

# CROSS POLLINATION

Newsletter of the Halton Master Gardeners

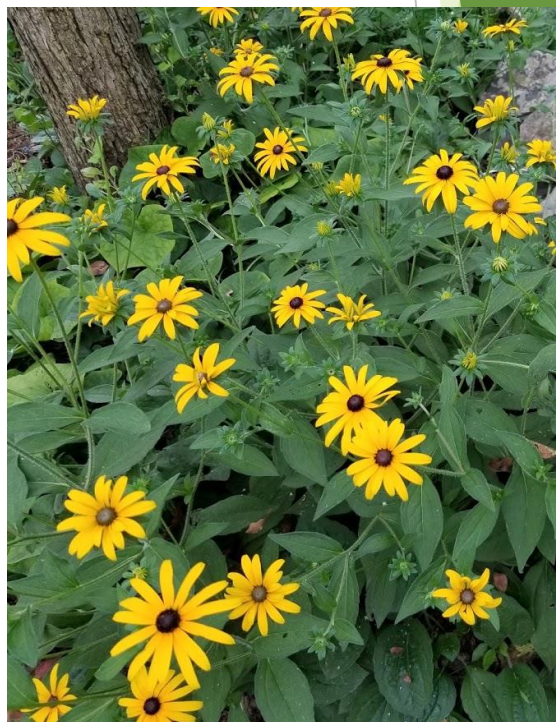


September  
2019

## September Garden 'To Do List'

- ❑ **Bulbs** - Plant spring flowering bulbs such as crocus, tulip, hyacinth & daffodil now, until before freeze up of soil. Water bulbs after planting.
- ❑ **Perennials** - Divide or transplant spring and summer flowering perennials such as iris, daylily, peony, phlox as the weather cools. Water the new divisions well. Fill gaps in borders with autumn flowering plants such as ornamental cabbage, sedum and mums to extend the colour to the end of the season. Plant goldenrod and asters for pollinators.
- ❑ **Grasses & tall perennials** - leave the stems and seedheads on for native insects & birds and to create winter interest. Read [Six reasons to NOT clean up the garden this fall](#) for pollinator friendly ideas
- ❑ **Feed the Soil** - [Add compost or manure](#) to garden beds & lawn.
- ❑ **Lawn & weeds** - [Overseed lawn](#) early in the month on a rainy day. Late fall feeding of lawn is best to increase root growth for an early spring green up. Pull, rake or cut off weeds at ground level. Keep pulling bindweed to reduce the seed bank in soil.
- ❑ **Leaves** - Attach the grass catcher bag to the mower and collect a ready supply of chopped leaves to layer into the compost pile or use as mulch on the veggie or flower garden.
- ❑ **Roses** - Stop pruning roses to avoid formation of weaker stems which won't survive the winter.
- ❑ **Veggies** - Green tomatoes-harvest to ripen indoors, freeze or use in recipes. Salad Garden - sow seeds to grow lettuce, spinach, arugula and radishes. Mix and sow seed of different varieties into veggie garden, flower bed or pots.
- ❑ **Plant cover crops** such as [red clover](#) & [winter rye](#) on bare soil.
- ❑ **Trees** - Plant new trees and shrubs now to allow them at least six weeks before frost to form roots. Water trees until freeze up, especially ones that were planted this year. Stop feeding and fertilizing shrubs and trees to encourage stems to harden off.
- ❑ **Collect** seed to start new plants and herbs for drying.
- ❑ **Houseplants** - Check houseplants for pests, then start to move indoors gradually when nights get cool. Prune tropicals such as hibiscus and move them into some shade to help transition indoors for the winter, where the light levels are lower.
- ❑ See our [August newsletter](#) for any garden jobs that you may have missed!

Halton MG Claudette Sims



Black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia* spp.) offers long lasting fall colour and makes a great cut flower.

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## Spotlight on Native Plants : *Chelone glabra* White Turtlehead



By Halton MG Janet Mackey

*Gardeners can support biodiversity and rich ecosystems by including native plants in their gardens. Once established, these plants require less care than imports as they are naturally suited to our environment*

**Chelone glabra, White Turtlehead** is an absolutely wonderful native plant that produces white flowers towards the end of summer (August - September).

The flower stocks, on the ends of erect stems, are clusters of white (often light-pink tinged) tubular, 2-lipped flowers resembling a turtle's head. The leaves are coarsely-toothed and lance-shaped, arranged opposite each other along the stem.

**Uses in Your Garden:** *Chelone glabra* is an ideal plant in a rain garden, bog or wetland with full sun to partial shade. It can be placed in a flower border if there are wet conditions.

### Growing Conditions:

- Soil: Sand - Loam - Clay
- Light: Full/Sun to Part-Sun
- Moisture: Wet Soil (i.e., rain/bog garden)
- Flower: White - Tubular Shape
- Bloom: August/September in Ontario
- Height: 60 - 100 cm. (2 - 4 ft.)

### Pollinators:

- ✓ Baltimore Checkerspot Butterflies (*Euphydryas phaeton*) This is the host plant.
- ✓ Long-Horned Bees (*Melissodes bimaculate*). These are medium sized bees that pry open the flower lobes entering & staying for up to a minute.
- ✓ Bumblebees (*Bombus* spp.). Worker bumblebees also pry open the side and enter the flower
- ✓ Hummingbirds



Baltimore Checkerspot butterfly and caterpillars



*Chelone* is derived from the Greek, (a tortoise - the flower resembles the head of a tortoise  
*glabra* = without hairs



September  
2019

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Spotlight on Natives- cont'd

**Companion Plants:** Try pairing with *Acorus americanus* (Sweet Flag), *Caltha palustris* (Marsh Marigold), *Iris versicolor* (Northern Blue Flag Iris), *Lobelia siphilitica* (Blue Cardinal Flower), or *Osmunda cinnamomea* (Cinnamon Fern).

**Problems:** There are some issues with mildew, especially if allowed to dry out or as a result of poor air-circulation. The stems may need support if grown in the shade.



Bumblebees enjoy the nectar of *Chelone glabra*



September  
2019



**Do YOU Have a Passion for Gardening?  
Take the Next Step: Become a Master Gardener!**

### Here's what you need:

- A passion for gardening - of any kind (i.e., growing food, flowers, trees, wildflowers, pollinators, permaculture, design, botany, propagation, sustainability etc.).
- Enjoy ongoing learning from a variety of sources. Master Gardeners are continually building their knowledge and skills through informative speakers, reading, workshops and by working with others.
- Commit to 30 hours of volunteer work (20 hours working with the public and 10 hours administrative) each year as well as participate in annual educational programs.
- Participate as a **Master Gardener in Training** for up to 3 years while you complete the educational and volunteer requirements. [Learn about the educational/certification requirements here.](#)



### Here's what You DO NOT need:

- Horticulture training, university/college degree or achieve a *Masters* from a University.
- Be in the landscape industry. Most Master Gardeners are **Home Gardeners** who want to extend their knowledge through study and share their passion with other gardeners. However that said, we also welcome those with backgrounds in the landscape industry but the **Master Gardener** designation is not an accreditation and should not be a means to get new clients.
- [Read MORE HERE!](#)

Did you know that Ontario Master Gardeners contribute **over 37,000** hours per year....



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## Garden Blunders-What were we thinking?

*Gardening can be challenging even for the most experienced among us. Here are some lessons lived and learned.*

### Landscape Fabric - Never Again!



I am sure that the previous owners had the best of intentions, and followed then-current recommendations when they used landscape fabric, planted junipers, and then covered it all over with mulch. However, it was a nightmare to remove: weeds had burst through the fabric, while others had rooted on the top. Pulling away the fabric also meant disturbing the roots of plants that I wanted to keep.

Editor's Note: Landscape fabric works at best, for a few years. It is better to either to use a good mulch until the plants fill in - or purchase more plants to fill the area. Read [MULCH MATTERS](#).



## Question of the Month



Do you have questions about how to care for your Hydrangea?

For example:

- Why isn't my Hydrangea blooming?
- When should I prune it?
- Are Hydrangeas good for pollinators?
- What type of Hydrangea would be good for my garden?
- How can get my Hydrangea to produce blue flowers?

Read: [A Guide to Growing Hydrangeas](#) on our website at <https://haltonmastergardeners.com>



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September  
2019

## Thugs and Invasives: *Caveat Emptor!*

By Halton MG Allyn Walsh



As charming plants commonly found in our garden landscapes can become big problems - for us, our neighbours, and our environment. In this series, we will highlight some plant offenders that can take over our gardens, woodlands and meadows if we are not careful.

This monthly series will discuss some of these plants, why they can be problems, and how to control them.

### Nightmare on (Siberian) Elm Street

*Ulmus pumila*, the Siberian elm, is native to central Asia, but has been widely cultivated in North America, becoming naturalized particularly in urban settings. This is unfortunate, because this invasive tree really can be a nightmare! A prolific samara seed producer with a high germination rate, the seeds are spread widely by the wind. The plant also suckers prolifically from any portion of root stock. Originally imported as a hedging material, in southern Ontario the “hedge” quickly grows to a tree which can reach 65 feet in height. As a result, many former hedges are now rows of closely planted trees. One nick name for Siberian Elm is “piss elm”, named for the aroma of its wood when cut. Perhaps the worst, and certainly the most dangerous, feature of Siberian elm is its weak wood and poor limb structure, leading to a tendency to sudden and unexpected “limb failure”. While boughs can fall due to ice and wind, this tree may also drop a limb without warning in perfect weather conditions. In 2016, a man was killed in a Toronto park in this way while sitting under a Siberian Elm.

Continued....



Look for the serrated alternate leaves



A typical location to find a young Siberian elm- it will already be difficult to remove

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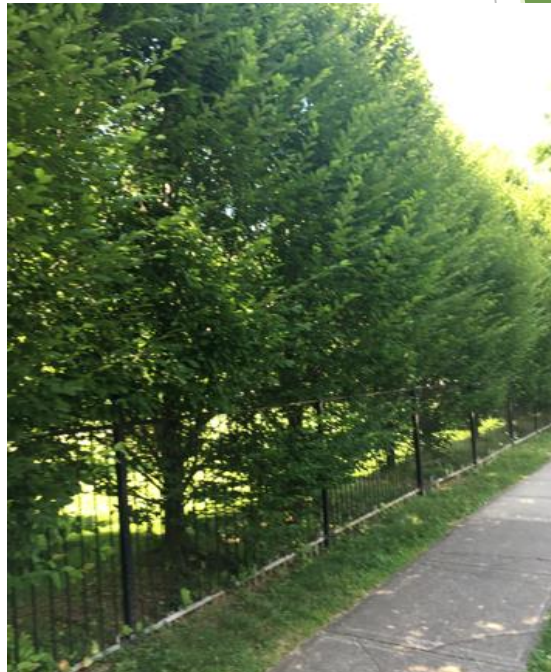
September  
2019

### Thugs & Invasives Cont'd

Because of its invasive nature, the plant does well in areas of poor soil with full sun and little moisture as well in moist and fertile areas. Growing rapidly, it thrives where other plants do not - along roads, railways, abandoned grounds, cracks in pavement, and generally where trees may not be desirable.

It quickly outcompetes our native plants, both trees and shrubs. The leaves are oblong, with serrate margins, green in colour with a glabrous underside. Unlike our native *Ulmus americana*, *Ulmus pumila* is not susceptible to Dutch elm disease.

Removal of Siberian elm trees is difficult and expensive, involving professional tree cutting and stump removal. New growth quickly arises from any roots left remaining. The best approach is to be aware of the potential of early and rather innocent looking shoots, with speedy removal by digging and disposal. Vigilant attention to new sprouts will be required. Improving conditions for desirable native plants will also help by making them more able to compete.



A border of Siberian elm trees-probably once a hedge that was thinned out, it will need constant attention to be well behaved.

Want to read  
More about  
Siberian Elm?



- [Midwest Noxious Weed: Do Not Plant](#)
- [Warning: Siberian Elm Needs a Firm Hand](#)

Stay tuned for next month's Thugs and Invaders article!

If you have plants you think should be featured here, **contact:** [HaltonMasterGardeners@gmail.com](mailto:HaltonMasterGardeners@gmail.com)



### Why are trees so forgiving?

Because in the Fall they "Let It Go" and in the Spring they "turn over a new leaf".





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“What’s Growing On” featuring Halton Master Gardeners

September Online Garden Chats

Tue. Sept. 3<sup>rd</sup> Mon. Sept. 16<sup>th</sup>

12:30 - 1:30 pm



radio



September  
2019

Listen to [Claudette](#) subbing in for Ed Lawrence on July 29<sup>th</sup>!

HMG’s Patty King, Liza Drozdov, Donna Parker and Claudette Sims team up with [Toronto Master Gardeners](#) Tina Cesaroni & Tena van Andel & Royal Botanical Garden experts Jon Peter & Alex Henderson to answer your garden questions.

Send your own questions to us by Tweet to [@CBCHamilton](#) or via email to [hamilton@cbc.ca](mailto:hamilton@cbc.ca)



Grab your tea, sit back and listen to Ed Lawrence on Ontario Today while we answer your gardening questions!

Answering your  
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Do You have a gardening question?  
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## "What's Growing On" in Our Community



### RBG Events

**Cootes to Escarpment EcoPark System - BioBlitz and Plant Sale**  
September 20 and 21

RBG needs your help to inventory what lives here. Join an enthusiastic team of EcoPark System partners, friends and the public for our third annual Cootes to Escarpment EcoPark System BioBlitz to document the biodiversity in the area. Become a citizen scientist for an afternoon, join local experts a guided hike.  
(Free Event)

[Find out more HERE](#)

### Goldenrod: It's Nothing to Sneeze At!

Enjoy this article from London-Middlesex Master Gardeners to learn more about including Goldenrod in YOUR garden.



### Garden Events

- Twilight Trials Tour: Wed. Sept. 4<sup>th</sup>  
6:30 pm - 8:00 pm William Dam Seeds, Dundas, Ontario
- Master Gardeners of Niagara 10th Annual Plant Sale - Sat. Sept. 7<sup>th</sup>, 9am - 12pm  
Vineland Research and Innovation Centre, 4890 Victoria Ave. N. Vineland Station, Ontario
- Fall Plant Sale - Flamborough Hort. Soc. Sat. Sept. 21<sup>st</sup> - 8am - 1pm
- Central Ontario Orchid Show & Sale - Sat. 28/29 11am - 5pm. Hespeler Memorial Arena Cambridge



**Hamilton Naturalists' Club**  
Protecting Nature Since 1919

**Guided Nature Walk Every Sunday in September 2-3:30 pm**

- Sun. Sept 1<sup>st</sup> - Hendrie Valley Meet at Cherry Hill Gate - Parking Lot
- Sun. Sept. 8<sup>th</sup> - Princess Point
- Sun. Sept. 15<sup>th</sup> - Cootes North Shore - Meet at Nature Interpretive Centre, RBG Arboretum
- Sun. Sept. 23<sup>rd</sup> - Cootes South Shore - Meet at Aviary Parking Lot, Oak Knoll
- Sun. Sept. 29<sup>th</sup> - Rock Chapel Parking Lot - Trail Head

Go To: <https://www.rbg.ca/hike> for more information. Contact Peter if you would like to learn about how to become a volunteer [plangballe@cogeco.ca](mailto:plangballe@cogeco.ca)

More events at [Hamilton Naturalists Calendar](#)

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