

# Improving Biodiversity and Wildlife Habitat in your own Backyard

Hosted by Lyndsey Wilkerson and Brian Popelier

Webinar-April 16, 2020





MISSION

**Preserving a ribbon of wilderness,  
for everyone, forever.**

VISION

The Bruce Trail secured within a permanently protected natural corridor along the Niagara Escarpment.

VALUES

Commitment | Integrity | Stewardship | Collaboration | Respect

## Connecting Islands of Conservation

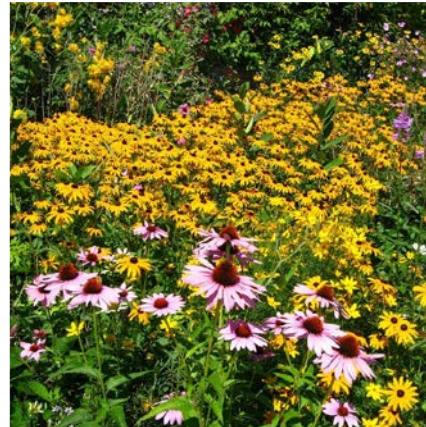
- BTC Properties
- Conservation Areas & National Parks
- Private Landowners
- **Your very own backyard!**





## What is wildlife friendly gardening?

- Offering food, water and shelter for wildlife





## **What to consider when creating your own garden?**

- What sort of wildlife do you want to attract?
- How much space are you willing to offer?
- How much sun/shade/water does this area receive?
- How much time are you prepared to put in?

## The Plan

- Set a boundary/ general area for the garden
- Remove invasive species
  - But wait, how do I know what is invasive in my yard and how to get rid of it?
- Select your plants



## Common Invasive Species

- Lily of the Valley
- Goutweed
- Periwinkle
- English Ivy

**BEWARE**

English Ivy



Goutweed



Lily of the Valley



Periwinkle





## Common Invasive Species Cont'd

- Garlic Mustard
- Buckthorn
- Dog Strangling Vine
- Giant Hogweed

**PULL IT!**  
**CUT IT!**  
**COVER IT!**

Garlic Mustard



Giant Hogweed



Dog Strangling Vine



Buckthorn







## Garlic Mustard

- How to identify it?
- How to control it?

Q What is the best way to deal with garlic mustard to curb its spread?

Q After 10 years of hand-pulling garlic mustard from our naturalized 1.5 acres, it still persists. Is this a battle I should continue to fight?

Q I have a vacant lot beside me. I have trouble with garlic mustard encroaching into my flower beds

**A Pull out by the roots prior to going to seed. Bag pulled plant in black garbage bags and leave out in sun for 2 weeks then deposit in compost or burn plants. Invasive species removal is an ongoing process often taking many years. Repeated treatment will eventually win the battle.**



## Buckthorn

- How to identify it?
- How to control it?



Q What is the best way to reduce or eliminate Buckthorn?

A Small ones can be pulled from the ground and hung up by the roots in nearby trees. Larger ones may need to be cut with a chainsaw and the stump treated with pesticides or covered with a tin can or black plastic



## Dog Strangling Vine

- How to identify it?
- How to control it?

Q Is there a strategy to deal with dog-strangling vine on the pathways near our home?

A Once again pull, cut, cover . Do this before going to seed and dispose of in a black garbage bag



## Giant Hogweed

- How to identify it?
- How to control it?

Q Is the giant hogweed native to Ontario? If not, how did it get to be so invasive in certain parks and parts of the Bruce Trail?

A Has been sold in nurseries for years as garden plants. Like all invasive species they produce a large amount of seed that is spread by birds and other animals

A Please note it is recommended to have a professional remove giant hogweed due to its health concerns

## What to actually grow then?

**Depends where you live!**

Instead of:

- ❓ Periwinkle
- ❓ Lily of the Valley
- ❓ Goutweed
- ❓ English Ivy
- ❓ Daylily
- ❓ Winged Euonymus

Try:

- ✓ Wild geranium
- ✓ Starry Solomon's Seal
- ✓ Large-leaved Aster
- ✓ Canada Anemone
- ✓ Michigan Lily
- ✓ Serviceberry





## What to actually grow then?

## Other great options!



Black Eyed Susan



Maple Leaf  
Viburnum



Nannyberry



Red Osier Dogwood



Serviceberry



Spicebush

## What to consider?

### FOR FOOD:

- Consider different flower shapes and sizes, bloom times from spring to fall
- Pollen, seeds, nuts and fruits are all food sources

### FOR HABITAT:

- Consider cover from the elements, protection from predators, nesting and resting spots
- Variety of types, heights and sizes such as trees, shrubs and tall grasses
- Snags, leaf litter, stone piles and brush piles are also habitat for many species

**Choose regionally native plants whenever possible!**

## But why plant native?

- Native plants are those that occur naturally in a region which they evolved
- Local wildlife has evolved alongside these plants including hummingbirds, native bees, butterflies, moths and bats and have adapted to the food sources available to them
- Support a greater diversity and number of wildlife throughout the food chain
- Generally low maintenance as they are better adapted to your local environment



## Buyer Beware!

- Just because it's native doesn't mean it won't take over!
- Not all garden centers are created equal
- Ornamental/showy plants may look great but are not as beneficial
- Avoid plants grown with neonicotinoids as these are detrimental to pollinators
- Generic wildflower seed packets that are widely distributed may contain plants that are actually invasive to your area

## Case Study: Private Home-Stoney Creek, Ontario

- Remove invasive trees/shrubs



## Case Study:

- Designate areas for wildflower garden and vegetable garden





## Case Study:

- Start small-pick a few favourites





## Resources

- Commercial Native Plant Growers Listed by Region:  
<http://nanps.org/commercial-growers/>
- Grow Me Instead-Guide for Southern Ontario:  
[https://www.ontarioinvasiveplants.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/GMI-South-\\_-PDF-\\_-Edition-3-2020-NEW-1.pdf](https://www.ontarioinvasiveplants.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/GMI-South-_-PDF-_-Edition-3-2020-NEW-1.pdf)
- Native Plant Resource Guide:  
<http://chapter.ser.org/ontario/files/2012/08/SERO-6th-Ed.-Growers-List-Only.pdf>
- Invasive Species Center:  
<https://www.invasivespeciescentre.ca/learn/invasive-plant-species>

## Questions: Native vs Invasive

- Is English ivy considered an invasive plant? **Yes**
- Is perennial geranium considered native or invasive? **Geraniums generally not considered invasive**
- Are dandelions invasive plants? **Only in your yard. In natural environments they are not considered invasive.**
- Black locust trees - are they invasives or natives? **Invasive**
- Is the Blackberry bush considered invasive? **No. Very good for pollinators and as a food source for Ontario's fauna**



## Questions: Native Plants

- Q. What are good native species to plant in a shady, relatively dry areas of the garden?**
- A. Shrubs- Dogwoods/ Chokecherry/ Leatherwood/Bush Honeysuckle;  
Flowers- Trilliums/Trout Lilies/Yellow Lady slipper/Mayapple/Toothwort/White  
Snakeroot/Wild Columbine*
- Q. As a beginner of native gardening, what plants do you recommend? (Owen Sound)**
- A. Asters/ Goldenrod/ Meadow Anemone . Native plants that are thriving on your site are also  
a good clue as to what might work best.*
- Q. Are any good books/resources about local native & invasive plants that you recommend?**
- A. Petersons/Newcombs/Lone Pine /Shrubs of Ontario/Owen Sound Field Naturalists*



## Questions: Plant Control

- Any advice re eco-friendly weed control? My back yard is beyond weed pulling, but I don't want to spray toxic chemicals. **Nothing has really been proven to work ie vinegar and water etc.**
- How can you eliminate invasive plants or weeds without pesticides?
- How to eradicate periwinkle
- Herb Robert - anything natural to get rid of it? It's taking over.
- How to limit Lemon Balm and Creeping Charlie without chemicals?
- What to do to eradicate chervil?
- is there a best way to get rid of these invasive species?

**PULL IT!**  
**CUT IT!**  
**COVER IT!**



## Questions: Plant Control

Note: Do not use toxic herbicides to kill unwanted vegetation. There is a province-wide ban on the use of cosmetic pesticides in Ontario. Although they can be used by qualified applicators to remove some particularly harmful pests, hand pulling weeds and other more natural methods of dealing with pests are preferred. BTC ecologists are licensed pesticide applicators but we only use pesticides on large populations where other methods are too labour intensive.

## Further Questions:

Email Lyndsey Wilkerson at  
[lwilkerson@brucetrail.org](mailto:lwilkerson@brucetrail.org)

## MISSION

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## VISION

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Rated top environmental  
charity in Canada for 2020  
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