

The Greenleaf Newsletter

Oshawa Garden Club



November /
December
2024

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Cover photo (Aster) by
Rose Mary Mason

Submission deadline
for Jan/Feb
newsletter: Dec 10



The Oshawa Garden Club (OGC) is an active member of District 17 of the Ontario Horticultural Association (OHA)



President's Message

Our gardens are winding down for the year but there is still beauty to be found out there. It's a great time to sit among the falling leaves and ponder improvements for next spring. I find I have to write it down in a notebook or I will forget! Notes also help me remember which friends want cuttings of what, and what new seedlings can be potted up in spring for the plant sale.

Our final meeting of the year is November 11. We have our Annual General Meeting (AGM) and election of board members. It's also a time to celebrate our numerous volunteers for our various projects and our meetings. We are bringing back our vendors for the meeting so come early to peruse their wares.

Our first two meetings of the year are definitely on zoom but we haven't quite decided as to whether to hold the March meeting in person. The weather can be iffy. We have had opinions for both in person and zoom. Perhaps we can have a vote of yes or no which can guide the Board decision. Also, filling in Alison's questionnaire helps with meeting and event planning. It is your club!

I hope lots of you have signed up to help with the Christmas wrapping in December to support Hearth Place.

Meanwhile until the new year, enjoy the rest of fall and the festive season.

Yours in gardening,

*Jill Snape,
Oshawa Garden Club President*



Photo by Rose Mary Mason

The Greenleaf Newsletter

Oshawa Garden Club

The Greenleaf is a newsletter of the Oshawa Garden Club.

President:
Jill Snape

Newsletter Editor:
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Location of Meetings:
38 Lviv Blvd, Oshawa
Doors open at 7:00 pm
Meetings start 7:30 pm

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oshawagardenclub.ca

Facebook:
"Friends of the
Oshawa Garden Club"



November Meeting at LVIV Hall

Oshawa Garden Club Annual General Meeting (AGM)

Monday November 11, 2024, 7:30 p.m.
Doors open at 7:00 p.m.

Join us for our AGM and celebration of volunteers. Yes, there will be cake in honour of all that our volunteers do for our club and our community! Bring a mug.

This year our vendors will be back, displaying their products for purchase. We will also have our exchange table. Bring items to exchange and please remember to take with you any items not picked up by the end of the meeting.

The all-important business part of the meeting will include election of Directors and reports from the outgoing Executive. It's really important that we have enough members present to satisfy quorum so come out and have some fun while attending our AGM!



Photo Contest Results

By Cecile Willert

At our October meeting, several of our members submitted photos and everyone present at the meeting had the opportunity to vote on the submitted photos. The winning photo will be displayed on our bookmarks for the 2025 calendar year. Congratulations to Ann Couch who submitted the winning photo of a tiger swallowtail butterfly.

A total of 17 photos were submitted and 59 votes were cast with 23 votes for the winning photo. Selected photos will be displayed in upcoming issues of our newsletter. Thanks to everyone who contributed! Those who submitted printed photos can pick them up at the November meeting.

Upcoming Meetings and Events:

November 11 - Annual General Meeting and Volunteer Appreciation

December - No meeting

January 13, February 10 - winter meetings will be held online



Photo by Rose Mary Mason

St. Anne's Pollinator Garden (also known as Gulfstream Pollinator Garden)

Article by Alison Babin

In 2021-2022 St. Anne's Catholic School located in north Oshawa put together to a plan to plant a native garden to support pollinators (bees, butterflies, moths, wasps, flies, bats etc). They got permission to plant on city property, and received support from TD Friends of the Environment. The students at the school provided input on the design of the garden and suggested plants. In collaboration with the City of Oshawa the garden was dug and plants were planted in October of 2022 and St. Anne's was designated a Beeschool under the Beecity Canada banner.



Photo by Alison Babin

Some of the wonderful plants include goldenrods, asters, Canada anemone, columbine, hairy beardtongue, showy tick trefoil, woodland sunflowers and milkweeds. All are very important food sources for insects, especially as the school is in a new subdivision that has little to offer for native food. The adage goes that the first year, native plants sleep (energy is focused on growing roots, not much to see above ground). The second year they creep, and the third year they leap! So, planted in October 2022, in 2023 the plants slept, and in 2024 they crept. I cannot wait to see them in 2025 when they will have leapt.

The above photo was taken on October 8 2024, just after the walkway weed blitz.

In early 2024, the teacher in charge of the garden reached out to the Oshawa Garden Club for help with the garden as she was changing positions. In April we had our first meeting with the school, and started working in the garden in May. The original proposal was for us to help out by providing hands-on learning experiences in the outdoor garden, and help direct care and maintenance of the garden; however, our one experience with this educational component was chaotic! The kids were very enthusiastic and exuberant and had a terrific time; however, the plants were a little trampled. At this point we wound up doing all the weeding and maintenance of the garden ourselves. To date, our volunteers have invested over 149 hours on this project, including a very successful weed blitz on Saturday October 5.

Moving forward, the school's ECO team will be working on a plan to coordinate the in-class curriculum with educational experiences in the garden. And the school is reaching out to the parents to get them involved in garden maintenance as well. *(Continued next page)*

St. Anne's Pollinator Garden continued

Two of our club members are David Suzuki Butterflyway Rangers and are extending their expertise to the school to help organize this program from the garden side.

This picture from September 15 of this year is of 3 teachers from the school, and club member volunteers Judy, Mary, Alison, Anne and Ann. (Photo taken by a student at St. Anne's). Oshawa City horticulturalist Mark is also included. We are standing in front of banks of goldenrod!



On October 5 we did a weed blitz of the walkway to remove dandelions, thistles, and other wayward greenery. Nine club members and a student and parent from the school came out to dig. It looks amazing now!

We are hoping that next year the school will take more of the reins of this project, and the year after they will be in charge of the whole thing. This garden is very significant for the native plants and pollinators, and will provide a place for them to thrive.

There is very real potential for this to become a blueprint for other schools in the Durham Catholic District school board. And isn't that exciting?

We will be looking for more volunteers for next year, approximately April to October. If you are interested, please let me know at ababin32@hotmail.com. This year we were going on Fridays at noon. It may or may not be same for next year.



Here are some of the volunteers from the weed blitz. (Photo by Rose Mary Mason)

Plant Spotlight: Friend or Foe?

Article and photos by Rose Mary Mason

I found a volunteer plant in my garden. It was five feet tall before I noticed it growing in my Culver's Root. *Bidens Frondosa* is an annual, native to North America, in the aster family. It has many colourful, descriptive names such as Devil's Beggarticks, Devil's Pitchfork, Devil's Bootjack, Stickights, Bur Marigold, Pitchfork Weed and Tickseed Sunflower. Its red stem evokes devil imagery and its tendency to leave sticky seeds that resemble a two-pronged pitchfork or a bootjack on fur and clothes enable its spread far and wide.

I waited patiently for the yellow flower buds to open, only to find that it doesn't have petals but a burr like head. The leaves turned a deep shade of burgundy before I pulled it out, only to be covered in its barbs. Considered invasive in New Zealand but listed as a wildflower in our part of the world, it brought a splash of colour to the garden, entertained some pollinators and I removed it (hopefully) before it dispersed too many of its seeds!



Submission Deadline for January/February Newsletter: December 10th.

Questionnaire Feedback from September Meeting

By Alison Babin

Thank you to everyone who responded to the “surprise” questionnaire at the September meeting. There were some very lovely comments from members, thank you! We want to share some of the love with our membership:

- Thank you very much for your dedication and for all the work you do!
- I appreciate...all the aspects of the monthly meeting that make them so meaningful and enjoyable
- I enjoy the garden tours
- I am pleased with the variety of topics presented by our speakers

Most of the feedback indicated people are interested in attending potluck evenings, perhaps themed ones such as chili night, dessert night, sweet and savoury night etc. Those that attended the strawberry social enjoyed it and want it brought back permanently. And lots of the responses say people are interested in workshops and demonstrations, especially making seasonal flower arrangements such as Christmas wreaths and/or swags. Everyone seems happy with the speakers, several suggested specific topics they would like to hear about. There was a suggestion to partner more with local schools to get youth involvement. We are actively involved with one school, St. Anne's in north Oshawa. Stay tuned for an update on how that is going!

Thank you again to everyone who responded to the questionnaire. The same one was provided at the October meeting so more feedback will follow. Think about what you want your Oshawa Garden Club to be/do/look like! Feedback is always welcome.

Time to Renew!

It's time once again to renew your membership with the Oshawa Garden Club. Renew online by visiting the website (oshawagardenclub.ca), or in person at our November meeting. We've got a great line up of speakers and events coming up!



Photo by Rose Mary Mason

Backyard Creatures

Article and Photos by Rose Mary Mason

I love the animal entertainment that my backyard provides.

The rabbit who stands statue still, believing that by not moving I cannot see them. A big black eye watching my every move only sprinting off, a blur of cottontail, when I venture too close.

The circus squirrels chasing each other through the cedars, hanging upside down on branches, making the impossible leaps to the tree in the park, that once landed leave a shower of leaves and branches buoying as a ship in a perfect storm, but never missing.

The glimpses of chipmunks in the wood pile, the scurrying of mice in the garage cupboards, the parade of stray cats, the thievery of racoons, the welcome sight of opossums, the hilly evidence of voles and the stealthy foxes running down the street at dawn.

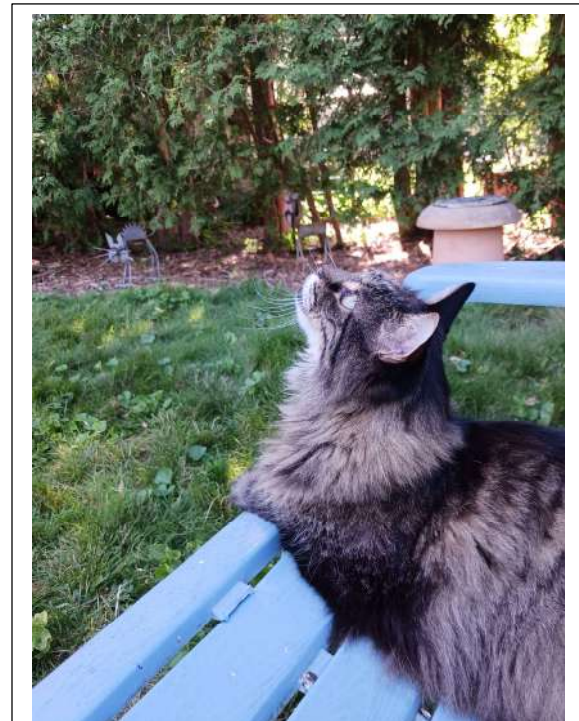
The variety of birds astounds me, from hawks to hummingbirds and everything in between. I still can't tell the difference between a sparrow and a wren but someday I will learn.

I love the sight of the rollercoaster flight of the chickadees and the glide of the starlings. The assortment of colours from the bright yellow of the gold finches to the young male cardinal starting out orange in the spring and settling into vibrant red by fall. The sounds of the downy woodpecker tapping out its love song on my metal chimney cap, the ear-piercing screech of the blue jay as it swoops in to eat the cat food on the back porch or the cooing of the mourning doves that turns to startled wing flapping horror as they sense my approach.

I've also marked off purple finches, juncos, robins, crows, nuthatches and grackles on my backyard bird bingo card. Sadly, I have yet to capture many of the critters on film so leave you only with photos of a circus squirrel and my curious cat, Zeke, enjoying the drama unfolding above him.



"Circus" Squirrel



Zeke