

## **District 2 Pollinator Initiative Projects 2017**

At the District 2 Fall advisory meeting in 2016, it was decided to donate \$100.00 to each of our 19 societies for a total of \$1900.00 on top of the \$200.00 from the OHA for pollinator initiatives. A lot of our 19 societies have expanded even further on this wonderful cause. Below are the activities that our societies completed.

### **Almonte H.S.**

On Wednesday, May 10, 2017 Dr. James Coupland spoke to the general public at the Almonte Old Town Hall about the decline of pollinators. The society is working with the Mississippi Mills Beautification Committee on this initiative. Their money was spent on the speaker fee and plants for the Naismith Public School Pollinator Garden. Almonte also partnered with Carleton Place and Pakenham to sell 120 solitary pollen bee nests as a fundraiser for the District 2 flower show.

### **Beachburg H.S.**

Beachburg Horticultural Society partnered with the Ross Museum in Forester's Falls. Many visitors come throughout the summer and fall. Plants are in the Heritage Creek-side garden along with several varieties of shrubs and flowers that attract bees and butterflies. Two bee nests have been installed on a nearby building to provide homes for pollen bees. In July during children's programs, they will be informed about pollinating bees. Literature will be available to visitors about our project.

The Allium bulbs of different sizes and colours we planted will attract visitors and pollen bees. This location is often used as a picnic site and ideal for family photos beside a running stream. What an attractive spot to observe lots of nature!

Thank you for the gift of \$100 to further this project.

Our Society purchased a case of 24 bee nests. We sold them successfully for \$15 each to members and guests at our Plant Sale.

### **Carleton Place H.S.**

The initiative for Carleton Place was to create a pollinator haven in the Victoria School Museum gardens by adding plants to attract pollinators and by adding some solitary bee nests.

### **Deep River H.S.**

Planted a garden at the Deep River Horticultural Society Incredible Edible site with herbs and flowers to attract pollinators.

### **Eganville H.S.**

In support of the OHA's Canada 150 initiative, the Eganville society built a pollinator garden anchored by three pear trees which were planted in 2015. The garden consists of native plants and shrubs to be planted over a 2-year period, with stepping stones inside the garden to permit easy access. A member contributed aged logs with drilled holes for a natural bee habitat. The Planting Chairperson took on this project and organized a committee of volunteers. Prior to this, she did the necessary research to ensure the garden was done properly, and located appropriate plants from local nurseries (chokecherry and nine bark shrubs, serviceberry trees, cosmos, coneflower, bee balm, sedum, thyme, asters). Volunteers laid 5+ layers of wet newspapers over the area and the soil was dumped on top, and spread evenly over the area. Mulch was spread on top (before plants were added, due to limited availability of donated mulch). There is no edging, logs or any type of a border. This reduces future maintenance work, and remains more natural looking. Plants will be clustered in groups of 2 or 3, depending on

size. The intention is to provide plants for three seasons. A sign provided by the OHA will be placed at the site indicating it is a natural pollinating garden. This will be an educational garden because it is located beside the Bonnechere River in an area frequented by walkers, and across the street from the Geo-Heritage Trail (which is part of Eganville's famous Fossil Hunts). The local newspaper is on the same street and has been supportive with its coverage.

### **Greater Ottawa Water Garden H.S.**

The Greater Ottawa Water Garden Horticultural Society had a presentation by Rebecca Last. Rebecca's presentation began by itemizing some pros and cons of gardening for wildlife. The cons were few and tended to be related to the need to keep things like feeders and birdbaths clean. She spoke about elements of a wildlife-friendly garden; plant selections; and food, water and shelter for wildlife. The presentation concluded with details of resources available to interested gardeners and a discussion of the Canadian Wildlife Federation's "Garden for Wildlife" certification program and citizen science. The presentation included numerous aspects of providing for pollinators, noting that recent studies in the UK and France found more diverse and numerous pollinator species in cities than in the countryside. Rebecca used features from her own garden to illustrate many of her points.

In the part of the presentation dealing with water, Rebecca told us that key design elements include lots of plants to shade water and provide shelter for fish in pond and visiting amphibians along with overhanging rocks that offer ledges for fish to hide under, and for birds and pollinators to perch on so they can drink without drowning. She suggested that if we have a pond with no fish, we can use vertical plants rising out of the water for aquatic dragonfly larvae to climb up to become hunting adult dragonflies.

Acknowledging that not everyone has the space, budget or desire for a full water feature, Rebecca suggested that bubbling features are still useful to wildlife and have the soothing sound of running water, but without any potential drowning hazard. Even a birdbath will help to attract wildlife and be useful for both birds and insects. Insects, especially pollinators and butterflies, will appreciate something as simple as a wide, shallow pan of water filled with marbles or stones, or with a ramp of some kind, on which they can sit while they sip.

### **Kanata-March H.S.**

Kanata-March created educational postcards with images and information about pollinators. The postcards were distributed along with packages of Vesey's bee feed mix wildflower seeds at the plant sale on May 20, 2017.

### **Madawaska Valley H.S.**

The Madawaska Valley Horticultural Society has committed to including bee-friendly plants in their existing and future plantings within the community. The Executive will have signs made up identifying "pollinator and bee-friendly plants" and include these signs in the plantings within their adopt-a-bed program.

### **Manotick H.S.**

Manotick Horticultural Society volunteers staffed a booth at several public events in the village of Manotick (Dickinson Days, Manotick Farmers' Market several times) and also at the North Gower Farmers' Market. The purpose of these events was to raise public awareness of our society and also to raise environmental awareness of the beneficial "solitary pollen bees" and sell solitary pollen bee nesting boxes-a benefit to the ecology. We intend to continue this activity through 2017.

**Nepean H.S.**

We had a special speaker, Dr. Jeff Skevington, who specializes in pollinator flies and sent a special invitation to other societies and waived our guest fee. He is a professor at Carleton and works for Agriculture Canada -- a very knowledgeable and entertaining speaker. We also planted annuals in front of the Nepean Museum where we also take care of two perennial beds. It was a nice boost to have the \$100 from district.

**Ottawa H.S.**

The Ottawa Horticultural Society hosted a talk on pollinators and specifically honey bees. The speakers were Marianne and Matt Gee of Gee's Bees of Dunrobin. The Society purchased several solitary pollen bee nests from Lee Valley and gave them out as door prizes.

**Ottawa Valley Rock Garden & H.S.**

The Ottawa Valley Rock Garden & Horticultural Society will use \$50 of the money to go towards the speaker fee for a speaker that we have coming in the fall talking about native plants. We are going to ask her to also include information about pollinator plants. The rest of the money will be spent to buy some pollinator plants and we will have a draw for the members to win a plant for their gardens. I will introduce the plant draw by talking about the pollinator project.

**Pakenham H.S.**

The Pakenham P.S. and Pakenham Horticultural Society continue to work on a joint Monarch Butterfly/Pollinator Garden in partnership with the Mississippi Valley Field Naturalist (MVFN). Since 2014 we have improved the soil in an existing garden at the school and added many pollinator plants provided by the MVFN. In addition, the school has received a "release kit" which provided the potential for six Monarchs to be hatched and released in the Fall of 2016. This program will be continued in 2017 with additional plants, more caterpillars and accessories.

**Pembroke H.S.**

Pembroke will have a presentation from Tanglewood Honey's Jim Anderson: The importance of pollinators at our meeting in September. The goal of our society is the 4P slogan. "Plant to promote and protect pollinators".

**Perth H.S.**

Perth Horticultural Society to Revitalize the Wendy Laut Memorial Ribbon of Life Garden. Pollinators have been at risk for a few years now and to help celebrate Canada's 150th Anniversary, Perth and District Horticultural Society (PDHS) volunteers, at the request of the Government of Ontario, the Ontario Horticultural Association and the Town of Perth will be taking on the cleaning up and planting of flowering perennials in the Wendy Laut Memorial Ribbon of Life Garden in Last Duel Park.

**Petawawa H.S.**

The Petawawa Horticultural Society, with help from a Grade 4 Class, planted 210 cranberry bushes at the fish hatchery park.

**Stittsville H.S.**

There's exciting gardening news in the Stittsville community this year. We are getting a new community garden. The Kasis family of Jo-Jo's pizza has offered up their vacant property behind their restaurant. The lot measures close to an acre and with its massive size, the new garden development has been divided into four phases. One phase will be completed per year over the next four years. This garden will

be a potager style design and will incorporate flower beds alongside the vegetable garden plots of the community members. The goal of the garden is to promote healthy organic eating and provide educational, social and environmental benefits to all participants, but most importantly the main focus will be to have children's participation.

The garden is planning on hosting numerous children's activities. First, there will be a special sunflower garden where kids can plant their own sunflower. At the end of the season the child who grows the biggest sunflower will win a prize. Next, we will have another contest to have kids sift out rocks from the garden beds and the child who collects the most rocks will win a prize.

Following these activities, we plan to build a pollinator garden and insect hotel. The third week in June is International Pollinator Week. It would be fitting to build the insect hotel during this time. The pollinator garden project will be used to teach kids how we as a community group can assist with protecting insect populations. Not only will it be useful for kids to learn but it will also educate all community members about pollinating gardens and their benefits. As most people are aware, there has been a big reduction in our bee and pollinating insect populations because of how pesticides are used in modern farming practices. By doing this project, our community will get a hands on learning experience of how important a role these insects have in nature.

We think that having a pollinator garden is such a good idea, we want to go the extra step. Volunteers of the garden have been discussing unique ways to raise funds. We intend to ask the Scouts to organize a special day with the garden volunteers to get together to build basic bug hotels. We will sell them and use the funds to cover garden operating expenses. Having insect hotels become more popular will raise awareness to community members who may want to host an insect hotel at their home to do their part in assisting nature.

### **Smiths Falls**

We have 3 gardens that we look after. We have remodelled them and added many pollinator friendly plants to each bed. We have bought and promoted pollinator bee houses and have had speakers presentations on bees and beekeeping, neonic bans, etc.

### **West Carleton Garden Club & H.S.**

As a means of fulfilling our mandate as a horticultural society to contribute to our community and to educate and foster the enjoyment of gardening The West Carleton Garden Club and Horticultural Society established the Reading Garden at the Carp Branch of the Ottawa Public Library and maintains it to this day.

As a club initiative for a Canada 150 Project, the executive decided to work towards augmenting the garden by adding a pathway from the front of the library around to the back and to install a culvert with path above it over the wet area into the Reading Garden. This would further encourage people to enter the garden and would facilitate access for any people with mobility issues as well as omit the unfortunate previous situation of having at times to wade through puddles and/or mud in the low area behind the library.

A committee (Donna Caldwell, Denise Burnham and Donna Christie) was struck. A fund raising garden tour was held in June, 2016. Grants were obtained from the Library's Deifenbooker Run funds and from a City of Ottawa grant. Our councillor, Ely El-Chantiry and City and Library staff were helpful and supportive. Quotes were obtained and a contractor was selected in time for construction to be done in May, 2017. Trellises were erected along the posts that line the pathway and vines were planted. Please check out this new enhancement to our Reading Garden, to our Library and to our community.

The Ontario Horticultural Association chose, as it's Canada 150 initiative, to encourage the population of native pollinators in Ontario. All societies in Ontario were encouraged to do

something towards improving the current decline of pollinators. Our club decided to help both educate people about native pollinators and to encourage their population. We hosted a speaker on the topic "The Power of Pollinators" by Dr. James Coupland of FarmForest Research at our Sept. 2016 general meeting. We published a list of Facts and Tips about pollinators in our Yearbook. Our Vice-President, Kathleen Teahen, arranged to get pollinator nests which we sold at our monthly meetings and at the local Field Naturalists meeting. We also bought three large wooden attractive pollinator houses to be placed in the community at the Reading Garden, The Memorial Hall Garden and the Community Gardens at the Anglican Church. An explanatory sign and an article submitted to the local paper should serve to help educate the general public that these nests or houses, placed 3 - 5 feet above ground preferably facing south east will attract non-stinging native pollinator bees. We are proud to be involved in this worthwhile endeavour.