

Dirt Newsletter

Ontario Horticultural Association – District 6



Assistant District Directors (ADDs)

Here are your ADDs and their assigned societies.

Bob Heil – ADD for
Ancaster, Brantford,
Winona

Susan MacMillan
Secretary. Newsletter
Editor, ADD for Bronte,
Burlington, Dundas,
Oakville,

Tomm Wenzel ADD
for Acton, Georgetown
Milton & District

Liz Chappel ADD for
Flamborough, Garden.
Hamilton, Stoney
Creek

Elsie Eubank ADD for
Haldimand, Paris
Waterford

Dave Collins ADD for
Glen Morris, Lynden,
St George

Janet Lala ADD for
Delhi, Port Dover &
Woodhouse, Simcoe

Message From District Director Lianne Krane

Well, summer was certainly full of surprises and seemed to fly by!

July and August are often a quieter time for our horticultural societies, though 30 of us spent 3 days in July at the OHA Convention in Oshawa, and what a terrific time it was! Great events, speakers, workshops, bus tours, meals and special gatherings made it a wonderful convention. I hope you will join us at the 2028 OHA Convention...more on that later

For others, it was a chance to step away from meetings and events and spend more time tending to our own gardens. It's also a busy time behind the scenes, as societies plan their programs, speakers, workshops and activities for the rest of the year and into 2027

And what a program we have to look forward to!

As we move into September, our societies are gearing up for another **exciting season** of meetings, garden visits, speakers, workshops, plant sales and, of course, opportunities to share our love of gardening.

There is something particularly special about this time of year in the garden. As temperatures cool, our gardens take on a whole new character. Summer colours soften, autumn tones emerge, and seedheads and grasses add texture and beauty, reminding us that every season has something wonderful to offer.

This fall, I hope you'll join us at Winona Vine Estates on October 25th as Stoney Creek Garden Club gets ready to host our District Fall Brunch and, more importantly, celebrate their **100th anniversary**. It promises to be a very special day, with an absolutely fabulous speaker who blew us away at the Convention — and so much more!

So, as you put away the patio furniture and start thinking about your fall garden, don't forget to make time for your horticultural society, too. Bring a friend, invite a neighbour, attend a meeting, take part in an activity — and help us continue to grow our gardening community.

Here's to a wonderful fall season in District 6. I look forward to seeing many of you at your local society events and sharing another season of **gardening, learning, growing and friendship** together.

Happy gardening!

Lianne

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Special Announcements

Share Your Stories. Inspire Our District!

HOW IT WORKS

Throughout the year, your District Director will track how many articles, photos, and updates each society submits to both the OHA Trillium and the District Dirt newsletter.

At the end of the year, the society with the most contributions will be selected as the winner.

The winning society will be notified in advance and then recognized and celebrated by everyone at the 2027 District AGM.

AS A TOKEN OF APPRECIATION, THE WINNING SOCIETY WILL RECEIVE TWO COMPLIMENTARY TICKETS TO THE AGM!

2026 CONTEST

Our Societies work tirelessly to provide events and activities for their members. Let's make sure everyone in the OHA Districts hears about it and gets inspired!

SUBMIT ARTICLES
Share your stories, news, and updates.

SHARE PHOTOS
Showcase your events, people, and projects.

STAY ON TRACK
Your District Director will track submissions throughout the year.

✓ Events
✓ Activities
✓ Successes
✓ Creativity

Let's take this friendly challenge and *share what makes our societies amazing!*
Your Adds will be reminding you prior to the deadlines—please work with them and get your submissions in.
We can't wait to read your stories!

OHA District 6 Fall Meeting

Sunday, October 25, 2026
Hosted by Stoney Creek Garden Club & Horticultural Society

celebrating 100 Years

10:00 am TO 3:00 pm (doors open at 9:00 am)

Winona Vine Estates, 267 Glover Road, Stoney Creek

OCTOBER 15 is the DEADLINE for PRE-REGISTRATION: \$50.00 each

- Morning refreshments,
- Delicious luncheon,
- Live caricaturist - complimentary portraits,
- 100 Years of our Society - historical displays,
- OHA District 6 Updates, News, Changes,
- OHA District 6 Share-the-Wealth & Penny Sale,
- Special Prize Draws hosted by Stoney Creek,
- SWAG gift for every attendee,
- Bring cash

EACH register and pay by Oct 15

[Click this LINK to Register](#) each one or use the QR Code below



QR Code to Register

MENU: coffee, tea, juices; muffins; Danish; croissants; rolls; salad; penne; chicken; sausage; potatoes; pastries; soft drinks.

FEATURED SPEAKER



Paul LaPorte,

Owner Ephemeral Ark Nursery.

One of Ontario's leading advocates for native plants and ecological gardening, Paul's presentations on Ontario's native woodland plants, biodiversity, and ecological restoration are engaging, informative, and inspiring.

QUESTIONS: Contact Bob Hell, bobhell56@gmail.com 905-246-3933

[OHA District 6 Fall Meeting Registration Link](#)

Oct 14, 12:00-1:30pm Webinar

[Tigers & Tussocks, Fall's Fuzziest Caterpillars + a Live Event](#)



Fall Native Plant Sale

Saturday, September 12

At Glen Morris United Church Parkette

Across from the GM United Church, 453 East River Road, Glen Morris

10am-noon - Cash Sales Only

Plants supplied by Prairie Song Nursery

It's time to make the switch from big box store mums to asters, goldenrods, and grasses that are native to our area, support biodiversity, and return every year.

Prairie Song Nursery will be there to offer advice to help you pick the right plant for the right place.



 Hamilton Naturalists' Club

OCT 3, 2026 — 10 AM - 3:30 PM

NATIVE PLANT FAIR

First Unitarian Church of Hamilton
170 Dundurn St S, Hamilton



Presentation by Kim Eierman • Educational Booths

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Society Events

Acton —

Sept 15 2026, A member from “ Grow Native Halton “ will present.

Oct 20 2026, Caitlyn Robinson “ Extending the Harvest in Canadian Climates”

Nov. 17 2026, Marie Decker. “The Ups and Downs of Rose Growing”

Dec. 1 2026. Members’ Christmas Dinner Celebration

Jan. 2027 no meeting

Feb. 16 2027. Sean James

Ancaster

Sept.15, Jennifer Henderson, and Rosemary Horwood, Dundas Turtle Watch Education Co-ordinator, will be presenting about the Dundas Turtle Watch mandate, turtle identification and handling, as well as the status of turtles in Ontario.

Oct. 20, Irene Kicak and Veronica Tunzi, Fancy Farmerettes “Growing with Hemp.”

Nov. 17, Ancaster Town Hall, Holiday Party and AGM

Thursday Nov. 18th 9:00 AM 12:00 PM,
Christmas Decoration - Fieldcote and Old Town Hall December(decorating) Wed. Dec. 1st 9:00 AM 12:00 PM

Music at Fieldcote has returned in 2026 and will continue with a new program for 2027.

Brantford.

Sept 10. Jeremy Gehla, Year in the Life of a Head Gardener Langdon H

Oct 8.Paul OliverHow to help the Birds through the Seasons

Nov 12.TBA

Brantford (cont'd)

Dec 10, Kevin Kavanagh & Dylan Cowan.

Plants in Jeopardy (new version)

Xmas dinner tickets must be purchased by Nov 12.

Bronte



Sept 12. Pot Luck. Sovereign House 4:00-6:00. See also a great video about the history of BHS and their 30 years of caring for Sovereign House.[Bronte Horticultural Society](#)

Burlington

Sept. 9, Mike Prong: Creating a Colourful Garden for All Seasons

Oct. 14, Allyn Walsh: New Plants From Old: collecting, saving and sowing seeds.

Nov. 11, Sean James: Wonderland: the Garden in Winter

Dec. 9: AM and potluck, no speaker

Delhi-

Flamborough (FHS)

Sept 16 Speaker Allyn Walsh. The Garden's Middle Layer.

Oct.14****Date Changed**. Heather Jerrard. Reimagining Eden: Designing for Climate Change and Advances in Technology.



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Georgetown-

Sept. 16, Speaker: Pat Vuurman, Topic: Orchids, and a September Flower Show
Oct. 21, Workshop lead by Lil Taggart, Autumn Treasures, a Pumpkin Carving and Pumpkin Dessert Contest
Nov. 18, TBD
Dec. 9, AGM, a Seasonal Workshop, and seasonal treats and tea!

Glen Morris- Hort Happenings:.

Sept. 12: Bird Walk, Waterworks Park, Brantford, Brant for Nature, register, 8-11 am
Sept. 12: Tree Day & Plant Sale, Guelph Arboretum, 10 am - 3 pm
Sept. 13: Autumn Mixed Planter, Walter's Greenhouses, register, \$45, 2-3 pm
Sept. 20: Annual Trail Party, rare Charitable Reserve, register, \$34.62, 9 am.
Sept. 20: Plant a Pumpkin Workshop, Walter's Greenhouses, register, \$43, 11am-noon
Sept. 20: Hens & Chicks Workshop, Walter's Greenhouses, register, \$30, 1-2 pm
Sept. 27: Fall Barrel Workshop, Walter's Greenhouses, register, \$35, 11 am - noon
Mon., Sept. 14, Meeting 7 p.m.
"Turtle Stewardship in Brant"- Jeff Leader
Mon., Oct. 5, Joint Meeting with Lynden & St George, 7 p.m. "Honey, I Shrank the Lawn"- Kevin Kavanagh

Haldimand-

Sept. 17. Quinten Hartlen-Melo speaking on Mosaiculture from Niagara Parks!

Lynden.

Milton & District.

Sep .21, The Ups and Downs of Rose Growing- Marie Decker
Oct 19, Modern Mass Design for Autumn, Michael Erdman.
Nov 16, Annual Awards Night and Introduction to a Sustainable Milton

Mt Hamilton/Garden Hamilton.

Sept 18 Speaker, Marie Decker. "Veggies: Harvest to Table."
Oct. 16 Simpler Thyme, Organic Gardening
Nov. 20 Awards Night Dinner. Christmas Design Class. Sean James- Sedges & Grasses.

Oakville

Sept. 14 - Speaker Janet Padiak: Good Bug, Bad Bug: Gardening with IPM
Oct. 5 - Speaker Matthew Donovan: All About Tea Workshop.
Nov. 9 - Speaker TBD
Dec. 14 - Annual Meeting and Potluck

Paris-

Sept 16. at the Paris Fair Grounds starting at 7 pm with social time, the program will begin at 7:30 pm. Our program will be members sharing their gardening year "Successes, Misses, Still working On It". We are also celebrating 40 years with a members' only flower show.

Port Dover/ Woodhouse:

Note: Apologies to Port Dover for missing to enter their Summer Dirt Submission.
Sept. 17 Presentation: Kim Drew, Purple Haven Lavender and Flower Farms
Sept. 19 Fall Plant Sale 9-noon, Silver Lake Pavilion
Oct. 14 Dried Flower Arrangement Workshop: 2-4 pm at Walt's Kitchen

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Port Dover/ Woodhouse(Cont'd)

Oct. 21 Joint Meeting Horticultural Society

Nov. 19 General Meeting: Presentation:

Aleksia Shoalts

Dec. 10. Christmas Arrangement Workshop
2-4pm at Walt's Kitchen

Simcoe-

St. George.

Sept. 12- Trent Meyers- Tree pruning demo-
Sunny Hill Park-9-11am

Sept 15-St. Flower/vegetable show – St,
George Firehall 6:45pm

Sept 19-20- Applefest- Downtown St. George

Sept 26 - 9 am Adopt- a-Road Garbage
Clean up

Workshop- Oct. 20 Members only- Willow

Bird Feeder -St. George Firehall-7pm

Nov. 17- AGM- St George Firehall- Details to
be announced

Stoney Creek Garden Club

Sept.14 - Cat McGill speaking on "What to do
with what you grew."

Oct. 5 - Darryl Cheng - Time Lapsed
Photography

Nov. 16 - Awards night and Annual meeting -
members only for dinner.

Jan. - Topic is Choosing Native Plants for the
Rain Garden.

Waterford.

Winona.

Sept. 16th Apothecary Garden Learn about
different gardens from urban farming,
herbalism, native plant growing, foraging,
seed saving to eco-printing!

Oct. 21st Meng Karbach - Regenerative
Farming -principles and practices of
regenerative farming, for a more sustainable
and resilient food system.

Plant Finders and Latin pronunciations

See [Plant Finder](#)



Hosted by Into the Outside Nature Stewards 

DIY Sustainable Grapevine Wreath

Saturday, October 3, 2026
1 p.m. - 3 p.m.
147 Grove Park Drive, Burlington, Ontario

 **\$30** Via e-transfer or cash.
Funds support IONS' event costs.

- Light refreshments will be served.
- We'll Provide: grape vine, twine, cedar, pine cones, dried fruit.
- Optional: Bring your own ribbons & dried flowers.

 <https://intotheout.wixsite.com/into-the-outside/>

 

The Link to register is [here](#).

Submissions

GLEN MORRIS HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

The Glen Morris Horticultural Society is
celebrating our 75th anniversary this year.
We have been involved in several activities to
celebrate. On Saturday, April 18, about 300
volunteers planted 1,000 trees in just over an
hour at Rising Park, Glen Morris. This was

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the 11th Annual County of Brant Community Tree Plant in which our Society was excited to be involved. Some of the trees planted included River and Yellow Birch, Kentucky Coffee, Button Bush, Redbud, Tamarack, Serviceberry, Elderberry, American Hazelnut, Red Maple, Red Osier Dogwood, Cherry, Balsam Fir, Blue Ash, Swamp White Oak, and Bitternut Hickory.



Photo Credit: Margaret Fleury

We thank Director Sarah Mulder and Steering Committee Member Cindy Briand for their leadership on this project. We also thank Lynn Leach, local member and owner of Bird's Foot Design Studio, for designing the "Secret Forest," a separate small area within Rising Park that has a little stream running through it.



Photo Credit: Margaret Fleury

On Monday, July 13, we held our annual Coffee Party. The day began at the Glen Morris Central Public School with Sarah Mulder, Project Manager, giving us a tour of the Rain Garden designed by Lynn Leach. This project was started a year ago with extensive landscaping done at the front of the school to capture rain runoff from the roof. Many native flowers and small shrubs were planted with a narrow path winding through the garden. In the middle area, a learning circle will include a small bridge with benches for students and teachers to sit and learn about nature.

Everyone then moved to the Glen Morris United Church for a social time and refreshments. Past President, Marion Morton, organized a delicious selection of treats.

To celebrate our 75th, guests were invited to decorate a Horticultural Hat. Thirteen women took up the challenge.



Photo Credit: Margaret Fleury

The winners, pictured from left, were Margaret McPherson placing first, second Irene Heltner, third Barbara Cisecki, and fourth Karen Varga. The day concluded with a fun gift exchange.

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We all went home with a plant or some pretty garden décor.

Submitted by: Margaret Fleury
Steering Committee Member
Glen Morris Horticultural Society

Port Dover & Woodhouse District Native Healing Garden



*Photo Debra Winter, Janet Lala
Georgia McCormick, Jenny Blunt*

As you can see, the team of volunteers have been working diligently with inspiration from Janet Lala to form the final appendages of the turtle shape.



It has certainly been a labour of love of the past few years with Janet Lala guiding us along the way. Thanks to those who donated native plants and to Pepper Landscape Supply for the soil. Special thanks to Tony Colucci who goes out of his way to provide large barrels of water especially given the heat waves we have experienced this summer. Without a nearby water source, it can be a challenge to keep the garden watered regularly. As planned, the garden is currently attracting pollinators and Janet anticipates it will be in full florescence by August. Kudos to Janet for bringing her dream to fruition with the help of her dedicated team. When at Silver Lake Park take a tour of the garden and enjoy the colours and scents of the many native plants. (Feel free to bring a bucket /jugs of water along as well). If you'd like more information about our team of native gardeners please contact Janet Lala by emailing

lalaandgal@gmail.com

We are 290 members strong with 49 new members so far this year!

Brantford: Congratulations to our 2026 Scholarship Winner – Violet Lamont



Each year one Scholarship is available to a student from Brantford, Six Nations and Brant County.

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The \$500.00 Scholarship is applied toward the tuition of a student who has graduated from high school and is enrolled in a program, Horticultural or Environmental Studies, at a College or University.

Violet Lamont will be attending Trent University Honours Science Program – Conservation Biology in Sept 2026. Violet graduated from Paris District High School in June.

Violet noted, “I want to know more about plants and animals which led me to apply to the Conservation Biology Program at Trent University. Our agricultural land is being destroyed by residential and commercial development. I am concerned that there won’t be enough space left for us to feed our growing populations. I hope to use what I learn in this program to conserve, feed, and benefit our population, as well as all species. My family have always been avid outdoors people who enjoy camping and hiking, respecting the phrase “leave no trace behind.” We regularly frequent the Royal Botanical Gardens for their greenhouses and trails. Years ago, when the Royal Botanical Gardens was selecting flowers for their soon to be rose garden, I was able to assist in selecting what flowers were to be chosen. While on the trails I got to meet with staff and discovered new local and invasive species, as well as the iNaturalist apps.

In February of 2026, I was honoured to receive the Lead, Learn, Inspire Award from Grand Erie District School Board. I was acknowledged for my grades, community involvement, and ongoing efforts towards the

environment. It is my intention to strive towards being the best person I can be with an ongoing desire to help our suffering environment. Thank you so much for selecting me for this award!”

Brantford’s Major Flower Show

This large competition was possible because of the generous work of many club volunteers who provided food, set up the room, guided members who brought entries, worked throughout the show and helped with clean up.

Winner -Total Points Horticulture and Design Trophy for First Place - Cheryl Hewitson

Second Place - Max Byerlay

Third Place – Heather Kovacic

Highest Total Points Design- Mrs Fred McArthur, Memorial Trophy - Irene Heltner.

Highest Total Points in Specimens Plaque – Cheryl Hewitson

Judge’s Choice Design - Best in Show Floral Design Plaque - Irene Heltner

Best in Show Specimen – Lottie Busk

Memorial Trophy - John Anderson

President’s Choice - President’s Trophy - Cheryl Hewitson.

Highest Total Points For First Time Exhibitor Plaque - Amanda Williams

Youth - Linda Cox Memorial Total Highest Points Youth Plaque

Winner - First Place -Ivor Elliott

Second Place-Lachlan Hughes

Third Place-Elizabeth Sterkenburg

Highly Commended Winners-
Odin Elliott

Olivia George

Madeline Mabey

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FHS 2026 Vase Painting Workshop



Mackenzie Browning is a Canadian artist whose primary mediums include screen print, book arts, and print based sculpture. With over 15 years of experience as a practicing artist and printmaker he can run a variety of workshops. He's led workshops across Canada and the United States. FHS members were able to tour the gardens, then paint a papier maché vase. Mackenzie and his Husband Bryan use all their recycled paper to create the vases. The end use of the vase would mainly be for dried flowers since the vases are not waterproof. Both Mack and Bryan are extremely talented having entirely renovated the Freelon coach house/ art studio. The upper floor has two rooms that can easily hold around 12 participants for each workshop. A greenhouse is attached to the coach house where they grow some of their own food and germinate annuals and perennials for their expansive gardens. Material costs are kept to a minimum

per person, which includes a premade papier maché vase, along with supplying acrylic paints and brushes. For more details on booking your group workshops or multiple events click on [this link](#). Everyone had a great time



Photo Credit MacKenzie Browning. Submitted by FHS

Ancaster Horticultural Society – Beautifying Ancaster for 65 years.

Our volunteers and Society members have been busy over the summer. We continue to maintain four municipal gardens in the community: Fieldcote, Millennium, Brandon Park and the Ancaster Town Square.

A big thank you to our Trillium Committee for their time and commitment to ensure the lovely gardens in our neighborhood are recognized and celebrated.

The Trillium Awards ceremony was held at the Old Town Hall, Ancaster, Ontario on August 17th, 2026, from 6:30 PM to 9:00 PM; a nice time to socialize.

Trillium Awards entries were received from May 26 to June 7, 2026. Once again, the front gardens of the residents of Ward 12 were beautiful! Our 28 judges viewed approximately 200 front gardens and awarded 125 Trilliums this year. The cut-off score was 91/100. Several gardens were awarded special Trillium: 3 residents received Diamond Trillium for achieving 15 years of awards, 6 residents received Ruby Trillium for 10 years of winning awards, and 10 residents received Gold Trillium for achieving 5 years of awards. Thank you,

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Carol H. and committee members.

Jeanne R., and Teresa Z. attended the OHA Annual Convention. The event was informative and various connections were made with gardeners throughout the various districts. A summary of the convention highlights was provided to our Society.

Our June 2026 Road trips to Purple Haven Lavender Farm and Beth Powell's garden in Canfield Ontario were highly successful and well attended; over 20 members were able to enjoy a gorgeous summer afternoon exploring the farm and private garden. The information and inspiration were top-notch!

Betty H., our Society's speaker and events coordinator provided the following summary:

"On Wednesday, June 24, 2026, 22 members and friends of the Ancaster Horticultural Society enjoyed a road trip to Canfield, Ontario, touring two amazing gardens. Mother Nature was very cooperative, and the sun was shining with a nice breeze. We started with a two-hour visit to Purple Haven Lavender Farm. Kim Drew was our host and guide. We learned about lavender, the different varieties, and how to care for them. Wandering around the fields full of different lavender varieties was amazing. Kim's beekeeper was on hand and spoke to us about bees, their function, caring for them and habits. Afterwards, we enjoyed a refreshing drink of homemade lavender lemonade and frozen fruit treats on a stick. Purchases were made in Kim's store, group photos were taken and before we knew it, we were off to the second tour of Beth Powell's property. Upon arrival we were escorted into Beth's gorgeous garden where we all enjoyed

our lunch seated at one of her many sitting areas. Beth and her husband Ken mingled with us and answered questions. It was wonderful to hear their stories. After lunch, Beth explained that our visit would be a self-guided tour around her multi-acre property. Their property is absolutely stunning and very whimsical. They have an amazing visual gift of seeing trash and repurposing it into beauty. She has incorporated bowling balls, bowling pins, satellite dishes, vintage water cans, oil funnels, saw blades, bottles, metal headboards, springs and metal mattresses, just to name a few, in her garden vision. The multiple seating areas are stunning, using chandeliers, old chairs, tables, billiard balls, birdhouses, wooden and metal items. Around every corner was something awe-inspiring and lovely.



The Ancaster Horticultural Society members and friends enjoyed a self-guided tour of Creek View Acres Nursery and Orchards. The tour was originally booked on Tuesday July 14, 2026, but a heat advisory and humidex in the 40's caused the tour to be rescheduled to Tuesday July 21, 2026. The day got off to a rocky start as Mother Nature

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unleashed her fury with high winds, rain and thunderstorms. But that didn't stop 14 folks from showing up and enjoying their evening at Creek View Acres, located in Brant County. The sun came out, and the tour started with Christi Garneau (who is running for the position of County of Brant Mayor) and her husband John Basaillon giving us a brief history of the farm, orchards and buildings. Most date back to 1860, with the barn foundation built in 1880. Afterwards, some folks enjoyed sitting and taking in the peace and beauty while others wandered the property admiring the buildings and gardens. It was a wonderful experience, and everyone enjoyed themselves.

Plant Sale Summary: Jeanne R. reported that over 1000 plants were offered for sale; 160 varieties. The sale of native plants and the toonie table went well and will continue. The new hours, 8 AM to noon, worked well, with most plants sold by 11 AM. The new potting location worked well, but there were fewer volunteers to do the planting. Eight gardens were dug up last fall and stored, but there were fewer volunteers to do the work.

Liz Martin reported on the tomato and pepper sales. Twenty-five percent of online sales went to new customers. All plants except 14 were sold, and those that were not sold were donated to a local hospice.

"A weed is but an unloved flower." —Ella Wheeler Wilcox

"Plant and your spouse plants with you; weed and you weed alone." —*Jean Jacques Rousseau*

Submitted by Rhu Sherrard, ASH Publicity Director 2026/2027

<https://rafflebox.ca/raffle/ontario-ha/>

From Blooming Blvds.



Above: Look familiar? Question mark butterflies (*Polygonia interrogationis*) are known for boom-and-bust years. Their numbers can rise noticeably when spring and summer conditions support good survival, when caterpillar host plants such as nettles, elms, hops, and hackberry are abundant, and when late-summer adults (indicated by the dark hindwings) find rich food sources like fermenting fruit and tree sap. Photo©Jeanne McRight_2026

Photo Credit Jeanne McKnight

[Top Native Goldenrods for Ontario Gardens — In Our Nature And, Other Details](#)

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Beetles as Helpers

While some of the 8,000 species of beetles (Coleoptera) are pests, many are beneficial and more than 20 beneficial species are at risk or endangered in Ontario. Some of these dispose of decaying animals, fruit and plants. Nightly bioluminescent mating of nineteen of the Fireflies beetle species (family Lampyridae) have lit up our yards this summer. As larvae, they devour snails and slugs. Some adult females mimic the flashes of other species and eat the males drawn to their signals. Here are a few of the main ones in our area. Big Dipper firefly (*Photinus pyralis*), Black firefly (*Lucidota atra*), Boreal firefly (*Pyractomena borealis*) and Pennsylvania firefly (*Photuris pennsylvanica*)

Rove beetles look like earwigs but their tails are turned upward. I was thrilled to see these beetles in my garden this year. They eat a range of pests, from mealybugs, to mites and aphids. As long as you don't grab or squish one with bare hands, the skin-irritating toxin they produce is unlikely to cause you harm. Soldier beetles including the common red and goldenrod beetle eat eggs of grasshoppers, aphids as well as pollen and nectar. Many beetles are under-appreciated pollinators!

Dragonflies and damselflies (order Odonata).



Red Dragonfly hitching a ride Susan's bicycle bell.
Photo Credit. S. MacMillan

Dragonflies are larger and can be distinguished by their unfolded wings, which extend horizontally from their bodies. Damselflies are more delicate, with slender abdomens and wings that fold along their backs when they are at rest. There are at least 170 species of Odonata native to Ontario. Both of these groups of insects are important predators of flying insect pests as adults. And as larvae, they may help to keep down populations of mosquito larvae and other aquatic nuisances.

For other [Fireflies](https://www.inaturalist.ca/observations?place_id=6883&taxon_id=47731) see https://www.inaturalist.ca/observations?place_id=6883&taxon_id=47731 And [See here](#) for more details on beneficial insects.

I found this three inch plus large pink Achemon Sphinx Moth Caterpillar this summer. Its larval host includes Virginia creeper, others in the grape vine family and pepper vine. Adults sip the nectar of flowers.



Photo Credit Caterpillar -S. MacMillan and Achemon Sphinx Moth Photo Credit: Prairiehaven.com

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Virginia Creeper Caterpillar and Sphinx Moth

Photo Credit: Wikipedia

Known as "hornworms", due to the large blue horn on the posterior end, the young larvae are slim and yellow. Maturing they become darker (green, pink or brown) and gain 7 pairs of diagonal stripes merging into a dorsal black line.

Virginia Creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*) while aggressive but tameable, it provides places for warblers and other songbirds to nest and gain protection. Toads and insects also find shelter there, which in turn are food for many birds and mammals. Virginia creeper flowers offer pollen for bees and berries for songbirds, skunks and chipmunks. The leaves turn a beautiful red in Fall as an added benefit.

Be sure to provide all the criteria needed; food, shelter/cover, places to raise young and water.

Move Leaves from Grass to your Gardens

