

=====THE URBAN FOREST NETWORK NEWSLETTER=====

Issue 21 - October 2004

Each generation takes the earth as trustees.

We ought to bequeath to posterity as many forests and orchards as we have exhausted and consumed.

J. Sterling Morton

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Etobicoke Resident Shares Her Yard with Wildlife

Interested in making your yard a refuge for needy urban wildlife? That's just what Etobicoke resident Christina Sharma has done. Inspired by CWF's Backyard Habitat for Canada's Wildlife project guide, she has created a wildlife oasis in her front and backyard. With a pond, bird boxes, toad holes, brush piles, bird feeders and baths, the yard emulates all the components of a natural forest. In a few short years, Christina transformed her average sized, suburban yard into important habitat for both resident and migratory wildlife. She has been rewarded with some terrific wildlife scenes: downy woodpeckers feeding their young; sharp shinned hawks feeding on rock doves; a fox leaving a brush pile at dusk, his lodgings for that day; frogs basking in the sun, and many more.

Recognizing that the average homeowner may feel daunted by a lack of knowledge or experience, Christina decided to open her yard to visitors. She offers tours and also gives presentations on starting your own backyard wildlife refuge. For more information contact Christina at CSHARMC342@rogers.com or 416-236-7234

Also visit www.wildaboutgardening.org for lots of information on starting your own backyard habitat.

Trees For Me by Joyce Major

I am so glad I was a small child growing up in 1931 in a small town in Ontario. Most homes had large yards and gardens for flowers and vegetables. There were open fields where we picked wild strawberries. Most streets were shaded with large trees like horse chestnut (*Aesculus*), maples (*Acer*), elms, (*Ulmus*) and other trees I didn't recognize. I liked to gather leaves and press them between waxed paper. Across the street from the wall of the Welland canal, where we used to swim, was a small tree with the most unusual shaped leaves. It was in the front of the office of Scott Misener of the Canada Steamship Lines. It wasn't until many years later that I found out it was a Ginkgo biloba. I wonder if that tree is still there.

Moving on to the end of a high school year in Pelham, Ontario, where we were given either seed potatoes or tree seedlings to plant and care for. I took the seedlings and planted them in front of our home in Fonthill. We called them Manitoba maples (*Acer negundo*), but they are known as ashleaf maple or box-elder. Both seedlings grew fast and well. My great uncles had a farm in Pelham that we loved to visit in the summer as the fruit on their trees was so delicious especially the big black sweet cherries (*Prunus serotina*). They are gone now but the big shade tree in front of the house was still there 7 years ago.

Forward to 1972 and I'm trying to cover 10 acres of the outskirts of Orangeville in free trees! The obstacles facing one little lady with a shovel, three children, and roaming animals meant that not all of the trees survived, but it was with a sense of pride that I witnessed the ones that did.

I'm in Toronto and joining a horticultural society in 1993. With the city forestry department, our society cleans up and plant trees and shrubs in a hilly area opposite a park on a biannual basis. I learn about LEAF about this time. It was wishful thinking on my part, but I thought it would be great to be able to go about inspecting trees to determine their type and state of health. A member of another society suggested that ratepayer organizations should involve themselves with inspecting trees for beetles and borers as trees are a big part of a value of a property.

Nut and fruit trees are my favourites for their usefulness. All other trees are beautiful in their own way either their shape, smell, bark, or uniqueness. There is a real beauty especially in the fall, near Colbourne Lodge in High Park. It's a copper beech (*Fagus sylvatica purpurea*). There is also a huge black walnut (*Juglans nigra*) on private property north of Bloor Street, near the Humber River; it's a sight to behold! I have always liked the taste of black walnuts, which means I have had to find trees, usually in the cemeteries around my hometown, to get the nuts. I like the smell of them and don't mind the iodine-like stain – but what a hard nut to get the meat out of!

I was one happy lady when I met the Grimos from Niagara-on-the-Lake. They not only sold black walnut kernels by the half pound but also English walnuts, hazelnuts, butternuts, and American chestnuts. Their business is growing and selling nut trees and includes mulberry (*Morus*), persimmon (*Diospyros virginiana*), pawpaw (*Asimina triloba*), fig (*Ficus carica*), northern pecan (*Carya illinoensis*) and the Ginkgo baloba. I bought butternuts from the Grimos and planted them at my sister's in Dunnville, Ontario.

Since I won't be going there afterwards, one of the places I must visit while alive is the Mount Pleasant Cemetery to admire the different variety of trees there.

It saddens me that developers are allowed to clear all plant life from a piece of land and to fill in swamps that either kill or displace all wild life in order to quickly build more boxes for the masses.

Again, I say I am so thankful I grew up when and where I did with tree-lined streets, fields, toads and snakes in the garden and the whole neighbourhood in which to play and explore.

Black Walnut Brandy Balls

Better Homes – 1971

Courtesy of Joyce Major

½ cup butter

½ cup confectioner's sugar

1/8 tsp salt

- 1 tbsp brandy
- ½ tsp vanilla
- 1 cup sifted all purpose flour
- ½ cup finely chopped black walnuts

Cream together butter, sugar and salt until fluffy. Stir in brandy and vanilla then the flour and nuts. Mix well. Form into balls (2 tsp). On un-greased baking sheet bake 25-30 minutes (until lightly browned) in oven at 325 degrees F. Roll in sifted icing sugar if desired. Makes approximately 20 cookies.

Dendro Devotion By Marc Willoughby, M.L.Arch., O.A.L.A., ISA Certified Arborist

Match the introduced tree pest or disease with the approximate location and date of arrival.

- 1) Dutch Elm Disease
- 2) Chestnut Blight
- 3) Scot's Pine Wilt
- 4) Sudden Oak Death
- 5) Gypsy Moth
- 6) Emerald Ash Borer
- 7) European Pine Shoot Moth
- 8) Hemlock Woolly Adelgid
- 9) Asian Long Horned Beetle
- 10) Beech Bark Disease

- a) Nova Scotia (1890)
- b) Boston (1868/69)
- c) Ohio (1930)
- d) Columbia, Mo. (1979)
- e) Long Island (1913)
- f) New York City (1904)
- g) Oregon (1924)
- h) Michigan (2002)
- j) Mill Valley, CA (1995)
- k) New York City (1996)

Answers at the end of the newsletter.

Events/Announcements

THE RIGHT TREE IN THE WRONG PLACE

October 22, 2004, Waterloo Recreation Complex, Hauser Haus, 8:00am – 3:30pm

Topics will include tree selection techniques, new methods of planting in urban areas, planting plans and nursery selection. Hosted by the International Society of Arboriculture. For more information visit www.isaontario.com or contact Mike Greer at 905-713-1215 x234 or mgreer@hydroone.com.

PESTICIDE BY-LAW EDUCATION WORKSHOPS

Sun Oct 24, 2004, 11:00 am - 12:00 pm, Toronto

Environmental and health experts increasingly agree that pesticides are harmful to our health and we should stop using them. On May 22nd, 2003 Toronto City Council also agreed and passed a By-law to restrict the use of pesticides on all outdoor property. Greenest City in conjunction with the City of Toronto - Public Health is holding 2 free educational workshops about the new City of Toronto Pesticide By-law. This is your opportunity to learn both about the new by-law and how you can have a beautiful, healthy lawn and garden naturally, without the use of pesticides.

Metro Hall (55 John Street, Toronto) - Room 313

(John & King St.; near St. Andrew subway)

Two dates:

Sunday, October 24th at 11:00am

and

Tuesday, October 26th at 6:30pm

(Each workshop will last approximately 1 hour.)

For more information visit <http://www.greenestcity.org>

For more events, visit or subscribe to PEOPLE- & PLANET-FRIENDLY Events, Resources, Jobs & Fun visit www.planetfriendly.net

Answers to Dendro Devotion:

1)c 2)f 3)d 4)j 5)b 6)h 7)e 8)g 9)k 10)a

The opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the UFN Committee or LEAF

Please send us your submissions for future newsletters – articles, announcements, news, recourses and events welcome! info@leaftoronto.org