



# The LEAFlet

## Summer 2009

### LEAFy Update

#### **Fifth Annual Leslieville Tree Festival A Success** *Festival Celebrated Leslieville's Eco-friendly Past and Present*

The Fifth Annual Leslieville Tree Festival was a great success, despite being rescheduled to the following day due to heavy rain and threatening thunder showers! The sun



Local community members help LEAF Executive Director Janet McKay and Councillor Paula Fletcher plant Leslie Grove Park's newest basswood tree.

shone for the rain date, and we welcomed about 400 Leslievillers and passers-by. This year we celebrated the 125th anniversary of Leslieville joining the City of York, paying tribute to the community's historical legacy of providing many of Toronto's street trees, which came from George Leslie's famed nurseries, once situated where Leslie Grove Park is today. This tree-friendly past was commemorated with a historical walk, a plaque unveiling and a tree planting dedicated to George Leslie.



Councillor Paula Fletcher and MP Jack Layton, Leader of Canada's New Democrats, add their mark to LEAF's "Tree of Hands"

Attendees were also entertained by tree dancers, stilt-walkers and musicians. A wide array of environ-

mental groups and eco-vendors lined the sidewalks - for a full list visit [www.leafontario.org/leslieville-vendors](http://www.leafontario.org/leslieville-vendors). The kids' activities were a great hit, with MP Jack Layton, Leader of Canada's New Democrats, and Councillor Paula Fletcher lending a hand (literally!) to build our "Tree of Hands", which now is proudly displayed in the LEAF office. Thanks to our event supporters, Toronto Hydro Corporation and [www.ecocentricguide.ca](http://www.ecocentricguide.ca), our event partners, Councillor Paula Fletcher and Toronto Parks, Forestry and Recreation, and our 11 wonderful volunteers who helped out at the event!

#### **Backyard Tree Planting Program gets a Boost** *Pilot Project Brings Shade to Residential Communities*

LEAF is pleased to announce a new partnership with the Ontario Power Authority (OPA) that focuses on reducing residential electricity demand for air conditioners. The pilot project, called "Cool Communities: Residential Shade Tree Planting Program" is funded through OPA's Conservation Fund. It will test LEAF's existing Backyard Tree Planting model against two alternative models and will help determine the most cost-effective way of getting the right trees planted in the right places. It will also compare various approaches to ensuring homeowners provide proper care for their trees. The pilot will be launched in York Region and will build upon existing partnerships with the Region of York, the Town of Markham and Ontario Power Generation. There will also be a pilot launched in the Cambridge-Kitchener-Waterloo-Guelph area which will focus on partnerships with retail stores.



LEAF Arborist Sarah Lamon waters a newly planted tree this spring.  
Photo by Kanchan Maharaj, inhereye.ca

(continued on next page)

# LEAFy Update (continued)

In Ontario, energy demand tends to peak on summer afternoons when air conditioners are working hard to keep us cool. This will increase over time with rising summer temperatures. If peak energy demands exceed production capacity, this can result in blackouts or brownouts. Cooling homes through shading has significant long-term potential to reduce peak demand. Shade trees planted on the southern and western sides of a home can save 25–40% and reduce peak energy demand in summer by up to 30%, according to a study by the University of California Berkeley.

*You can help LEAF get this program off the ground by telling friends and family living in York Region to contact LEAF and book a consultation with a LEAF arborist today. We are also doing consultations throughout Toronto all summer, leading to planting in the fall. Plant a tree, and spread the word!*

## Toronto Tree Tours Bring out the Masses

The Toronto Tree Tours are in full swing and popular as ever! With a focus on telling community's tree-related stories, the tours are universally appealing, welcoming an average of 70 attendees per tour this year. The next tour will be held in the Junction on Saturday July 25 from 2-4 pm, meeting at Southwest corner of Dundas St. W and Keel St. Presented in partnership with Green 13 and the Junction Residents Association, the tour will feature David Wencer of the Junction Historical Society as well as tour leader Todd Irvine, inspirational speaker and LEAF arborist. Highlights include an introduction to the rare black oak, the elegant boughs of black walnuts, and a spectacular front yard garden that is a butterfly haven certified by Monarch Watch at the University of Kansas. Visit [www.treetours.to](http://www.treetours.to) to register for this tour, sign up for Tree Tour alerts, download our self-guided tours (available in English, French, Portuguese and Spanish) or take a virtual tour!



*LEAF Arborist Todd Irvine leads a tour through Saddlecreek Park in Willowdale*

Visit [www.treetours.to](http://www.treetours.to) to register for this tour, sign up for Tree Tour alerts, download our self-guided tours (available in English, French, Portuguese and Spanish) or take a virtual tour!

## Tree Tenders Graduates Take Pride in Newly Planted Tree

Both spring sessions of the Tree Tenders Volunteer Training Program were full to capacity, bringing together a host of passionate people to learn basic arboricultural skills, the “who’s who” of the urban forest scene in Toronto, and how they as individuals can contribute to improving and protecting the



*Tree Tenders Volunteer Training graduates pose with their newly planted tree in Riverdale Park.*

urban forest. At the end of each session, a new tree was planted in Riverdale Park. Participants described this as being a proud moment and a tangible demonstration of how easy it is for communities to come together to take action for the urban forest.

There are still spaces available for the next Tree Tenders session, which will run on Tuesday evenings from September 15th to September 29th, ending with a Saturday session and tree planting on October 3rd. Please visit [www.leafontario.org/tree-tenders-volunteer-training](http://www.leafontario.org/tree-tenders-volunteer-training) for more information and to register. Please note that your place is confirmed only upon payment in full (cost is \$50 for 17 hours of instruction).



*Tree Tenders look on as one of their classmates mulches the new tree*

# Websites of the Month

By Leandra Micka, LEAF Volunteer

## Ontario Heritage Tree Program

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

The Trees Ontario Heritage Tree Program identifies and records the location of heritage trees in the province. The identification of these trees will enable Trees Ontario and community-minded organizations to locate potential native seed sources of legacy trees.

## Sharing Backyards Toronto

<http://sharingbackyards.wordpress.com>

Growing for Green in Toronto has become a local partner for Sharing Backyards, a program that helps link up apartment-dwellers with homeowners who have extra garden space to share and who would enjoy receiving a share of the harvest.

# Dendro Devotion

By Marc Willoughby

M.L. Arch, O.A.L.A., ISA certified arborist, LEAF Volunteer

## Match the Tree Genera or Species with the Important Pest Enemy

- |                     |                              |
|---------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. alder            | a) fir sawfly                |
| 2. hawthorn         | b) black walnut caterpillar  |
| 3. pine             | c) alder leaf-miner          |
| 4. oak              | d) eastern tent caterpillar  |
| 5. black locust     | e) woolly adelgid            |
| 6. hickory          | f) white pine weevil         |
| 7. balsam fir       | g) oyster shell scale        |
| 8. ash              | h) gypsy moth                |
| 9. butternut        | i) locust borer              |
| 10. eastern hemlock | j) yellow necked caterpillar |

*Answers at end of newsletter.*

# Species of the Month

## Hackberry (*Celtis Occidentalis*)

By Jeff Stock, LEAF Volunteer

The hackberry is a fast-growing shade tree suited to urban conditions. Its Canadian range is throughout southern Quebec and Ontario into Manitoba. An ideal tree for city life, it can withstand a variety of challenging conditions typically found in urban settings, such as alkaline soil, drought, air pollution, and temporary flooding.

The hackberry could easily be mistaken for the elm tree, which shares similar foliage, although the hackberry is unsusceptible to Dutch elm disease. Its hardiness is further reflected in the relative lack of disease threatening the viability of the species. The hackberry can tolerate being transplanted when young, although growth is reduced for a period of up to 2 years after relocation. Although the tree can tolerate a wide range of conditions, it prefers a rich loam soil with a neutral to slightly acidic pH.

The hackberry can reach a height of over 20m (70ft) but in an urban setting is closer to 12m (40ft) and spreads out at a width of 7.5m (25ft), growing at roughly 0.75m (2-3ft) per annum. It has a distinct, aesthetically pleasing bark, with a layer of bumps covering a smooth grey base. The branches form a broad oval rounded crown, with the leaves turning a pale yellowish green during the fall season. It bears orange-brown berries, which eventually turn purplish-black nearing the end of summer. They remain throughout the winter on barren limbs, acting as a source of food for 25 bird species as well as other wildlife. The fruit is also edible for humans, producing a sweet taste similar to dates.



*A LEAF-planted hackberry, five years after planting*

The hackberry provides habitat for butterfly and moth species such as American snout, mourning snout, question mark and tawny emperor moths, as well as brown thrasher, eastern bluebird, northern oriole and orchard oriole. It is also the primary source of nectar for the endangered Hackberry butterfly, making it a welcome species in the urban environment.

## References:

Lois Hole's Favorite Trees & Shrubs. Hole, Lois, 1997. Lone Pine Publishing  
Evergreen Native Plant Database. [www.evergreen.ca/nativeplants](http://www.evergreen.ca/nativeplants)

# Ask the Arborist

Compiled by Jeff Stock, LEAF Volunteer. Answers provided by Sarah Lamon, LEAF arborist.

## Q: I'm planning to renovate my house this summer. How can I ensure my trees aren't damaged?

**A: Hire a certified arborist early in the planning process.** Employing an arborist will help you avoid significant damage to your trees, above and below ground. An arborist can provide details about your trees which your builder may be unaware of, such as species, age, size, site conditions, sensitivity to pruning and other existing problems. Communication between your arborist and builder is key to sustaining the health of your trees, and will ensure a well-managed home project while maintaining the integrity of your surrounding trees. For a list of certified arborists in Ontario, visit [www.isaontario.com](http://www.isaontario.com).

**Think twice.** Simple changes in the design plans may be the difference between a heavily impacted and a relatively unaffected tree.

**Protect vulnerable roots.** The unseen root system below the soil is quite sensitive, especially feeder roots which are roughly the diameter of human hair. Roots need to be nurtured with air, water and nutrients so make sure they get plenty of all three. Visit [www.treesaregood.com/treecare/avoiding\\_construction.aspx](http://www.treesaregood.com/treecare/avoiding_construction.aspx) for information on root protection and other helpful tips.

**Avoid soil compaction.** If construction equipment is being used on your property, soil will be compacted. This leaves little room for oxygen to enter the soil. Without plentiful access to oxygen, root growth will be substantially reduced. Even applying additional soil over the root system can starve them of air. Ensure construction equipment does not drive underneath the tree's canopy, or piling heavy material there.

**Minimize root damage.** There may be a degree of digging or trenching involved in the construction work that will threaten to sever existing root systems. Alternatives are available to minimize damage by tunneling beneath a tree instead of through its roots. Also, providing reflective light (known as "daylighting") to expose a dig can reduce harm to roots through more precise building.

**Guard both trunk and branches.** It is important to prevent equipment being used during the construction from damaging your trees. The city of Toronto has enacted by-laws which require a temporary protection fence be placed around any tree on private property which exceeds 30cm in diameter at breast height. The fence is to be erected before the job has begun and is to remain until the work is complete. This provides a buffer zone for your trees against any significant damage. Information on Toronto's tree protection policy is available at [www.toronto.ca/trees/pdfs/TreeProtSpecs.pdf](http://www.toronto.ca/trees/pdfs/TreeProtSpecs.pdf)

## Support Toronto's Urban Forest

We need your support to continue our work. Donations of \$50 or more are recognized with a special set of five buttons featuring five native tree leaves drawn by a local artist. Send us the form below or donate on-line at [www.leafontario.org/donate](http://www.leafontario.org/donate)



601 Christie St, Suite 253  
Toronto, ON  
M6G 4C7

Tel: 416-413-9244  
[info@leafontario.org](mailto:info@leafontario.org)  
[www.leafontario.org](http://www.leafontario.org)

Yes! I would like to support LEAF with the following donation:

\$25\_\_ \$50\_\_ \$100\_\_ Other \$\_\_\_\_\_

I have made a cheque payable to "LEAF" (enclosed)

I would like to pay by VISA (please supply information below)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

VISA \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Please note that LEAF is not a registered charity and therefore cannot issue tax receipts for donations.

# Behind the Scenes of LEAF



**Amanda Gomm** is the new Volunteer Coordinator for LEAF and has over 10 years of experience in the environmental community. At the age of 18 she established her own organization called Smallworlds which highlighted conservation organizations from around the world, working locally, to preserve their wild spaces. For the past few years Amanda was based in Vancouver working as the Outreach Coordinator for an international youth leadership organization and is extremely excited to now be with LEAF. Originally an art student, Amanda enjoys creating large scale paintings and designing installations when she gets the time.



**Katherine Glowacz** joins LEAF for the summer as Program Assistant. Her interest in making our communal urban landscape healthier with small individual changes, like planting a backyard tree, attracted her to LEAF. She currently attends Ryerson University's Urban and Regional Planning program and holds a Bachelor of Arts and Science from McMaster University. In her free time Katherine can be found cycling along country roads, tasting samples at farmers markets or spending time in her kitchen baking up a storm.

## Feature Interview

**We caught up with Dan Lander, longtime LEAF volunteer and member of the LEAF Learning Garden Steering Committee, to get the lowdown on that project and how LEAF volunteers are getting involved.**



### **Why did you first get involved with LEAF?**

It is almost three years since I first began to volunteer for LEAF. I was looking to be involved with an organization that focused on

*Dan as Community Outreach Assistant at Seedy Saturday*

issues of environmental well being in an urban context. LEAF's focus on urban forestry stewardship was a perfect fit for me.

### **What roles have you played as a LEAF volunteer?**

My first involvement was to assist Todd Irvine in expanding the Tree Tours. This included getting the website going, figuring out ways in which to more fully involve members of the community and figuring out how best to support the Toronto Tree Tours through photographic documentation, historical context and other logistical considerations. I have also met many interesting people through attending various events as a Community Outreach Assistant, where I represent LEAF and provide information about LEAF's programs to the public. I have also done some photography, primarily documenting some of the Toronto Tree Tours for the website.

### **How else have you been involved with LEAF programs?**

I was fortunate to be included in the 2007 board retreat, at which we spent two days discussing ideas related to LEAF's development. I have also completed part one and two of LEAF's Tree Tenders Volunteer Training program.

### **What is the LEAF Learning Garden?**

The Learning Garden is a long, narrow strip of land at the south-west end of the Artscape Wychwood Barns' green space at 601 Christie Street, where LEAF's office is located. LEAF has been given special permission to manage this plot.

### **What is the purpose of the LEAF Learning Garden?**

The garden is intended to be, as its name would imply, a Learning Garden, or demonstration garden. We want to share with the community how to grow native plants organically, and to illustrate how various zones such as woodland, pollinators, grassland etc. may be appropriate to their own yards, front or back. Primarily, the garden is a way in which to celebrate the diversity of native plants, methods of gardening that are most beneficial to a sustainable urban environment, and to create a sanctuary. This is a special project and I am very excited about how the Garden allows LEAF to contribute to the community it resides in.



*Dan wheeling in mulch for the LEAF Learning Garden*

### **How are you involved with the LEAF Learning Garden?**

I am a member of the Steering Committee for the Learning Garden. It is a great opportunity in that it provides for stimulating discussion during planning meetings, a lot of interesting research regarding native plants, a hands on aspect involving mulching and planting, and last but not least, a chance to meet some great people who come out to volunteer whenever we have a need to get our hands dirty in the Learning Garden.

# Book Review

Review by Lorraine Johnson, author of a number of books on native plant gardening and a board member of LEAF.



I realized too late, after I'd already agreed to review Southcrop Forest by Toronto author Lorne Rothman, that I was exactly the wrong person for the job. I don't enjoy reading fables. Books in which non-human creatures speak give me the willies. But from the first

page, I was hooked. It's a delightful tale told by a first-rate storyteller. Every page sparkles. Description, dialogue, characters, setting—the whole thing works.

Southcrop Forest is the story of a quest, set in a forest becoming increasingly fragmented. (Sound familiar?) A young oak

named Auja convinces Fur (a tent caterpillar feeding on Auja's leaves) to venture to Riverside Farm, where Fur will find the secret source of tree wisdom and strength. Fur's task is to disperse this treasure far and wide so the fragmented forest can survive.

Into and around this timeless narrative scaffolding, the author has woven a story in which the line between reality and fantasy is intriguingly blurred. The idea that trees can speak seems clearly fantastical, right? Yet the networks of arboreal communication (called speech paths in this book) that science has confirmed exist ground the author's fanciful narrative device close to home. The book is full of such parallels, many of which are explicated through footnotes. At first I found the

footnotes distracting and somewhat diminishing, but after learning all kinds of interesting facts from the footnotes, I was glad they were included. For example, I hadn't known that tent caterpillars do not eat red maple leaves. Essentially a quest story, the action elements of the narrative (the many dangers that lurk as Fur goes on his journey) are perfectly complemented with moments of contemplative pause where the author's inventiveness shines through. Consider this: trees' leaves are eyes that feed on the light. Just one of the poetically perfect ideas that make Southcrop Forest such a pleasure to read.

For more information and to purchase Southcrop Forest, visit [www.southcropforest.ca](http://www.southcropforest.ca)

# Upcoming Events

## LEAF EVENTS

### LEAFy Drinks

**Thursday August 6, 7:00 pm – 10:00 pm**

**Victory Cafe, 581 Markham St. (just south of Bloor St).**

**Free (food and drink available for purchase)**

Join LEAF staff and volunteers at the Victory Cafe for our monthly LEAFy drinks to have a pint and meet other Toronto tree lovers.

Website: [www.leafontario.org/events](http://www.leafontario.org/events)

### Junction Tree Tour

**Saturday July 25, 2:00 pm– 4:00 pm**

**Meet at Southwest corner of Dundas St. W and Keel St.**

**Suggested Donation: \$5**

Highlights include an introduction to the rare black oak, the elegant boughs of black walnuts, and a spectacular front yard garden that is a butterfly haven certified by Monarch Watch at the University of Kansas.

Website: [www.treetours.to](http://www.treetours.to)

### Edible Tree Tour

**Saturday August 15, 2:00 pm– 4:00 pm**

**Meet at Eglinton West Subway station**

**Suggested Donation: \$5**

LEAF is teaming with Not Far From The Tree and Growing For Green for this one of a kind tree tour. The tour starts at Toronto's first community orchard at Ben Nobleman Park and makes its way into Cedarvale Park. LEAF arborist Todd Irvine will lead the tour, while OCAD professor Stan Krzyzanowski will talk about his art installation of grafted cherry trees. The tour includes a fruit pick for the sampling pleasure tour enthusiasts.

Website: [www.treetours.to](http://www.treetours.to)

### Beaches Tree Tour

**Saturday August 29, 1:30 pm– 3:30 pm**

**Meet at Beaches Library, 2161 Queen St. East**

**Suggested Donation: \$5**

Join LEAF arborist Todd Irvine as we venture north from Kew Gardens to the crest of the natural ridge and then wander back down into the magnificent Glen Stewart ravine. Discover yellow birch, black cherry and ironwood in this remnant forest and learn about the City Forestry Department's vital restoration efforts.

Website: [www.treetours.to](http://www.treetours.to)

## COMMUNITY EVENTS

### Alex Metcalf – Tree Listening Installation

**May 25 – November 1, 2009**

**Oakville Galleries - Gairloch Gardens**

**1306 Lakeshore Road East, Oakville**

Alex Metcalf's *Tree Listening Installation* links science and art to provide a fascinating new way of understanding trees. A sensor and amplifying device designed by the artist provides access to a tree's 'voice', allowing visitors to hear the subtle soundscapes created by a tree's internal workings.

Website: [www.oakvillegalleries.com](http://www.oakvillegalleries.com)

### Tuesdays on the Trail - TRCA Tree Talk

**Tuesday July 28, 6:30 pm – 7:30 pm**

**Malton Greenway Trail, Mississauga**

**Free!**

We'll use bark, leaves and branches to identify native Ontario trees found along the trail. Registration is required. Contact Jessica Corkum-Gorrill, 416-661-6600, ext. 5748 or email [jcorkum-gorrill@trca.on.ca](mailto:jcorkum-gorrill@trca.on.ca)

# Upcoming Events

## Evergreen Wildlife-friendly Gardening Classes for Kids

July 25 and August 1, 10:00 am – 11:30 am

### Evergreen Brick Works

#### Pay What You Can

What are native plants? How does a garden grow? Come get your hands in the dirt at this fun and informative workshop. Take a look at some wild, native plants, insects and animals in natural spaces and learn how to create habitat for this flora and fauna your own garden. Two-part workshop for ages 5-12.

Website: [www.evergreen.ca](http://www.evergreen.ca)

## Tuesdays on the Trail - See, Smell, Hear and Touch

Tuesday August 4 and 25, 6:30 pm - 7:30 pm

### Wexford Park, Brampton

#### Free!

A great one for the kids or the kid in all of us. Explore nature with all your senses. Registration is required. Contact Jessica Corkum-Gorrill, 416-661-6600, ext. 5748, [jcorkum-gorrill@trca.on.ca](mailto:jcorkum-gorrill@trca.on.ca)

Website: [www.trcastewardshipecvents.ca](http://www.trcastewardshipecvents.ca)

## Growing For Green Cedarvale Park Wetland Tour

Tuesday August 4th, 6.30 pm

### Cedarvale Ravine - Entrance at Everden Rd and Ava Rd.

Recently a richly planted wetland appeared in Cedarvale Ravine. Cheryl Post, the Stewardship Parks Program Officer from the City of Toronto's urban forestry department will talk about the plants in this wetland, the animals it is expected to attract, and why a wetland is appropriate for this ravine. 25 spots only. RSVP to [register@growingforgreen.ca](mailto:register@growingforgreen.ca)

Website: <http://www.growingforgreen.wordpress.com/events>

## Restoring the Forest High Park Walking Tour

Sunday August 23, 2009, 10:30 am—12:00 pm

### Benches across from south side of Grenadier Restaurant Free! Donations to Friends of High Park are welcomed.

Walks are led by volunteer scientists, historians, and local naturalists who will help you to understand and explore High Park's many significant features.

Website: [www.highpark.org](http://www.highpark.org)

Dendro Answers: 1)c 2)d 3)f 4)h 5)i 6)j 7)a 8)g 9)b10)e



# This Summer in Photos

## Clockwise from top left:

LEAF staff Todd Irvine accepts Toronto Community Foundation's Vita Ideas Award; LEAF Executive Director Janet McKay at the LEAF Learning Garden mulching event; Vale of Avoca Tree Tour; Volunteer Mark Sherman at LEAF Learning Garden event; Tree Dancer at Leslieville Tree Festival; LEAF staff with Councillor Raymond Cho, Alan Cook of the Biodiversity Education and Awareness Network (BEAN) and Toronto Zoo staff at World Biodiversity Day