



# Streetsville Blooms



Streetsville Horticultural Society

*Proud to be a member of the Ontario Horticultural Association*

Volume 28, Issue 7

[www.streetsvillehort.ca](http://www.streetsvillehort.ca)

March 2021

## INDEX

Co-Presidents Message	1
2021 Board of Directors	3
Speaker of the month	4
Community improve award	4
Common gardening myths	5
Native Corner	6
Enjoying winter outdoors	7

**Next Meeting**  
**Tuesday, March 9th**  
**“Prune Away”**  
**: Denise Hodgins**  
**Zoom Virtual Meeting**  
**Meeting starts 7:30pm**

## Co-President’s Message

Hello everyone; It's beginning to look like there might be an early spring, twelve of the next fourteen days are forecast to be above seasonal temperatures. We are thinking about and planning for a return to in person meetings, and yes keeping our fingers and toes crossed.

We are looking for ideas and hopefully some expertise from Streetsville Hort members. [This is your society please give the following topics serious thought.](#)

**50th anniversary of Streetsville Horticultural Society**-the Society was first established in 1914, it continued until 1954, it was recreated in 1972, 2022 is the 50th anniversary of the re-establishment of the Streetsville Horticultural Society. We are looking for suggestions for ways we can celebrate this significant anniversary.

**Mary Gilbert a life member and previous president handstitched this banner**





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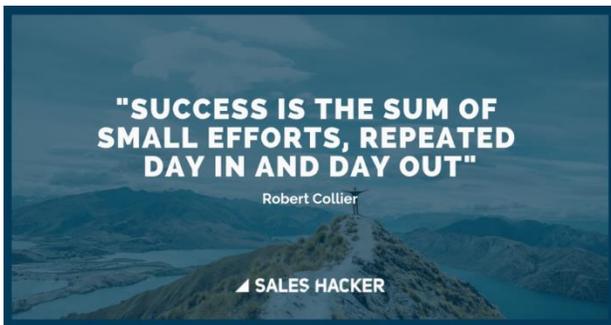
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March 2021

**Membership:** some people who were members in 2019-2020 did not renew their memberships for 2020-2021. What can we do to encourage our previous members to rejoin Streetsville Hort?

**Publicity and Membership:** we need new members; we have previously posted our spring and fall Open Houses on many different local websites and calendars, and usually have signed up new members at Open Houses. What else can we do; are there other local groups we could contact and invite their members to join us for a meeting? One possibility is the many groups for new Canadians, often newcomers to Canada have gardening experience in their home countries that isn't applicable here because the climate is different.

Many Ontario Horts have youth groups; is this something we should think about?



**Facebook:** do we have any Facebook experts? Our current Facebook page was created several years ago as a personal page when it should have been set up as a group page, with an SHS administrator, open to current and past SHS members. We don't know how to set up a group page.

**SHS website:** How can we improve our website? Should we have more educational garden information? Should we add links to horticultural websites, such as the Royal Botanical Gardens, the Ontario Horticultural Association and others? Should we offer gardening advice through our website?

**Online photo and flower shows:** any ideas on how we could hold these events or others while we are unable to meet in person. Could we do this on a Facebook group page, or on our website?

**Streetsville Pollinator Garden;** We were involved in the design and creation of the pollinator garden at the old bowling green in Streetsville. The city of Mississauga parks department does some maintenance of the gardens but not enough. Are any members interested in looking after this garden? Every second week would be sufficient.

**Streetsville Hort Equipment;** If you have any 'stuff' that belongs to the society please let us know.

Please send your suggestions to [StreetsvilleHort@gmail.com](mailto:StreetsvilleHort@gmail.com).

**Carol Ashford and Monica Ross, Co-presidents SHS**

If you are interested in submitting articles or information for the April newsletter please send them to Nury Garzon by March 17.





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March 2021

## 2020 Board of Directors

At our February 23, 2021 AGM the 2021 Board of Directors was elected

Co-Presidents	Carol Ashford and Monica Ross
Past Presidents	Marg Rowan and Janet Shaw
Treasurer	Martha Witney
Secretary	Marg Rowan
Webmaster and Tech Guru	Maureen Dodd
Newsletter Chair	Nury Garzon
Membership Chair	Shelley Dodd

Our new volunteer hours Chair is Grace Nelham, please make sure you send your volunteer hours to Grace every month, we will send you the volunteer hours form and the email address by separate email.

Jon Eldridge is our Speaker chair. Volunteers needed; Flower Show convener, Photo Contest Chair, Publicity chair, Gardening Education Chair

This a screenshot of the new Board of Directors from the Annual General Meeting





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Volume 28, Issue 7

March 2021

## Speaker of the Month: "Prune Away" by Denise Hodgins

Denise has many years of experience in the horticulture field spanning all areas, from landscape maintenance, historical designer, retail sales, wholesale greenhouse production, retail management, and a College Instructor. Many of you have probably read at least one of her articles as she writes for Sun Media and she has a weekly column in the Homes Section in the London Free Press. Denise is now a Roses Canada Rose judge as well as a Certified Horticultural Judge.



She holds a diploma from Fanshawe College in Landscape Design and the Ontario Diploma in Horticulture as well as many Certificates of Achievement in Horticulture from the University of Guelph.

Over the years she has developed a true passion for the horticulture profession and thoroughly enjoys sharing her knowledge and experiences; Denise is happiest when she is playing in the dirt - sorry I believe the correct term is soil. ✂

**Janet Shaw**

## Community Improvement Award

**Carol Ashford** is the recipient of the Ontario Horticultural Association (O.H.A.) "Community Improvement Award" for the year 2020.

Unfortunately, due to Covid 19 the O.H.A. Convention was not held in 2020.

Carol was awarded this plaque virtually at The Streetsville Horticultural Society AGM zoom meeting on February 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2021. The award is for Carol's leadership on behalf of the SHS in the establishment in 2010 and future maintenance of a new project, The Leslie Log House Gardens with the City of Mississauga.



Carol and her volunteers from SHS have maintained the beautiful gardens each year and they are enjoyed by members of the community. While we were walking at the LLH property we took the opportunity for a photo op.



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Volume 28, Issue 7

March 2021

The plaque reads

'Community Improvement Award

Ontario Horticultural Association

Carol Ashford

Streetsville Horticultural Society

District 15

July 14 2020'

Congratulations Carol, so pleased that you have been Awarded for all of your hard work and dedication.

Carol's personal comments "As long as I am able, my pledge is to keep caring for the Leslie Log House property and keep the garden thriving and beautiful for the enjoyment of all who visit the property"

✂ Grace Nelham.

## Common Gardening Myths by Robert Pavlis

### Myth #28: The myth of balanced fertilizer

In the good old days, people just put manure on their garden and things grew well. Keep in mind that manure was easy to come by before the advent of the car. The invention of fertilizer created a problem for manufacturers because they didn't know which formulation they should use. Marketing solved the problem by creating the concept of a *balanced fertilizer*. This seemed to make a lot of sense. It was known that plants used nitrogen (N), phosphorus (P) and potassium (K), so why not provide them in equal amounts?

Bags of balanced fertilizer labeled with 5-5-5 or 10-10-10 became very popular with home gardeners. You could not go wrong since you were providing all three of the main nutrients.

After a few years, competitive companies wanted to get in on the action, and they needed a different marketing plan in order to compete. They asked the question, do plants really need the nutrients in equal amounts? In an attempt to answer this question, scientists measured the nutrient content of plants. It turns out that they don't contain equal amounts of N, P and K. If they don't contain equal amounts of nutrients, it does not make sense to use a balanced fertilizer, so companies started to sell different formulations based on plant type. Even though there is no good reason to use a balanced fertilizer, they are still highly recommended and very popular.

A balanced fertilizer is almost never the right choice because plants don't use the nutrients in a balanced way and soil is rarely missing nutrients in equal amounts.

### Best Practices

- ✓ When you fertilize, add the nutrients missing from the soil. Don't listen to expert gardeners or fertilizer manufacturers that make recommendations.
- ✓ In most cases, soil does not need more phosphorus, so keep the middle number as low as possible.



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## Further Reading

*Fertilizer Nonsense: Balanced Fertilizer*; <http://www.gardenmyths.com/fertilizer-nonsense-balanced-fertilizer/>

Written by Robert Pavlis, author of three books, , *Garden Myths* , *Soil Science for Gardeners* and *Building Natural Ponds*.

Have a question for Robert – connect on his Facebook Group: Garden Fundamentals

## Native Corner: Paper Birch – *Betula papyrifera*



Another native staple of Canadian forests is the birch. Fairly easy to recognize, the brilliant white of the bark is an unmistakable icon and easily lights up the dark corners of a forest. Although not a long-lived tree (most stop growth after 60 or 70 years and die before they reach 140 years), it grows to approx. 70 or 80 feet tall. Male and female flowers grow on the same tree but in separate catkins. The bright yellow of the male catkins is something I think we're all familiar with in the spring.

Birches are important for browsing moose, providing them with needed sustenance when the menu is pretty sparse all winter. This forces the roots to produce new shoots, creating a tree with multiple stems. A myriad of animals benefits from our friend the birch. From snowshoe hares to shrews, from sapsuckers to squirrels, all take turn at the feast that birch supplies – even caterpillars (the paper birch is the larval host for the Luna moth as well as the Eastern Tiger Swallowtail butterfly)! It's a wonder the tree survives ... but it does. It's so tough that it will even regenerate from root crowns after a fire.

Birch trees grow well on disturbed sites, and often appear on land that has been burned or sites where vegetation has died because of air pollution.

Just about every part of the birch has been used at some point for some purpose. The native peoples used the waterproof bark of the paper birch to make wigwams and baskets, and used it as paper for drawing. Being remarkably durable, drawings and writings on birch bark from the 16<sup>th</sup> century are still legible. The most significant and well-known use of birch bark is probably the making of canoes. Any Canadian history course invariably includes images of natives or voyageurs in long canoes paddling down a river. What says "wilderness" better than that?! Canoes could be anywhere from 10-20 feet long. Natives used a patchwork approach, stitching sheets of bark together with roots, and sealing them with pitch. So that classic image of the pure white canoe probably wasn't the most accurate – it was more likely that the boats were a reddish brown. These flexible waterproof craft could survive almost anything and were known to last for around 10 years.



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Birch wood was also used to make sleds and snowshoes. Conveniently these were crafted in the winter when the wood was frozen and contained less sap, making it easier to split in a straight line, steam and bend the wood without splitting. It was used for all sorts of purposes e.g., wooden nails, bows, arrows, drums, ax handles, hammers, spoons, snowshoe webbing, dog whip handles, and grease lamp bowls. Rotted birch was used to smoke meat and fish, and when mixed with spruce and jack pine cones, it could be used to tan hides. Amazingly enough, birch bark was used by the peoples in northern areas as makeshift “sunglasses” against snow blindness. Tearing the bark into strips about two inches wide, they would wrap it around their heads using the lenticels as eyeholes.

Birch leaves, twigs and buds contain methyl salicylate (a component of aspirin) and the bark contains betulinic acid, an anti-cancer, anti-inflammatory, and anti-viral compound. Leaves and twigs were often brewed to make a kind of medicinal tea or an infusion for treating skin and scalp problems. Following an outbreak of contagious disease, people used to burn birchwood to clear the air of contagion.

Birch sap can be used to make vinegar, wine, beer, and syrup. The syrup is a bit like maple syrup or molasses and the beer is a little like root beer, but not as sweet. Birch sap is more acidic and contains only 0.9% sugar, compared to 2-3% for maple sap.

Today birchwood is used commercially to make toothpicks, popsicle sticks, pulp and paper, and fuel wood. Birchwood is famous as a veneer and is employed in making furniture.

The birch tree now battles for its range and its life. Acid rain has damaged the whole of the boreal forest, but birch damage is particularly noticeable. But the birch also has a remarkable relationship with the mycorrhizae in the soil. Scientists are studying the birch to see what beneficial microorganisms keep certain plants free of the birch borer and diseases that afflict other species.

However tempting it may be to take the bark (for tinder etc.) please remember that it should be stripped off carefully so the inner layer, or cambium, is not touched. Stripping it off in one big chunk or taking bark from right around the tree will seriously harm the tree. A better solution is to take bark from a fallen branch

The next time you’re wandering in our wonderful outdoors, I’m sure you’ll be able to find a birch – just look for the light.

As always, never dig up plants from the wild, and don’t buy from nurseries that do.

Heather Marchment



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March 2021

## Enjoying winter outdoors: Island Lake Conservation Area

Following medical advice, I decided to reboot my immune system until I get the vaccine. How? Going outside, breathing fresh air and exercising. Where? In our provincial parks. Last week I visited, for first time, Island Lake Conservation Area. It is located in the rolling hills of Dufferin County in the Towns of Orangeville and Mono.

It's 329 hectares of lake, wetland, forest and meadows play an important ecological role in protecting the headwaters of the Credit and Nottawasaga Rivers. Island Lake's varied landscapes lend themselves to interesting and educational hikes and outings. The lake is rich in life with healthy fish and wildlife populations, and abundant underwater plants.

Cleared for farming in the 1800s, the forested hedgerows, old fields, plantations and a remnant maple-beech forest are reminders of this past. In 1967, the local landscape changed dramatically with the construction of two dams. The dams flooded a large cedar swamp, deciduous thicket and the small lake creating a 182 ha reservoir, first known as the Orangeville Reservoir, but now named Island Lake, not for the Islands the flooding created but for an original settler to the area. It was opened to the public in 1970.



I walked the Vicki Barron Lakeside Trail that is designed to be accessible for all and offer opportunities for hiking, walking, cross-country skiing, bicycling and nature study and is appropriate for all trail users; its wide base is made up of packed gravel screenings make it suitable for bicycles, wheelchairs and strollers



I would like to mention an interesting feature along this path is a living memorial wall built in 2011 by dry stone Waller Eric Landman. Mr. Landman built the wall in memory of his late wife, Kerry.

The activities that people were permitted: walking, skating, ice fishing, Hiking, Cycling and Dog walking (leashed dogs only) Bird watching, Photography. But mostly I saw ice fishing, families bring the kid with slices to play, some skating. The are rules on place and park etiquette to follow like: use masks, reserved the parking lot, practicing physical distance and follow park staff instructions. ✂ Nury Garzon



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*“Stay local! We’re asking everyone to do their part to minimize the risk to yourself and others by following all public health advice and only engaging in outdoor activities close to where you live.”*

<https://cvc.ca/enjoy-the-outdoors/conservation-areas/island-lake-conservation-area/>

