

PETERBOROUGH HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

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March 24 Double Bill: Stephanie Hendren, Peterborough Microgreens and Desiree Bandi, 1.5 Degrees Composting



Stephanie Hendren is the creator of [Peterborough Microgreens](#). In March of 2020 she decided to try to pursue her dream of opening her own business. Her goal was to create a business that would be good for her customers, good for the community, and good for the planet. Eventually she came up with the idea for Peterborough Microgreens. She had grown microgreens on her kitchen windowsill for years, so she decided to turn her hobby into a real business. Her professional background consists primarily of administration work and graphic/web design, so she recruited her husband Dan (a hydroponic specialist) to help develop proper growing procedures, as well as her sister Jessica (a

professional chef) to help develop original recipes. Now, for the first time in her professional life, she finally feels like she is doing something she is really proud of, and truly loves. ♥

Desiree Bandi is the owner & operator of [1.5 Degrees Composting Solutions](#), a one-year-old Community-Supported Compost Program that provides a weekly compost pick-up service for residents & businesses in Peterborough & surrounding areas who are looking to divert their food waste & compost in a hassle-free way.

She is a passionate advocate for protecting the quality of the natural environment through waste reduction & diversion, healing soils, and advocacy for regenerative agriculture. She believes that composting is an important step that everyone can take to make sustainable changes and create a greener life in an impactful and meaningful way. Composting is tied to issues of food security, the economy, agriculture, & reconnecting with the land and our roots. It reduces waste in our landfill, replenishes soil, and offers a hands-on way for people to take environmental action.



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President's Message

This is an exciting time of year for gardeners. Spring is just around the corner, and the garden-related articles in newspapers & social media and gardening radio & tv shows are getting to be more prevalent. It's definitely my favourite season and a nice alternative to COVID-19 in the media. In my garden, I always marvel at the little shoots popping up at just the right time (usually) and the fact that everything remembers from the previous year exactly what it's supposed to look like. Mine are all still covered in snow which is a good thing because it protects them from the temperature variations that often come at this time of year. By the end of the month, though, I will change my tune and will be actively wishing the snow away.

A welcome to all our new members. As we have a large membership of over 200, it is often hard to meet people. This is particularly true during a global pandemic, as we all know. If you want a bit of additional time to chat with fellow members, please join our general meeting up to 30 minutes earlier than the stated time, or plan to stick around a bit longer after the end of the formal meeting. Often there is some lively banter that you can participate in. Bring your questions and plans.

We hope that you enjoy this newsletter. As you know, we've transitioned away from an 'event-focused' monthly publication to one that is information-based, and many of you have appreciated the change and have had positive comments. I'm always amazed at the contributions that our board members come up with; definitely a great spectrum of entries that are welcoming, helpful and informative. Well done, PHS Board.

We have a great spring and summer of gardening to look forward to in spite of the pandemic, and I can't wait!

❖ **MJ Pilgrim**

For English Country Garden Lovers



And who isn't, really??! Here is a link to an amazing video about English Country Gardens for all to enjoy:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EUyxCP5Rvco>

❖ **Monica White**

Also, a link from "Garden Making" magazine with information on upcoming sessions and events, many of which are virtual and free:

https://gardenmaking.com/events/categories/ontario/?utm_source=mailpoet&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Newsletter+Mar+5+2021



Update on Zoom: We're now virtual, as you should already know. If you have tried Zoom, but are having difficulty, several of our board members are willing to assist one-on-one. Let us know! We'd love to have more participants. See our troubleshooting guide at the end of this newsletter for help.

Zoom works on ipads, laptops, chromebooks, cellphones and desktop computers. Go to zoom.us/download, choose 'Download Client' and then zoom.us/test to be ready for our March 24 meeting.

Winter Birds

I have 2 bird feeders filled with mixed seed in my yard. These attract mostly sparrows and 90% of these are the pretty tree sparrows.

These birds come from my neighbor's yard. He has two weeping trees whose branches provide a tight, cozy maze for the birds to hide and nest in. The birds arrive at the feeders every morning and evening for meals. These birds have strict rules about feeding. If one lands on the feeder while another is eating, it will be chased away. They either have to wait patiently in the tree or eat the dropped seeds on the ground. Seems they don't like to share.

I realized when the snow melted beneath the feeder that there were a lot of dropped seeds. Not wanting anything weird to pop up later in my lawn, I decided to rake it all up. I almost filled a small grocery bag with soggy seeds! The other feeder still has a mound of snow beneath it covered with scattered seeds, so I will have to wait for further melting to get at those. Where is my chipmunk clean-up crew when I need them?

❖ **Shaun Pyper**



Beginner "VEG-EAT-ABLE" Gardens



With COVID 19 entering a second season of growing, many are attempting a veggie garden. Start small, approximately 10 ft. X 10 ft. Start with the basics before investing tons of time and money with your new hobby. You will find out if you like spending time outside planting, watering, and weeding. Select about 5 vegetables you and your family enjoy, and if you have extras, share!! Some of the most popular vegetables are Sugar Snap Peas, Beans, Carrots, Beets, Kale, Tomatoes, Cucumber, Zucchini, Spinach,

Arugula and Lettuce. Containers can also be used for some of your veggies and when space is limited, you can grow vining plants vertically to save space. Enjoy "the veggies of your labour!!"

❖ **Annie English**

Indoor Veggies all year round with the Aerogarden

I wanted to share a few tidbits about a newer piece of technology that allows easy carefree growing of indoor herbs and vegetables all year round. It's called an Aerogarden and although the hydroponics concept is not really that new, these newer devices consisting of a grow light, water bed and nutrient pods are now pretty turn key, allowing for easy indoor growing of things like lettuce, cherry tomatoes and herbs with minimal muss and fuss all year round.

There are a variety of devices and sizes available on the market and prices range from around \$150 upwards, but I'm told that if you keep an eye out and watch the sales at your local hardware store you can sometimes pick them up for as low as \$100. Admittedly, it's a



bit of a price to pay for fresh lettuce but it's a real treat to be able to grow your own produce in the dead of winter. By staggering your crops and starting different seeds a few weeks apart, you can ensure a constant supply of fresh veggies are always ready for the table.

I'm also told that they are amazing for starting seeds for the garden so it may be worth the price for the avid gardener. This bit of gadgetry was new to me so thought I'd share...

❖ **Mary Rose Daigle**



Monarch Migration

This is not seasonal but is a follow-up to Carlotta James amazing presentation on the Monarch Ultra from our February meeting. There is an interesting local opportunity in late August - early September when the Monarchs start their migration - one that doesn't involve running or travelling ... great distances! A fascinating day trip in the midst of migration is to Cobourg. The Monarchs collect in the long grasses and goldenrod along the shores of Lake Ontario in their hundreds and thousands waiting for the favourable winds that will take them south across the lake. In the wild patches along the shore, hundreds of Monarchs cling feeding on the goldenrod growing there.



Adjacent to Victoria Park on the waterfront in Cobourg are gardens planted with butterfly bushes, echinacea and other nectar-rich flowers with masses of Monarchs, Swallowtails and other butterflies flitting amongst them.

Cobourg's Ecology Garden is another rich viewing area. Google for directions. There are paths amongst organic gardens planted with native plants, bushes and trees to provide food, water and shelter for birds and butterflies. This park is an official Monarch way station. Beside the park is a boardwalk along the lake and then fields of wild plantings to help prevent erosion. The profusion of goldenrod amongst the tall grasses is alive with fluttering Monarchs. A beautiful sight on a sunny day of yellow goldenrod and orange and black Monarchs against the blue of Lake Ontario.

❖ **Pat de Villiers**

Transcendental Nature of Gardens and Jigsaw Puzzles

I have been missing the quiet, meditative, state of mind while working in my gardens. I love just digging, trimming and cleaning up my garden beds without thinking too hard about what I am doing. At the same time though, I can let my mind wonder about the possibilities of what more I might be able to fit within the borders of my existing beds.

Having to stay indoors so much lately within the walls of home and work I needed to find something to do that didn't require too much work and concentration. Something that I could do quietly and let my mind wander a bit, like in my garden. The answer arrived this Christmas in the form of a jigsaw puzzle from my neighbour! It was a puzzle of bikes, which made me think about all the trails I had done last summer while I pieced the bikes together.



It has proven to be a great way to clear my head of 'daily to do lists' and just work quietly and learn how to be patient while I look for pieces to fit within the borders. I am working on a Garden theme one now as my meditative musings are turning back to my own garden outside, waiting patiently for the warmth of spring and long sunny days ahead.

❖ **Laura Jack**

The Traditional Flower of Easter

Originally, the Easter Lily (Latin name: *Lilium longiflorum*), was native to the Ryukyu Islands of southern Japan. They were brought to England in 1777 and later Bermuda, where they were "mass" produced and earned their first nickname, the Bermuda Lily. After a virus wiped them from Bermuda, Japan was once again the only source of Easter lilies. However, the Easter Lily industry is an American success story. Prior to 1941, the majority of the Easter Lily bulbs were exported to the United States from Japan.

If grown indoors as a houseplant, it's difficult to get an Easter lily to re-bloom. They can be replanted outside after the blooms are faded and all of the plant's flowers have been removed. As soon as the ground can be worked, select a sunny site with well-drained soil. Set the top of the bulb six inches below the soil surface and wait patiently (ha ha!) until the next Spring! They readily re-bloom each year.



Note: Beauty can be deadly! If you see your cat licking or eating any part of an Easter lily, call your veterinarian or Pet Poison Helpline immediately. Thankfully, dogs and humans only experience mild gastrointestinal issues if a large amount is ingested. Happy Easter everyone!

❖ **Donna-Marie Fennell**

Seeds: Have They Reached the End of their Useful Life?

If you have a few seed packets left from last spring, do you chance it or order more? Most gardeners will take the opportunity to buy more, often investing in unique cultivars they

haven't tried before. But what about the seed packets you already have? It wastes time and energy to wait for something to grow that doesn't.

When properly stored in a cool, dry place, the shelf life of the seeds can extend to years. But, there is no guarantee that they will still be productive for next season's planting. There are two easy tests you can take to check to see if there is life left in your seeds.

Water test: Take your seeds and put them in a container of water. Let them sit for about 15 minutes. If the seeds sink, they are still viable; if they float, they most likely will not sprout. This method however, even though it's simple and quick, may not be the best way to check your seeds. For surer results, try performing a germination test.

Germination test: Take a few of your seeds, like 5-10 depending on size and how many you actually have, then place them in a row on top of a damp paper towel. Fold over the paper towel and place in a zip-up plastic bag and seal it; this helps to keep the towel moist and protected.

Then put it in a warm location and check the seeds often—around once a day—to see if they have begun to germinate and/or to check the moisture of the paper towel. Make sure the location you have chosen is away from exposure to direct sunlight which can overheat your seeds.

A good rule of thumb is to wait roughly 10 days; however, if you want to give your seeds the best chance, research the germination time of your specific seeds. Once the allotted time has passed, check to see how many have germinated. If less than half of the seeds sprouted, your old packet may not be worth sowing. If more than half sprouted, then your seeds are good to go!

❖ MJ Pilgrim, President

Luck o' the Irish!

Has there ever been a plant immediately associated with a culture or event such as the Shamrock Plant? Nothing comes to mind faster when looking over these three leafed plants as St Patrick's Day, March 17th, green beer and the wearing of the green. However, I may be a bit biased. 😊 The shamrock is an outdoor plant, but the hardy species *Oxalis regnellii* is available locally, can be grown indoors, and is showy, long lived and, my favourite part – unfussy! This plant is thought to bring good luck. Legend says that St Patrick used the three leafed plant to explain the holy trinity (when he wasn't busy chasing all the snakes out of the Holy Land). The three leaves also stand for faith, hope and love. If you're lucky enough to find a 4 leaf clover – well that is luck itself! Ironically, the Druids, in the early days of Ireland, believed that





carrying a three-leaf clover gave them the powers to see evil spirits coming, giving them a chance to escape. Children believed that carrying a 4-leaf clover gave them the ability to see fairies. However you spend the 17th, my wish for you is this: May your day be touched by a bit of Irish luck, brightened by a song in your heart and warmed by the smiles of the people you love.

Slainte!

❖ Donna O'Brien

Japanese Gardens



Some of the most beautiful, tranquil, peaceful gardens are located in Japan. If anyone is looking for an early glimpse into Spring, go to YouTube and search for "Monty Don's Japanese Gardens". At this time of year, you will especially enjoy the Spring videos!

❖ Ed and Carol

To Bee or not to Bee?



What more does an avid gardener need than a plot of land, some good soil, a healthy compost heap, a handful of seeds, some water and sunshine? Why, pollinators of course! I was thinking about becoming a beekeeper, but I've learned that there is more to it than setting up some hives and walking away while nature takes over.

Beekeeping is regulated under the *Bees Act*. The main purpose of the Act is to protect the health of honeybees in Ontario. Bee colonies can be subject to a host of viruses, bacteria, fungi and parasitic mites requiring constant vigilance and treatment plans. Spring and fall require a heavy time commitment from beekeepers as this is when monitoring, prevention and treatment plans are in full swing.

Beekeeping, as it turns out, is not a simple add-on task to a gardener's already full plate, but a fulltime hobby of its own. While it is no doubt personally rewarding for those with a passion for beekeeping, going into it with eyes wide open and a solid understanding of the commitment is key.

For those interested in learning more, there are plenty of online resources. Particularly helpful is the Ontario Beekeeping Association (ontariobee.com), where you'll also find a link to the Essential Practices for Beekeepers in Ontario and many other helpful links.

❖ **Sandra Caswell**

DON'T PRUNE ROSES (without reading this first)!

It doesn't matter if they are Teas, Floribundas or shrub roses - prune your roses for HOW they grow: like a BUSH, with a STRUCTURE or as a CLIMBER. If you remember this, it doesn't matter what kind of rose, you can successfully prune your roses. So sharpen your pruners, wait for the Forsythia to bloom and watch for my article on my site

www.lush-gardens.com (see Roses).

In the meantime, if you would like a copy of my article, please send me a note at cauleensgardens@gmail.com.

❖ **Cauleen Viscoff**



The New Canadians Centre is looking for seeds!

Members, we were approached by **Helene** of the New Canadians Centre this week. She'd like to be able to help people to plant their first vegetables in their new homes in our amazing community. In particular, they are looking for veggie seeds, flower seeds and herb seeds. If you have any to spare, would you consider connecting with them and dropping them off?

They are located at 221 Romaine Street, between George and Alymer. Thank you!



Zoom Troubleshooting Guide:

Problem: Webcam or audio not working

Nothing is more frustrating than having your webcam or audio not work on a Zoom call! If it's not working, here are a few basic tips to try first.

Solution 1: Check Zoom settings

On the pop-up that prompts for a meeting ID just before joining a call, leave the following settings unchecked:

- Do Not Connect to Audio
- Turn Off My Video

This allows you to join a call with your audio and video automatically enabled.

Solution 2: Exit other related apps

If your webcam isn't showing up, make sure all other programs that use the webcam are closed and signed out. Zoom may not be able to use the camera if it's currently accessed by a different application.

Solution 3: Test the audio and video before the meeting

If your webcam or audio still isn't working, you can test your audio and video in Zoom by clicking this [link \(zoom.us/test\)](https://zoom.us/test). Once open, you can join a test call on the Zoom app and follow the instructions on the screen.



Solution 4: Contact Us!

Let us know that you'd like to connect with us on Zoom, but you're having trouble. One of our intrepid board members will contact you via the phone and walk you through the steps to diagnose the problem. If you're comfortable with a housecall, that's also possible -- just let us know.

Email peterborough@gardenontario.org or call MJ at 705 927 6993.

Note: Some laptops also have a physical webcam switch that must be enabled to allow the webcam to function properly. Double-check that yours is in the right position if you have one.

❖ **Elane Kalavrias**

