

# 2020 ANNUAL REPORT



LEAF



# Planting with LEAF

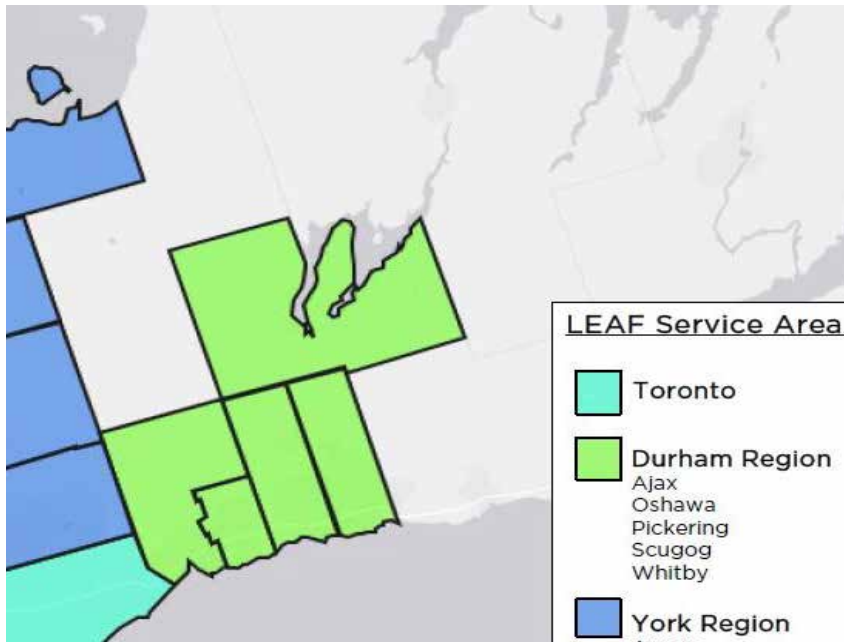


We planted **1,176** native trees and shrubs through the Backyard Tree Planting Program with over **470** property owners.



## WE PLANTED IN...

Ajax • Aurora • East Gwillimbury • Georgina • King • Markham  
Newmarket • Oshawa • Pickering • Richmond Hill • Scugog  
Toronto • Vaughan • Whitby • Whitchurch-Stouffville



In just five months, we planted over **260** native trees and shrubs with more than **130** Durham property owners.



## WE EXPANDED IN DURHAM REGION

Following continued success in Ajax, our Backyard Tree Planting Program expanded to Oshawa, Pickering, Scugog and Whitby in July.

We distributed **595** trees through our Spring Tree Sale to Toronto, York Region and Ajax property owners.



## **THE SPRING TREE SALE**

Property owners purchased small trees (2 to 3 feet in height) from us through an online sale. The trees were distributed through contactless delivery by our staff in June 2020.

We increased habitat even more by distributing **73** Native Garden Kits.



## **GARDEN KITS**

Butterfly Kit • Songbird Kit • Native Bee Kit • Shade Thriving Kit  
Small/Large Yard Options

We helped residents create wildlife-friendly urban yards through **3** campaigns that educate individuals on the benefits of native species and direct back to the Backyard Tree Planting Program: Backyard Biodiversity, Bees Love Trees and Project Swallowtail.



Courtesy of Project Swallowtail (@ Vicki Deloach)

## PROJECT SWALLOWTAIL

We partnered with Project Swallowtail to increase pollinator awareness and habitat in west Toronto. Project participants could choose between **14** native trees and shrubs that provide food and/or shelter to swallowtail butterflies and other pollinators.

**THE TORONTO COMMUNITY HOUSING (TCH) PLANTING AND STEWARDSHIP INITIATIVE** aims to increase urban forest canopy cover and achieve environmental and quality of life benefits for TCH tenants by planting trees and engaging the local community in their stewardship.

- **48** new trees
- **247** native shrubs
- **19** sites
- **10** tenant-led Tree Care Teams





We distributed over **500** free, native shrubs in Toronto to promote planting native species on private property!

Requests were made online and contactless deliveries were completed by our staff in September.



### **SPECIES OFFERED IN 2020**

1. American hazelnut
2. Common ninebark
3. Common snowberry
4. Eastern redbud
5. Meadowsweet
6. Pagoda dogwood
7. Purple flowering raspberry
8. Red osier dogwood
9. Serviceberry
10. Spicebush



# Volunteering with LEAF

LEAF volunteers participated in planting and stewardship events, cared for the Urban Forest Demonstration Gardens, raised awareness online and much more! 2020 highlights:

- **6** volunteer orientation sessions attended by **260** people
- **341** active volunteers
- **3,225** total volunteer hours
- **4** community outreach events (pre-COVID-19)



## SOCIAL MEDIA OUTREACH VOLUNTEERS

COVID-19 limited our ability to connect with community members face-to-face. In response, we launched the Social Media Outreach Team to engage the public in urban forest issues. This team of specially trained LEAF volunteers engaged with over **660** people this year using social media.

LEAF staff and volunteers dedicated over **360** hours to planting over **1,600** native trees and shrubs on public lands in Richmond Hill.



### **RESPONSE TO COVID-19:**

Typically, our events are open to the public. This year, to ensure the health and safety of all participants, we limited attendance to LEAF staff and volunteers, and added the following rules:

1. Face masks must be worn at all times
2. Bring-Your-Own gardening gloves
3. Adhere to physical distancing guidelines

The LEAF Learning Garden at Wychwood Barns Park and our five Urban Forest Demonstration Gardens were cared for by **43** volunteer garden stewards.

## THE URBAN FOREST DEMONSTRATION GARDENS

Our volunteer garden stewards, following all preventative health guidelines, kept these biodiverse spaces beautiful and inviting all year. We're so happy to have been able to provide our volunteers and the wider community with this safe and meaningful experience during these challenging times.





# Learning with LEAF

## Tree Tenders Volunteer Training highlights:

- **2** virtual, multi-day courses
- **7** expert instructors
- **94** graduates from Toronto, as well as York, Durham and Peel Regions



*“I loved, loved, loved Tree Tenders and would recommend it to anyone who wants to learn more about trees.”*

*“It is a wonderful course for anyone wishing to deepen their understanding of urban trees in order to better advocate for them. The LEAF team and presenters did a tremendous job taking their course on-line for us!”*

Our Young Urban Forest Leaders program was re-imagined to provide five months of virtual training and mentorship to youth:

- **20** youth
- **9** virtual workshops
- **7** guest speakers
- **4** webinars hosted and led by the participants
- **313** webinar attendees



## **WORKING WITHIN THE COMMUNITY**

Over the course of the program, participants assessed and identified priorities for planting and stewardship within their own neighbourhoods and sparked awareness of the urban forest through targeted outreach.



## VIRTUAL TREE TOURS

We hosted **2** virtual learning events with over **200** live attendees. The tours were recorded and made available to the public for free and have since been enjoyed by an additional **270** people.



### **Wychwood Barns Park Virtual Tree Tour**

- Located in Toronto
- Led by LEAF Education and Stewardship Coordinators
- Focus on stewardship



### **Lake Wilcox Park Virtual Tree Tour**

- Located in Richmond Hill
- Led by Aileen Barclay, Forest Education Specialist
- Focus on local biodiversity

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**THE LEAGUE OF TREES CAMPAIGN** was launched in partnership with Ontario Power Generation (OPG), Nature Conservancy of Canada and Bruce Trail Conservancy to educate Ontario residents on the benefits of forests and trees.

A tree will be planted in Ontario everytime:

- The promotional video is share, liked or watched
- A picture is share using #LeagueofTrees

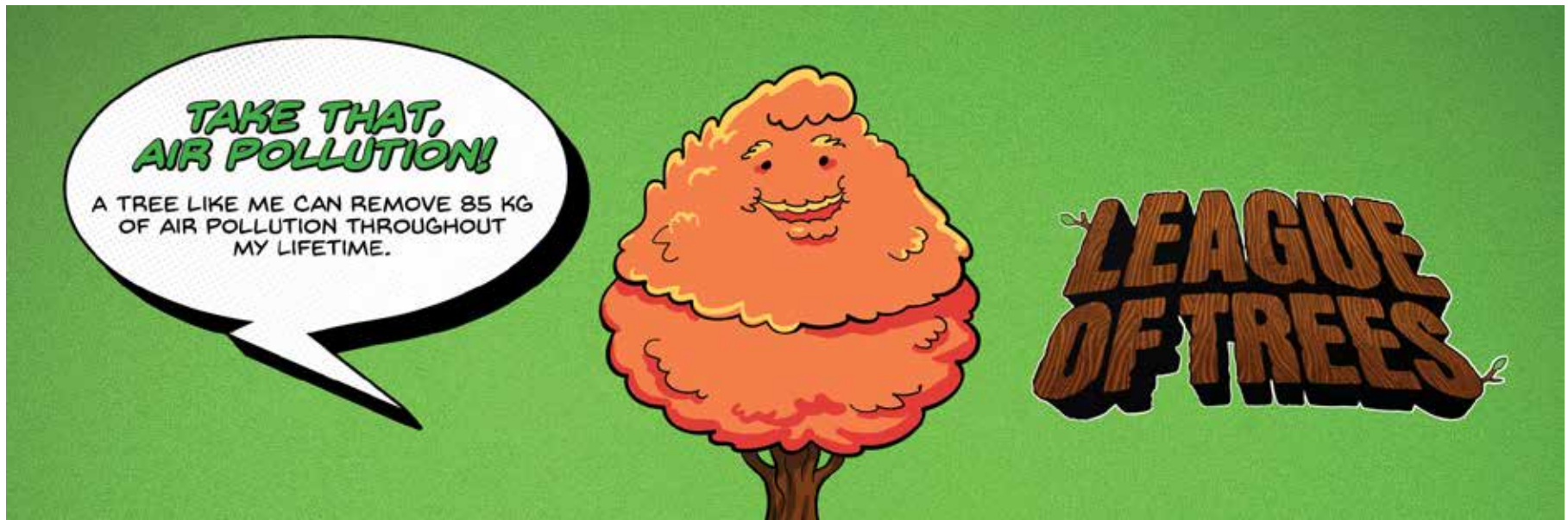


Image courtesy of Ontario Power Generation



# Capacity Building within LEAF

The Psychological Health and Safety Committee continued to build a strong work culture that encourages a healthy work-life balance, resiliency and positive mental health.



### **2020 COMMITTEE ACHIEVEMENTS:**

1. Helped develop a Psychological Health and Safety policy
2. Acquired new tools to improve effectiveness and safety of field work
3. Provided staff with work from home tools and resources

## **2020 COMMITTEE ACHIEVEMENTS:**

1. Led Truth and Reconciliation training for staff and Board Members
2. Developed a long-term, cyclical “forever process” to ensure continual learning and improvement
3. Engaged LEAF staff in reflection and idea generation through an anonymous survey
4. Initiated a similar survey with LEAF Board Members and the larger LEAF community

The committee will develop a plan with short, medium and long-term actions in early 2021.

The Reconciliation and Anti-Racism Committee was formed to facilitate anti-racist organizational change and reconciliation work. The committee is a collaborative effort between LEAF staff and Board Members.



# THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTING PARTNERS

