

GARDEN TATTLER

Winter 2019

Lake Simcoe Gardeners



Grow With Us!

Well, another season of great gardening inspiration is well underway. It began with our Photography competition in January, where despite wintry weather, we had an amazing collection of 160 photographs submitted.

As I'm sure you all know by now, our February meeting has had a date change due to the upcoming by-election, so we will now be meeting on Monday, March 4th for our Pet Palooza evening. Our guest speaker, Koidu Sulev, will be speaking on herbs. For a listing of our complete 2019 program, see the last page of this issue.

If you haven't already done so, this is a great time to renew your membership...and if you do it before the end of March, your name will be entered into a draw to win next year's membership. I like the chances of that!

A new year means a new chance to award our \$400 bursary to a student pursuing studies in the horticultural or environmental field. The application can be found on page 10. (or can be shared from our Facebook page)

And speaking of Facebook, have you 'liked' our page yet?

For all of you who enjoy the social aspect of our group, bring a little spare cash to the next meeting to purchase your Wine & Cheese ticket. It's always a great evening. (page 18)

For future submissions to the Tattler, you can reach me at Petal Pushers Flower Shop
905-476-4356 or e-mail me at
petalshop@sympatico.ca (include Tattler in the subject line)

Corinne



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Executive Meetings

Just a reminder that all executive meetings are open for all members to attend or you can submit a request for a copy of our current minutes. Please contact Joyce Cathcart if you would like a copy.



Please remember to turn off your cell phones or switch them to silent during our meetings. Thanks!



Reminder.....

To help spread the word about our club and to keep in touch with our current members, you can visit our Facebook page. Search Lake Simcoe Gardeners and "Like" us. Invite your friends to do the same.

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Top 10 Foods for Winter Bird Feeding

by Bill Thompson, III | Editor, *Bird Watcher's Digest*



A pileated woodpecker visits a sock feeder full of suet and mixed seed.

Photo by Barb Fuller.

Winter: 'Tis the season for feeding birds all across North America, especially in those regions where it gets mighty cold and snowy. If you are a veteran bird feeder, you've probably gained lots of insight into the foods your backyard birds prefer. Perhaps you've learned through trial and error, or perhaps you did your homework and read up on the subject.

If you are just getting started in bird feeding, or if you are frustrated by a lack of success in attracting winter birds to your feeders, the first thing you need to determine is whether you are feeding the right foods. If you are not giving the birds what they want, you might not have many birds.

The following ten foods are extremely popular with backyard birds all across North America.

10. Black-oil sunflower seed. This seed is the hamburger of the bird world. Almost any bird that will visit a bird feeder will eat black-oil sunflower. Birds that can't crack the seeds themselves will scour the ground under the feeders, picking up bits and pieces. The outer shell of a black-oil sunflower seed is thinner and easier to crack than that of striped sunflower. Black-oil sunflower kernels have a higher fat content than striped sunflower seeds, and so make a great winter diet staple. Striped sunflower is still fine, and evening grosbeaks, cardinals, jays, and other big-billed birds may even prefer it slightly, but black-oil sunflower seed is better at attracting a wide variety of birds to your winter feeder. Hulled sunflower seeds, aka sunflower hearts, provide a no-mess option.

9. Peanuts. Shelled (which means without a shell), dry-roasted, and unsalted peanuts provide protein and fat, so they're a great fuel for birds in winter. Several major feeder manufacturers produce sturdy, efficient, tube-shaped feeders intended to serve peanuts. Woodpeckers, jays, nuthatches, chickadees, and titmice will readily visit a feeder for this high-energy food. Even cardinals and finches will eat peanuts. Whole peanuts—in the shell—attract jays and woodpeckers, but not smaller birds. Birds love peanut butter, too—just avoid brands that contain partially hydrogenated oil, aka trans fat. Be warned, though, that squirrels love peanuts in any form.

8. Suet. For birds in winter, fat is an excellent source of energy. Commercial suet blocks are available wherever birdseed is sold. Or look for raw suet in the meat aisle of your grocery store. Ask for it at the butcher counter if

you don't see packages of it on display. It is fine to feed small chunks of raw suet to wild birds, but it does become rancid faster than commercial blocks, especially during warm weather. No suet feeder? No problem—just use an old mesh onion bag. For the adventurous, you can render raw suet to make your own longer-lasting blocks: Melt it down to liquid in a microwave or on the stovetop, monitoring it carefully. Remove and dispose of the un-meltable bits and allow it to harden.

7. Good mixed seed. Is there such a thing as BAD seed mix? You bet! Bad mixed seed has lots of filler in it—junk ingredients that most birds won't eat. Bad mixed seed can include dyed seed intended for pet birds, wheat, and some forms of red milo that only birds in the Desert Southwest seem to eat. Good mixed seed has a large amount of black-oil sunflower seed, cracked corn, white proso millet, and perhaps some peanut chips, sunflower hearts, and dried fruit. You get what you pay for when it comes to seed mixes. Read the ingredients on the bag or make your own seed blend from the seeds mentioned above.

6. Nyjer/thistle seed. Although it can be expensive, Nyjer (aka thistle) seed is eagerly consumed by all the small finches—goldfinches, house, purple, and Cassin's finches, pine siskins, and redpolls. You need to offer this tiny seed in a specialized feeder of some kind. The two most commonly used types of thistle feeder are a tube feeder with small, thistle-seed-sized holes, and a thistle sock. A thistle sock is a fine-mesh, synthetic bag that is filled with Nyjer seed. Small finches can cling to this bag and pull seeds out through the mesh. Note: Nyjer can go rancid or moldy quickly in wet weather. A sure sign that it has gone off is when the birds stop visiting the feeder. Time to throw away what you've got and buy a fresh bag.

5. Safflower. This white, thin-shelled, conical seed is eaten by many birds and has the reputation for being the favorite food of the northern cardinal. Some feeder operators claim that safflower seed is not as readily eaten by squirrels and blackbirds. (Caveat: Your results may vary.) Feed safflower in any feeder that can accommodate sunflower seed. Avoid offering safflower on the ground in wet weather: It can quickly become soggy and inedible. You can buy safflower in bulk at seed and feed stores.

4. Cracked corn. Sparrows, blackbirds, jays, doves, quail, and squirrels are just a few of the creatures attracted to cracked corn. Depending on where you live you may also get turkeys, deer, elk, moose, and caribou. Fed in moderation, cracked corn will attract almost any feeder species. Some feeder operators use this food to lure the squirrels away from the bird feeders. Squirrels love corn—cracked or otherwise—best of all. Whole corn still on the cob is fine for squirrels, but not a good bird food because the kernels are too big and hard for most small birds to digest. Cracked corn is broken into smaller, more manageable bits that many birds will gobble up.

3. Mealworms. Most feeder birds, except goldfinches, will eat mealworms if you offer them. Live mealworms are available in bait stores or by mail order. Don't worry, mealworms aren't slimy and gross. In fact, they aren't even worms; they are larval stage of a beetle (*Tenebrio molitor*), if that makes you feel

better. We grow our own mealworms in a tub of old-fashioned rolled oats and feed them to the birds in a shallow ceramic dish. The dish has slippery sides so the worms can't crawl out. Bluebirds, in particular, go crazy for mealworms and will eat as many as you provide. That can result in an unbalanced diet, so we recommend no more than twenty mealworms per bluebird per day. Bags of freeze-dried mealworms are usually available in wild bird feeding stores and big-box hardware stores.

2. Fruit. Humans are supposed to eat at least three servings of fruit every day. Fruit is also an important dietary element for birds, but it can be hard to find in many areas in midwinter. Set out grapes, slices of citrus fruits, apple or banana slices, and even melon rinds, and watch the birds chow down. If you want to feed raisins, chop them up and soak them in warm water first to soften them up a bit. Offering fruit to tanagers and orioles is a traditional spring and summer feeding strategy, but many winter feeder birds will eat fruit, too.

1. Homemade bird treats. You can come up with your own recipes for winter bird treats. Smear peanut butter on a tree trunk and poke some peanut bits into it. Melt suet in your microwave and pour it into an ice-cube tray to harden. Before it solidifies, add peanut bits, raisins, apple bits, or other bird foods. Put the tray in your freezer to harden. Once it does, you've got cubed bird treats—easy to make and easy to use!



The world seems quieter right after a snowfall because the blanket of fresh powder absorbs sound, making things seem "calmer."

Denis J. Mailloux

January 17 at 2:23 PM

From My Notes

Butterfly Gardens 101 - Plant Selection Native North American Milkweeds

for Monarchs



Butterfly gardening belongs to a growing school of gardening that focuses on the preservation of wildlife. It focuses on creating an environment for butterflies to thrive and reproduce. Gardeners who specialize in butterfly gardening place nectar producing plants and host plants around the garden with hopes of attracting these beautiful insects. Each person has their own reason for creating a butterfly sanctuary that ranges from purely aesthetic to passionate about preserving the species. Regardless of the reasoning behind this brand of niche gardening, people tend to love it.

Introduction To Plant Selection

Monarchs cannot survive without milkweed; their caterpillars only eat milkweed plants (*Asclepias* spp.), and monarch butterflies need milkweed to lay their eggs. With shifting land management practices, we have lost much milkweed from the landscape. By planting milkweed in your own garden, landscape and throughout your community, you can help reverse the fortune of these beautiful insects.

For the most part, each milkweed species has its own horticultural/environmental requirements with a couple exceptions. Common and marsh milkweeds tend to be more generalist in nature and can grow well in a variety of soil types including clay. They tend to spread easily in most gardens. Here is a species by species breakdown of native milkweed species.

Native North American Milkweeds

Asclepias syriaca (Common milkweed) - Common milkweed needs elbow-room as it is an aggressive suckering perennial growing 3 to 4 feet tall. Its flowering stems are often widely spaced. It normally grows in tallgrass prairies, along roadsides and at the edges of corn and soy fields. It is at the center of the current controversy with roundup ready corn and soybeans. James Trager states that this species is the most preferred milkweed by monarchs laying eggs. It's fragrant flowers also attract a wide variety of pollinators and predators looking to ambush pollinators. Performs best in full sun but may tolerate partial shade.

Zone: 3 to 9

Asclepias incarnata (Marsh or swamp milkweed) - Marsh or swamp milkweed is a clump-forming perennial growing 3 to 4 feet tall. It is a wetland species and so can tolerate poorly drained clay soils with low oxygen and flooding. It is an ideal rain garden plant. It's copious display of flower clusters attract a wide variety of pollinators and predators looking to ambush pollinators. Monarchs frequently lay their eggs on this species. In dry soils expect it to be short-lived. Performs best in full sun and moist soils.

Zone: 3 to 6

Asclepias tuberosa (Butterfly Weed) - Butterfly milkweed is a clump-forming perennial growing 2 feet tall. It grows in dry prairies, roadsides and gardens with well-drained soils. It is also one of the top butterfly and pollinator attractors and is the number one choice of milkweeds by gardeners. Performs best in full sun and dry soils.

Zone: 3 to 9

Asclepias purpurascens (Purple milkweed) - Purple milkweed is a clump-forming woodland perennial growing 3 feet tall. It grows in open woodlands and occasionally prairie and glade edges. It is also sought-after by gardeners for its fragrant purple flower clusters. It is also one of the top butterfly and pollinator attractors. Performs best in light shade and dry to average soils.

Zone: 3 to 8

Asclepias viridis (Green or spider milkweed) - Green or spider milkweed is a clump-forming perennial growing 1 to 2 feet tall. It grows in dry prairies and roadsides. It has the largest flowers of North American native species with greenish-yellow flowers and purple speckling. This is a lesser-known species among gardeners but well-worth considering. Performs best in full sun and dry or rocky soils.

Zone: 5 to 9.

Asclepias verticillata (Whorled Milkweed) - Whorled milkweed is an aggressive suckering perennial 1 to 2 feet tall in full sun. It colonizes rapidly, less so in part shade. Its flowering stems emerge densely from the ground, hence the other common name, horsetail milkweed. Its stems are upright with narrow leaves and tiny greenish-white fragrant flowers in clusters along the stem. This plant is often considered aggressive by gardeners but is difficult to find in local nurseries. Performs best in full sun to part shade and dry to average soils.

Zone: 4 to 9.

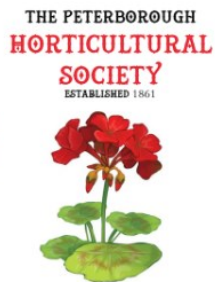
Asclepias sullivantii (Sullivant's milkweed) - Sullivant's milkweed is a suckering perennial growing 3 to 4 feet tall. Its flowering stems are widely spaced, appearing by surprise 5 to 10 feet away from parent plants. It grows in wet prairies. Its appearance is similar to common milkweed but it's not as aggressive. Flowers are pink with salmon-orange tones. Leaf mid-veins are pinkish in color. Performs best in full sun in wet to average soils.

Zone: 3 to 7

Are you a Membership Early Bird?

In 2018 we implemented a Membership Prize for people who paid their membership fees prior to March 31st. We're delighted to tell you that we're offering a Membership Prize this year, too. At our April 22, 2019 meeting, the names of all of our paid-up members as at the end of March will be placed in a basket. One name will be selected and that person will win . . . Woohoo! . . . a FREE Membership! Go ahead. Spend your money. \$20 for great speakers, our yearbook, special events, wonderful opportunities to meet people and have fun – and so much more. You can pay at our 'February' meeting which, as has been announced, is on March 4th, or at our regular March 25th meeting, or at Petal Pushers, 18 the Queensway S, Keswick.

Lorax Fact - Despite being the second largest exporter of paper in the world, Sweden is actually increasing forest biomass. For every tree they cut down, they plant three new ones.



The Peterborough Garden Show

“Coming Up Roses”

Show Dates: April 26-27-28, 2019

Proudly presented by the Peterborough Horticultural Society.

BIG NEWS: Our show is partnering with **Fleming College** and will be hosting the 2019 show at the **Fleming Trades and Technology Centre** in Peterborough! Fleming boasts a bright and attractive space, more than ample parking and a fresh look for the show.

Our **Award Winning** show:

Friday Evening April 26 – 5pm to 9pm

Saturday April 27 – 10am to 5pm

Sunday April 28 – 10am to 4pm

...our 19th incredible Garden Show!

Admission: \$10 “Enjoy the Show All Weekend”, come and go as you please. Available in advance, online and at the door. Tickets will be exchanged for a wristband for full weekend access to the show!

Show Coordinator: Sandy Spremo, spremoevents@nexicom.net
(705) 772-3400

For general inquiries: info@peterboroughgardenshow.com

Bus Tours: bustours@peterboroughgardenshow.com

To volunteer at the show: volunteer@peterboroughgardenshow.com

Mailing Address: Peterborough Garden Show, P.O. Box 72, Peterborough ON K9J 6Y5

Fleming College, 599 Brealey Dr, Peterborough, ON K9J 7B1


Committee Convenors 2019

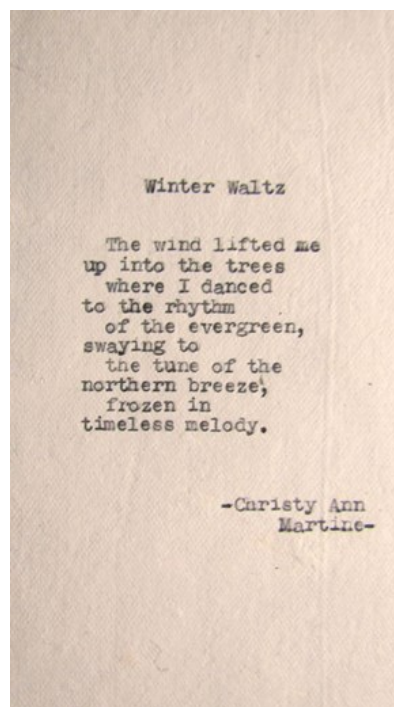
Adopt-a-Road	Brenda Eng
Advertising	Bette Banks
Archives	Diane Ingersoll
Bursaries	Corinne Ennis
Communication	Dorothy Hare
2020 District 5 AGM	Diane Ingersoll
Dessert Competition	Diana Horrex
Flower Shows	Kathy Bruce
Friendship Cards	Diane Ingersoll
Fundraiser Prizes	Tony Snider
Fund Raising	Tony Snider
Garden/Bus Tour	Joyce Pangborn
Lug-a-Mug	Brenda Eng
Membership	Diane Ingersoll
Meeting Set-up	Ralph Cox
Newsletter	Corinne Ennis
Nominations-Executive	Diane & Nancy
Pet Palooza	Nancy Serrick
Phone	Marilyn Cox
Photographic Show	Graig Cox
Plantings	Corinne Ennis
Poetry	Estelle LeMaire
Programme	Nancy Serrick
Pumpkin/Scarecrow	Brenda Eng
Lorax Project	Nancy Serrick
Refreshments	Ralph Cox
Remembrance Day	Bette Banks
Santa Claus Parades	Lynda Balena
Volunteer Hours	Diane & Nancy
Way to Grow	Carolyn Arnold
Webmaster	Corinne Ennis
Yearbook	Corinne Ennis



A study found that wine and cheese go together well because cheese makes the taster's wine palate more sensitive.



**"It's snowing still,"
said Eeyore
gloomily.** 
**"And freezing."
"However," he said,
brightening up a
little, "we haven't
had an earthquake
lately."**





Lake Simcoe Gardeners Bursary

Criteria:

- 1) Student must reside in the Town of Georgina.
- 2) Student must be attending or have attended a Georgina High School.
- 3) Student must be accepted or attending a College or University in a field related to Horticulture, Agricultural Science, Environmental Studies, Landscape Design, Botany, or Conservation.
- 4) Student must provide a letter from the Registrar of the College or University with proof of payment of registration and acceptance into the program before disbursement of bursary funds.
- 5) Student must submit a completed Lake Simcoe Gardeners Student Bursary Application Form on or before deadline of **May 31, 2019.**
Return completed form to Corinne Ennis; c/o Petal Pushers Flower Shop,
18 The Queensway S. Keswick, ON L4P 1Y7

2019 \$400 Bursary Application Form:

Date: _____

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

High School of Graduation: _____ Year Graduated: _____

Will attend _____ College/University

Field of Study: _____

Program start date: _____

Please provide a short essay explaining your career path and why:



The Kinds of Things You Don't Hear About

The destruction of the National Butterfly Center in Mission, Texas may begin this week to make room for the border wall. There are more than 20 kinds of butterflies and moths listed as endangered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, including the iconic monarch butterfly. Congress funded 33 new miles of Border Wall in the 2018 omnibus Appropriations Act (which at 3000 pages many Representatives did not read or at least complete reading) and contracts for the first 6 miles have been awarded. The real kicker is that the border wall is not being built on the border here, but over 2 miles inland, moving the border of Mexico NORTH of the Rio Grande River (the actual border) and placing more than 6,000 acres of private property and public lands behind it. The issue is not whether butterflies can fly over a wall, but whether private property (farms, businesses, homes) should be seized and destroyed for a project that does not serve the greater good or enhance national security. Rather, it increases the size of Mexico and makes America smaller.

The surveyor's stakes marking the 150 ft "clearing zone" for Trump's Border Fence appeared at the National Butterfly Center in Mission, TX, on Thursday, July 20, 2018 along with a work crew with chainsaws and heavy equipment. When Marianna Trevino Wright, executive director of the nonprofit center, confronted them, the crew explained they were hired by the Department of Homeland Security Customs and Border Protection to remove trees and brush along a 1.2 mile road from the levee to the Rio Grande River; this is a private road, on private property, held by the North American Butterfly Association. About halfway down the road lay a big, white X marking the spot where engineers had taken a core soil sample to determine the suitability of this place for construction. No permission was requested to enter the property or begin cutting down trees, the center was not notified of any roadwork, nor given the opportunity to review, negotiate or deny the workplan. Same goes for the core sampling of soils on the property, and the surveying and staking of a "clear zone" that will bulldoze 200,000 square feet of habitat for protected species like the Texas Tortoise and Texas Indigo, not to mention about 400 species of birds.

70% of the land belonging to the nonprofit project of the North American Butterfly Center will be forfeited to create a landing and staging area for illegal traffic on the shores of the U.S. On this land, set aside for the protection of a remnant of native habitat, endangered species such as the ocelot, and the graves of Native American people who were present before the U.S. existed, everything will be desecrated, bulldozed and cut off from access by citizens and landowners so that gunboats can more easily be placed on the river to actually prevent traffic from setting foot on U.S. soil.

In this particular length of fence which the Trump Administration seeks to build, more than 30 million square feet of vegetation may be cleared. Some of this will be private land, such as the Butterfly Center's, but some of it will be public land, like the Santa Ana National Wildlife Refuge and Bentsen-Rio Grande Valley State Park. The National Butterfly Center is taking a stand, joining dozens of private property owners in taking legal action against the efforts of the federal government to deprive them of their property rights.

The federal government waived 28 laws in order to expedite this. If it succeeds in tossing due process and usurping private property rights, all Americans lose.

- Excerpted from the Miami Herald, February 5, 2019, and other sources



Lake Simcoe South Shore Horticultural Society

PURPOSE

The objects of our horticultural Society are to encourage interest and improvement in horticulture:

- a) by holding meetings respecting the theory and practice of horticulture;
- b) by encouraging the planting of trees, shrubs and flowers on public and private grounds;
- c) by promoting outdoor floral art, public beautification, balcony & plot gardening;
- d) by arranging field trips, contests, competitions & exhibitions related to horticulture and awarding prizes;
- e) by promoting the protection of the environment; and
- f) by promoting the circulation of horticultural information through the media.

Source: LSSSHS Constitution, Article III

Our Purpose comes straight out of the Ag and Hort Act which created us, i.e. garden clubs by way of the Ontario Horticultural Association (OHA), way back in 1906.

- The Agricultural and Horticultural Organizations Act (the Act) is the legislation that provides legal status and direction for agricultural societies, horticultural societies and agricultural associations in the province of Ontario.

- The Act came into effect on December 15th 1988, replacing the Agricultural Societies Act, the Horticultural Societies Act and the Agricultural Associations Act. The Ontario Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) is responsible for the administration of the Act.

Now more than ever, in the face of global warming and planet-wide problems, we are focusing on Section e). Here are just a few environmental facts:

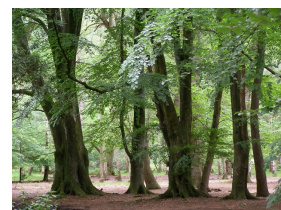
1. Over the last ten years we have produced more plastic than during the whole of the last century. Think of the Great Pacific Garbage Patch (which scientists say doesn't really exist as there are a number of 'garbage patches', not just one). There is a global influence: though the Pacific garbage patches are between Japan and Hawaii, the trash can come from Canada, Asia, and the US. An estimated 80% of the plastic in those patches comes from land-based sources like landfills. The remaining 20% comes from ships at sea.

2. Wind power is the cheapest source of energy out of coal, gas, & nuclear.

3. The Amazon River Basin is home to the largest rainforest on Earth. It's not only the largest forest in the world - it is often called the "Lungs of the World" - playing a significant part in the health of our global environment by digesting and converting carbon dioxide into oxygen, but the basin is drained by the mighty Amazon River. It's the world's largest river in terms of discharge and the longest river on the planet as well. The force of the current - from sheer water volume alone - causes Amazon River water to continue flowing 125 miles out to sea before mixing with Atlantic salt water. Over two-thirds of all the fresh water found on Earth is in the Amazon Basin's rivers, streams, and tributaries. Unfortunately, rainforests are being destroyed by industry worldwide for the profits they yield. Were you aware that every second the planet loses another two football fields of its precious rainforest cloak?

Georgina is just a tiny community on the world stage, but we can do our part in many ways. Hurray for our Lorax Project! We're helping to preserve the tree canopy in our own area.

Lorax Fact - Finland has ten trees for every person in the world.



Plant a Hot Tomato – Some Day!

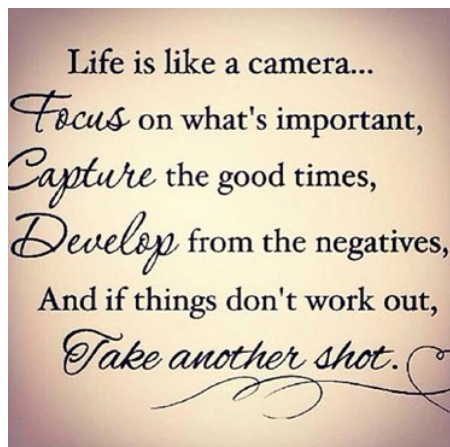
If you were asked to describe a tomato, words like “juicy,” “acidic” and maybe even “sweet” might pop into your mind. “Spicy” is not on the list of adjectives commonly attributed to this yummy fruit (and yes, it is a fruit), but that may one day change. A team of scientists hopes to genetically engineer tomatoes with a fiery kick. The key to this challenge is capsaicin, the chemical compound that gives peppers their spicy taste by activating nerve cells in the tongue that deal with heat-induced pain. Because tomatoes are closely related to peppers—the two plants diverged 19 million years ago—they have all the genes necessary to produce capsaicinoids. But in tomatoes, these genes “are just not active.”

All of this, of course, begs the question: Why are scientists so keen to infuse tomatoes with a bit of spicy punch? In the past, researchers have mulled over possible ways to create better-tasting tomatoes, but the team behind the new study hope to make it easier to harvest capsaicin’s beneficial effects; the molecule has been shown to have anti-inflammatory, anti-oxidant and weight-loss properties. Capsaicin may even be helpful in fighting cancer. On top of that, capsaicinoids “are used in [the] weapons industry for pepper spray [and] they are also used for anaesthetics.”

Capsaicinoids originate in the white pith of chili peppers, which, unfortunately, are a rather finicky crop. They’re grown in open fields, leaving them susceptible to detrimental conditions like high precipitation and high temperatures, and their capsaicinoid levels can vary widely based on the environments in which they are cultivated. Peppers are also vulnerable to soil-borne diseases, and their seed germination can be quite slow. Contrast this with the hardy tomato, which is often grown indoors, has a high yield and is generally much easier to cultivate. Tomatoes, in other words, may offer a promising avenue for producing capsaicinoids at a commercial level.

Granted, we haven’t quite reached the point where chefs will no longer have to add extra heat to their tomato sauce. “We have the tools powerful enough to engineer the genome of any species. The challenge is to know which gene to engineer and where.” Nor can scientists be sure how tinkering with tomato genes will affect factors like crop yield and quality. But even with those obstacles in mind, the study authors are optimistic. Spicy tomatoes, they write, could very well be “the next step in the fascinating story of pungent crops.”

- Excerpted from *The Daily Smithsonian*, Jan 2019



Tree Fact: Maple syrup has more calcium than milk. Yes, a ¼ cup serving of maple syrup contains more calcium than the same amount of milk and more potassium than a banana. It’s also a good source of magnesium, phosphorus, zinc and iron. Pure maple syrup is a much healthier sweetener than processed white sugar, which is stripped of its nutrients in manufacturing.



“Gardening is one of the rewards of middle age, when one is ready for an impersonal passion, a passion that demands patience, acute awareness of a world outside oneself, and the power to keep on growing through all the times of drought, through the cold snows, toward those moments of pure joy when all failures are forgotten and the plum tree flowers.”

-- May Sarton, *Plant Dreaming Deep*, a memoir of the poet and novelist’s first experience of buying a house and setting down roots at age 45.

Fruit Salad Trees



You know how fruit salad has multiple types of fruit in it? Pretty much pleases everyone since there is a variety of fruit. If you don't like one type of fruit, you can spoon up only the fruit chunks you love. Wouldn't it be nice if there was a tree that would grow multiple types of fruit just like a fruit salad? Beginning around 1990, a family in Australia's New South Wales began developing that very thing.

Today, if you love fruit and want to grow your own, but your gardening space is limited without enough room for multiple fruit trees, no problem. Fruit salad trees are the answer. They come in four different types and bear up to eight different fruits of the same family on the one tree. Sorry, it doesn't work to have oranges and pears on the same tree. The other great thing about fruit salad trees is that the fruit ripening is staggered so you don't have a giant harvest ready all at once.

How did this miracle come about? Grafting, an old method of asexual plant propagation, is being used in a newer way to accommodate multiple types of fruit on the same plant. There are four different fruit salad trees available:

Stone fruit – gives you peaches, plums, nectarine, apricots, and peachcots (a cross between a peach and apricot)

Citrus – bears oranges, mandarins, tangelos, grapefruit, lemons, limes and pomelos

Multi apple – puts out a variety of apples

Multi nashi – includes various Asian pear varieties

Fruit salad tree care is pretty much the same as that for any fruiting tree. Keep the tree moist at all times to avoid stress. Mulch around the tree to retain moisture. Reduce the amount of watering during the winter months as the tree goes dormant. Fertilize the tree twice a year in the late winter and again in the late summer. Keep the fertilizer away from the trunk of the tree.

The fruit salad tree should be in full sun to part sun (except the citrus variety which needs full sun) in an area sheltered from wind. Trees can be grown in containers or directly in the ground and can even be espaliered to maximize space. The first fruit should appear in 6-18 months.

Guess what. Fruit salad trees aren't being shipped internationally yet unless the receiving country allows them in. Still, it's always good to learn something new and maybe someone will develop them here in Canada!

Ease Heart Disease

Grandma's heart disease may have dealt you a troublesome gene that promotes plaque build-up in your arteries. But Canadian researchers found a solution in a salad bowl. Their study of 27,000 people suggests that plant compounds in dark leafy greens like kale, spinach and collards shut off that troublesome gene entirely. Word is that eating four cups weekly can slash your risk of heart disease by up to 33 %.



I Can't Find Plants for the Shade in My Garden!

No? Here are 15 to consider:

1. **Bletilla**

This Chinese ground orchid is relatively low-maintenance, but it does ask for one thing: that you plant it in a partially shaded location, where it's only exposed to several hours of morning light.

2. **Hosta**

How you care for each variety of hosta is not one-size-fits-all, as they all require different amounts of shade. Try this: the darker the leaf (they vary from white to dark green), the less sun it needs.

3. **Bleeding Heart**

This unique flower, also called *dicentra spectabilis*, is famous for its unique shape and is a showstopper in any garden. To help it thrive, plant yours in shade or partial shade.

4. **Hakonechloa**

Even though the grass in your yard needs tons of sun, this short, clump-forming kind needs shade, because too much exposure to light can cause burn marks and turn the leaves yellow.

5. **Foamflower**

These light pink flowers are on the more delicate side, so make sure you plant them in partial to heavy shade, as they can only handle a couple hours of morning sun.

6. **Leopard Plant**

Even though this plant can handle direct sunlight if you water it often enough, overwatering can lead to water spots. That's why it's safest to keep it in a partial shade patch.

7. **Spotted Deadnettle**

If you want to brighten up some of the darker corners of your yard with little to no effort, this light purple flowering plant is for you. It prefers the shade but beware, it spreads aggressively.

8. **Autumn Anemone**

These perennials, also known as Japanese anemones, flower from July to September — as long as they're planted in partial shade that gives them regular reprieve from direct sunlight.

9. **Astilbe**

The reason everyone loves this plant is because of the bright pink plumes, but they can burn if exposed to too much direct sunlight, so light to moderate shade is a must.

10. **Fern**

Ferns are often found in dark, wet forests, because they favor an environment where light is only provided through tree branches. Hang your potted plant from a covered deck to replicate this environment.

11. **Jacob's Ladder**

Even though this plant (named for the ladder-like way the leaves grow) can survive in the sun, the foliage will look darker and more intense when grown in the shade and well-drained soil.

12. **Bunchberry**

This unique plant (also known as *cornus canadensis*) features bright red berries in fall, as long as it's planted in a place out of direct, harsh sunlight. Shaded walkways are an excellent option.

13. **Heuchera**

Add a deep burgundy color to your garden with this perennial (a.k.a. coral bells). For the richest color, plant it away from the sun, as leaves might fade if overexposed.

14. **Lenten Rose**

Make sure the blooms on your plant are their prettiest by planting yours under a tree with low branches on the east side of your home. This way, only morning sun and afternoon shade will hit it.

15. **Columbine**

Even though this flowering plant can handle the sun, it hates the heat. So if you live in a warmer environment, plant yours in partial shade to keep it cool during the hottest part of the day.

...Excerpted from House Beautiful

It takes as much as 1,000 years to form one centimeter of soil,
and the Earth is losing soil at the rate of 30 soccer fields per minute.

Ever Heard of a Superbloom?

That's what's all set to happen in parts of Southern California in the next few weeks. The burned areas from those terrible fires last year are already greening up and there has been lots of rain. A biologist there reports, "We are at ~100 to 150 percent (maybe even 200 percent) our normal rainfall up to this point." What does that mean? The best superblooms occur after extended drought has had time to kill off invasive weeds that compete with native wildflowers for sunlight, followed by above average rainfall. When the excess rain soaks and softens the seed coats—as they did in 2017—the plants germinate en masse, producing acres and acres of blossoms. If the rain keeps up, the deserts and burn scars will soon explode with colourful poppies, lupines, lilies, popcorn-flowers, sunflowers, snapdragons and other ephemeral flowers. In some desert areas, rare species that only bloom every few years, or even decades, can pop up. "In superblooms you can get flowers, which in some cases, are thought to be extinct," Richard Minnich, a professor of earth sciences says. If it gets too hot too quickly, the plants could wither away but people are optimistic and looking forward to a good outcome. In 2017 there was a superbloom that began in March, lasted through April, and in fact, could be seen from space. Hopefully, we'll be able to see it here, too, on the various media available to us.

It's Pet Palooza Time

At our February meeting, we collect items for the Georgina Animal Shelter and Adoption Centre. The difference this year is that our meeting isn't happening on Feb 25 (elections taking place at the church) but on Monday March 4 instead. So if you have anything to donate, please bring it to our Feb25/Mar 4 meeting. The Shelter is happy to accept:

- cat litter
- old blankets, sheets or towels
- pet toys
- new or gently used leashes and collars
- basic medical supplies (such as bandage material, rubbing alcohol, antibiotic ointments etc.)
- new or gently used travel carriers or crates (all sizes)
- kitten milk supplement
- pet clothing
- and maybe even cash for medical bills

We asked about dog and cat food because we'd heard they didn't normally accept these. Not dry food, we were told, but canned food is always welcome.

David Suzuki asks: Will 2019 be the Year Monarchs Make a Comeback?

- Great news: Millions of monarch butterflies safely made it from Canada to Mexico for the winter - more than twice as many as last year!
- "Goldilocks" weather - not too hot, not too cold, just right - along the migratory route helped the eastern monarch population swell to its highest numbers in over a decade.
- This amazing achievement is the result of collective actions by thousands of people. Every milkweed and pollinator-friendly wildflower planted in gardens, schools, parks and roadsides helped!
- At the same time, the western population of monarch butterflies, which migrates along the Pacific coast and spends winters in Southern California, has dropped to 28,429 butterflies - a 99.4 per cent decline since the 1980s!
- While we can savour the good news about the monarchs in Mexico, these dramatically contrasting stories highlight that this species remains in serious peril.
- Here's hoping we'll remember 2019 as the year that both monarch populations made epic comebacks!
- Suzuki Foundation e-letter Feb 6, 2019

Get The Jump On Spring & Seedy Saturday

Two FREE garden events you won't want to miss on Saturday, February 23, 2019 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

GET THE JUMP ON SPRING

TBG's annual Horticultural Open House with 30+ exhibitors including horticultural societies, garden clubs and environmental organizations, in addition to a floral design competition and show.

SEEDY SATURDAY

Bring your open-pollinated and heirloom seeds to swap with other gardeners. Leftover seed will be added to the [TBG Seed Library](#). Seeds will also be available for purchase from local seed vendors. Seedy Saturday provides gardeners a chance to share their heirloom seed with one another to make sure it's available for future generations. It's also a great opportunity to discover varieties that are not available commercially.

This one-day garden extravaganza includes:

free talks and demonstrations –

N.B. Tony Snider is on at 1:30 pm demonstrating "The Seedy Side of Gardening"

gently-used gardening book sale

gardening advice from [Toronto Master Gardeners](#)

special discounts in the TBG [Garden Shop](#)

[Food Dudes Food Truck](#) (Bring a mug and/or a water bottle to help us reduce waste.)

Free Admission

\$2 donation appreciated (Those who donate will be entered in free prize draws, 1 every hour!)

How to participate in the seed swap:

Bring seed in envelopes labeled with:

Plant name (common and botanical name if you know them both)

Year of harvest

Place of harvest (postal code)

Your name (if you wish)

A bit about where the seed came from (if you wish)

Register at the table and add your seed to those available for swapping

Swap seeds – try to leave with around the same number that you brought

Buy seeds from the vendors – you can use these for swapping as well if you're not able to bring your own

This event is organized in partnership with the [Ontario Horticultural Association](#) (Garden Ontario). Cindy Scythes and Nancy Serrick are GTJ Planning Committee members.

May is Bring-a-Friend Month

Have you sometimes wondered if your neighbour would like the garden club? Someone at work? A cousin? A coffee friend? Now is the time to find out.

Welcome to May, our Bring-a-Friend month. Brand new in 2019.

Why not invite that person you've been thinking of?

There'll be a We're-Glad-You're-Here gift for your guest and something to say Thanks-for-Participating for you.

Monday May 13, 2019! Bring a friend!

Want to Have Some Fun? Check Out Your Birth Flower!

January - You're a captivating carnation!

Famously hardy, yet fringed with delicate, feathery petals, the carnation is symbolic of strength, loyalty and beauty. You exude captivating charisma.

February - You're a wise iris!

The three upright petals of the iris represent faith, wisdom and courage – traits you show in spades. You wouldn't be you without the hope that inspires you, the sagacity that defines you and the bravery that drives you.

March - You're an affable daffodil!

Trumpeting spring's arrival, the daffodil embodies rebirth and companionship - yellow, in fact, is the colour of friendship. Fittingly, you make friends easily.

April - You're a playful daisy!

The youthful daisy captures your kid-at-heart whimsy. Whether you're sowing spring seeds or picking wild daisies, you know that the little moments in life make the most precious memories.

May - You're a sweet lily of the valley!

The bell-shaped blooms of May are as sweet as they are demure. It's fitting then, that lily of the valley symbolizes humility. Never one for bold statements, you embody serene grace.

June - You're a regal rose!

With its perfect symmetry, the rose is undeniably regal. A born leader, you always go after your heart's desire.

July - You're an open-minded delphinium!

With its cluster of lush petals, the delphinium evokes limitless horizons and is symbolic of open-mindedness. Curious and creative, you embrace new ideas and thrive on challenges.

August - You're a driven gladiola!

Named for the Roman sword, the *gladius*, your flower signals strength. Just as it reaches for the sun, so do you reach for the stars.

September - You're a magical aster!

Believed in ancient times to possess magical powers, the star-like aster is a symbol of sophistication - and captures your grace, poise and "magical" charm.

October - You're a warm marigold!

With its mood-boasting hues of amber and yellow, the marigold embodies warmth. Caring and nurturing, you're the centre of your family, just as the marigold is the centre of your garden.

November - You're a joyful chrysanthemum!

Representing optimism, the late-blooming mum brings a spectrum of bright colours to the fall. Hopeful and tenacious, you define can-do idealism.

December - You're a cheerful poinsettia!

Emblematic of good cheer, the poinsettia is the perfect reflection of your effervescent nature. Always able to put others at ease, you're the perfect host - and celebrate life every day of the year.

**Got your birth flower in your garden?
Going to make sure you plant it this year?**

Let's Party! . . . Annual Wine and Cheese Social

Our annual Wine and Cheese get-together will be on Friday March 22, 2019 beginning at 6:30 pm. This year our hosts are Kathy and Tom Bruce, 154A First Ave, Keswick. (Their street is near Our Lady of the Lake church on Metro Rd.) We say Wine and Cheese but that's really a misnomer. It's an assortment of Wine / Beer / Soft Drinks / Juice / Water . . . and an array of Cheese / Crackers / Other Appies / Fruit / Sweets -- definitely something for everyone. This is a fundraiser and previously we've been able to help cover the cost of our digital projector (which is used often), and the service pins given to members to honour their contributions to our Society. Last year we decided to help someone pursue their dream of further education in our vast environmental world. This year we're continuing with that goal, i.e. to fill up our Bursary coffers. Tickets for \$10.00 each will be on sale at our February meeting which, don't forget, is now on Monday March 4th. Alternately, tickets will be available at Petal Pushers, 18 The Queensway S, Keswick. Mark it on your calendars now!

O Cannabis

Tony Snider

I've added a new plant to the garden,
A flowering ornamental it's not,
Its straggly and not that arresting,
No matter how perfect the spot.

In times past had you chosen to grow it,
You'd have done it in secret, I know
But now it's all out in the open,
Thanks to the likes of Trudeau.

If you use it to grace your foundation,
Your neighbours will think it's all wrong,
Unless, or course, you are living,
Next door to Cheech Marin and Chong.

It won't win a ribbon at show-time,
And judges won't swoon at its charm.
I suspect that the flower club entrants,
Will think its poor blossoms no harm

To their prospects of winning the contest,
Whether specimen, plant or design,
For this plant of ungainly proportion,
Is neither superb or sublime.

And yet, ... hemp may impact the judging,
Of specimens, designs, and more
If the judges are under its influence,
When trying to tally the score.

I also suspect if we sell it,
And advertise the sale near and far,
The profits from our little venture,
Will reach the unreachable stars.

We may find if we add this ingredient,
To our Pots and Pies brownies and cakes,
The demand for our goodies will outpace supply,
Even if all of us bake.

For there's nothing like hemp in the brownies,
And nothing beats dope in the cake,
And puffing a joint as you whip up a pie,
Makes the work a tad easier to take

A new day is dawning for gardeners,
We applaud as we see it approach
For each garden chore that we used to abhor,
Seems more pleasant when smoking a roach.

So now when I'm tending my garden,
And cannabis has me feeling mellow,
I'll laugh at the ravaging insects,
And the plants that are sickly and yellow.

And the weeding which used to annoy me
I'll now be in no hurry to stop,
'Cause I used to get high on the hobby
But now I get high on the crop.

Lake Simcoe Gardeners 2019 Program

March 4	Growing Herbs for Food, Medicine and Good Looks (Koidu Sulev) Pet Palooza
March 25	Wild Bees (Scott McIvor Ph.D) Dessert Competition
April 22	Drought Gardening (Jeff Mason) Houseplant Show
May 13	Drama in the Butterfly Garden (Carol Pasternak) Spring Flower Show
Sat May 25	Pots and Pies - plant, book & bake sale 8am-noon
June 24	Fabulous Canadian Flora from Coast to Coast (Maureen Hulbert) Summer Flower Show
August 26	Carefree Roses (Gloria Broks) Way to Grow Celebration Fall Flower & Vegetable Show
September 23	Awards Night!
October 28	Planting your Spectacular Spring Garden Now (Dugald Cameron) Pumpkin Patch Competition
November 18	Annual General Meeting Christmas Competition

Two TV Shows to Consider



Life in a Cottage Garden
Mondays at 8:00 pm from Feb 11
Gardening expert Carol Klein shows you a year in the life of her beautiful garden.

The Edible Garden
Mondays at 8:30 pm from Feb 11
London urbanite Alys Fowler is on a mission. In just one year she plans to turn her small, big city back garden into a self-sufficient vegetable garden. Come and see how her garden grows.

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