



**YOUTH COMPETITION**  
**OHA 118<sup>th</sup> Convention**  
**July 24<sup>th</sup> to July 26<sup>th</sup>, 2026**

**Host: District 4 & 17**  
**Theme: GARDENING FOR LIFE**

**Committee Chair: Karen Redmond**  
**Phone:** 519-525-2254      **Email:** youth@gardenontario.org

1. **Theme:** This competition is inspired by the convention theme and linked to the other competitions through the class title: **“GARDENING FOR LIFE”** to explore creative expression. There are no Youth classes in the general Photography competition. These classes are now part of the Youth Competition.
2. **Eligibility:** Each exhibitor must be an OHA Youth member or an OHA Youth Club Member or leader In Good Standing of a Society/Club (hereafter Society) In Good Standing with the Ontario Horticultural Association (OHA).
3. **Entry:**
  - a. Each class is either “Only one entry per Club” or “Open to all OHA youth members”. The Ruby Lobban High Points Award (Class 15) is for the Youth Club with the highest total point aggregate from awards in the Youth competition so no need to apply.
  - b. Please provide the coordinator with an estimated list of entries on a **Youth Competitions Entry Form by June 1<sup>st</sup>**. Please estimate high, as the number of entries help determines the space allotted for the Youth Competition.
  - c. Age groupings for Youth Competition Classes 1 – 7 are as follows:  
**A: Born 2020-2018 (6 - 8 years)    B: Born 2017-2015 (9 - 11 years)**  
**C: Born 2014-2012 (12 - 14 years)    D: Born 2011-2008 (15 - 18 years)**  
These groupings DO NOT apply for classes 8 -14.
  - d. Each entry must have an entry tag securely attached showing: Exhibitor’s name, age, Youth Club, Society and District. Use your local Society tags. If you do not have tags available, please contact the Youth Competition Coordinator.
  - e. Dried plant material is material from which the moisture has been removed either naturally or by artificial means. Scarce, protected, or endangered native plants will be disqualified. Refer to Government of Ontario, Ministry of Natural Resources “*Endangered Species Act*” at [www.ontario.ca/speciesatrisk](http://www.ontario.ca/speciesatrisk).
  - f. Entries at the Convention must be placed Thursday between 6:00 and 8:00 p.m. or Friday between 7:00 and 8:00 a.m. Judging starts at 9:30 a.m. **NO LATE ENTRIES ACCEPTED**
  - g. Permission form must accompany EACH Youths entry- 1 per youth. Permission to use the youth’s name/age/details in OHA publications. Form can be found at: <https://gardenontario.org/wp-content/uploads/OHA-Media-Release-and-Indemnity-2024-01-26.pdf>
4. **Judging:** Criteria vary and are outlined in the schedule. Judging and placements will be based on merit. Honourable Mention (HM) placements may be awarded at the Judge’s discretion. Judges may withhold an award if, in their opinion, an exhibit is not worthy. The Judge’s decision is final.

5. **Awards:**  
Classes 1 - 9: OHA ribbons and cash prizes  
1<sup>st</sup> prize: \$5 (5 pts)    2<sup>nd</sup> prize: \$4 (4 pts)    3<sup>rd</sup> prize: \$3 (3 pts)    HM (up to 3): \$1 (1 pt each)

Classes 10-14: OHA ribbons and prizes stated below the class description  
\*Best in Show Rosette, Section B: Artistic Creativity (5 points)  
\*Judge's Choice Rosette, Section C: Floral Design (5 points)

6. **Viewing:** All entry tags will be open for viewing on  
Friday - 12 noon to 5:00 p.m.    Saturday - 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
7. **Return:** Entry removal not permitted until after the competition is closed on Saturday. Entries and prizes are to be picked up on Sunday between 7:30 a.m. and 8:30 a.m. or if necessary, by special arrangement with the coordinator. A signature is necessary for receipt of materials if not picked up by leader.

**Note: No dried or fresh Marijuana plants allowed as per Ontario law- it is illegal to transport unless you are a registered grower.**

**SECTION A: WRITING      Open to all youth members**

Age Group A & B: Class 1 and 2 - not to exceed 150 words.  
Age Group C & D: Class 1 and 2 - should have a minimum of 150 words.

Judging Criteria: Subject matter 70%  
Neatness and spelling 30%

**Class 1 – Cultivating Connections**

In the journey of gardening, every plant plays a vital role in our ecosystem. For this class, share your experiences of growing a plant or crop that contributes to life-whether it's for your kitchen table or for supporting local wildlife. Explain why this process was enjoyable for you and discuss the role of pollinators in this relationship. Did they help your plants flourish or present challenges? Feel free to include information from online resources to enrich your explanation. You can also incorporate drawings (hand-drawn or pre-drawn), photos, and/or images from magazines or websites. Please present your work in a folder with a clear cover, ensuring that the title page is visible.

**Class 2 – Life in Balance**

Explore the fascinating relationship between plants and the insects that interact with them! For this class, showcase a plant and its corresponding insect that feeds on it. Describe this partnership in your own words, highlighting the balance of nature. Include drawings (hand-drawn or pre-drawn), photos, and/or images from magazines or websites. Additionally, provide examples of other plants that share similar relationships. Please ensure your presentation does not exceed 13 cm x 18 cm (5" x 7").

**SECTION B: ARTISTIC CREATIVITY    Open to all youth members**  
**Sponsored by Don Matthews, OHA Past President 1989-1990**

Judging Criteria: Interpretation of title 20%  
Use of appropriate material 30%  
Creativity 30%    Neatness 20%

1<sup>st</sup> prize: \$5 (5 pts)    2<sup>nd</sup> prize: \$4 (4 pts)    3<sup>rd</sup> prize: \$3 (3 points)    HM (up to 3) \$1 (1 pt each)  
Best in Show Rosette

### **Class 3 – Blossoms of Life**

Craft a picture that celebrates the beauty of nature using fresh and/or dried materials. You might paint a scene and incorporate textures or flowers that enhance the story of life in the garden. Let your creativity shine as you depict the vibrant connections between plants and the environment. Please ensure your artwork does not exceed 13 cm x 18 cm (5" x 7").

### **Class 4 – Harvesting Ontario's Bounty**

Design a flyer on 22 cm x 28 cm (8.5" x 11") paper or cardstock that showcases a crop grown in Ontario and the products created from it. Use your creativity with drawings, computer-generated images, magazine photos, coloured pencils, crayons, markers, and/or paints to illustrate the connection between the crop and its role in supporting life. Highlight how these crops contribute to our community and environment.

## **SECTION C: FLORAL DESIGN and SPECIAL EXHIBITS Open to all youth members**

Accessories permitted

Judging Criteria: In accordance with the *Ontario Judging & Exhibiting Standards (OJES) for Horticulture and Floral Design (Second edition OJES 2019, Reprinted 2024)*.

Copies can be purchased from the OHA; order form on-line at <http://www.gardenontario.org/shop/index/php>.

Judge's Choice rosette to be awarded.

### **Class 5 – Seeds of Creativity**

Create a single flower using a variety of materials, such as cotton balls, seeds, pinecones, and other crafted items like dried orange peel. Let your imagination bloom as you design a unique flower that represents the beauty of life in the garden. Feel free to paint your finished creation to add vibrancy and character. Item may be free-standing or on paper/cardboard background.

### **Class 6 – The Essence of Flavour**

Present three different herbs in transparent tubes, clearly labeled with their names. Highlight the importance of these herbs in enhancing culinary creations and their role in promoting a healthy lifestyle. Share a brief description of each herb, including its benefits and uses in cooking, to showcase how gardening enriches our lives through flavour and wellness.

### **Class 7 – Backyard Treasures: An Exploration in the Yard**

Create a display of at least three plants arranged in a vase, using materials gathered from your own garden or with permission from a friend's garden.

You may include dried, fresh, or a combination of both. Be sure to name each plant to highlight its significance and contribution to the ecosystem. This class celebrates the beauty of your yard and its role in nurturing life right outside your door.

## **SPECIAL AWARDS FOR YOUTH MEMBERS**

**Class 8- 11** are Open classes for all youth members (no age categories)

Prize amounts awarded to individuals, prizes described with each class.

**The following Classes are NOT age separated so NO age code required.**

### **Class 8 – Nature's Unseen Allies      Open to all youth members**

Curate a collection for a drawing of at least three different plants commonly considered "weeds" in your area.

Examples may include Milkweed, Goldenrod, Dandelion, Queen Anne’s Lace, Purslane, and Common mallow. Highlight the ecological importance of these plants and how they support life in their environments. This class encourages appreciation for the often-overlooked contributions of these species to our local ecosystems.

Entry to be a drawing (hand or pre-drawn) on 22 cm x 28 cm (8.5” x 11”) sheet of paper. May use crayon, paint, pencil crayon, magazine pictures, etc. in any combination. Drawing should indicate the name of the plant with uses of plant.

Judging criteria: Subject matter 70% Neatness and spelling 30%

1<sup>st</sup> prize - \$6      2<sup>nd</sup> prize - \$5      3<sup>rd</sup> prize - \$4 (no points)      HM \$1 (no Points)

**SECTION D: PHOTOGRAPHY    Open to all youth members**

Entries must be colour prints (unless stated otherwise). Print to be mounted not matted. Mounted size to be 5” x 7” (outside measurement). The photo is to be no larger than 4” x 6”. The photo should contain a horticultural element. Photos with identifiable people will be disqualified. An entry implies that the exhibitor gives consent to the OHA to make further use of the entry in any way that it designates. Ownership of the entry is retained by the exhibitor.

***William D. Clingersmith Youth Photography Award (classes 9 & 10)***

All age classes are eligible. Awarded to the youth who have been chosen to have the best photograph across all youth photography classes. \$20 award & Best in Show Rosette

**In memory of William Clingersmith - who is responsible for introducing me to nature and the outdoors and always encouraged my work with the OHA. Kelly Taylor, OHA Secretary.**

**Class 9 – Foundations of Life    Open to all youth members**

Submit a photograph capturing any type of rock formation that showcases the beauty of nature's structures.

This image should reflect the connection between geological elements and the life they support in the ecosystem. Consider how these formations contribute to the environment and the plants and animals that thrive around them.

**Class 10 - Field Stone**

Your interpretation.

**SECTION E: FINE ARTS**

**\*Changes in Award - no longer receives a plaque**

**Class 11 – Pathways of Possibility    Open to all youth members**

Express your vision through any medium—painting, drawing, sculpture, carving, fiber art, or more—while reflecting on the theme of life and growth in the garden. Your artwork can incorporate dry plant materials and should not exceed 50 cm (20”) in any direction. This class invites you to explore the journey of gardening and the vibrant possibilities it brings to our lives.

Judging criteria: Interpretation of title 20%    Creativity 20%    Originality 30%    Skill 30%

1<sup>st</sup> prize - \$10.00      2<sup>nd</sup> prize - \$8.00      3<sup>rd</sup> prize - \$6.00

**Donated by Harry Wyma, Ridgetown**

**District 11 Director 1983-1988, OHA President 1990**

## SECTION F: HORTICULTURE    Open to all OHA youth members

**\* Changed to open class**

### **Class 12 – Edible Harmony**

Create a pot or planter featuring a minimum of three different varieties of edibles, which may include herbs, flowers, or a combination of both. Be sure to name each variety to highlight its contribution to our gardens and our plates. Judging will follow the Ontario Judging & Exhibiting Standards (OJES) for Horticulture and Floral Design (*Second edition OJES 2019, Reprinted 2024*). Copies can be purchased from the OHA; order form on-line at <http://www.gardenontario.org/shop/index/php>.

1<sup>st</sup> prize - \$6                      2<sup>nd</sup> prize- \$5                      3<sup>rd</sup> prize - \$4 (no points)                      HM \$1 (no Points)  
**Cash prizes donated by Catherine McGill, Youth Competitions Past Youth Chair.**

### **Class 13 - Ruby Lobban High Points Awards    Open to all OHA youth members**

This award is based on the highest point aggregate from awards in the OHA Youth competition.

1<sup>st</sup> prize - \$15.00                      2<sup>nd</sup> prize - \$10.00                      3<sup>rd</sup> prize - \$5.00

**In memory of Ruby Lobban, a member of the Owen Sound Horticultural Society, and District 8 Assistant Director 1970-83.**

### **Class 14 - Maisie Bray Award - Dandelion**

**Only one entry per Club; may be a combined effort**

**\* Changed to open class**

Create a presentation on firm board material (e.g., Bristol board) that highlights Dandelion, a plant often misunderstood as a nuisance in the lawn. Include its printed name, both common and botanical, along with interesting facts about this versatile plant. Discuss its edible uses, such as in tea, jelly, and creams, as well as its role in floral arrangements and as a vital food source for spring pollinators. Illustrate your presentation with drawings, which may be coloured using any medium (pen, crayon, coloured pencil, etc.), to celebrate the importance of Dandelions in our ecosystem.

[www.invadingspecies.com/invasive-phragmites](http://www.invadingspecies.com/invasive-phragmites)

Judging Criteria:                      Subject matter 70%                      Neatness and Spelling 30%

1<sup>st</sup> prize - \$10.00                      2<sup>nd</sup> prize - \$8.00                      3<sup>rd</sup> prize - \$6.00

**In memory of Maisie Bray, Lion's Head, District 8 Director 1978 – 1983**

## SECTION G: SPECIAL AWARDS - Club award

### **Class 15 - Ruby Bryan Award    Only one entry per Club**

Create a scrapbook that provides a descriptive account of your Youth Club activities over the past two years. Include a pictorial and illustrated narrative showcasing specific subjects, meetings, and projects undertaken during this time. There are no limitations on the size of the scrapbook, and it may be compiled by the Youth Club leader. Please ensure to indicate "Calendar Year" or "School Year" on the entry tag to clarify the timeframe. This class celebrates the creativity and engagement of youth in gardening and community involvement.

Judging criteria:

1<sup>st</sup> prize - \$10.00                      2<sup>nd</sup> prize - \$8.00                      3<sup>rd</sup> prize - \$6.00

**Donated by Ruby Bryan, Englehart, District 12 Director 1964–1969, OHA President 1972**

