

LAKEFIELD AND DISTRICT HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

President's Message

-----SILVIA STROBL

It was wonderful to see so many of you at the February meeting. I hope you were inspired by Thom Luloff's Creating Bird Friendly Habitat presentation. If we feed birds, we need to follow safe practices that prevent disease transmission. These include: placing feeders widely apart to minimize bird contact rates and using smaller feeders that also empty quicker and prevent seed from spoiling. Thom offered many tips on feeders to use, for example, glass, plastic or metal feeders are easier to clean as should be done weekly with a 10% bleach solution. Tube feeders with staggered feeding perches avoid poop falling on birds feeding lower down. He also discouraged the use of platform feeders because they are impossible to clean. I couldn't help thinking that by adopting his suggestions we can honour, respect and protect the birds in the traditional territory of the Michi Saggiig and Chippewa First Nations, as noted in our Land Acknowledgement. The world needs gardeners that help maintain our biodiverse ecosystems.

We also honoured two new Life Members, Wendy Best and Norma Walker, at our February meeting. These awards recognize their long-time membership in LHS and recognize the countless volunteer hours each has contributed to making our Society successful. We wish them both continued good health and enjoyment with gardening.

We have almost made it through one of the snowiest winters in many years and spring is just around the corner. Enjoy this period of anticipation leading up to another exciting garden season.



Memberships for 2025 are due.

If you haven't already done so, please renew at the next meeting (cash or cheque) or by e-transfer to

lhstreasurer22@gmail.com

Single membership: \$25;

Family membership: \$30.

Plant Identification Lab

Have you ever wanted to improve your plant identification skills?

Lakefield & District Horticultural Society members have an opportunity to participate in a workshop being held jointly with the Ennismore Garden Club on **Saturday March 22nd** from 9 am to 1pm. You'll learn to identify native plants with Susan Chow using the biology lab's dissection scopes in order to see plants' reproductive parts (aka. flowers) up close. This is your chance to go to Trent University for a day! We'll be classifying plant specimens into families based on leaf, stem and flower morphology. Please contact Ceci Leigh at cecileigh22@gmail.com or (705) 930-3604 to register for this session and receive details on location, parking and what to bring. Cost will be \$10.

We are thrilled that most of you have already renewed your membership for this year! On-time membership fee payment really helps our Society as we have many expenses early in the fiscal year. These include the Yearbook and this year, a brand-new sound system!

Our March meeting will feature Sue Chow. Sue is a biology lab instructor specializing in ecology, botany, fungi, herpetology, and limnology courses at Trent University.

What are stinkhorns, velvet shanks, and conks? These are just a few of the diverse Ontario fungi you will learn about. Sue will begin with an overview of how fungi groups are organized and teach us how to recognize some of the major fungi groups. We will learn to name mushrooms by examining some collected specimens. If you would like some extra information on the fungi that will be discussed, before coming to the meeting, you can download to your cell phone the ID chart posted on https://drive.google.com/file/d/1G3vwX3OIIFKZf5tx1RbOT1uQq_D9CQZ9/view?usp=sharing

We look forward to seeing you at the Marshland Centre at 7 p.m. on March 11th.

Thanks to Heather Dummitt and, Kathy Dracup Harris who will be providing refreshments for the meeting.

March Presentation

Fungi Identification



Upcoming Community Events



The Peterborough Seedy Sunday event is on again this year and taking place in the same location that was so successful last year! Come to the Peterborough Square Mall on Sunday March 9th from 11 am to 3 pm. There will be a lot of seed and garden-related vendors and community groups to help you get ready for the gardening season. The ever-popular Seed Exchange Area will be available for you to trade seeds with other gardeners. For more information on how the seed exchange works, please go to:

<https://urbantomato.ca/seedy-sunday-seed-exchange/>

Stay up to date on the vendors participating and other details by joining <https://www.facebook.com/groups/397363018229582>



Apsley Seedy Sunday
N. Kawartha Library, Apsley Branch, 175 Burleigh St. Apsley

Day for Gardeners
Saturday April 26th
Westdale United Church

The Peterborough and Area Master Gardeners are excited to announce their annual "Day for Gardeners" on Saturday April 26 at Westdale United Church. There will be great speakers, including Thom Luloff, excellent food, door prizes and lots of opportunity to socialize with other gardeners. Please visit

<https://peterboroughmastergardeners.com>

for all the details and to register!



Saturday April 26, 2025

Westdale United Church

1509 Sherbrooke St, Peterborough, ON

9:30am to 3pm (estimate)

<p>Four Seminars, lunch & door prizes</p> <p>Cost: \$60 early bird \$75 after Apr1</p> <p>Come join us for a fun day of learning, lunch and friendship!</p>	<p>All seminars are presented by Peterborough Master Gardeners</p>
	<p>Session 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Composting & Soil OR ❖ Beyond Bee Hotels: Creating Habitat for Beneficial Insects
	<p>Session 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Trees & Shrubs for Small Urban Spaces OR ❖ Shade Gardens
	<p>Session 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Vegetable/Edible Gardens OR ❖ Harvesting Rainwater: One Gardener's Experience
<p>Plenary: Friends, Enemies and Frenemies: A Wildlife Guide for Gardeners</p>	



Brighton Garden Club and Grafton Horticultural Society are pleased to welcome you to our

District 4
Annual General Meeting 2025
"100 Years and Growing"
 Saturday, April 5, 2025
 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
 Brighton Community Centre
 Location: 81 Elizabeth Street, Brighton Ontario

Guest Speaker:
Cathy Kavassalis
 Canadian Coalition for Invasive Plant Regulation

Report on OHA Directors' Meeting
 Elections for District Director, Assistant Directors and Financial Reviewers

Enjoy a delicious lunch
 Browse our Silent Auction items
 Enter our Raffle to win a full Spa Day at St. Anne's in Grafton
 Please Note: Cash or E-transfer Only
 Take part in some fun activities
 Lug-A-Mug Draw: Be sure to bring your favourite beverage container

BRING YOUR SOCIETY BANNER AND DISPLAY

The Ontario Horticultural Association Grafton and Brighton clubs are celebrating 100 years in 2025 and will be hosting the District 4 Annual General Meeting on April 5th in Brighton. LHS will contribute \$20 to the \$30 per person registration cost for the event. Please contact Ceci Leigh at the next meeting or at (705) 930-3604 to register.

New Sound System

Based on input from our 2023 Member Survey, the Board approved the purchase of a new sound system in 2024. Unfortunately, the model we wanted was on backorder until early January 2025 and we were finally able to use it at the February meeting. Thankfully, we were able to borrow the Peterborough & Area Master Gardeners' sound system, for our September, October and November meetings. Special thanks to Grant Murphy for bringing the speaker and accessories to these meetings and for helping us get comfortable with the new technology before we could take receipt of our own system.

Don't miss Lakefield Horticulture Society's April 8th General Meeting

Helen Battersby – Gardening in the Shade

Whether you have shady patches or a garden with complete shade, Helen will provide tips for coping with a shade garden's particular problems as well as understanding its opportunities. She'll cover garden design principles for shade gardens, and ideas for shade-friendly plants to help you discover creative ways to make a beautiful shade garden.

The April meeting will be held at the Lakefield Baptist Church. We ask that participants help with speaker costs by paying \$10 to reserve a seat.

Ceci will keep track of registrants. Payment can be made with e-transfer to lhstreasurer22@gmail.com

Garden Ontario
50/50 DRAW
Next Draw
March 8, 2025

All proceeds go towards Keeping Ontario Beautiful[™] by way of grants and education

Ticket Packages
 A - 10 for \$10.00
 B - 30 for \$20.00
 C - 500 for \$50.00
 D - 800 for \$75.00

<https://www.rafflebox.ca/raffle/ontario-ha>
 Licence # RAF1369110

Purchase your tickets by March 7th, to ensure your place in the next big draw. The more tickets sold the higher the 50/50 jackpot will grow. The current raffle sits at over \$3,500 with the winner taking half!

Tickets are available by visiting the raffle website at:

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

Starting Seeds Indoors

Buying a plant in a pot requires minimum effort and gives instant gratification, but there's much more satisfaction to be had from growing from seed. It's simple, cheap, and even free if you save your own. Growing flowers or food from seed is as good as gardening gets!

Planting directly outdoors is easiest, but many long-season vegetables and annual flowers should be started indoors in early spring. It's not a difficult process either, but here are some tips to ensure success.



Sowing Seeds

Start seeds in small, individual containers (seed starting cells). It's best to use divided containers with a single seedling per container, but when using older seeds with lower germination rates, plant two or more seeds per cell. Set the cell flats or containers into a solid tray, fill them with seed starting mix, and water the mix before sowing seeds. If you are unsure about seeding depth, a rule of thumb is to plant a seed deeply enough that three more seeds could be placed directly above it.

Some seeds require light to germinate, some prefer darkness, some aren't fussy. Check which light condition your seeds need for germination. As soon as they sprout, provide a light source, because *all* seedlings need light.

Once the seedlings have developed true leaves, cut all but the healthiest seedling in the cell off at ground level with scissors, don't pull them as this could damage the roots of the one you want to keep.

Light



It's much better to grow seedlings under lights than to rely solely on natural light. Grow lights are great but you can also use cool white fluorescent tubes to provide adequate light. Keep lights between 2 and 4 inches above the tops of your seedlings. *Lack of light is the major cause of elongated, skinny stems.* Plants need 12 to 16 hours of light daily. Don't leave lights on continuously, as many plants need a dark period each night to develop properly.

Bottom Heat



Providing a constant heat source from underneath (seed heating mat) can be very beneficial to seedlings. Seeds of most plants started indoors germinate sooner and produce healthier roots when the potting mix is warm. Bottom heat can also help to prevent "damping off" (the death of tiny seedlings due to pathogens at the surface of the potting mix).

Watering and Fertilizing



Keep the potting mix moist while the seeds are germinating. Use a spray bottle or add water to the tray until it moves up into the mix. Drain excess water that remains or accumulates in the tray, to keep roots healthy.

Seedlings don't need fertilizer until they have several sets of true leaves. Seedlings will benefit from a weak general purpose water-soluble fertilizer mixed 1/4 strength. Fertilize only once a week. Water as needed the rest of the week with plain water.

Transplanting



Transplant seedlings that outgrow cell packs into larger containers. Larger peat pots or plastic cups with holes punched in their bottoms work well. Lift seedlings by the root-ball using a spoon or plant tag for support if necessary. Never hold the seedling by its stem, as you may crush it, or harm the growing tip.

Hardening Off Outdoors

Plants started indoors will not have been exposed to full sun, wind or fluctuating temperatures. If they are not gradually accustomed to the outdoor environment, a process called "hardening off," they may wilt and die.

Two weeks before planting outdoors, move seedlings outside into the shade during the warmth of the afternoon, protected from wind. If you have a cold-frame or greenhouse – even better. Bring them back inside before temperatures start to drop at night. Each day, leave the plants out a little longer, and expose them to a little more direct sunshine. By the end of two weeks, unless freezing temperatures are forecast, the seedlings can stay outside in a sunny area until you are ready to transplant them into the garden.

Transplant into the garden on a cloudy day or late afternoon when the sun has passed its peak.

When transplanted, hardened off plants may wilt when first exposed to full sun, but they generally recover within a day or so. Row covers and other types of plant protectors can help plants get off to a good start in the garden by reducing damage from wind and temperature fluctuations.

Consider Donating

Once you have successfully raised your seedlings and are reaping the benefits, consider donating excess produce to a community or school food program. The Lakefield Horticulture Society would also gratefully accept your plant donations for our May plant sale!