



# The Ladyslipper

Perth & District Horticultural Society

[www.perthhortsociety.com](http://www.perthhortsociety.com)



Est. 1984

May 2025

## President's Pen

We do not seem to ease into Spring. It seems one day it is cold and nasty, the next day it is warm and sunny.

Please mark your calendars for our spring plant sale. It will take place on Saturday, May 17 from 8:00 am to Noon at the Perth Farmer's Market, Crystal Palace. Many volunteers have been busy digging up gardens and potting up plants. If you have plants to donate, please bring them to Robin's place at 16 George Avenue by Friday. Please name the plants and, if possible, the colour of the flower and what time they bloom. We need a few volunteers to help with the tagging and pricing of the plants on Friday evening. We will also need some help at the plant sale at Crystal Palace on Saturday morning.

The District 2 AM was held on Saturday, May 3 in Pakenham. We had seven members attend the event. The morning speaker spoke to us on volunteerism. Did you know that volunteering offers five key benefits? Improved mental and physical health, development of new skills, increased self-confidence, a sense of purpose, and opportunities to connect with others. Thank you to each and every one of our members who volunteer their time to make our society what it is today.

The afternoon speaker was Alberto Suarez Esteban, who delivered an informative presentation on "Modern Sustainable Gardening Practices." We are hoping to have him as a speaker at one of our meetings next year.

Our June meeting will consist of our sweet and savoury social (please bring a dish to share), and a standard flower show (see the schedule on page 2). Dale Odorozzi will talk to us on bugs (good and bad) then we will have our social break and resume with the Q&A session with the Master Gardeners.

Happy Gardening

Linda

## Where to Purchase Plants

### *Especially native plants.*

That is a question that many members are asking?

Some of our local garden centres are selling some native plants, such as Gemmell's Garden Centre, Reid Gardens, Kiwi Gardens and Stoneridge Gardens & Nursery to name a few.

Then there are the nurseries that specialize in native plants. The ones listed below are to get you started on your journey looking for native plants.

#### **Naturaide**

11343A Van Camp Rd, Winchester, ON  
<https://www.naturaide.ca/>

#### **Echo Native Plants**

1883 Old Perth Rd, Almonte, ON  
<https://www.echonativeplants.ca/>

#### **Dropseed Native Plant Nursery**

1099 Old Milford Rd, Picton, ON  
<https://www.dropseed.ca/>

#### **Natural Themes Native Plant Nursery**

219 Maybee Road, Frankford, Ontario  
<https://www.naturalthemes.com/>

#### **Hidden Habit Ecological Landscapes**

2017 Southwood Road, Kilworthy, ON  
<https://www.hiddenhabitat.ca/>

#### **Diggin it Nursery**

<https://digginitnursery.com/>

#### **Thousand Islands Watershed Land Trust**

Glen Elbe Learning Centre  
870 County Road 42, Athens, Ontario  
Plant Sale - weekends in May - check website  
<https://tiwlt.ca/event/native-tree-plant-sale/>

As you discover other native plant nurseries, please let me know so we can make a more comprehensive list to share with the membership.

Happy Plant Shopping!

# PDHS June Flower Show

Here is the Schedule and Rules for the June Flower Show for 2025. We encourage everyone to participate.

## Section I: Horticultural Specimen

Class 1: Allium – 1 stem

Class 2: Bearded Iris – 1 spike

Class 3: Delphinium – 1 stem

Class 4: Hosta, small-leaved up to 10cm (4") leaf base to tip, same cultivar – 3 leaves

Class 5: Hosta, large-leaved over 10cm (4") leaf base to tip, same cultivar – 3 leaves

Class 6: Peony (any kind) – 1 stem

Class 7: Rose (any kind) – 1 stem or spray

Class 8: Siberian Iris – 1 spike

Class 9: Any other perennial – named – 3 stems

Class 10: Any annual named – 3 stems

Class 11: Collection of Herbs – minimum 3 – named

Class 12: Collection of Hosta, any size, one leaf each of 5 different cultivars, in one container

Class 13: Collection of Peonies – at least 3 stems

Class 14: Rhubarb -3 stalks – displayed on a plate

## Section II: Design

Class 15A: "Time for Tea" – a small design in a teacup

Class 15B: "Time for Tea" – a small design in a teacup (Novice Class)

Class 16: "Nature's Beauty" – a design using decorative wood and garden flowers

Class 17: "Reach for the Sun" – a vertical line design

Class 18: "First Day of Summer" - a bouquet in a vase

Class 19: "Sunset" – a design

## SHOW RULES

- ▶ Exhibitors must be members of the Perth & District Horticultural Society.
- ▶ Entries are to be placed prior to 7:00 p.m. when judging takes place.
- ▶ Once placed, entries may only be moved by the Show Steward.
- ▶ Only one entry per exhibitor for each Design Class.
- ▶ Maximum of two entries per exhibitor for each Horticultural Class providing specimens are of different cultivars.
- ▶ All entries in Horticultural classes must have been grown or have been in the possession of the exhibitor for three months.
- ▶ Entry tag must be completed and remain with the entry.
- ▶ The decision of the judge is final.
- ▶ No exhibit will receive a prize, even though it is the only one in the class, unless judged to have sufficient merit.
- ▶ No exhibit may be moved before the specified closing time.
- ▶ All shows will take place during regular meetings.

For definitions and tips, please visit <https://www.perthhortsociety.com/show.htm>. Please refer to the Ontario Judging & Exhibiting Standards – Second Edition, OJES 2019 for more definitions and information.

# Gardening with Birds in Mind

Timothy Deslippe, Lanark County Master Gardeners

Gardening and birding are activities that overlap for many people. Gardeners often value ecosystems and nature from a holistic perspective. We have increased awareness of the steady decline of birds and through careful and informed planning it is possible to design gardens and landscapes that support bird growth and survival.

Garden design is one of the first things to consider. Designing with biodiversity in mind helps the gardener to understand the varied needs and requirements that it takes to support large numbers of bird species. Creating spaces that have a combination of openness, planted areas and defined ecosystems will successfully attract and support bird populations.

Birds are part of every ecosystem in nature. For those interested in attracting and integrating more birds into their gardens the key areas to focus on are food, water and shelter. This article will give a general overview of these areas of interest with suggestions of how to make your garden both bird-friendly and balanced as an ecosystem. The integrated relationship of plants and specific bird species will be highlighted.

## Food Sources

When choosing the types of plants that will produce food for your feathered visitors it is important to understand the requirements of both permanent residents as well as those that are migratory. It is possible to know what will provide a source of food for birds in every season. In the spring even before plants start growing the insects are first to awake. It is important to consider leaving areas undisturbed so that eggs and larvae can hatch to provide a rich source of nutrition for resident and newly arrived bird species. Brush piles and fallen logs are great places to encourage insects, slugs and snails to hide and reproduce.

Diversity is important as there are different categories of birds based on their foraging habits. Aerial insectivores require open spaces in order to catch insects while in flight e.g. swallows, Eastern Phoebe. Bark insectivores need older established trees to be able to find insects on or behind the bark e.g. Woodpeckers, Northern Flickers, Nuthatches. There are categories for every level of the garden from the ground to the upper canopy. It helps to choose plants that support as many categories as possible to increase the diversity and number of birds.

Since insects play an essential part of the life cycle for birds, a gardener can consider planting host plants that will attract insects to the garden like Sweet Cicely (*Myrrhis odorata*), Dill (*Anethum graveolens*) and Parsley (*Petroselinum crispum*). The importance of insects cannot be underestimated as birds do not feed their offspring seeds. Ninety-six percent of birds feed their young soft bodied insects like spiders, caterpillars, flies, bees and midges that have co-evolved with our native plants. (April 5, 2025, Credit Valley Conservation) Did you know that it takes 6 to 9 thousand caterpillars to feed a chickadee family? Make spaces for native plants and host plants for insect populations.



The following is a list of plants and the associated birds that they support.

- ▶ Columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis*), Bleeding hearts (*Lamprocapnos spectabilis*) for hummingbirds in spring. Bergamot (*Monarda fistulosa*), Fireweed (*Epilobium angustifolium*), Honeysuckle to provide nectar during summer and early fall.
- ▶ Serviceberry (*Amelanchier sanguinea*), Highbush Cranberry (*Viburnum opulus* spp. *Trilobum*), Nannyberry (*Viburnum lentago*), Elderberry (*Sambucus canadensis*) for Red-eyed Vireo, Robins, Eastern Phoebe, Cedar Waxwings.

- ▶ Eastern White Cedar (*Thuja occidentalis*), Jack Pine, (*Pinus banksiana*), Eastern Hemlock, for Red-breasted Grosbeaks and Pine Grosbeaks.
- ▶ Gray-headed Coneflower (*Ratibida pinnata*), Sunflowers (*Helianthus* spp.) support many songbirds.
- ▶ Leaving leaf mulch on garden beds, logs and branches for foraging birds on the ground. Robins, Juncos, Mourning Doves, Northern Flicker greatly appreciate the opportunity to look for insects, larvae and insect eggs in this environment.

## Water

Water is an essential element to organic life. Adding a water element to a garden will attract birds looking for opportunities to both drink and bathe. Birdbaths, bubbling rocks, ponds and other water features attract birds as well as providing visually interesting elements to the garden. Diversity continues to be a theme when deciding what types of birds you would like to attract. Shallow, moving water is appealing to small birds like Finches, Warblers, Wrens and numerous others while deeper water can attract Herons, Ducks, Grebes and if you're lucky, even Swans. While there are many recommendations to consider a heated birdbath during the winter there are others who do not consider this wise. Birds may be tempted to bathe and then not have the capacity to dry themselves off.

Whatever the source of the water it is important to keep it reliable, clean and free from any potential contaminants like pesticides. Once a water source is provided it will be a regular attraction to most birds.

## Shelter and Nesting



When thinking about the needs of birds it is useful to plant recognizing the needs vary extensively across species. Just as plants have different needs so do birds. Some birds prefer open spaces while others prefer the protection and safety that dense growth can provide. This is where thickets, hedges and dense growth can shield both adults and their offspring from predation by other animals.

Birds are most likely to nest in areas that have adequate protection as well as available food sources. Some birds prefer to nest in evergreens (*Pinus nigra*, *Tsuga canadensis*) like Great Horned owls, Mourning Doves and Cardinals. Others build complex nests that rest in the open branch structures of deciduous trees (*Acer platanoides*, *Belula papyrifera*) and shrubs (*Spiraea*

*x vanhouttei*, *Picea abies* 'Nidiformis'), with adequate foliage coverage. Here you will find the smaller songbirds like Finches, Warblers and Chickadees. At every level of the garden there are birds thriving often without your awareness or knowledge. You might walk by your Creeping Juniper (*Juniperus horizontalis*) or Spirea (*spirea tomentosa*) not realizing there are House Wrens, Chipping Sparrows and Warblers happily nesting there. Even your gravel path has the potential to become home to a nest of Killdeer.

Leaving parts of dead trees (snag) in the garden to provide accommodation for cavity nesting birds which might include Northern Flicker, Wood Duck, Pileated Woodpecker and Barred Owl.

## Being Mindful

Creating gardens that are bird-friendly is a mindful and contemplative activity. Providing food, water and safe, protective spaces supports biodiversity. Birds support the garden through pollination, seed dispersal and pest management. Birds are an essential part of the garden, and it is our job to do everything we can to support their growth and survival through knowledgeable and mindful practices that meet their unique and diverse needs.