



Garden Gleanings

Glen Morris Horticultural Society

Established 1951

Website: www.gardenontario.org

December 2023 - 132nd Issue

COMING EVENTS

Monday, February 5, 2024
Glen Morris Hort. Meeting
G. M. United Church, 7:30 p.m.
"Nature Mandala Craft"
Lynn Leach

Monday, March 4, 2024
Glen Morris Hort. Meeting
G. M. United Church, 7:30 p.m.
"Tour of Ireland and Scotland"
Michele and Roland Schraa

Newsletter by Margaret Fleury

The Parasitic Mistletoe

There are 1500 species of Mistletoe. The European variety has smooth-edged, oval, evergreen leaves with waxy, white berries. Those native from Spain to Africa have red berries. Eastern Mistletoe, *Phoradendron leucarpum*, is native to North America with short, broad leaves and white berries.

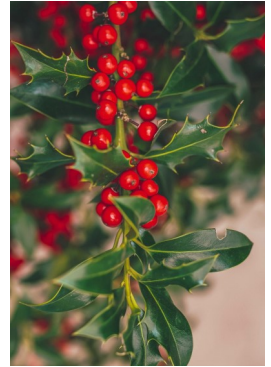
Mistletoe is a parasitic invasive plant that grows on host trees. Heavy infestations can stunt growth or kill the host. A Mistletoe seed germinates on a branch and grows towards the bark of a host tree or shrub forming a clump.

At first, the clump provides its own photosynthesis but eventually, it penetrates the host tissue to get water and nutrients from the host tree.

Most Mistletoe seeds are spread by birds that excrete the droppings or wipe the sticky seeds onto branches.

European Mistletoe is more toxic than the American but both can cause diarrhea and vomiting. It has been used historically to treat arthritis and high blood pressure.

Many birds and animals depend on Mistletoe leaves and berries for food.



Tip of the Month

Cold weather can sap birds of critical energy and body heat. Provide bird houses or brush piles to shelter birds. Keep feeders clean and full of high-calorie sources of fat for energy.

EXECUTIVE

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Hort. Happenings

Nov. 25–Dec. 10: *Sip N Seed Fundraiser*, Garden Ontario & Sipology Tea Co., <https://fundraise-ca.sipology.com/collections/oha-sip-n-seed>

Dec. 9: *Christmas Mini Workshop*, Walter's Greenhouses, \$59, pre-register

Dec. 11: *Turtles, Trees & the Other 99%*, Sarah Richer, Species at Risk RBG,

Hamilton Naturalists' Club, McMaster Innovation Park, Hamilton, 7:30 p.m.

Dec. 17: *Christmas Bird Count*, Cambridge, levicmoore@gmail.com register

Dec. 31: *Christmas Bird Count*, Brantford, nashkevin1980@outlook.com register

Mistletoe Traditions

Pagan cultures regarded white Mistletoe berries as symbols of male fertility and romance.

The Romans associated the plant with peace, love and understanding.

The Celts used it as a remedy for barrenness in animals.

Western Christians use Mistletoe as Christmas decorations under which lovers kiss. You get one kiss for each berry on a Mistletoe sprig. The earliest kiss was recorded in 16th century England. The serving class of Victorian England is credited with perpetuating the tradition.



According to some traditions, Mistletoe should remain hanging throughout the year to preserve the house from lightning or fire until replaced the next Christmas Eve.

Christmas Bird Count

The Christmas Bird Count started in 1900 and is North America's longest running citizen science project. Each bird count is conducted in a community on a certain day from December 14 to January 5. The count is held within a 24 km diameter circle that stays the same each year. Count birds in the field or at your feeder. The data collected helps with bird conservation. Contact Kevin Murphy in Brantford or Levi Moore in Cambridge to participate.

Natural Repellents

Geraniums have bold, fragrant blooms known for repelling insects. The Mosquito Plant, Lemon-Scented, Rose, Peppermint, Bigroot, and Lavender Geraniums contain citronellol and geraniol that repel ants, mosquitoes, aphids, spider mites, Japanese beetles, and white flies. When insects land on the flowers,



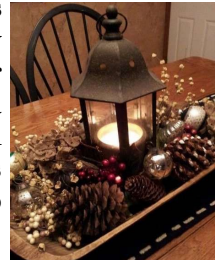
they are repelled by the strong aroma or the oils physically block the insect's ability to smell and eat.

Christmas Lanterns

Lanterns make lovely Christmas decorations and are quick and easy to create with only a few supplies. Inside the lanterns pictured top right are three battery-operated candles of different heights. A red ribbon and greenery are tied to the top to complete the décor.



Inside the lantern left are large pinecones and coloured balls surrounded by fairy lights. The third lantern lower right is snuggled in the middle of a bed of pinecones, fairy lights, and Christmas balls. A large candle has been placed inside the lantern to create a pretty table decoration.



Winter Predictors

Woolly Bear Caterpillars have a reputation for predicting the coming winter weather. The wider the rusty brown section is, the milder the winter will be. From 1948-1956, Dr. C. H. Curran, curator of insects in New York City, studied Woolly Bears to see if the predictions were reliable. Although his data samples were small, he concluded that the folklore has some merit and might be true. His experiments legitimized the folklore for some and for others offered an excuse for having fun.



Annual General Meeting

It was wonderful to see 38 people attend our Annual General Meeting and Potluck on Monday, November 6. The many changes to the Constitution were reviewed and approved unanimously. This marked the beginning of our Membership Drive. To date, a little over half of our members have paid their \$15. We ask for your support to continue the work we do in this beautiful little community of Glen Morris. We strive to be nature's guardians!



Barbara thanked Nancy McComb for her many years on our Society. Nancy has been President and Secretary and was a huge promoter of Flower Shows.

Marion thanked Jennifer Hager for her many years as Treasurer. Jennifer was always willing to help organize or bake or whatever was needed.

Joan thanked Ellen Horak for her many years organizing the Community Garden Volunteers. Thanks for the Cosmos seeds.

2024 Executive: Back I-r: Cindy Briand, Diane Woodham, Joan Sims, Barbara Cisecki, ADD Sandi Remedios, Margaret Fleury, Nancy Taylor
Front I-r: Sarah Mulder, Cathy Thompson, Marion Morton, Martine Emery, Barbara Baumgart
Absent: Marlene Gilchrist

