



Garden Gleanings

Glen Morris Horticultural Society

Established 1951

Website: www.gardenontario.org

February 2026 - 158th Issue

COMING EVENTS

Monday, February 2, 2026
Glen Morris Hort. Meeting
GM United Church, 7 p.m.
"Rain Gardens"
Lynn Leach & Sarah Mulder

Monday, March 2, 2026
Glen Morris Hort. Meeting
GM United Church, 7 p.m.
"Herbal Folklore"
Amy Bradley

Monday, April 13, 2026
Glen Morris Hort. Meeting
GM United Church, 7 p.m.
"Kayanase Greenhouses"
Dan Werner

Newsletter by Margaret Fleury

Canada Holly

Winterberry, *Ilex verticillata*, is a slow growing species of Holly native to eastern North America. It is also known as Black Alder, Fever Bush, Coralberry, Winterberry Holly, and Canada Holly.

This species is found in wetland habitats, on dry sand dunes, and on grassland. It grows to 1-5 m (3-16 ft.). In wet sites, it will spread to form a dense thicket. In dry locations, it will remain a tight shrub.

There are separate male and female plants. One male plant must be close by for female plants to bear fruit.

Small white flowers appear in spring. Dense clusters of bright red berries form in the fall that stay on branches throughout winter.

Holly berries are a crucial, high-energy, late-winter food source for over 40 species of birds like Robins, Cardinals, and Cedar Waxwings.

In late summer, Winterberry leaves turn yellow. They lose their leaves in the fall, making the berries visible in winter. After a hard frost, the berries can ferment, creating a mild intoxicating effect on birds. The berries are toxic to humans.



Tip of the Month

Birds reduce heat loss at night by lowering their body temperature. Fill feeders at night so that when birds wake at the crack of dawn, they can find much needed food to replenish fat reserves.

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Hort. Happenings

Feb.1–Apr. 6: *Floral Bloomland in Oz*, RBG, time-ticketed experience, register

Feb. 5, 11: *Field Notes From an Unintentional Birder*, Julia Zarankin, Great Backyard Bird Count, one hour online event, register birdcount.org

Feb. 13-16: *Great Backyard Bird Count*, submit to Merlin Bird ID or GBBC website

Feb.21: *Animal Tracking*, Pinehurst Conservation Area, brantfornature.ca, 10 am

Mar. 1: *Dream Garden Conference*, Galt Horticultural Society, Portuguese Club, Cambridge, \$70, register galthortpayments@gmail.com, 9 am - 3:30 pm

Pull One - Plant One

Our theme for this year is **Pull One - Plant One**.

The goal of the Ontario *Invasive Species Act* is to "support the prevention, early detection, response to and eradication of invasive species in Ontario." Preventing invasive species from getting established and spreading is critical.

If you discover an invasive plant, remove it, place it in a black garbage bag, and dispose of it with your regular garbage.

Do NOT throw invasive plants into your compost pile or into natural areas where they can spread.



Pull One (invasive plant) and then **Plant One** (a native plant). Purchase native plants and non-invasive plants from reputable suppliers.

Aerate Houseplants

Is the soil of your house plants compacted? Aeration is a good way to get oxygen to the roots of your potted plants so that they can absorb nutrients and water. Plants need oxygen around the roots, which they get from tiny little air pockets in the soil. Worms aerate plants outside. We must do the job indoors. As you rotate the pot, insert a stick or spoon, or any small tool into the soil to loosen it. Do this monthly. Your plants will thank you.

Soft Landings

Foamflower, *Tiarella cordifolia*, is a native perennial that got its name from the masses of foamy white to pinkish flowers that emerge in the spring on long, thin stems from a dense mound of foliage. This groundcover spreads quickly by runners in shade or rock gardens. It grows in average to moist soils. The leaves turn red in the fall. Bees, butterflies, and moths are attracted to the blooms that emerge earlier than many other food sources.



Pinecone Art

Gather pinecones, small twigs, leaves, and stones to create cute pinecone art. To clean, soak pinecones overnight in warm water mixed with 1/2 c. vinegar and a splash of dish soap. Rinse and dry thoroughly. Warm pinecones in 275°F oven for one hour so that they open completely. Let them rest a bit then get creative!



The Subnivean Zone

Small mammals like mice, moles, shrews, and voles survive winter by living in the "subnivean zone," the insulated space between the ground and the snowpack. The snow crystals at the bottom of the snowpack are coarse and crumbly, allowing small mammals to easily burrow through them. The snowpack above provides insulation and moisture so that the animals can move around and eat seeds, leaves, and stems without being seen. However, they are not completely safe since foxes and owls can actually hear a small mammal under the snow and attack it.

Christmas Decorations



On December 16, 2025, Mr. Reid's Grade 3 class at the Glen Morris Central Public School was visited by three of Santa's Elves (aka [below left to right] Cindy Briand, Sarah Mulder, and Sanaa Khan Maneer). Pics by Cindy B.



The students were given three small slabs of wood to paint as Christmas tree decorations. When finished, they tied pieces of string to each decoration so that they could be hung on their Christmas tree at home. The results were special keepsakes to treasure.

