

Talks can be developed upon request but current lectures include:

- **"Herbs – from the savoury to the sensual to deadly poison"** - Come and learn how you can enjoy the heady aromas of herbs in your garden or on your windowsill. Whether for culinary delights, calming infusions or causing calamities, there are hundreds of herbs that are easy to grow. The seductive perfumes of a Damask Rose will delight any gardener, while the beautiful Monkshood cloaks her deadly poisons in regal shrouds. Whatever your bent, there is an herb for you. Join former chemist, Catherine Kavassalis, and learn about the joys and perils of herb gardening.
- **"Getting to Biodiversity"** The world is a wondrous place and our portion of this planet is rich with unique species and ecosystems. Our landscapes support a wide array of interesting and beautiful plants that in turn support migratory birds, bats and butterflies as well as the many permanent inhabitants of our region. In the words of Sir David Attenborough, "We, homo sapiens, are dependent on the natural world and are part of it." We gardeners can do a great deal to support and nurture the natural world within our care. By choosing plants wisely, caring for the soil and water, reducing our use of pesticides and fertilizers as well as by providing habitats for wildlife, we can create breathtaking biodiverse landscapes unique to our region. As we celebrate being a community of gardeners, I look forward to talking with you about 'getting to biodiversity.' Let's get inspired together and plan how we can invite a greater variety of life to thrive in our gardens and communities.
- **"A Pollinator Patch from the Ground Up"** - Bees, beetles, birds and butterflies are among the important pollinators vital for plant propagation and the production of seeds and fruits. Worldwide, our pollinators are in danger. You can make a difference by designing gardens that supply native pollinators with habitat, food and shelter. Where do you begin? Which plants are best for your pollinator patch? Come and explore the beautiful possibilities and be amazed at the diversity of life at work all around us.
- **"GARDENING FOR LIFE"** A garden, at its least, is a piece of ground for growing flowers, fruits or vegetables. At its best, it is a paradise – a place of joy. Endlessly mutable, gardens are spaces with artistic, recreational, spiritual and social value. They give us opportunities to express ourselves as individuals and opportunities to shape our world. Through our gardens, we can make a meaningful impact on the life of our planet. Join me in celebrating life in the garden and the joys of gardening for life.
- **"Fabulous Ferns"** - A fern is the quintessential plant: charming, elegant, graceful, delicate yet strong and adaptable, or so the Victorians thought. The fern craze of the 19th century was well founded. Come learn about weird and wonderful ferns from the desert to the Arctic. See the fascinating potato ferns that house ants and the iridescent ferns that glow in the dark. What makes a fern? The answer may surprise you. For your garden or home, there is a fabulous fern for you. Let's start a new fern craze together.
- **"Small Trees for a Small Spaces"** - Often called the backbone of a garden, trees and shrubs give a yard structure and form. They provide benefits of year round beauty, while improving our environment and providing food and habitat for wildlife. How do you choose the right tree for your space? Native is best for biodiversity, but fruit bearing trees may be more to your taste. Large trees can be kept small, but there are many small trees and large shrubs that may be a better fit. The possibilities for small spaces, while not endless are extensive. Come and get a few ideas for creating your own small oasis.
- **"Our Trees a walk through time"** - Palms at the poles? It happened once. Could it happen again? Take a walk through time. Learn how our wondrous forests evolved and how our trees cope with an ever changing climate. We will look at the trees of our region and talk about their ability to adapt and or migrate in response to climate induced pressures. We will think about the impact of introduced species and the need for us to be thoughtful participants in the evolution of our planet. Find out how we can help promote plant diversity and ensure healthy trees for future generations. From sex to awe, this talk will inspire and delight.

- **"Berrylicious – growing berries for fun, food and wild friends"** - Berries and berry-like fruit can make wonderful additions to any landscape, terrace or balcony. Strawberries for pots or as edible ground covers can provide fruit from spring to fall. Grape or kiwi vines can offer privacy, vertical interest and shade along with a tasty treat. While raspberries and blueberries are berry good, you might also consider growing currants, elderberries or the more unusual honeyberries, goji berries or goumi. Come and learn the basics of berry culture and get the names of a few trusted varieties. I am sure you will be berry happy to include these delicious and easy to grow plants in your gardens.
- **"Pesticides - What products can I use for pests and diseases in Ontario?"** In 2009, Ontario banned pesticides for cosmetic purposes. There are however, over 70 biopesticides and lower risk pesticide ingredients available to homeowners to take care of lawns and gardens. There are additional higher risk pesticides available to deal with pests on houseplants, poisonous plants, biting insects and to safeguard trees. What is the law? What is available? How do they work? Come and learn with former chemist and Master Gardener, Catherine Kavassalis.