

# CROSS POLLINATION

Halton Master Gardeners Monthly Newsletter  
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Halton Region  
Master Gardeners



## **Witch Hazel** *Hamamelis virginiana*

*A perfect native to bloom for Halloween*

By Kirsten McCarthy, Halton Master Gardener

As we enter into October, our gardening chores turn toward cleaning up the garden for the winter, sharpening our tools and planting spring bulbs. Many of our native plants have finished their life cycle and we are collecting their seeds for next year. While we are preparing for the colder months there is a native shrub that is just starting to flower and burst with gorgeous colour that lights up the grey and cloudy days and weeks ahead.

### **Cultural Requirements**

Aptly named witch hazel (*Hamamelis virginiana*), this shrub or small tree can grow 15-20 feet tall and wide. It prefers full sun or partial shade, although the best flowering will occur in full sun. Witch hazel loves moist, well-draining soil. Although it doesn't tolerate dry feet, it will grow fine in heavy clay soil. The leaves of this woody ornamental shrub turn a gorgeous yellow in the fall and are followed by cheery, spider-like, fragrant yellow flowers that look like they came from a Dr. Seuss story.

*Image: Clemson University*

*Continued on next page*

## WITCH HAZEL (CONT'D)

### Seeds and Fruit

The generic name, *Hamamelis* combines two greek word roots meaning "fruit" and "together". This is perhaps because witch hazel produces flowers at the same time as the previous year's fruit matures and produces seed. The fruit enshrines two shiny hard black seeds with white, oily edible interiors. When the seeds mature, witch hazel engages a mechanical seed dispersal mechanism that launches the seeds with a cracking "pop" up to ten yards from the shrub! Remember this if you ever bring some witch hazel twigs inside to enjoy at home, as the warmth will trigger the previous year's seeds!



### Pollinators

For a long time, it was a mystery how a winter-flowering plant would get pollinated as many of the pollinators are no longer active in the colder weather.

Fortunately, there is a group of owl moths called winter moths that need nutrition on colder nights. These moths have an incredible ability to warm themselves up by shivering in order to fly in search of food.



It is a group of these moths that pollinate witch hazel. Witch hazel is also the host plant for the larvae of the blue azure butterfly.



Image: Janet Mackey



### Did you know?



- The name "witch hazel" originates from folk history where people used the branch of witch hazel to find sources of water. If the branch twisted or dipped while walking over the ground, they believed water would be found. This was called "[water-witching](#)".
- Witch hazel's leaves, bark and twigs have been used medicinally.
- The extracts from witch hazel have been used by Indigenous Peoples of Canada for [medicinal purposes](#).
- Witch hazel has many synonyms including: "snapping hazel", "magician's rod" and "winter bloom".
- Some say, witch hazel may be good to help rid [pets](#) of ticks and pet odour.
- It is suggested witch hazel can be used as an environmentally friendly household cleaner. Neat eh?





## OCTOBER 'TO-DO' LIST

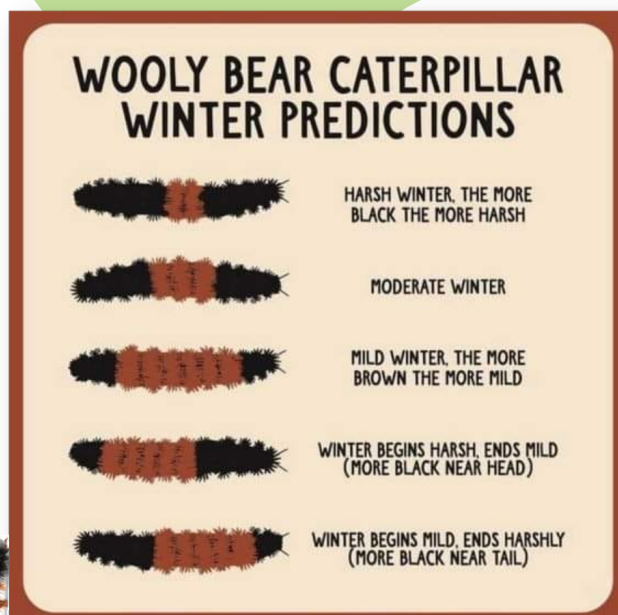
by Claudette Sims, Halton Master Gardener

- ☐ **Perennials** – [Divide or transplant overcrowded or underperforming perennials](#) as the weather cools & water in the new divisions well. For species specific instructions [consult this list](#). Leave perennials uncut for native bees and birds.
- ☐ **Feed the Soil** – Empty your compost bin into gardens and cover bare soil with organic matter such as compost, leaves, straw, mulch or manure.
- ☐ **Trees** – Mulch young trees with wood chips. To reduce rodent & rabbit damage, use spiral tree guards & trim grass around the tree.
- ☐ **Houseplants** – Decrease watering as the days become shorter. Increase humidity by misting plants. Check for pests weekly.
- ☐ **Garlic** – Plant from the end of October to mid November up until the ground freezes. Complete [details here!](#)
- ☐ **General Clean up** – shed, garage, patio, garden etc. Donate unused tools & repair, recycle or throw away broken items. Drain & store hoses & turn off the water supply. Clean & store/cover pots, watering cans etc. to prevent cracking during freeze up. Cover ponds with netting before leaf fall or remove leaves in the pond with a bamboo rake.
- ☐ **Seeds** – Continue to collect seed for next year's garden. Prepare containers for winter sowing of vegetables or perennials. Grow butterflies by sowing seeds of their larval host plants!



*The relative amount of black and orange colours on a woolly bear caterpillar is the result of ageing. With each successive moulting, less and less of the caterpillar is black and more of it is orange.*

[Ontario Nature Magazine](#)



*"The woolly bear's reputation as a prognosticator of winter's severity is mythical. A woolly bear with more black is just a young caterpillar and not a prediction for a harsh winter."*

[Ontario Nature Magazine](#)

- ☐ **Lawn & Weeds** – Rake or "mow" leaves and remove to garden beds. Leave some leaves uncut for beneficial insects and pollinators who overwinter in leaf litter. Keep on weeding as long as the soil is workable. When mowing is done for the season, clean the mower and sharpen blades.

### Butterflies that Overwinter in Leaf Litter - [Xerces Society](#)

[Luna Moth](#) (cocoon) [Red Banded Hairstreak](#) (eggs) [Woolly Bear](#) (caterpillar) [Fritillary](#) (caterpillar) [Canadian Tiger Swallowtail](#)



## RECIPE FOR A NATIVE PLANT GARDEN

By Janet Mackey, Halton Master Gardener



# Recipe



## for a Native Plant Garden



### Ingredients

- Keystone species
- Evergreens for shelter
- Berry sources
- Native perennials that provide seed & nectar
- Varied flower shapes, colours & time of bloom
- Host plants including some grasses

### Set the Table

- Choose a site with 6 hours of sunshine or more (less sun can also work)
- Outline your bed shape with a hose (curvy or straight edges are both fine)
- Remove a thin strip (3") of soil/turf from the new garden edges
- Sheet mulch the existing vegetation using several sheets of newspaper or cardboard (remove tape/labels) - overlap edges
- Layer 2-3" of compost or soil mixture, then add layers of mown grass and fallen leaves
- An additional layer of arborist (wood chip) mulch will help build terrific soil
- Leave layers in place until spring or at least 6 weeks
- Consider getting started with Winter Sowing of native plant seeds

### Directions



- Start small - gardens can always expand
- Early fall is the perfect time to begin, but if you're busy, spring is okay too
- Draw a plan using basic design principles:
  - plant in masses or groupings rather than individual plants on their own
  - consider colour, texture, and form
  - use focal points, repetition, and balance as guides
  - consider mature size, especially height
- Move mulch to the side and begin adding ingredients to the garden when the soil can be worked in spring
- Water 1 to 2 times per week unless there's sufficient rain - just for the first season of growth
- Weed frequently - it's easier after rain.

### Enjoy!



- Add pathways, logs, and a source of water
- Leave the garden standing over the winter to provide both food and shelter
- Use the chop-and-drop method for spring clean-up, but wait until it's above 10 C
- **See Page 7 for links to resources**

*"As gardeners and stewards of our land, we have never been so empowered to help save biodiversity from extinction, and the need to do so has never been so great. All we need to do is plant native plants!"*

Dr. Douglas Tallamy - author of *Nature's Best Hope*





## THE PLUNK-AND-PLOP SCHOOL OF GARDENING

by Bev Wagar, Halton Master Gardener

One evening in mid-September I was walking around my small urban garden with a plant in each hand, unaware that my husband was watching.

"Looking for a place to plant those?" he asked.

"Yup. I gotta get these in the ground before I run out of time."

"You have a lot of new plants," he remarked blandly.

"And they take a lot of time. Most of them are pot-bound, which means a lot of clipping and fussing" I explained, even though his comment was aimed at the expense, not the work, these new plants entail.

They were hairy panic grass (*Dichanthelium acuminatum* var. *fasciculatum*), an unusual native species that I bought as an edging plant for textural contrast. But that's all I could remember without running upstairs to consult google or my spreadsheet. Sun or shade? Dry or moist? Conscious of the setting sun and the many plants in the queue, I plopped them in a convenient open space and stuck the marker. That would do until spring. I was back to the old *plunk-and-plop*.

I did not invent the phrase. I first heard it used in 2008, by a friend deflecting my praise of her gorgeous garden. I too was a *plunk-and-plopper*. And when time is short or stress is high, it's still my preferred method of getting plants in the ground.



Image: Sean Hurley (CC BY-SA)

### A way out of the swamp

The Internet can be a paralyzing, overwhelming onslaught of information and opinion. The charlatans make promises, the profit-seekers elbow and bellow, and the "influencers" clamour for eyeballs and clicks. For beginners, it's like running into a big tangled swamp on the first leg of their gardening journey.

If you're stuck in the swamp, *plunk-and-plop* could be your lifeline. Just put those plants in the ground. It doesn't matter so much where you put them. What's important is that you pay attention to them. They, perhaps more than the Internet, are your trusty guides.

*Continued on next page*

## Plunk and Plop (continued)

Being a *plunk-and-plop* gardener is part expedience (“this plant is bustin’ out and has to get in the ground right away”), part defiance (“no one tells me what/where/how/why to plant”), and part impatience (“I don’t have time for this.”). These three tenets are the core curriculum of the *plunk-and-plop* school of gardening. Let’s take a closer look.

### Expedience

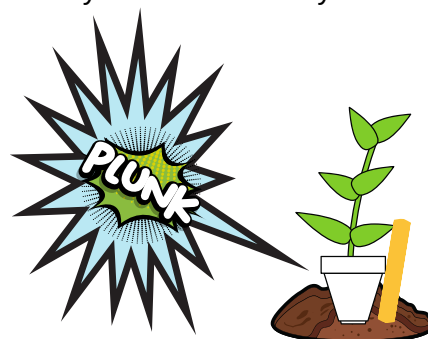
No one can do things right all the time. But getting that plant out of the pot, and into the soil is the first step. Just plant it, no matter how imperfectly.

*Just go ahead and plant. Each year is a new creative opportunity to fix mistakes, experiment, and be frugal. Remember that those first impulsive plunkings can be moved or divided for bonus plants at no cost.*

Plunking plants is better than abandoning them on a hot patio while you get around to weeding the space, pruning the overhanging shrub, enlarging the planting bed, or fixing the hose. So fill up your watering can, pop those little guys out, tease the roots, dig a hole, water, plunk, and water again. After placing the plant marker, write in your journal (or spreadsheet or phone) what you did. You’ll need this information this winter as you research the plant and decide on a better home for it. Always keep in mind that plants can be moved, replaced, and replicated. Right now you’re not aiming for perfection—you’re just keeping that plant alive and out of misery for the short term,

### Defiance

Don’t let expert advice paralyze you. If you balk when a Master Gardener tells you to get rid of oriental honeysuckle, miscanthus, vinca, goutweed, lily-of-the-valley, burning bush, ditch lily (and possibly lilac and rose-of-sharon too) remember that you can remove the bad guys and grow the good guys *at the same time*. Find a spot for a nursery bed and nurture your babies while you kill invasives.



If necessary, have the courage to defy your neighbours. If you want vegetables in your front yard, or native plants with goldenrod, or a rain garden, just do it. Bucking the trend (or simply following your muse) can be a great motivator to do the research. Arm yourself with facts so the next time someone tries to unload some thugs, or suggests a homemade spray, or goes on about what you’re doing wrong, you can explain why you’re doing it your way. Remember this is your garden, your own space to create, restore, showcase, and enjoy.

### Impatience

If you’re an older beginner, you may balk at advice to wait and observe. For example, it’s wise to wait a year in a new space to learn the soil, the sun patterns, and existing plants. You may be told to start with the “bones” (trees and shrubs) and progress, over several seasons, to the “pretties” (flowers). And if your yard has accumulated a lot of invasive plants it may take several years to remove them.

*Continued on next page*



**Plunk and Plop (continued)**

Just go ahead and plant. Each year is a new creative opportunity to fix mistakes, experiment, and be frugal. Remember that those first impulsive plunkings can be moved or divided for bonus plants at no cost.

The old adage about planting a tree for your grandchildren to enjoy is more prescient than ever. We simply must have patience with trees. But certain shrubs and vines, on the other hand, are great options for the impatient gardener. Consider quick ways to achieve a leafy-green canopy: cover a pergola with a native clematis (*C. virginiana*); build a shade structure with a "green roof" lined with cascading annuals; or plunk down a big green canopy with hanging plants all around.

Being impatient is no excuse for carelessness, though. The plunk-and-plop school of gardening is still a school—so you need to write things down and (eventually) do your research.



Image: Marika Reed CC BY-SA

Even when your hands are cold and you're looking to plunk a pretty before the frost hits, write down the name and place. Or send your buddy an email about the great Blasterogickly bazookinus you plunked today, so at least there's a record of it.

I sometimes wish my gardening journey hadn't lingered so long on the pretty flowers and botanical oddities. But gardening with minimal constraints was an enviable freedom. My first gardens seldom went according to plan. They simply evolved as new plants were grown, purchased, or found on my doorstep. It was a wonderful way to learn. We called it being "self taught."

Now, as I wander, plants in hand, through my small urban garden with its new set of challenges, I'm wistfully reminded of those years of youthful exuberance. There is so little time left and even less space. These plants need to get in the ground.

Plunk.

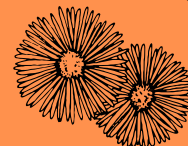
Plop.



## RESOURCES

### Recipe for a Native Plant Garden

From Page 4



- [Keystone Plants](#)
- [Host Plants](#)
- [Planting Guide](#)
- [Seed Library - Hamilton Region](#)
- [Seed Library - RBG](#)
- [Winter Sowing](#)
- [Sources for Plants](#)
- [Basics of Sheet Mulching](#)
- [Mulching with Leaves](#)
- [Designs for Small Gardens](#)
- [Guelph Native Plant Designs](#)
- [Spring Garden Clean-up Using Chop & Drop Method](#)
- [Make a Simple Bee Water Source](#)
- [Toolkit for Pollinator Paradise](#)

## GARDEN VISITORS OR GARDEN PESTS? PART 3: SQUIRRELS

By Liza Drozdov, Halton Master Gardener

Many gardeners are frustrated by squirrels, (sometimes referred to as "tree rats"), especially in spring when the heads suddenly disappear from tulips. (Personally, I'm more upset with them when they dig up my lily bulbs and peel the scales as if eating an artichoke.) They don't even seem to eat the blossoms, which is even more irritating. While there's no effective method of preventing this, planting bulbs in well-trafficked areas or in containers close to the house can work, depending on how confident your squirrels are. For a few years I've been feeding my squirrels peanuts, reasoning that if they are well fed, they'll leave my bulbs alone. I keep telling myself it's working. I ignore the inner voice that tells me I've been negotiating with myself; you can't reason with a squirrel.

After awhile I had a lot of fat squirrels in my garden—then the foxes arrived. I loved the foxes and was thrilled every time I saw one, but I wrestled with a moral dilemma. It didn't seem right to use fat, happy squirrels as fox bait, so I gave up feeding them. Sadly, the foxes don't visit anymore, but my conscience is clear.



Image: Liza Drozdov



One solution to the squirrel/bulb issue is to be more selective in which bulbs you plant. Squirrels don't seem as attracted to shorter species tulips, daffodils and hyacinths. So, if squirrels are an issue for you, perhaps tall hybrid tulips should be avoided.

In autumn, squirrels will dig up your bulbs, often mere minutes after you've planted them. They are curious creatures and are attracted to disturbed soil. Cover the area where you've planted bulbs with leaves in order to hide the evidence. Sprinkling blood meal after planting will help discourage them until they forget all about it, for the time being.

Another very effective solution is to plant your bulbs deeply; I plant my tulips 10" deep, which both protects them and increases their longevity. It also prevents the squirrels from digging them up since they have short arms and aren't patient. They'll try briefly but won't get deep enough to unearth the bulbs.

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## GARDEN VISITORS OR GARDEN PESTS? (CONT'D)

Another simple and effective solution is to use a barrier. After planting your bulbs, lay a piece of chicken wire or metal hardware cloth over them, about two inches under the surface of the soil. I also use old cooking grills which are heavier, reusable, and less annoying to deal with than chicken wire. The metal won't be visible, squirrels won't be able to dig through it and the bulbs will still be able to come up through the barrier when they start to grow in spring.



Image: [YMC](#)

There are also squirrel repellent products available at garden centres and online. Many of them contain capsaicin---a compound derived from chilli peppers. Some gardeners will even use their own cayenne pepper to prevent squirrels from digging in the garden. I find this cruel, and if you've ever seen squirrels desperately trying to get this out of their eyes, you'd agree.

Many people swear by mothballs, however, [Health Canada](#)'s rules restrict the use of mothballs to [INDOOR USE ONLY, using an AIRTIGHT CONTAINER](#). Mothballs contain paradichlorobenzene and naphthalene, both of which are known carcinogens. Since naphthalene vapourizes at room temperature imagine if you placed it under your deck to deter squirrels. On a warm summer day those fumes may be toxic to you, let alone any animals or children exploring the area. Mothballs aren't great for the environment either. They can contaminate water and soil, harm wildlife, and contribute to air pollution.

Anyway, who wants to sit out in a garden that stinks of mothballs? No thanks.

You might also want to consider removing any food sources that might be attractive to squirrels (e.g., bird feeders, bread left out for birds, compost, pet food left outside, or unsecured garbage).

Despite all these issues, squirrels really are great at planting trees. They play a vital role in sustaining and expanding plant communities and ecosystems. They even help in the [control of Spongy Moths](#) (*Lymantria dispar dispar* or LDD moth) by eating large quantities of the moth pupae. Squirrels can stay (...do I have a choice?). I can share my garden and I guess some of my plants. I've changed the types of bulbs I've planted and have protected them. And who can't admire their agility and antics in the yard. They certainly can brighten up a dull day. \*



## Interesting Facts About Squirrels

- A group of squirrels is called a scurry or dray
- They are very territorial and will fight to defend their area
- Mother squirrels are most aggressive when defending their babies
- Some squirrels are crepuscular (only active at dawn and dusk)
- A squirrel has padded feet that cushions a jump from up to 6 meters
- Squirrels can run 32 kph

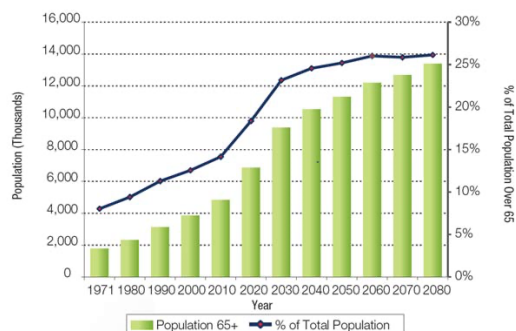


By Hariette Henry, Halton Master Gardener

Whether you struggle with limitations based on a disability or whether your challenges are the result of advancing age, the strategies for making gardening easier and more accessible overlap. Accessibility is not limited just to spaces meant for healing. It is also for healthy people who have mobility or sensory issues, who will greatly benefit by continuing to garden regardless of their circumstances or age.

Gardening activities are thought to improve the problems associated with aging such as depression, osteoporosis, diabetes and poor sleep. This type of information is very relevant given that our population is aging. The Government of Canada – Action for Seniors Report – states that “Seniors in Canada are a rapidly growing segment of the population and are living longer and healthier lives than previous generations. In 2014, over 6 million Canadians were aged 65 or older, representing 15.6 percent of Canada’s population. By 2030—in less than two decades—seniors will number over 9.5 million and make up 23 percent of Canadians.”

Table 1: Total and share of population 65 and over by decade, 1971–2080



**Figure 1:** Statistics Canada (1971–2010) and Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions (2020–2080)

*“I figure that there are some of us that struggle with physical limitations or disabilities and we have to find creative ways to work in our gardens. I was hoping that y’all could share some tips or gardening “hacks” or tools that you have found helpful in overcoming physical challenges in the garden.”*

Keeping active in the garden as we age should involve thinking about safety. For instance, we should avoid going out into the garden barefoot. Without proper shoes, we are more likely to fall and sprain an ankle. Damp grass and uneven surfaces can be a hazard leading to falls potentially followed by serious complications. It is also important to protect your skin. Sunscreen, a hat and loose clothing are recommended. As is investing in a good pair of gloves that you will keep on no matter what the task.

At the end of the gardening day tools should be put away and hoses should be coiled and moved away from walkways. Having a tote in which to store your tools keeps them on hand and in one place, avoiding making extra steps. Painting the handles of tools with bright colours can make them easier to spot in the garden or lawn.

As we get older, it’s worth considering an investment in lightweight and long-handled forks, spades and secateurs. A kneeler bench is a must for anyone with bad knees. These benches allow you to use the arms to raise yourself up and they are light enough to carry around fairly easily. Tools with good leverage, sharpened edges, and smooth operation of moving parts are always easier to work with. And of course, be sure to keep your tools sharp and well maintained.





(cont'd)

Thinking proactively also involves preparing your body for the task of gardening. Stretch, stretch, stretch before you start. Engaging in activities such as yoga or tai chi can improve your balance, flexibility and energy. Taking regular breaks is a great idea to prevent overtaxing yourself. Setting a timer on your cellphone allows you to stop and switch up chores every thirty minutes saving you energy. After all it's the repetitive movements that lead to pain and feeling sore the next day.



For baby boomers wanting to improve their fitness level as they garden a new television series from PBS called Garden Fit was released in Spring 2022. The trailer for the show says "Garden Fit offers you the chance to care for your body while caring for your garden". Co-hosts Madeline and Jeff tour 13 gardens across the U.S., while offering advice on doing tasks more safely and more easily.

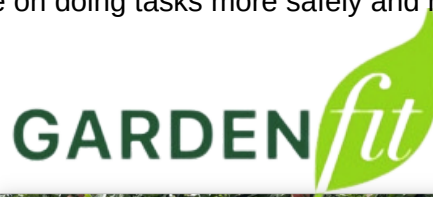


Photo 4: Co-hosts of new series from PBS Garden Fit.  
Source: [www.gardenfit.fit](http://www.gardenfit.fit)

As we age the design of our gardens can be adapted to our changing abilities and needs. For one thing we can situate the garden closer to the house to provide easier access. We may need larger garden paths to accommodate a walker or wheelchair. Along the path or within the garden, it is nice to provide benches in shaded areas to sit passively and enjoy the garden. If bending to reach ground-level plants becomes difficult, elevating the garden to a more comfortable height is a good idea. Raised beds can be waist high, at a mid-level that allows a person to sit while tending plants or high enough that they can sit in a wheelchair or walker, with legs tucked under the bed. They should only be as wide as an arm's length so that leaning over is not necessary. Raised beds have additional benefits in that the soil in them warms up earlier and is loose so roots grow more easily. Plants can be placed close to one another to encourage minimal weeding.

**Photos 1,2,3:** Top left are radius hand tools designed to let the strongest arm muscles do the work, while keeping the joints in natural positions. Top right are long handled grass shears which allow the user to trim edges without stooping and finally bottom photo shows a garden bench that can be used for kneeling or sitting. All are available at most garden retailers.

Photos: Lee Valley Tools



(cont'd)

We should also consider gardening vertically, such as with hanging baskets. Since they are off the ground, users need not worry about tripping over them or having them block walkways. We can use a pulley system to bring hanging containers down to a workable level and then raise them back up again and out of the way.



*Photo 5: Hanging baskets on a pulley system that can be lowered for ease of care and then raised to be out of the way.*

*Photo: Picket Fence Pulley Planters*

The choice of plants is also a consideration. Plants that can thrive on their own require less work. The best way to do this is to select plants native to your region. Native plants require little to no fertilization, and many don't require as much water. Save time and money by planting perennials or shrubs rather than annuals. Always remember the concept of "the right plant, in the right place," saving you time and money and correcting costly mistakes.

Installing a drip irrigation system can also be a worthwhile investment. Garden hoses are heavy and getting a sprinkler in just the right spot is a practice in trial and error. Once installed these systems only require turning the water faucet on and off. And even better a timer can be added to make the system automated. If this type of system is not in the budget a soaker hose snaked through the beds will also be effective.

Finally, we should never be too proud to ask for help. Paying someone to do the tasks that we find difficult or don't enjoy is always an option or (you never know?) younger, more able-bodied acquaintances or family members might be willing to exchange their labour for a chance to learn some new gardening skills. \*

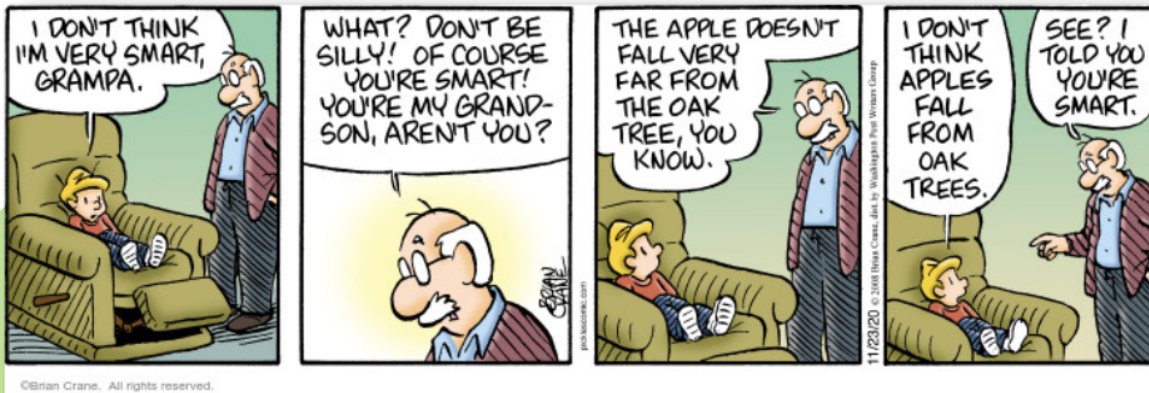
## Take a Closer Look!

- [Garden Fit – YouTube, Season 1 Episode 1](#)
- [Kneeler bench, available at most major retailers](#)
- [Master Gardeners: Tips and tricks to make gardening easier as we age](#)
- [Accessibility and therapeutic gardening](#)
- [Accessible ergonomic Garden Tools](#)
- [Accessible Long Handled Garden Tools](#)





## LEAVE THE LEAVES!



The Garden Professors - Facebook



# What's Growing On?



**Royal  
Botanical  
Gardens**

**Virtual Guided  
Hike: Fall Edition**



Click [here](#)

**Family Fun**



Click [here](#)

**Outdoor  
Adventure**



Click [here](#)

**We're here to answer your  
garden questions!**

Answering your  
**Gardening  
Questions!**

Send us an [email](#). It's what we do best!

- Do you have a passion for gardening and sharing your knowledge? Learn more about [joining us](#).
- Interested in attending a meeting? Contact us at: [Halton Master Gardeners](#)
- Follow us on [Facebook](#)

**Seedy Saturday**  
Art Gallery Burlington



Click [here](#)

Saturday October 22, 2022



Check our [calendar](#) for events

**The growing season is winding down.**

**Find a Farmers' Market**



Click [here](#)

# What's Growing On?



## Thinking about Water Conservation?

Receive up to \$2500 towards the cost of eligible projects aimed at improving local surface and ground water quality. If you've got nagging drainage issues or if you just want to add more biodiversity, this is a great opportunity to enhance your property.

For residents of Hamilton, Waterdown, Pleasant View, Brant Hills, Tyandaga, and Aldershot

Eligible projects include: rain gardens, bioswales, infiltration trenches, soakaway pits, permeable pavement / pavers, and other projects that demonstrate the retention, infiltration, or conservation of water.



**APPLICATION DEADLINE EXTENDED!**

Conservation  
**Halton**

<https://www.conservationhalton.ca/financial-assistance-programs/>  
stewardship@hrca.on.ca or avesistormwater@gmail.com  
905-336-1158 x-2285

### About Our Newsletter

Cross Pollination is published monthly from February to December and is written and prepared by our dedicated volunteers. Halton Master Gardeners are experienced gardeners who have studied horticulture extensively and continue to upgrade their skills through technical training. We strive to provide science-based, sustainable gardening information to the general public. The information in our newsletter has been verified by our volunteers to the best of our abilities, but given the scope of horticulture and science some concepts may not reflect current knowledge.

Your [donations](#) support our work!

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