# Inside MGOI

*Master Gardeners of Ontario Newsletter*

### *MGOI Board Members*

| | |
|---|---|
| President: | Anne Craig, Peterborough |
| Past President: | Karen Sciuk, Waterloo Region |
| Vice President: | Vacant |
| Corporate Secretary: | Lynda Bobinski, Thunder Bay |
| Treasurer: | Susie Cosack, Simcoe |
| Director of Communications: | Ruth Treloar, Haliburton County |
| Director of Education: | Kate Sault, Halton |
| Director of Events: | Isia Yeo, Durham |
| Director of Membership: | Lois Johnson, Niagara |
| Director of Operations: | Dianne Wheler, Tri-County |
| Director of Marketing: | Elizabeth Stewart, Toronto |
| Director of Partnerships: | Sean Patchett, Muskoka |
| Director of Central Region: | Linda Gordon, Etobicoke |
| Director of East Region: | Rebecca Last-Guenette, Ottawa-Carleton |
| Director of North Region: | Gail Cocker, Simcoe County |
| Director of South & West Region: | Lynne Goulet-Smith, Grand Erie |
| Advisor to the Board: | Rhonda Grein, Waterloo Region |

### *Committee Members*

Webmaster: Sabine Behnk, Waterloo sabine.behnk@icloud.com
Newsletter Editor: Isabel Belanger, Halton newsletter@mgoi.ca
Membership Database, Exams & Certificates: MJ Pilgrim, Peterborough database@mgoi.ca
Badges & Pins: Lois Johnson, Niagara supplies@mgoi.ca
MGOI Wear: Lynn Goulet-Smith, Grand Erie
Twitter: Dale Odorizzi, Lanark County
Facebook: Claudette Sims, Halton & Cathy Kavassalis, Halton
Manager, MG Participation in the CNE & RWF: Kate Sault, Halton

## April 2026 Newsletter

### *Inside This Issue*


***Master Gardeners***

- Milestones
- Update—Newsletter Working Group
- Book Recommendation
- Master Gardeners Out & About
- Upcoming Events
- Resources—Oak Wilt Disease/Spotted Lantern Fly/CCIPR Links/CFIA Digital Toolkit/CFIA Seeds Alert

***MGOI***

- Board Vacancy: VP


*Welcome to the April edition of Inside MGOI, the Master Gardeners of Ontario, Inc. (MGOI) newsletter. Our goal is to be a voice for Master Gardeners, a venue for providing insights and the inside scoop from MGOI Board & Committee members. It also features updates from the 28 Master Gardener groups throughout Ontario, including member milestones, group projects and activities, short member profiles, and upcoming events such as webinars/conferences/technical updates/plant sales/open gardens—essentially anything about the functioning and happenings of our groups and our members. Please feel free to submit pictures—they are most welcome!*

*We are looking for fresh ideas and inspiration for meaningful change for this newsletter. Contributions to the newsletter, and inspirational ideas may be sent at any time to these coordinates:*
*Isabel Belanger, Newsletter Editor, newsletter@mgoi.ca.*

## Durham Master Gardeners

**15 Year Anniversary**
Karen Durnin
Isia Yeo

**5 Year Anniversary**
Lindsay Code

*by Norine Blythe*
Durham's March in-person meeting gave us many wonderful reasons to celebrate and recognize some truly outstanding members. We proudly presented 15-year pins to Karen Durnin and Isia Yeo—an incredible milestone.

*Karen*

Both Karen and Isia have been tremendous assets to DMG over the years, known for their exceptional presentation skills and dedication. I also had the great honour of having Karen as my mentor, for which I am truly grateful. Thank you, Karen!

Isia has likewise been a valued mentor to many MGiTs over the years. Both Karen and Isia are always willing to share their knowledge and support fellow team members. Karen and Isia, congratulations—and thank you for everything you have contributed to DMG!

We also celebrated Lindsay Code, who was presented with her 5-year pin. Lindsay has been a tremendous asset as well, actively serving on the executive in a variety of roles, most recently in Membership.

We at DMG are truly grateful to have such inspiring and dedicated women in our group. Congratulations to you all!

## Guelph-Wellington Master Gardeners

**20 Year Anniversary**
Margaret Stewart

**15 Year Anniversary**
Mary Ellen Pyear

**10 Year Anniversary**
Pat Van Benthem

**5 Year Anniversaries**
Rosemary Fernandes-Walker
Claudia McConnell
Sharon Zadorozny
Dorthea Stephan
Janine Robertson
Lyanne Schlichter

**Master Gardener Status Achieved**
Barbara Freuler

Congratulations all!

## Master Gardeners of Ottawa-Carleton

**Master Gardener Status Achieved**
Pauline Yelle

Pauline received her Master Gardener certificate at the March 26 meeting. She is a regular participant at advice tables and a busy member of the continuing education programing team.

*Pauline (left) with MGOCs co-coordinators Odette McIntyre (Pauline's mentor) and Belinda Boekhoven*
*Photo by Tong Zhao-Ansari*

## Niagara Master Gardeners

**35 Year Anniversary**
Becky Fox

**25 Year Anniversary**
Jennifer Qusen

**15 Year Anniversary**
Pat Bowman

Three Niagara Master Gardeners received anniversary pins at recent meetings. Big congratulations to Pat, Beckie, and Jennifer!

*Jennifer Qusen, right, accepts her 25-year pin from Lois Johnson at our April meeting*

*Pat Bowman, left, marked 15 years and Beckie Fox, right, received her 35-year pin from Lois Johnson at our March meet*

To mark the occasion Beckie Fox wrote a piece, below.

***by Beckie Fox***
For the past 35+ years, I've been fortunate to balance a career in garden writing and editing with volunteering for two MG groups.

When I joined Lake Simcoe South Master Gardeners in 1989, I was creating a new garden in Unionville and beginning a new job helping to launch *Canadian Gardening* magazine. LSSMG was new, too, with only seven or eight members, covering a vast area north of Toronto in hardiness Zones 4, 5 and 6.

Most of the volunteer events centred around advice clinics at fall agricultural fairs. One of the questions on my first shift as a new MG was "How many ears of corn grow on one stalk?" Being raised in a city, I didn't have a clue. And, at that time, there were no cell phones with Google to help me out. Obviously, I still had a lot to learn.

And I'm still learning at Master Gardeners Niagara, which I joined when we moved to Niagara-on-the-Lake in 2002. Another garden (Zone 7!) began, and then a new gardening magazine followed — *Garden Making*, which my husband and I created and published for eight years.

Like everything in the world, how we receive information and share it has changed dramatically, but what hasn't are the meaningful connections MGs continue to make through our shared love of gardening, desire to help others, and willingness to speak up and make a strong case for best gardening practices and what that entails.

Back in the 80s, pretty, ornamental gardens were often the main goal. Now, Master Gardeners' efforts have broadened to emphasize gardening choices and practices that will help preserve plant, insect, bird, water and soil health, while still enjoying beautiful, thriving gardens. I'm happy to still be a part of this journey—learning, sharing and encouraging.

## We Need Your Help!

MGOI is run for and by Master Gardeners. If you would like to contribute, in a big way, by joining the board in the future or in a smaller way by helping with a special project, please let us know. You can reach out to your group coordinator or directly to me at President@MGOI.ca. Thank you.

*Anne Craig (Peterborough & Area)*
*President, MGOI*

## *Newsletter Working Group-Update*

**Working Group**

We have a newsletter working group team! Our 1st meeting was held via Zoom on March 30th. Members include:

*Hariette Henry, Halton*
*Mary-Lyn Hopper, Niagara*
*Deirdre Walsh, Mississauga*
*Leslie Ferguson, Etobicoke*
*Isabel Belanger, Halton*

**Next Steps**

Watch for a questionnaire asking for your input on improving the newsletter, modernizing and making it more relevant. We expect the questionnaire to go out in May.

Any and all ideas are welcome at any time. Please contact me at: newsletter@mgoi.ca.

*Isabel Belanger, Editor*

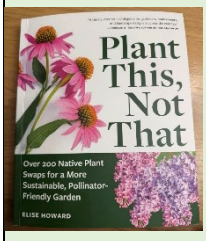
---

## CCIPR

*Learn More & Do More*

- Link to the 2026 Invasive Species Forum, February 17-19: https://www.invasivespeciescentre.ca/events/invasive-species-forum/
- Check out Cathy Kavassilis' speech at the forum, "Gardens That Give Back" (starts at 19:07): https://www.youtube.com/live/1rUKu_HBTgU?t=1145s
- Link to the CCIPR website: https://ccipr.ca/
- CCIPR Facebook page link: https://www.facebook.com/groups/1503444570040194
- Join our growing number of CCIPR supporters

---




**Book Recommendation**

MG Karen Newark, Simcoe County recommends 'Plant This, Not That'. Hot off the press (end of March), the book suggests native alternatives to invasive and non-native plants to support local biodiversity and reduce damage to our ecosystems. (Although American, maps for different species extend into Canada as well). It is available in paperback and Kindle on Amazon for $29. or try local bookstores.

## ***Board Vacancy—Vice President (VP)***

*The VP Position is currently vacant. MGOI is looking for 1 or 2 VPs to support the President.*

https://www.etsy.com/market/funny_vice_president

**This position entails:**

- ***Supporting and working closely with the President***
- ***Monitoring the progress of the organization's goals and objectives***
- ***Reviewing information submitted in Annual Reviews and in the Annual Report to recognize achievements, share best practices, and identify potential areas of concern***
- ***Assisting Directors in resolving areas of concern, potentially bringing them to the attention of the Board of Directors***
- ***Working with the Director of Membership and others to fill vacant Board positions***
- ***Assuming the duties of the President in her absence; succeeds the President***

If you are interested in this position, or would like further information, please contact Anne Craig, President @: President@MGOI.ca.

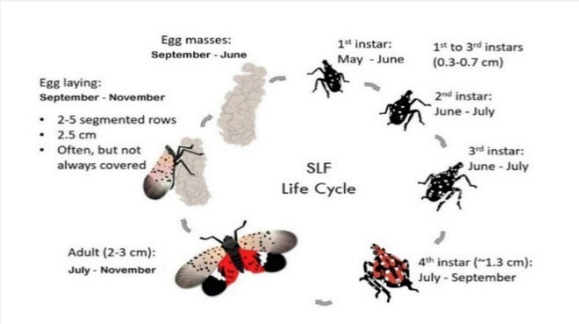
## Spotted Lanternfly

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) has reported sightings of spotted lanternfly (SLF) in southwestern Ontario in 2025, and again in March 2026, but has not confirmed any established populations in Canada. Spotted lanternfly is an invasive planthopper and federally regulated pest that threatens Ontario's agricultural sector.

If you think you have found a spotted lanternfly, please ensure you follow these steps: ♣ Snap it: Take clear photos of the specimen ♣ Kill and/or catch it: If you are able, collect the specimen or squish it and put it in a sealable container such as a small jar, vial or plastic bag. Live specimens can be placed in a freezer to be killed. Retaining the sample is important so that a positive identification can be made. ♣ Report it: Collect as much information as possible such as your accurate location and report the find to the CFIA. Information on **Spotted Lanternfly** is available here:

https://inspection.canada.ca/en/plant-health/invasive-pests-and-plants/insects/spotted-lanternfly

https://www.ontario.ca/page/spotted-lanternfly-prevention-practices-producers




## Oak Wilt Disease

Temperatures are rising, and we are now in Oak Wilt Disease season. **Reminder – Do Not Prune Oak Trees (*Quercus* spp.) from April 1st until December:** winter pruning when the tree is dormant needs to be the new norm.

Oak Wilt (*Bretziella fagacearum*) is a fungal disease that can kill oak trees within one year. Red oaks are particularly susceptible.

The pathogen that causes oak wilt is present in the Ontario environment, and prevention is key. All ages and sizes of oak trees are susceptible. Read more here: https://onnurserycrops.wordpress.com/2024/04/02/reminder-no-pruning-oaks-from-now-until-november/#more-6673.

Pathways by which oak wilt can spread include:

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

Learn more about oak wilt at: ontario.ca/page/oak-wilt.

Visit Facebook at: #ScienceON #InvasiveSpecies #ForestResearch #ForestHealth.

Canada's oak wilt response framework is available through the CFIA: https://inspection.canada.ca/en/plant-health/invasive-species/plant-diseases/oak-wilt/response-framework

# Master Gardeners Out & About

***Projects & Events***

## Halton Master Gardeners

**Name: Sustainable Milton Future House Show**

**Details:** On March 28, 2026, Halton Region Master Gardeners participated in Sustainable Milton's Future House Show. Sustainable Milton works to reduce the impacts of climate change in the Milton area through community engagement, education, and advocacy. The Future House Show focuses on products and strategies to achieve these goals. Representing Halton Master Gardeners were Christina Bilobrk, Carol Tuck-Riggs, Kate Sault, Trish Moraghan, and Janet Padiak. Topics of interest included native plants, vegetable gardening, rain gardens and invasive species control.

*From left to right, MGs Trish Moraghan, Kate Sault, and Carol Tuck-Riggs*

## Thunder Bay & District Master Gardeners

**Name: Lunch & Learn Presentation on Composting & Fertilizers**

**Details:** The lunch and learn presentation for employees at the local Canadian Mental Health Association this past March was well attended.

The presentation focused mainly on "hot composting" but also touched on vermicomposting, bokashi, and pit composting. Emphasis was placed on the benefits of adding compost to your garden soil and the differences between organic and synthetic fertilizers.

Shown here are MGs Hedy Koski and Jack Van Gemeren holding items that can be added to a compost.

A few weeks later, Hedy gave the same presentation in Nipigon at the local library for an enthusiastic group of gardeners. Nipigon is a small community about an hour north-east of Thunder Bay.

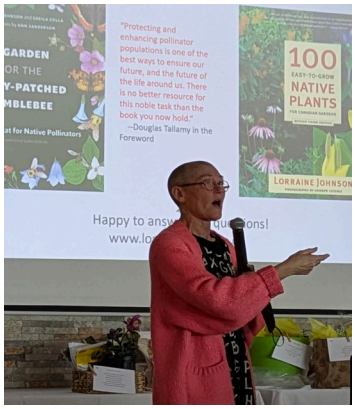
*Jack and Hedy*

*Hedy at the Nipigon Library*

## Guelph-Wellington Master Gardeners

**Name: Day In The Garden— February 28**

**Details:** We had a record attendance of 130 participants! Our speakers – Lorraine Johnson, Sean James and Matt Soltys – were a big hit this year with loads of valuable information and tips for sustainable gardening.




*Lorraine Johnson*

*Sean James*

*MGs Lee Anne Lennox, left & Esther Reid*

*Matt Soltys*

*Registration—MGs Bob Newman & Sharon Leggett*

*Demo—Dividing Dahlias with MG Danielle Gignac*

*Artist Vendor*

## Grand Erie Master Gardeners

*by MG Laura Rodger*

We participated in SO many events this month!

### Workshop 1: "Back to Basics - And Beyond!"

The photo below is of our workshop today (April 19th), the first of five workshops in our "Back to Basics - And Beyond!" workshop series, held at Birds Canada Headquarters in Port Rowan. The next workshop will take place on Sunday May 24th.

*From left to right: Lindsay Leitch, Dylan Cowan, Kevin Kavanagh, Lynne Goulet-Smith, Carolyn Bennett, Kimberly Hutten, Erin Casey and Laura Rodger*

### Brant Plant's Earth Day

Over 1000 trees were planted within one hour at Brant Plant's Earth Day on April 18th! The Grand Erie Master Gardeners were happy to participate.

*Left to Right: MGs Lynne Goulet-Smith and Kim Hutten, and MGiT Liz Hopkins*

### Bite for Brant

The Grand Erie Master Gardeners volunteered at Bite for Brant on April 14th and 15th.

*From left to right: MG Marilyn Park & MGiTs Liz Hopkins, Betty Goodfellow, Amy Sandy*

*From left to right: Retired MG Eva Koehler, MG Alex Kucharew, MG Marilyn Park, MGiT Betty Goodfellow*

### Haldimand Horticultural Society's Seed & Garden Show

Grand Erie Master Gardeners were present and gave out advice at the Haldimand Horticultural Society's Seed & Garden Show on April 11th.

*From left to right: Alex Kucharew, Georgia McCormick, Amy Sandy, Betty Goodfellow, Erin Casey, Liz Hopkins, Marilyn Park, Kevin Kavanagh, Dylan Cowan.*
*Missing: Lynne Goulet-Smith*

**Talks**
MGiT Erin Casey of The Garlic Shed gave a talk to the Port Dover & Woodhouse Horticultural Society on April 16th.

MGiT Carolyn Bennett gave a talk on *Gardening for Birds* on April 18th in front of an audience of 130 people at the St. Thomas and District Horticultural Society during their annual District 10 AGM.

## Peterborough Master Gardeners

**Name: Seedy Sunday Apsley**
**Details:** On March 29th Peterborough Master Gardeners were front and centre at Apsley's Seedy Sunday, doing two presentations (thank you Jennifer Guertin and Carol Ireland). Also on hand at our advice table were Mary-K Dunn, Sylvia Green and one of the organizers, Silvia Strobl.

*L to R: Silvia Green, Carol Ireland, Jennifer Guertin, Mary K Dunn on the seed exchange, answering questions*

**Name: Seeding Workshops at Millbrook Library**
**Details:** Joan Harding and Christine Freeburn held seeding workshops at the Millbrook Library on April 8th and 11th.

Explaining the importance of good soil, the right containers, proper light and water, they demonstrated how to plant and grow vegetable seeds successfully. Participants left with cell paks of planted seeds and much enthusiasm to grow their own food.

*Christine Freeburn (red apron, back) with the group at the Millbrook Library*

*Joan Harding getting everyone organized at Millbrook Library Seeding Workshop*

**Name: Houseplant Social**
**Details:** PMG had an advice table at the Houseplant Social held at the Peterborough Golf & Country Club on April 12. The event was very busy and lots of questions were asked and answered by our PMGs – Jennifer Guertin, Brandi McNeely, Carol Ireland, Gladys Fowler and Christine Freeburn. Many questions were on houseplants, but people also asked about starting plants from seed, perennial division and controlling invasives.

*Gladys Fowler, left & Jenn Guertin at the Houseplant Social*

## Master Gardeners of Ottawa-Carleton

### Out & About—March 22-April 21

**Advice Table**
The outdoor season opener took place at the unusually warm and sunny Centretown Earth Day Festival on April 18. More than 50 participants posed questions, many about balcony gardening.

*MGs Barbara Long, left and Adair Heuchan fielded questions. Photo by Barbara Sibbald, the table coordinator.*

**Talks**
The joint MGOC/Friends of the Central Experiment Farm lecture series continued on March 31 with "Cold frames and cold crops – extending the season" by Odette McIntyre, and on April 14 with "Growing unusual edibles: successes, failures and learnings" with Claire McCaughey.

There is one more lecture in the series. See: https://friendsofthefarm.ca/fcef-annual-events/master-gardener-lectures/2026-master-gardener-lectures/

This was a fertile month for MGOC talks. Nancy McDonald spoke on April 1 to the Greely Garden Club on "Culinary herbs, easy to grow, delicious and nutritious!" Lee Ann Smith delivered her presentation "High performance, low maintenance plants" on April 7 to the Kanata-March Horticultural Society.

Two lectures were delivered at the Ottawa Cottage Life and Backyard Show: on April 10, Rebecca Last spoke on "Waterwise gardening" and Joanne McRae delivered a talk on April 11 entitled "Growing vegetables at the cottage – yes you can!" Mary Reid ventured to the Kemptville Horticultural Society to deliver her talk "Shrubs for All Seasons" on April 15. Nancy McDonald presented "Paint with blooms" twice this month – to the Nepean Horticultural Society on April 16 and to the Merrickville Historical Society on April 21. "Wildscaping: wild planting in a strong design" was the topic of Lee Ann Smith's talk to the Russell and District Horticultural Society on April 20. And Barbara Sibbald brought "Notes on a Japanese Garden" to the Stittsville Goulbourn Horticultural Society on April 21.

**Forget for a Moment Foundation**
invited MGOC to attend the opening of *The Creativity of Plants* at the Ottawa Art Gallery on April 21. In collaboration with Artists for Plants, this international digital art exhibition featured the work of 31 artists from 21 countries, selected by an international jury. The exhibition explored the extraordinary survival strategies, adaptability, and intelligence of the plant world, inviting the public to reflect on the resilience of plants — past, present, and future — and their essential role in sustaining ecological balance.

**New Fact Sheets**
Three new fact sheets have been posted online: Mycorrhizae, Squirrels and Rabbits, and Tool Maintenance.

## Niagara Master Gardeners

### Name: Grimsby Wetlands, April meeting

**Details**: Niagara MGs had a fascinating tour (via PowerPoint) of the Grimsby Wetlands at our April meeting. Bruce MacKenzie, coordinator of the wetlands, told us the thriving habitat is a haven for turtles, muskrat and many types of birds, and has trails and observation areas so humans can enjoy the space too.

Bruce and his wife Laura have both worked tirelessly alongside others to rehabilitate the 12-hectare area on the south shore of Lake Ontario that was previously a series of sewage lagoons made redundant in 2000, and before that a farm.

In 2002, the Hamilton Naturalists Club stepped in and negotiated to save the area from development. A massive effort to clear invasive species such as phragmites, cow parsley and buckthorn has made the area much more hospitable. Native species have been planted instead, along with structures for birds and other creatures to make homes in.

This beautiful wildlife haven is well worth a visit. You can read more at the Hamilton Naturalists website.

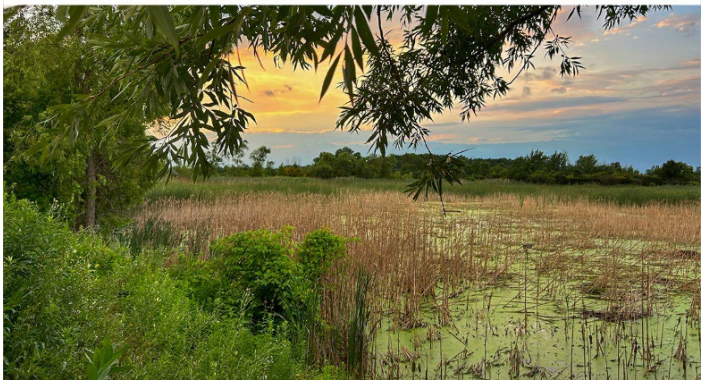


*Photo top, painted turtles lounge on a log. Below, green duckweed on the pond surface offers nutritious food for birds at Grimsby Wetlands. Photos by Niagara MG Eva Weber*

*Canvasback ducks enjoy a paddle at Grimsby Wetlands, in a photo by Mike Veltri*

**Name: Library Presentation**
**Details**: Niagara MG Betty Knight did a presentation called *Diggin' the Dirt* at the Welland Library recently, offering advice on good gardening practices, nourishing the soil and protecting pollinator habitat.

## London Middlesex Master Gardeners

### Seedy Saturday

Our annual Seedy Saturday was held on Saturday, March 7th. It was a record success, with over 50 vendors and 1,375 attendees! Despite the lack of kitchen facilities, St. Anne's Church was able to steadily produce snacks and goodies.

Our local speakers (Andrew Fleet of Growing Chefs, Brenda Gallagher of Upper Thames Conservation Authority, and MG Ann Marie Allen) gave their perspectives on a variety of gardening issues.

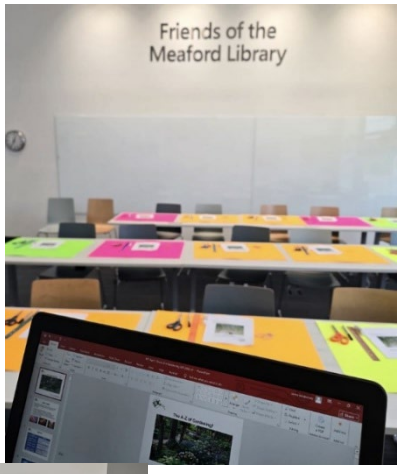
The new free shuttle bus and alternate parking lot were a great help in relieving pressure on parking at the venue.

Seedy Saturday chair Catherine McInerney would like to thank the SS committee and volunteers for helping to make this a successful day.

*(L to R) Karen Newark, Carole Warren, Vicky Thompson and Jen Deeks*

**"The A to Z of Gardening"**

MGs Ann Joyner and Jenna Vandermay led this first in a series of 3 classes called "The A to Z of Gardening". The picture below shows the room laid out for participants to work on dream boards as a first step towards their dream gardens.




**Meetings**

*March meeting:*

We had a virtual meeting in March to allow speakers from father afield. We hosted Graham Buck from Tallgrass Ontario; we learned about different types of prairie native to southwestern Ontario and its advantages.

*April Meeting:*

The program coordinator for Reforest London, a local charity that is re-populating the city with trees, presented on the value of forests.

*MG Ann Joyner speaking*
*Photo: Jenna Vandermay*

## Grey County Master Gardeners

### Grey County MGs Out & About

### Gardeners in Residence - Meaford Library

MGs Karen Newark, Carole Warren, Vicky Thompson and Jen Deeks were at the Meaford Library and provided free packets of seed, seed snail samples, and advice.

**Wiarton Seedy Saturday**
MGs Susan Cox, Karen Newark and Carole Warren supplied free seeds, demonstrated examples of seed starting and seed viability, and provided advice to local gardeners.

*Seated are MGs Susan Cox, left and Karen Newark speaking with new MGiT Lesley Radman*
*Photo: Carole Warren*

*Susan Cox demonstrates how you can test for seed viability by having seeds float/sink in a jar of water*

**Grown in Grey**
"Grown in Grey" is a two-day program designed to engage and involve Grade 5 students from Grey County in agriculture and ag-related topics.

*New MGiT Meriel Bradley*

Our presentation focuses on the parts of the plant, specifically the parts that we eat.

*Meriel Bradley with interested participants*

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Grey County Master Gardeners

**Name: Owen Sound Gardeners in Residence Programs**
**Dates:** Programs began in March and run monthly except for July, August & December.

- ~~March (24th) - Seed starting~~
- ~~April - Transplanting, Repotting & Dividing~~
- May - Using Ornamental Grasses in your Landscape
- June - Edible Container Gardening
- September - Rethinking Your Garden
- October - Bulbs and Tubers
- November - Gardening Tools

**Details:** More information can be found at the Owen Sound & North Grey Union Public Library in Owen Sound. Photos and details to follow!

## Guelph-Wellington Master Gardeners

**Name: Annual Plant Sale**
**Date & Time:** May 16, 2026 from 9 am-1 pm
**Place:** Harcourt United Church, 87 Dean Ave., Guelph
**Details:** Perennials, shrubs, trees, veggies, native & pollinator plants will all be available.

---

## Halton Master Gardeners

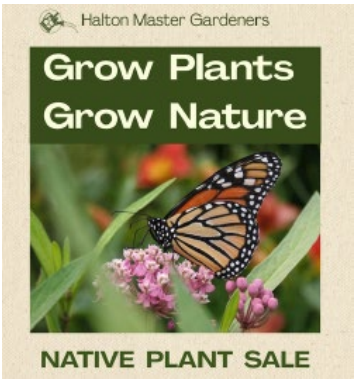
**Name: Monarch Awards 2026**
**Dates:** May 15 – June 27
Applications open May 15 and close June 27 and are open to gardeners who rent or own a home within the municipality of Hamilton. Selected gardens will be visited by Monarch Award teams between July 13 and August 27, with award recipients announced in September. Every pollinator-friendly garden makes a difference - consider applying!
**Zoom Call:** Thursday, May 14th at 7 p.m. Join us on **ZOOM** to learn how your garden can support biodiversity — and be recognized for it! **REGISTER HERE**
**Details:** The Monarch Awards celebrate and support Hamilton area gardeners who are helping create habitat for pollinators. If your front yard garden includes native plants like milkweed and provides food and shelter for butterflies, bees, and other wildlife, this is your chance to be recognized.

The program started in Hamilton in 2017 and became part of Halton Master Gardeners in 2025. It is hoped that additional nearby communities will be included in future years. The mission of the program is: *To educate, inspire and acknowledge gardeners who create sustainable gardens that provide shelter, nesting sites and food sources for native flora and fauna.*

The aim is to guide participants along a continuum to more ecologically beneficial practises. Participants receive recognition for the work they have done as they progress from the Good Start level, through Chrysalis and Caterpillar levels, to finally becoming recipients of a Monarch Award. At this point their gardens exemplify ecological gardening practices.

---

**Name: Native Plant Sale**
**Date & Time:** June 6, 2026 – 9:30am-1pm
**Location:** Dundurn Castle – Pavillion, 610 York Blvd., Hamilton, ON
**Details:** Beautiful, locally grown plants:




- Perennials: 2” × 5” plugs — $7.50 each
- Shrubs & Trees (1 gallon) — from $16.00
- Ctrl+Click PLANT LIST for plant listings, and VIEW ‘Planting Native Plant Plugs”—**PLANT LIST**

**Shopping Details:**
- Cash or e-transfer ONLY
- Pick up ONLY
- Bring your own box, bag or containers

---

## Garden Journeys/Open Days 2026

**Date:** August 8 - 9 & 14 - 16
**Details:** Garden Journeys Open Days is an opportunity to visit beautiful gardens across the City of Hamilton. Free to the public, gardens will be open for visitors, and gardeners will be available to discuss their own journey to eco-friendly gardening, from first steps to fully mature gardens.
**Hamilton Area Gardeners:** If you are working towards a biodiverse eco-friendly garden, **consider applying to be a host gardener.** It is a wonderful way to inspire members of the public and to meet other like-minded gardeners to exchange ideas.
**Out-of-Towners:** Are you curious about gardens that support biodiversity and our ecosystem? Are you taking steps to build your own nature-friendly garden? Want some garden inspiration and practical ideas for gardens that are both beautiful and sustainable? These free open gardens are worth the trip to Hamilton!
**Questions:** Email us at:
gardenjourneysopendays@gmail.com

---

## Grand Erie Master Gardeners

**Coming up: Workshop #2**
**Location:**
115 Front Road, Port Rowan
**Time:** 1-4pm

**Stay Tuned:** Lots of upcoming events planned with more information to come!

---

## Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA)

### CFIA Digital Toolkit

The CFIA is looking for help and expertise to engage Canadians on how we can successfully keep Canada's natural landscape, bountiful plants, and beautiful gardens healthy and protected against the threat of invasive species. The CFIA has developed a user-friendly **digital toolkit** full of outreach materials in both English and French, including posters, social media messaging and images, and more.

This toolkit includes extensive material on invasive species. Please use these and share freely. Feel free to bug us if you have any questions or would like to discuss opportunities to work together! Please contact:
***Maria Kubacki, Manager / Gestionnaire***
Marketing and partnerships / Marketing et partenariats
Communications and Public Affairs Branch / Direction générale des communications et affaires publiques
Canadian Food Inspection Agency / Agence canadienne d'inspection des aliments
Government of Canada / Gouvernement du Canada
**343-542-3856 / Maria.kubacki@inspection.gc.ca**

---

## CFIA Seeds Alert

**Canadians are urged to connect with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) before sending seeds abroad.** As Canada's plant health regulator, the CFIA plays an important role in making sure seeds from Canada meet internationally agreed upon regulations. There have been notifications of non-compliance from foreign countries about seeds exported from Canada without proper phytosanitary (plant health) certification. Seeds can potentially be invasive in some countries or spread plant diseases or other pests. Not meeting requirements has consequences such as the destination country destroying the seeds and issuing Canada a notice of non-compliance. All seeds, including those in small packets for gardeners, must comply with the import requirements of the destination country.

Please share this information with the Canadian public to increase awareness of the steps to take when shipping or exporting seeds to protect international plant resources, our economy and the environment.

The CFIA has spokespeople available for interviews, people who are experts in plant health imports and exports. CFIA experts are also willing to write and submit a piece if that is of interest. Please contact us if you have any questions: Media Relations, Canadian Food Inspection Agency / Government of Canada: cfia.media.acia@inspection.gc.ca; Tel: 613-773-6600

**Follow:** Facebook | X | YouTube | LinkedIn | Instagram