had relented about the complaints concerning her garden. What about the other natural gardens across the city? With Donnelly's help, she's now trying to get the city to rip up the entire bylaw.

"The fact that you have to get an exemption is a reverse burden of responsibility," she said, noting the application process, appeal process - and still being subject to new complaints regardless of the exemption status.

She knows some people will say she should have welcomed the exemption and moved on. But she said as a rich white woman in an affluent part of the city with credible expertise in the field, she felt morally obligated to do something about the rules themselves.

What about newcomers who just want to plant familiar species or food to eat? Or an Indigenous person who wants to grow medicinal herbs? The "colonial" norm of a manicured lawn should not be the starting point, she said. "I'm in a position of power and authority and wealth to be able to point out the flaws with this," she said.

Lister said the complaints about her garden have included her being called "lazy" and the space being "neglected" - comments that are actually about "social conformity," not esthetics, she said.

For starters, she said there's a misconception natural gardens require no maintenance. She explained landscape crews help her and her husband with quite a bit of weeding in the space they've kept up for the last five years.

Donnelly said the existing bylaw is unconstitutional, pointing to a 1996 case where Toronto resident Sandy Bell successfully fought the city rules about excessive growth, saying it infringed upon her Charter right to freedom of expression and were "void for vagueness" and therefore unenforceable.

Justice David Fairgreave wrote in his decision he imagined the city could write a bylaw that didn't infringe on expression rights while still targeting derelict lawns.

"Clearly, not every weed patch or derelict yard manifests an intention to express one's beliefs or convey meaning; most, I would think, reflect mere laziness and indifference," the judge concluded. "It would be open to the city to draft a bylaw that imposes a duty on neglectful property owners concerning minimal maintenance standards while exempting from the operation of the bylaw those unconventional gardens which express their owners' environmentalist values. "

While the city did create the exemption for so-called "natural gardens," Donnelly said he's aware of another resident who the city notified this week about removal. Lister is not the only client to have called about this issue.

Neighbour Janet Rosenberg, an award-winning landscape architect who lives across from Lister and Guth's front "meadow," told the Star outside her home on Tuesday that she doesn't see eye-to-eye with those complaining about the garden.

"This is just another component of the history of gardening," she said, noting how cities themselves are moving towards sustainability and resilience in planting. "I think it's a new esthetic that we should just enjoy and get used to."

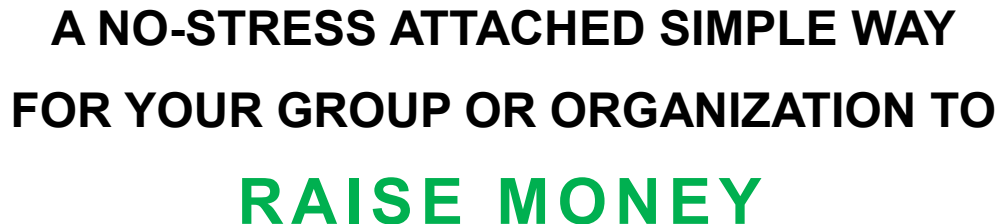


did you know continued.....

The mayor's spokesperson Don Peat said they had forwarded the letter to staff for review and response.

"The mayor appreciates the offer to visit the garden and we will be following up on that invitation."

Accredited to: Toronto Star · 7 Oct 2020 · JENNIFER PAGLIARO



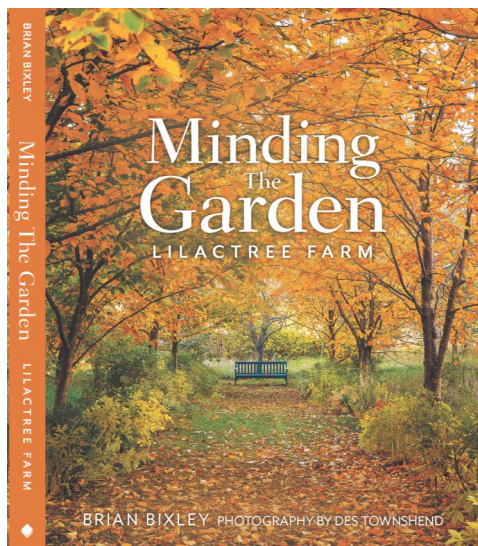
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Winter Reads: Favourite books for Canadian gardeners

'This is an outstanding gardening book - highly literate, witty, and engaging as the dickens. The author is based not in some ancestral English manse but on a frigid Canadian site he and his wife have developed themselves. I really like the serendipitous qualities of the book. There are 125 sections, some only a paragraph long, and you can savor them two or three at a time, like chocolates, all winter long.'

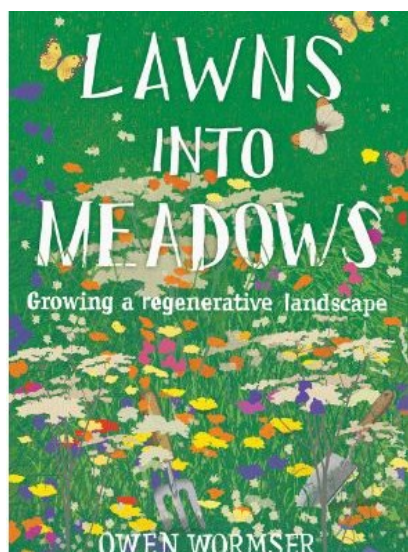


Minding The Garden: Lilactree Farm combines brief commentaries on garden history, on rare and familiar plants, on the tantalizing connections between the garden as art form and the other arts, on the pleasures and follies of gardening, in a collection of 125 'Notes' presented in the context of a composite gardening year. Discover how Lilactree Farm evolved over the years, through six retrospective 'plans,' spaced sequentially throughout the text, and through Des Townsend's spell-casting photographs. Minding The Garden: Lilactree Farm is sure to captivate gardeners, both armchair and active, in the English-speaking world and perhaps beyond.

By Brian Bixley and Photography by Des Townsend .

Brian and Maureen Bixley have been gardeners for fifty years. Lilactree Farm, their 2.5 acre (1 ha) garden, has been featured in local and international books and articles. Brian has organized major gardening conferences and written many articles for gardening publications in England, Scotland, the United States, and Canada, as well as The Canadian Gardeners' Journal and The American Gardeners' Journal. His writing experience also includes Essays on Gardening in a Cold Climate and Ten New Snowdrops with Hallie Watson. He and his wife live in rural Ontario.

Photographer Des Townsend graduated in digital photography from the Vancouver Institute of Media Arts in 2009. Projects include work for a travel magazine, photo essays on artisans in Ireland and Canada's First Nations, together with industrial photography for web-sites. He divides his time between Canada and his native Ireland.



In *Lawns Into Meadows*, landscape designer Owen Wormser makes a case for the power and generosity of meadows. In a world where lawns have wreaked havoc on our natural ecosystems, meadows offer a compelling solution. They establish wildlife and pollinator habitats. They're low-maintenance and low-cost. They have a built-in resilience that helps them weather climate extremes, and they can draw down and store far more carbon dioxide than any manicured lawn. They're also beautiful, all year round.

Owen describes how to plant an organic meadow that's right for your site, whether it's a yard, community garden, or tired city lot. He shares advice on preparing your plot, coming up with the right design, and planting—all without using synthetic chemicals. He passes along tips on building support in neighborhoods where a tidy lawn is the standard. Owen also profiles twenty-one starter grasses and flowers for beginning meadow-makers, and offers guidance on how to grow each one.



Owen Wormser was born and raised in rural Maine. He earned a degree in landscape architecture and quickly learned to use regenerative, low-maintenance practices in designing and building landscapes. Based in Western Massachusetts, his company, Abound Design, provides design, consulting, and installation services.

