Master Gardeners of Ontario

What's growing on?

Join the email list and have the newsletter sent to you directly. Send an email to editor@mastergardener.ca with your name, email and group.

Fall, 2008 **www.mastergardener.ca**

Floating Islands

When the Perth Horticultural Society decided to install Floating Islands in the Tay River in historic Perth, Lanark County Master Gardener Renai Rennick was on the team to make it happen. After receiving the go-ahead from all levels of Government, from the municipal to the Federal, the group obtained funding from the Ontario Horticultural Association, the Business Improvement Association, Lanark County Master Gardeners and a local restaurant, raising $3,000. This was enough money to purchase 5 islands, ranging in size from 15 to 25 square feet.

In the last week in June (end of fish breeding season), the islands were planted up and floated into the river. We had initially considered planting some large water-loving plants such as Canna Lilies and *Astilboides tabularis* but found these plants too large for the size of the planting holes. The gardens were planted with many kinds of ornamental grasses, plant spikes, reeds, sedges, gaura, petunias and cleomes. Because our islands have to be taken out for the winter (RVCA request), we steered away from perennials.

The islands were a great attraction for our Canada Day celebrations and then an even greater temptation for the muskrats. Virtually all the plants except the cleome and gaura were devoured. For the next two weeks, our town's gardening crew waded down the river and planted different kinds of plants and almost immediately the muskrats ate them too. We contemplated other approaches—leg traps or a hunter with a rifle across the river—not too tourist friendly. Instead, at that point, we

continued on page 4

In this Issue

- Floating Islands
- Developing Revenue
- Urban Organic Farming
- Education for All MGs
- Master Gardeners in Action

Developing Revenue

Did you know….

That Master Gardeners of Ontario is a registered non-profit charity? Well it's true, and we would like to encourage you to think about Master Gardeners when you are considering where to make your charitable (or in memoriam) donations. Master Gardeners of Ontario needs about $40,000 annually to properly run our provincial organization and strengthen our services to members. This covers administration, insurance, education development, special events such as the Coordinator's Conference, Board and committee costs. We collect about $20,000 in annual dues from members, which leaves a shortfall of $20,000. The Revenue Development Committee is looking at ways to incorporate the many suggestions that came from the member survey, improve benefits and make up this shortfall. One way you can help is to make a tax-credited, charitable donation. It's easy – go to www.mastergardener.ca and use the CanadaHelps button. It's a safe and secure way to make an on-line donation and you'll be receipted immediately. Thank you for your support!

The Revenue Development Committee

Mystery Plant

Do you know this plant? The answer will be revealed next issue.

No one guessed last month's mystery. Perhaps it was too hard or too obvious. It was butterfly weed - Asclepias tuberosa.

Urban Organic Farming

The Guelph Centre for Urban Organic Farming had its 'Grand Opening' on Thursday, September 4th. The vision of the Centre is to use the experience of urban organic farming to teach local food production, food security and resource conservation. Intergenerational learning is the guiding principle together with the melding of the urban and rural communities.

The Centre will be running many educational offerings with hands-on as well as technical instruction. Down the road it will be an invaluable "tool" for MG training and it is hoped that MGOI will be seen to be supportive of this initiative.

Please be aware that "agriculture" embraces food-producing horticulture i.e. GARDENING!

The GCUOF site is already growing a great crop of potatoes and carrots, beet, cabbage and pumpkins will be grown in the future.

The first sod was turned using a pair of lovely grey Percheron plough horses - symbolic of so much history and , hopefully the future.

Further information contact E. Ann Clark at 519-824-4120 x 52508 (eaclark@uoguelph.ca)

Mary Beverley-Burton - Guelph and Wellington

Book Recomendation

'Growing Trees from Seed' authored by Henry Kock, Paul Aird and John Ambrose, (Firefly Books). $45 or available at Chapters on line at $27.

Education for All MGs

Sarnia/Lambton MGs were delighted to welcome a new MGiT into our group –Maggie Hatfield has joined us and is working towards doing her certification exam in the first week of December. Maggie joined us after talking to several members at our annual fundraising garden tour. She said she has always wanted to join MGs because she is passionate about gardening but was intimidated. I am proud to say that all the MGs she talked to on the garden tour encouraged her to join and assured her that we weren't superior beings, just ordinary people with a passion for learning about gardening and sharing that knowledge. Something to think about in terms of the image we need to portray to get new recruits. It is interesting to us that out of our four MGiTs, we have at least one pursuing each of the three different educational paths to become a MG. That speaks highly of the usefulness of offering different education/qualification avenues. I attended the MGOI sponsored Plant Propagation workshop at Ridgetown College. It was an unbelievable experience and I came back so enthusiastic about the fantastic course having learned an incredible amount in two days, as well as energized to continue the work of being an MG. I am going to give a mini workshop at a fall or spring meeting to share what I learned. Further education on that level is very valuable to long standing MGs and I would like to thank MGOI for sponsoring and contributing $50 towards the cost of this workshop

Jennifer Plaus, Coordinator, Sarnia/Lambton

MGOI Board of Directors

President James Lee - jflee@sympatico.ca
Vice President Carol Dunk - carol@caroldunk.com
2nd Vice President - Andrew Cartmell - andrewcartmell@gmail.com
Treasurer Lynne Campbell - lcp1966@hotmail.com
Corporate Secretary vacant
Directors:
Zone 1 Ralph Bullough - ralph@tbaytel.net
Zone 2 Linda Hugli - lhugli@hotmail.com
Zone 3 Ron Rossini - lon.rrossini@imag.net
Zone 4 Andrew Cartmell - andrewcartmell@gmail.com
Zone 5 June Streadwick - Streadwick@sympatico.ca
Zone 6 Valerie Liney - valerie.liney@sympatico.ca
Zone 7 Nancy Cole - nancecole@gmail.com
Zone 8 Kelly Noel - khnoel@rogers.com
Zone 9 Don Nicholson - donald.nicholson@sympatico.ca
Zone 10 Vacant
Zone 11 John Craw - jonbon@sympatico.ca
MG List-serv Avalon Hamlin - hamlin@ebtech.net
Newsletter Dianne & Gary Westlake - editor@mastergardener.ca

OHA Director Marlene Bruckhardt bruckhardt@golden.net
OMAFRA Director - Helen Scutt helen.scutt@ontario.ca
Provincial Administrator Charlotte Vorstermans cvorstermans@rogers.com
113 Mill St., Creemore ON, L0M 1G0
Provincial Field Advisor Edythe Falconer edythelf@netscape.ca
Directors At Large Carol Dunk; Lynne Campbell

Prince Edward County MG Elaine Metcalfe and Coordinator Virginia Mitchell are shown in the group's new booth at the Picton Fall Fair.

Master Gardeners in Action

North Bay Blooms

North Bay MG's participated in the final judging for North Bay Blooms, a community contest to promote local gardens and, for the first time, became involved with activities at three local schools

Loblaws Help Line

The Toronto Master Gardeners continue to offer gardening advice through the TBG's Infoline and Web Forum. They were also responsible for answering questions on the Loblaws free 'help line', accessible across Ontario and the Atlantic provinces.

Toronto Fact Sheets

To date, over 90 Factsheets have been posted on the TBG website and Organic Gardening Factsheets are also featured on the City of Toronto's organic gardening site.

Oakville Newspaper Articles

Oakville MG's have written articles which have been published in one of the local newspapers. Topics have included Watering; Clematis; Lawns; Container design; Black spot; Plant tags and Overwintering plants indoors;

Pollinator Park

Guelph & Wellington is very involved with a new Pollinator Park that will be created out of a section of the rehabilitated Guelph landfill.

Essex-Windsor MG Technical Update

'The Healing Properties of Gardens' was held on September 20, 2008. Many thanks to all the MGs who worked so hard to make this a successful day. What a team!

Peterborough Garden Show

Planning is already well underway for next year's show in Peterborough organized by the Peterborough and Northumberland Groups along with the Peterborough Hort Society. The show will be held on Thurs., Fri., Sat. of Easter Weekend.

Picton Fall Fair

Prince Edward County MGs put together a new booth for the Picton Fall Fair. Feedback from the public was very positive.

Online Horticulturist program through the University of Guelph

I have completed 5 of the 7 courses required for the Horticulturist Certificate for the University of Guelph and am now taking my 6th course on Ornamental Plant Protection. Two of these are only given in the summer months.

High speed access to the web is preferable, although I managed to get by (with difficulty) on my first four courses with a dial up line. In my experience the more you put in the more you get out. These courses have been most useful in my gardening activities and are greatly beneficial in discussing gardening issues with my gardening friends. Many times these have given me the ability to provide new information, as well as prompting me to do further research on difficult issues.

David Oldacre – Oakville

If you would like to see more of this article check it out on www.mastergardener.ca.

Floating Islands continued from page 1

pulled the gardens out of the river and made further trials of plants. We put wire fences around the gardens and a "No Muskrats Allowed" sign, applied Critter Ridder but learned that muskrats can't read. Tuberous begonia survived well, as did our cleome and guara.

Recently, we were talking to the President of the Perth BIA and told him that we anticipated vandalism and a strong current to deal with but we never anticipated the devastation that the muskrats would bring. His reply was that he was glad we hadn't because then we might not have done it and he was glad that we had started this plan. Encouraging!!

Dale Odorizzi - Lanark

You can find more details of this project on www.mastergardener.ca

MGs on the Net

You can now have a photo made available for discussions on the mg-list by sending it to mg-spics@gmail.com

Canada Blooms

Canada Blooms has presented us with the opportunity to again showcase the talents and abilities that abound in our Master Gardener Groups. This year we will be even more visible as we will have our stage on the 800 level which has the most visitor traffic as it has the market place and the gardens located on it. It is a far cry from the days when we had a small booth at the back door where we answered horticulture questions. We will have speakers, panel sessions and our Ask the Expert Booth.

I am looking for approximately 24 speakers this year. It is hoped that a sponsor can be found to help with the costs of this production. If anyone is interested in being a panel member at any of the lunch time sessions please email me. Last year I had to have the names of all the speakers and topics by some time in November.

This is a major event for all of us and a terrific way to let the public know about Master Gardeners and what we can do.

I wait to hear from you.

Valerie Liney, Events Coordinator

Events

October 25, Coordinators ' Conference , L.O. Headquarters, Milton

January 10th, 2009 Technical Update 'The Global Gardener – Gardening in a Changing Climate' at the Toronto Botanical Garden. A full agenda and registration details available in October, Tena van Andel casey.vanandel@sympatico.ca

March 1, 2009 – "A Day in the Garden" at the Guelph Turfgrass Institute on Victoria Road in Guelph

May 9, 2009 Guelph and Wellington MG's Plant Sale at the Turf Grass Institute.

Milestones

New MGiTs

Ottawa-Carleton - Julie Chartrand, Catherine Disley-Engler, Julianne Labreche, Danielle Lefebvre, Ann McQuillan

North Bay – Vicki Doucette, Carol Gough.

Peterborough – Marg Higgins, Joanne Windrem

Sarnia/Lambton –Maggie Hatfield

Completed the Certification Exam

Lanark County – Lorri MacKay

New MG's

Durham – Elizabeth Cook, Pam Love

Halton Region – Karen Walsh

5 Years

Peterborough & Area – Gladys Fowler, Sally Rye, Cathy Tapner, Mary Witalis

15 Years

North Bay – Adrian van der Bijl

Brantford –Irma Nicolle

20 Years

Brantford –Ivy Johnson

North Bay – Helen McCombie

Emeritus

Brantford –Ivy Johnson

In Memoriam:

Halton Region – Walter Anderson – a Master Gardener for over 10 years.

Essex-Windsor – James Meredith – MG Emeritus