



OVER THE GARDEN FENCE

East Gwillimbury Gardeners' Newsletter ("Teaser" Edition)

April/May

Volume 22

Issue 1

MEET SOME LOCAL GARDENERS!

East Gwillimbury Gardeners gather on the third Tuesday of each month, Feb. to Nov. at 7:30pm in the Mount Albert Community Centre, Main Street, Mount Albert. There is a flower show, an interesting speaker, goodies to enjoy and wonderful people from your community to get to know.

We also have a youth club that meets at the same location at 7pm, third Tuesday of each month, Feb. to June, Sept. and Oct.

Yearly membership: \$20 single, \$25 couple and \$30 family.

Our amazing website has great info and resource links!

<http://eastgwillimburygardeners.com>

Connect on social media via:



<http://facebook.com/eastgwillimburygardeners>



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East Gwillimbury Gardeners is a member of The Ontario Horticultural Association (OHA) District 5 Gardenontario.org

President: Anne Hill

Past president: Valerie Liney



A Peek into Charmaine Hunter's Garden, page 12



Hello From East Gwillimbury Gardeners

Hello fellow gardener! Have we caught your attention? You have just picked up our “teaser” mini newsletter. In order to receive the entire newsletter you have to be a member of East Gwillimbury Gardeners! And how do you do that, you ask? Just fill out one of the membership forms in this booklet and come out to one of our meetings (see below). Speak to Ellen at the entrance and she will get you all set up with one of our fabulous membership packages full of great gardening goodies! Or check out our website: <http://eastgwillimburygardeners.com>

UPCOMING EG GARDENERS' MEETINGS & EVENTS:

April 16th: Raised Bed Revolution: Raised Beds Rule with speaker Tara Nolan.

Junior Meeting: Making an Easter table arrangement.

May 21st: Water Gardens with speaker Anna Leggat.
Flower show: See pg. 14 of your Year Book. And our website has great design information.

Junior Meeting: Planting at the Youth Garden in the Millennium garden.



May 25th: Our Fantastic Plant and Bake sale! Mount Albert Community Centre, Main St. Mount Albert, 10 am to noon. We really do have one of the best!

Outreach programs:

April 2nd: CHATS (Community and Home Assistance To Seniors). Easter Center Pieces.

April 17th: Youth Task Force at the Holland Valley Library.

OTHER GARDEN EVENTS (more in full newsletter):

April 27th: The District 5 AGM, 3300 Hwy. 7 at Roddick Rd. St. Maurice & St. Verena Coptic Orthodox Church, Markham, 9-3:30 pm. It sounds like it will be an interesting event with a huge flower show, a great lunch and two excellent speakers, David Leeman and Lorraine Johnson. Speak to Ellen if you would like to attend. Tickets are \$35.00 which includes your lunch.

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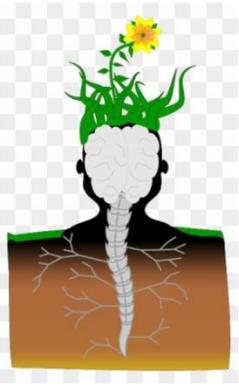
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All articles by Brenda Near unless otherwise noted

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I welcome your submissions!



“Smarty Plants” A podcast by Radiolab: *Can the plants around you hear, remember, and learn?*

This podcast¹ was a funny and entertaining presentation of some experiments done by scientist Monica Gagliano into the behavior of plants. Gagliano has also written a book called *“Thus Spoke the Plant, A Remarkable Journey of Groundbreaking Scientific Discoveries and Personal Encounters with Plants”* (North Atlantic Books, Berkeley, California, 2018).

In her first experiment, Gagliano set out to answer the question: How do plants seem to know where your water pipes are located so they can seek them out and destroy them? To research this phenomenon, she placed a plant in a specially designed pot that only allowed the roots to grow right or left. Picture an upside down Y shape. On the outside of each part of the branching Y she placed a water pipe. In one pipe she played the sound of water and in the other there was no sound. Neither pipe had any actual water in it. She found that the majority of the roots grew toward the pipe that had the sound of water. How is this possible? Could the hairs at the end of the roots somehow “hear”?

The second and third experiments attempt to show that plants can remember and learn. Many of you are probably familiar with the Sensitive Plant, *Mimosa pudica*, which closes its leaves tightly against its stem when touched. It is believed that this is a defensive mechanism—when a grazing animal creates movement around the plant or touches it, it closes up so there are no leaves to eat and the grazer moves on past the plant. Monica took some of these Sensitive Plants and placed them in a protected box so they would not be hurt in any way. She then rigged up a mechanism that dropped the plant within this box, a short distance. At first the plants closed their leaves in reaction to the stimuli. But after many drops, the plants stopped closing as they had “learned” that this stimulus was not dangerous and they did not need to react to it. After a few days of rest, Gagliano repeated the drop and found that the plants took less drops to stop closing. So they appeared to “remember” that this stimulus was not dangerous. Even after 28 days, she found that they still did not react to the stimulus of the drop. Not only did they seem to learn, they retained what they learned. They seem to have remembered. But where would the plant process and store such information? They do not have a brain so it would seem that this is not possible; Gagliano contends that we as a society are brain obsessed and that there can be other ways of processing information.

In the third experiment, Gagliano replicated Pavlov’s bell experiment with small pea plants. To refresh our memories, in Pavlov’s experiment dogs were given meat for a period of time. The meat would elicit a salivation response in the dogs. Then Pavlov introduced the sound of a bell when the meat was given. Eventually, when the meat was removed and just the bell rang, the dogs would still salivate at the sound of the bell because they came to anticipate that the bell sound meant that the meat

More of this article available to EG Gardener’s membership

¹ What the heck is a podcast? It’s like a radio show that you can download from the internet and listen to it when you like. You can listen to this Podcast on YouTube: Search Smarty Plants, Radiolab.



Pollinator Gardening: What you really need to know

Type in Pollinator Garden into the internet and you'd better have several hours set aside. Add in all the books you can read on the topic and your head will spin. This article will attempt to give you a brief summary of the crisis in our pollinator population, a concise list of what you can do right now to help our pollinators survive, a catalogue of pollinator plants and resources so you can do your own research.

So what's all the fuss about? Pollinator Gardens seem to be everywhere these days! Well, it's actually nothing new. The alarm bells about pollinator collapse, bees in particular, have been chiming for some time now. To be clear this is not just a honey bee issue. Most of our native bee populations are in decline. The Rusty Patch bumble bee was once very common in Ontario, but over the last 3 decades has declined to the point of near extinction. *Bombus affinis* is currently listed as Endangered since only a handful can be still found in the wild.² Pollination Guelph was established in 2008 advocating a bee friendly approach to gardening by planting native plants and eliminating the use of herbicides and pesticides in our gardens, and you can find many online articles on the topic of pollinators reaching back to the early 2000's.

Bees are the primary pollinators of our agricultural crops and flowers and without them our food system would face serious consequences. One out of every three mouthfuls of food you consume daily is there because of pollinators.³ Thus it is imperative for our survival as a species that we do something to ensure the bees' survival. The honey bee, an introduced European species, is very important to our food production system, but they are not the only pollinators and in fact many of our native bees are actually better pollinators than the honey bee.⁴ Other pollinators such as butterflies, bats, flies and beetles are also in decline. While not the front line workers, these creatures are also necessary for our food production survival.

More of this article available to EG Gardener's membership

You can make a difference

There is a story of a father and his small son walking along a beach. It happened that on that very day a batch of sea turtles were hatching.

As the hatchlings emerged and began their run to the sea, seagulls swooped and picked them off in great numbers.

The little boy bent, picked up one small turtle and walked with it to the surf. He gently placed the tiny turtle into the sea.

When he returned to his father's side, his father said, "That won't make a difference to anything."

The little fellow nodded toward the surf and said, "It made a difference to him."

Your one little pollinator patch won't change the world, but it will make a difference to one area of that world.

Make that difference.

(From OHA Roadside Guide)

² <https://www.ontario.ca/page/rusty-patched-bumble-bee>

³ <https://www.pollinationguelph.ca/quickfacts/>; <https://pollinator.org/pollinators>

⁴ Selecting Plants For Pollinators, A Guide For Gardeners, Farmers, And Land Managers In The Manitoulin/ Lake Simcoe Ecoregion, Pg. 8, Pollinator.org; http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/pollinator/action_plan.pdf