

# The Greenleaf Newsletter

Oshawa Garden Club



January/  
February 2026

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Cover photo "Icy  
Dogwood" by Alison  
Babin

Submission deadline  
for Mar/Apr  
newsletter: Feb 8



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



## President's Message

I hope your holiday season was filled with family and friends and all things wonderful.

The image of Father Time, aged and weary, the last year yielding to the new year personified by a vigorous cheerful baby, seems particularly apropos. We say goodbye to a difficult year with heat, drought and wildfire smoke in our gardens and say hello with a hopeful heart to 2026, an exciting fresh start, a new year with perhaps better times, at least in the garden.

A reminder that the membership year runs from January to December. Please visit our website for all the renewal options: <https://oshawagardenclub.ca/membership-details/>

We will be meeting via Zoom for our January, February and March meetings. All paid up members will be sent the link approximately a week before the meeting. Grab a cup of your favourite hot beverage, cozy up under a blanket and join us for some inspiring speakers. If you picked up seeds at our Holiday Social (or have your own) be sure to tune in to hear Dorte Windmuller speaking on Winter Sowing, January 12 at 7:30 p.m. (join a little earlier to make sure all the technology is working).

For those missing the in-person connection, join us at the Coffee Social, held Mondays at 10 a.m. at the Ritson/Adelaide Tim Horton's and Tuesdays at 1:00 p.m. at the King/Wilson store. For all the details visit:

<https://oshawagardenclub.ca/2025/02/09/ogcs-coffee-social-club/>

If venturing out is not appealing, consider contributing to the newsletter. Let your voice be heard through garden related articles, photos, poems or artwork. Send your submissions for consideration to the Greenleaf editor at [ogcgreenleafnews@gmail.com](mailto:ogcgreenleafnews@gmail.com)

Finally, the Club is taking on a new, exciting partnership with the Robert McLaughlin Gallery (RMG) and their native garden behind the arts centre. See the call for volunteers further on in the newsletter.

Let's stay warm, let's stay connected.

Rose Mary Mason

*Oshawa Garden Club President*

[President@oshawagardenclub.ca](mailto:President@oshawagardenclub.ca)

## The Greenleaf Newsletter

Oshawa Garden Club

The Greenleaf is a newsletter of the Oshawa Garden Club.

President:

Rose Mary Mason

Newsletter Editor:

Cecile Willert

**Winter meetings on Zoom (Jan/Feb/Mar)**

Regular meetings:

38 Lviv Blvd, Oshawa

Doors open at 7:00 pm

Meetings start 7:30 pm

E-mail address:

[info@oshawagardenclub.ca](mailto:info@oshawagardenclub.ca)

Web address:

[oshawagardenclub.ca](http://oshawagardenclub.ca)

Facebook:

"Friends of the Oshawa Garden Club"



# January Meeting on Zoom

***Speaker: Dorte Windmuller***

**Monday January 12, 2025, 7:30 p.m.**

Dorte is passionate about sharing manageable actions to counteract biodiversity loss and climate change. It is surprisingly easy to bring bees, birds, and butterflies back into our gardens by planting native plants. To make native plant gardening more accessible, she founded the Cliffcrest Butterflyway.com with neighbours in 2019 and started her native plant and garden design business, PollinatorGarden.ca. She grows and sells native plants in the Bluffs and shares her love for nature on her websites, through educational events, and as a photographer. Dorte has created many native plant gardens with clients, schools and the community, e.g. at Variety Village. She organizes biannual Native Tree Giveaways, distributing 1600 trees and shrubs each year. It brings Dorte great joy to see people rediscover their connection to nature as they witness the magic of life unfold, and there is no better way to fully connect to plants than to grow them from seed.



## **Topic: Winter Sowing Native Plants**

Dorte will take us through all the steps of Winter Sowing Native Plants

### **1. About native seeds:**

- How to collect or otherwise acquire native plant seeds
- How to clean and store seeds

### **2. About winter sowing of native seeds:**

- How to sow
- What materials are needed
- Different methods
- What's the workflow

### **3. How to grow seedlings successfully:**

- Location
- Watering
- Protection
- Up-potting
- Planting

Dorte will also be providing seeds for our members. Details on how to get yours will be available during our meeting.

## February Meeting on Zoom

**Speaker: Paul Gellatly - The Tattooed Gardener**

**Monday February 9, 2025, 7:30 p.m.**

A passionate life-long horticulturist, Paul was featured on Season 1 of the award-winning television documentary series 'Visionary Gardeners'. Paul is currently the CEO of The Tattooed Gardener Inc. He is the former Director of Horticulture at the Toronto Botanical Garden, the former Curatorial Gardener at The Toronto Zoo, managing one of Canada's largest tropical plant collections, and the former Vice-President of the Etobicoke Horticultural Society.



Many online garden lovers may know Paul through his strong online presence as The Tattooed Gardener, with social media posts reaching 30-35 million people per month. He is an avid collector of rare and unusual plants with a personal collection of over 800 tropical plants. As an experienced hybridizer of daylilies, with 130 registrations with the American Hemerocallis Society, Paul is the recipient of the 2022 Douglas Lycett award for the daylily now registered 'Oscar Peterson'.

Although gardening has been a lifelong passion (He was a Director of the Waterloo Horticultural Society at 16 years old, and received the Rotary Environmental Award presented by David Suzuki), he entered horticulture as a profession just over a decade ago. Paul started part-time at Plant World in their perennial department. He then accepted a position as gardener/grower for the City of Toronto, maintaining historical gardens in the west end of Toronto (Sunnyside Pavilion / James Gardens). He also spent time as an estate gardener for a Trillium award-winning garden in Carlisle, Ontario. Paul has been a guest on numerous Podcasts and Radio shows, in Newspapers and Magazines. His former home garden is featured in Tara Nolan's book: Gardening Your Front Yard: Projects and Ideas for Big and Small Spaces.

### **Topic: Perfect Plant Pairings: An artistic eye**

Taking your garden to the next level requires a sharp eye for detail, utilizing plants with multiple seasons of interest, careful plant selection, thoughtful design, and artistic pairings/combinations. Plants can be paired for several reasons, texture, colour, form, and functionality, to name a few. In this talk, Paul will walk you through perfect plant pairings and help you unlock the potential pairings for your own space. After all, gardening is considered the slowest of the performing arts.

## Upcoming Seminars and Podcasts

*By Rose Mary Mason*

Looking for a garden fix during the cold winter months?

Check these out:

- Blooming Boulevards Webinars  
<https://www.bloomingboulevards.org/book-online>
  1. Saturday January 10, 2026 10:00 a.m.  
“Winter Sowing”
  2. Saturday January 17, 2026 10:00 a.m. “Growing Native Plants from Seeds”
  3. Saturday February 7, 2026  
“Low-Maintenance Boulevard Gardens”
- Podcast <https://www.thegardenshift.com/>  
“The Garden Shift”

## Upcoming Meetings and Events:

Monday January 12, **Meeting on Zoom** at 7:30 p.m. Presenter Dorte Windmuller, “Winter Sowing”

Monday February 9, **Meeting on Zoom** at 7:30 p.m.

**Coffee Social Club**, Mondays 10 a.m. Tim Hortons @ Ritson/Adelaide, Tuesdays 1 p.m. Tim Hortons @ King/Wilson

Saturday May 23, **Annual Plant Sale**, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.



Photo by Alison Babin

## 2025 Bulb Sale Recap



The OGC spring bulb sale raised **\$648.69** toward our **100th Anniversary** celebration. Thank you to all the members who supported the sale.

- 10 bulb varieties were offered
- Orders were due July 19; pickup began October 7
- Extra bulbs were available at the October and November meetings and via E-blast
- A total 29 volunteer hours were recorded.

**Special thanks** to Karen Lang, Mary McConkey, and Robin Burns for their generous help and contributions.

*Carmen Lint & Janice McRae, 2025 Bulb Sale Committee*

## Save the Date! OGC Annual Plant Sale

May 23, 2026  
9:00am-1:00pm



Mark your calendars! The Oshawa Garden Club's Annual Plant Sale returns on **Saturday, May 23, 2026** – our biggest fundraiser of the year that supports the day-to-day operations of the club and is a beloved community tradition.

Join us for a vibrant selection of plants, expert gardening tips, a chance to meet and support our community partners. More details to come!

*Kathy Pellarin, Karen Lang, Alison Babin, Janice McRae and Carmen Lint - 2026 Plant Sale Committee*



## Seeking Volunteers

Our club is partnering with the Robert McLaughlin Gallery on a project to rejuvenate their back yard planters. We are looking for volunteers, and wondering if there is any interest in doing either a Thursday or a weekend time slot. If you are interested in helping out with this project, please email Alison at [info@oshawagardenclub.ca](mailto:info@oshawagardenclub.ca) for details and date/time availability.

Photo (left) by Rose Mary Mason

“Winter Sowing - Day 1”

## Holiday Gift Wrapping at the Oshawa Center

*By Rose Mary Mason*

Oshawa Garden Club members donated approximately 165 hours over the busy holiday season to help wrap gifts in support of Durham Children's Aid Foundation. In between wrapping presents, volunteers enjoyed camaraderie, exchanged cookie recipes as well as holiday traditions. A fun time was had by all for a worthwhile cause!



## Holiday Social

*By Rose Mary Mason*

December 1, 2025, marked the return of the Holiday Social. It was an evening of fun and food with seasonal music playing softly in the background as well as hot chocolate on the menu.

There was a very successful potluck, a groaning board as it were, of different dishes. From meatballs to potato salad, chocolate cake to trifle, plates and stomachs were filled with deliciousness.

Attire ranged from holiday sparkle to flashing snowflake necklaces and the table décor showcased fresh cedar boughs and colourful balls.

Two boxes full of canned goods and \$200 were donated to Simcoe Hall Settlement House.

Different games were played to get to know each other better, from finding your other half of a Christmas card to writing a fact about yourself for the table to guess the author.

But the star of the evening was dressing up a person from each table as a Christmas tree. Starting with a green tablecloth. Ornaments were crafted from an assortment of supplies. Imagination and laughter were in abundance. Each finished tree was interviewed and every pine had a special story to tell.

Good memories!



# Spotlight on Native Plants

by Michelle Benn

## *Clematis virginiana* Virgin's Bower

A beautiful native vine or ground cover for part shade providing white flowers in mid summer:

- Light = Full Morning Sun to **part shade** (protect from intense afternoon sun)
- Soil = moist to average soil
- Size = 10-20 ft H x 3-6 ft W
- Flowering = white, July - September
- Seed Germination = cold stratification 30-90 days, 16 + deg C for 30+ days to germinate.
- Has a low germination rate and is slow to germinate, so use a few extra seeds and be patient.
- Sowing = see note below
- Rabbit resistant

Since it flowers on the current year's growth, you can prune it to about 3 ft in spring, or prune it heavily in fall after flowering to prevent self seeding.

Grows quickly and is a prolific self seeder - but don't confuse this native with the invasive Sweet Autumn Clematis.

Like most clematis, it likes cool/shaded roots.

Gloves are recommended when pruning the vine as its sap can be a skin irritant.

Larval host to Clematis Clearwing moth (bore into roots), Brown Bark Carpet Moth, Spotted Thyris moth.



*Clematis virginiana*

Photo by Peter M. Dziuk

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## Sowing

Sowing = scatter the seed on the surface of the soil and cover lightly with 1/4" soil.

If winter sowing, germination should occur in Spring once daytime temperatures are above 16 deg C.

Once the plant grows several inches tall or gets 2-3 sets of true leaves, you can separate the seedlings and transfer to larger containers.

## Spotlight on Native Plants (continued)

### *Symphyotrichum cordifolium*

#### Heart-leaved Aster or Blue Wood Aster or Broad Leaved Aster

- Light = Part Shade is best, but it can take full Sun
- Soil = medium moisture, well drained
- Size = 3 ft H x 2 ft W
- Flowering = pale blue, Sept-Oct
- Seed Germination = cold stratification 90 days
- Sowing = see note preceding page

Rabbits may eat asters, so it is best to protect it in spring until there are other plants to choose from.

This native plant is a larval host to the pearl crescent butterfly.

To prevent self seeding, you can deadhead in the fall after flowering. If you have a large area and don't mind the reseeding, you can leave the seeds for the birds.

Asters also spread by rhizomes thereby gradually expanding your clump.

Do the Chelsea Chop (reduce height by 1/3 to 1/2) in June to prevent asters from flopping.



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*Symphyotrichum cordifolium*

Photo by Katy Chayka

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### *Solidago flexicaulis*

#### Zigzag Goldenrod

This lovely native gets its common name of zigzag goldenrod due to the way the flowers emerge between leaf axils on somewhat "zigzag" stems.

- Light = Part Shade
- Soil = medium moisture, well drained
- Size = 3 ft H x 1 ft W, spreads by rhizomes
- Flowering = yellow, Sept-Oct
- Seed Germination = cold stratification 90 days
- Sowing = see note below

Rabbits may eat this plant, so you should protect it in the spring until it gets some size and roots on it.

This native is a larval host to the wavy-lined emerald moth, brown hooded owlet moth, green leuconycta, bilobed dichomeris, and the twirler moth.

To prevent self seeding, you can deadhead in the fall after flowering. If you have a large area and don't mind the reseeding, you can leave the seeds for the birds.

This goldenrod also spreads by rhizomes thereby gradually expanding your clump.



*Solidago flexicaulis*

Photo by Peter M. Dziuk

# Musings on Maple Trees

By Rose Mary Mason

A friend recently asked me, “What value do maple trees have in a native ecosystem?”

Several obvious answers came to my tongue such as habitat for birds, mammals and insects, shade and cooling effects for the area, the fallen leaves are wonderful mulch for helping maintain moisture and smother weeds as well as providing nutrients to the soil and regulating extremes of cold and freezing due to their insulating nature.

But I thought some more and realized I don’t have any exact answer to this question. Those answers apply to pretty much every native tree! So, I decided to look deeper into the question.

First, how many species of maples are native to Ontario? Looking around different sites on the internet there are a variety of answers to this question. I decided to use VASCAN as it is the authority on native vascular plants in Canada.

Ontario has 6 native maple trees and 2 native maple shrub/trees. Red (*Acer rubrum*), silver (*A. saccharinum*), sugar (*A. saccharum*), freeman<sup>(1)</sup> (*A. xfreemanii*), black (*A. nigrum*) and Manitoba<sup>(2)</sup> (*A. negundo*) are the larger trees. The two shrubby trees are striped (or moosewood) (*A. pensylvanicum*) and mountain maple (*A. spicatum*). Interestingly, the striped maple has green bark with stripes of white that become more prominent as it ages. I have never seen (or noticed) a striped maple but will be looking for them now!

<sup>(1)</sup> Freeman maples are a naturally occurring hybrid of red and silver maples.

<sup>(2)</sup> Manitoba maples are native just on the border of Manitoba and Ontario, they are considered invasive throughout most of Ontario.

The next question I looked at is how are these natives used by wildlife?

Again, some of this is broadly apparent with most native trees. The leaves, twigs, buds, seeds and bark are eaten by herbivores like beetles, mice, squirrels, rabbits, beavers, porcupine, deer, moose and some birds. The flowers are used by pollinators like bees, butterflies, moths and others. (continued next page)



## Musings on Maple Trees (continued)

The red maple has flowers that come out in late winter or very early spring before the leaves appear, so they are a really important source of food for early pollinators who have emerged and are looking for food. The branches and boles provide shelter and homes for wildlife. The leaves are hosts for many species including some that will only eat these specific plants.

Douglas Tallamy listed the above maples (except for the Freeman and black species) and said they feed 285 species of butterflies and moths, never mind the bees and wasps and flies, etc. Without all those soft squishy bags of protein (caterpillars) to feed their babies, there would be many fewer birds.

Equally important are the leaves that fall in autumn. Overwintering larvae will use the leaves as insulation and cover to hide from predators (nuthatches come to mind), and some larvae actually look like dead leaves. There are also some pollinators that overwinter as adults in leaf detritus (mourning cloak butterflies for example).

By contrast, Dr. John Hilty from Illinois Wildflowers lists only 9 species of insects in total that feed on non-native invasive Norway Maple (*A. platanoides*), including the Japanese beetle.

So now I know more about why native maples trees are important in our ecosystem.

Sources:

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/tree-atlas>

<https://data.canadensys.net/vascan/search>

<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/maple>

<https://beegreenlandscaping.ca/types-of-maple-trees-in-ontario/>

<https://nativeplantadvocate.com/maple-trees-red-sugar-etc-as-a-host-plant-for-caterpillars/>

[https://www.illinoiswildflowers.info/plant\\_insects/plants/acer\\_platanoides.html](https://www.illinoiswildflowers.info/plant_insects/plants/acer_platanoides.html)

Douglas Tallamy. *Bringing Nature Home* (2007).



Photo by Rose Mary Mason

“Winter Sowing - Day 2”