



# Woodbridge Horticultural Society Newsletter



[www.woodbridgehorticultural.weebly.com](http://www.woodbridgehorticultural.weebly.com)

Issue 51, May, 2019

I am not a greedy person except about flowers and plants, and then I become fanatically greedy.

--May Sarton (1912-1996)

## **SPEAKER TONIGHT**

TBA

## **SAVE THE DATE FOR THE GARDEN TOUR June 22, 2019!**

Buy your Garden Tour tickets at the May 13 meeting; they will be ready for pick up at our June 17<sup>th</sup> meeting.

## **WINNERS OF LAST MONTH'S FLOWER SHOW**

-Cultural, Gilda Ferrone

-Design, Doreen Smith

## **VOLUNTEERS!**

Many thanks to Maria Durigon and John Mazzella for cleaning up the Wallace House garden April 13.

Thanks to Chris and Sally, John, Gail, Gilda, Maria and Liz for decorating the bridge, Wallace house and Armstrong park for Easter.

## **FYI**

Cut a round piece of chicken wire and place over spears of peonies when they first appear. The shoots will grow up through the chicken wire. As they start to leaf out, gently pull the wire up off the ground. The leaves of the plant hide all traces of the wire; the stems and flowers are supported, so they won't sag or droop, preventing the pretty faces of peonies from lying in patches of damp earth--The Literary Garden, Duncan Brine

Kill overwintering insects and diseases by applying dormant oil spray when night temperatures are above freezing and before the blossom or leaf buds have broken on deciduous trees, shrubs and roses.

Plant dahlia tubers in one-gallon pots and place in a sunny place indoors until end of May, or warm enough to move outdoors.



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Dig out unwanted dandelions if you wish, or leave them, as they are great pollinators.

Environmental Days-Mulch giveaway. Call 832-2281 or visit  
<http://www.vaughan.ca/cityhall/departments/es/Pages/Environmental-Days.aspx>

**Rain Barrel Sales** - please visit <https://rainbarrel.ca/vaughan/> to place your order. Rain barrels to be picked up only on the day of the event. Please bring a copy of your receipt and ID to pick up your pre-paid online order. Available only during the ***Public Works Open House Event, Saturday May 25\****

The District 15 AGM was held April 27 in Mississauga, hosted by the Credit Valley Horticultural Society, was attended by Maria Durigon and Mary Cicchirillo. The theme was Something Magic, featuring amazing floral designs, and an informative and entertaining talk on the Magic of Seeds and the Healing Power of Gardens.

## NEAT THINGS ABOUT OPOSSUMS

Possums' full name is Virginia opossum (*Didelphimorphia*). They are different from the Australian possum (*Phalangeridae*), a completely unrelated animal, though both are marsupials. Marsupials are animals that are born through the birth canal and then climb to a pouch covering the mother's breasts. Female possums give birth to as many as twenty jelly-bean-sized young at a time, who immediately travel to her pouch for survival.

Possums are most common in the southern American States, but they are increasingly migrating northward and now can be found in the southern regions of Ontario, and in the Fraser Valley of B.C. There have been sightings as far north as Toronto.

Possums play dead when under threat and have no control over when or how long they do so, though playing dead is an involuntary reaction triggered by stress, which puts them into a comatose-like state. Before doing so, they may hiss and snarl and show their many teeth. North American Possoms have more teeth than most other mammals, up to fifty. They would much sooner play dead than fight, but they will bite if they feel threatened. As marsupials, they have a lower body temperature than other mammals, which means they do not get rabies.

Possoms may contribute to slowing the spread of Lyme disease because they eat ticks. A single possum can eat as many as 5,000 ticks per season. It's easy to discourage them from taking over your garden simply by cleaning the location. Sprinkle mothballs through the premises, cut down long branches of trees, destroy shelters, use ammonia as a deterrent and install sprinklers. Far from being a nuisance, opossums can be beneficial for your garden by eating snails, slugs, insects and small rodents. They'll even clean up spilled garbage and fruit that has fallen off trees. Sprinkle blood meal around vulnerable plants that you do not them to sample.

## SUBMISSIONS

If you have anything you'd like added to the newsletter, please call or email Mary no later than one week before the next meeting.