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December 2022

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**Feature: Nine Eco-Friendly**  
**Holiday Gift Ideas**

With the holidays approaching fast, we all have that one family member who is impossible to buy for. Sometimes we panic, and end up ordering anything we think they might like online, just so there is something under the tree. We have also all been on the receiving end of that random item that we didn't necessarily want. You don't want to be ungrateful but you may think "Now I have to store this item that I never wanted in the first place." So, here are some stuff-free and climate-friendly options for gift-giving this holiday season.



***1. Support Locally***

The Rideau Lakes area is home to some great local artisans, stores, and places to eat. Check and see if your gift idea is something that can be sourced through a local retailer.

***2. Buy a Second Hand Item***

If you want to buy something, check out a thrift store. Oftentimes items in thrift stores are perfectly functional but may need a make-over – a perfect opportunity for a DIY gift.

### **3. Donate to a charity on behalf of someone**

Charities and non-profit organizations rely heavily on donations to ensure they are able to function and deliver on important projects. A small donation to honour a cause someone supports is a great way to give back. You can even ask them what organization they would like you to donate to.

### **4. Offer your time**

In our fast-paced, busy lives, sometimes offering your time to help someone can be more meaningful than any item.

### **5. Experiences**

Look into local experiences like a spa treatment, weekend get-aways, festivals, or concerts.

### **6. Classes**

Maybe someone has expressed interest in wanting to learn more about a new hobby like yoga or art.

### **7. Membership**

Give the gift of education and self improvement! Community organizations and businesses offer memberships for people to participate and learn more on certain topics of interest. Check out membership options either virtually or locally.

### **8. Craft Something**

This can go two ways... So, if you don't excel in the arts and crafts department, maybe choose one of the other options.

### **9. Consumables (food and drink)**

Check out local food vendors and farmers markets, and put together a food basket. Dust off grandma's baking recipes and make a cute tin of cookies and squares. If that's not to your fancy, treat someone to a gift certificate to dine out at one of the many amazing eateries in the Rideau Lakes area.

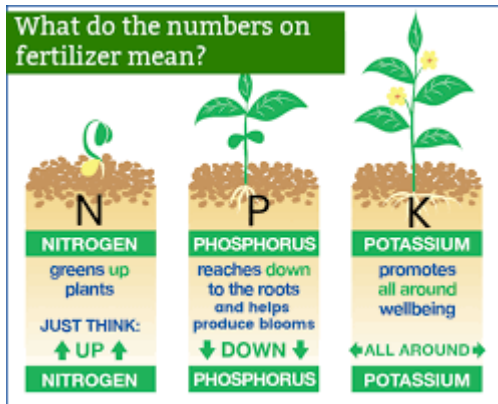
*Madeline*

*IF YOU SEE EVEN ONE RED DEAD NETTLE BLOOMING WHEN NOTHING ELSE IS, YOU HAVE A BOND OF AFFECTION WITH IT THAT NOTHING CAN BREAK, AND I THINK EVERYTHING BETWEEN THE LAST MICHAELMAS DAISY AND THE FIRST DAFFODIL HAS DOUBLE TRIPLE QUADRUPLE VALUE... THEY MEAN SOMETHING IS HAPPENING. THE DEAD EARTH STILL LIVES. – Elizabeth Smart*

## PRESIDENT'S VIEW

With the 2022 gardening season behind us and our gardens now resting, we hope that this season was filled with abundance and beauty for everyone! For those of you who may have experienced challenges with your gardens this season, you are all the wiser! It's important to not get discouraged as some years may be better than others, and there's always next year!

In October, we had an amazing presentation from Karen Smereka called "Rethinking your lawn and its place in Ecology". This presentation outlined the benefits of naturalized lawns and gardens, and shifting away from the traditional perfectly trimmed North American lawn. The audience was engaged by Karen's ability to present the facts on how our lawns can be part of larger ecological issues. We hope to see a few people around the township adopting these ideas with their own lawns.



Our Annual General Meeting in November was great! We proposed a revised budget to accommodate technology costs, and managed to fill most of the positions on our Board. Brad King, the Director of District 3 Ontario Horticultural Societies, was very helpful in guiding me through my first AGM. He also gave a great presentation that outlined the various nutrients and their roles in plant health.

This spring we are planning on breaking ground on a new planting project in partnership with the Township of Rideau Lakes. Our plan is to put a Sensory Garden outside the Elgin Municipal Complex. This garden will have interpretive signage to guide people through their senses and the plants in the garden. Sensory gardens are used therapeutically to engage the five senses. We hope this garden will bring wonder and mindfulness to people of all ages. Stay tuned for updates!

We are still working on lining up some guest speakers for you for next year, but have already lined up a couple. We will announce more as we confirm dates. In the meantime, if you could take a moment to fill out our engagement survey this would be very helpful to our Board! As we brainstorm ideas and reach out for speakers, having this information of what is wanted from our membership will provide insights for this process. You can find the survey at:

<https://www.rideaulakeshorticulturalsociety.ca/engagement-survey>.

As RLHS Board members prepare to break for the month of December, we are happy to have a Board of new (and returning) faces for the upcoming year. We are still currently looking for Directors-at-large to take the lead on some of our projects, to line up speakers, and to take over this newsletter. If you are interested in joining and taking an active role on the Board of Directors, please do not hesitate to reach out at [rideaulhs@gmail.com](mailto:rideaulhs@gmail.com) or [madeline.seward@gmail.com](mailto:madeline.seward@gmail.com).

Wishing you happiness and health this holiday season! We hope to see you at our events in 2023!

*Madeline*

## **Read Into It**

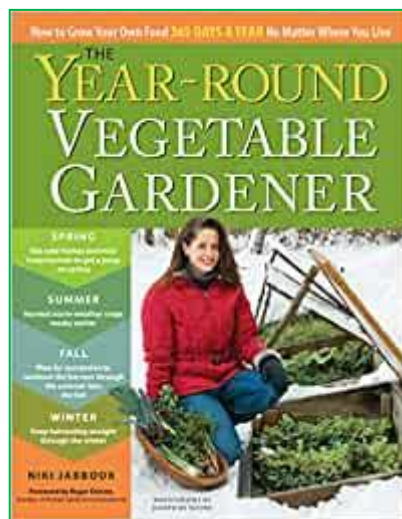
### ***The Year-Round Vegetable Gardener***

**by Niki Jabbour**

**Storey Publishing: 2021**

**Available at Rideau Lakes Public Library through interlibrary loan: [www.rideaulakeslibrary.ca](http://www.rideaulakeslibrary.ca)**

This book promises that we can grow our own food 365 days a year, no matter where we live! Well, I think that in this day and age of high inflation, soaring food costs, this would be very appealing. Now, I do have some skepticism about the 365 days a year part, especially in our climate. However, I do see the value in trying to extend our growing season and getting more from our gardens.



The book is divided into two parts. Part 1 is the how-to section in which she discusses intensive and succession planting as well as the infrastructure supports needed to extend the fall and spring seasons and to continue growing during the winter. By infrastructure supports she means grow lights, row covers, cloches and hot caps, cold frames and unheated greenhouses, and polytunnels. For each of these supports, she describes how to build and take care of them and, most importantly, how to use them throughout the year. Part 2 is all about the vegetables, picking what one wants to grow, determining which varieties are suitable for cold season growing and how to grow them. She does this for 45 vegetables and six herbs.

This is a very comprehensive book. The information provided is detailed. Questions one may have are answered. Most importantly, it broadens the scope of what we can do with our gardens. There is a lot there for both the experienced as well as the novice gardener. I also think that the winter is the best time to read it. Winter is our time of dreaming and planning and if

we are planning to get more out of our gardens, this is a great reference to have close by.

About the author: Niki Jabbour is a young garden writer who gardens in Nova Scotia. Whether trying new vegetables or garden season extending techniques, she is not afraid to experiment and enjoys pushing the boundaries of traditional garden practices. She has written other books on vegetable gardening: **Growing Under Cover**, **Veggie Garden Remix** and **Ground Breaking Food Gardens**. All of these books have been reviewed in previous Lilypad editions. She hosts a gardening radio show from CBC Halifax and she is a contributor to **SavvyGardening.com**.

*Judi*

# Community Corner

## BEAUTIFICATION

The Township funds community beautification teams from California to Rideau Ferry and all stops in between. The teams work through the associated Community Enhancement Committee to purchase plants, fertilizer and soil, as well as providing advice on signage, park amenities, flower boxes, and seasonal displays. Each team has anywhere from 3 to 14 people, which amounts to about 150 volunteers and represents a contribution of well over \$65,000 in equivalent wages. If you have suggestions for your corner of the Township, or wish to volunteer, contact your Community Enhancement Committee (CEC). You can find coordinates for the six Township CECs at: <https://www.rideaulakes.ca/town-hall/council/committees>.

### **FUEL UP: Caribbean Coleslaw**

A dish to bring sunshine into a wintry day or, perhaps, a tropical staycation? Compliments of Kate Earl, Nutritionist at Country Roads Community Health Centre, from her What's Cooking program.

[www.africanbites.com/caribbean-cole-slaw/](http://www.africanbites.com/caribbean-cole-slaw/)



**Ingredients:**

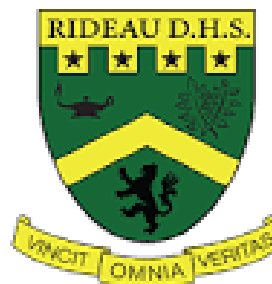
- |                                        |                                                                                        |
|----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1-2 Tbsp Dijon mustard                 | 1 large mango, peeled and sliced or julienned (or try with apple!)                     |
| 2-4 Tbsp honey and/or brown sugar      | 1 cup shredded carrots                                                                 |
| ½-1 jalapeno pepper, minced (optional) | 2-3 diced green onions or thinly sliced red onion                                      |
| 2 Tbsp red wine vinegar or lemon juice | 1/4 cup minced parsley (optional)                                                      |
| 1-2 garlic cloves, minced              | 1/2 cup nuts or seeds (almonds, sunflower seeds, cashews, etc.), or raisins or coconut |
| 1 tsp hot sauce (optional)             | Salt and pepper to taste                                                               |
| 2 Tbsp olive or canola oil             |                                                                                        |
| 6 cups shredded cabbage                |                                                                                        |

**Directions:**

1. Combine all dressing ingredients, from mustard to oil, in a jar or bowl. Shake/whisk to blend. Set aside.
2. Combine cabbage, mango, carrots and onions in a bowl.
3. Stir dressing into salad right before serving. Sprinkle with parsley and nuts/seeds.

**Dispatches: RDHS News**

*Exciting things happening in the Greenhouse at Rideau District High School! Students, community volunteer Fletcher Nelson, and I have been busy the past couple of months cleaning up the greenhouse and flower beds with preparation to plant. We have had the opportunity to plant a variety of vegetables, herbs and garlic, as well as daffodils that the Township graciously donated.*



*The medicine garden, planted by Corey Evans, has been getting some TLC and, in the spring, Fletcher, the students and I look forward to planting fruit and vegetables to tie into the four cardinal directions of the medicine garden, and watch it flourish.*

*The generous grant from WHOLE FOODS has allowed us to install in the greenhouse a watering system with a timer, to ensure our plants get watered on a regular basis and keep strong and healthy. We look forward to purchasing strawberry plants in the spring with the remainder of the grant. Thank you, WHOLE FOODS!*



*Upcoming events: We are excited about planning a plant sale in December which will include poinsettias and amaryllis. We will be using the funds we make from the plant sale to purchase food items such as turkeys or hams to create Christmas baskets to donate to families in need. Christmas food baskets will also be filled with vegetables we are currently growing in the greenhouse such as potatoes, beans, tomatoes, peas and so much more.*

*Sheena*

*Hi, I am a student from RDHS. I work in the greenhouse where we grow many plants. We also have a fish in it that we feed every day. Earlier this year we cleaned the garden beds and planted garlic in them. I also did a project on rotary tillers. There are three different types: hand rototiller, push rototiller and disk rototiller. They all do the same job in different ways. You use a hand rototiller for small areas. You use a push or gas rototiller for something just under an acre like a vegetable garden. You use a disc rototiller for big farming things. It was fun and I learned a lot. I like the greenhouse because I love agriculture and it gives me something to look forward to at school.*

*Lane*

*Hi, I'm a grade 8 student at Rideau District High School. I am currently working in the greenhouse usually once a week or more. We cleaned the gardens outside because there were too many weeds; then, after we cleaned them, we planted garlic. We have a water system, but we still must water some plants regularly that the water system doesn't reach. We have planted spinach, beans, potatoes and tomatoes, and lots more. I like how you plant a seed and it makes this big plant. I like being a part of the greenhouse because we are using the vegetables for Christmas baskets to help feed families in need. I learned from being a part of the greenhouse how to plant crops properly and that plants need sun and water.*

*Devin*



## YOUR **NEW** BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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