



2023 ANNUAL  
REPORT









## WE PLANTED:

**1632** native trees and shrubs through the **Backyard Tree Planting Program** with **541** property owners.

## WHERE WE PLANTED:

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





***I was very pleased with the LEAF program. From the consultation to the installation of our tree, all aspects were very professional and well organized. I would highly recommend this service!***

## CLIENT SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

**88%**



of respondents said their species choice was influenced by LEAF

**99%**



of participants said they would recommend the LEAF program to others

**100%**



of participants rated LEAF tree knowledge and care as excellent or good

**100%**



of participants rated LEAF tree knowledge and care as excellent or good



We increased habitat within our service area by distributing **105** Native Garden Kits. These kits contain a selected mix of perennials and shrubs that offer a simple way to enhance your outdoor space while also helping the environment!

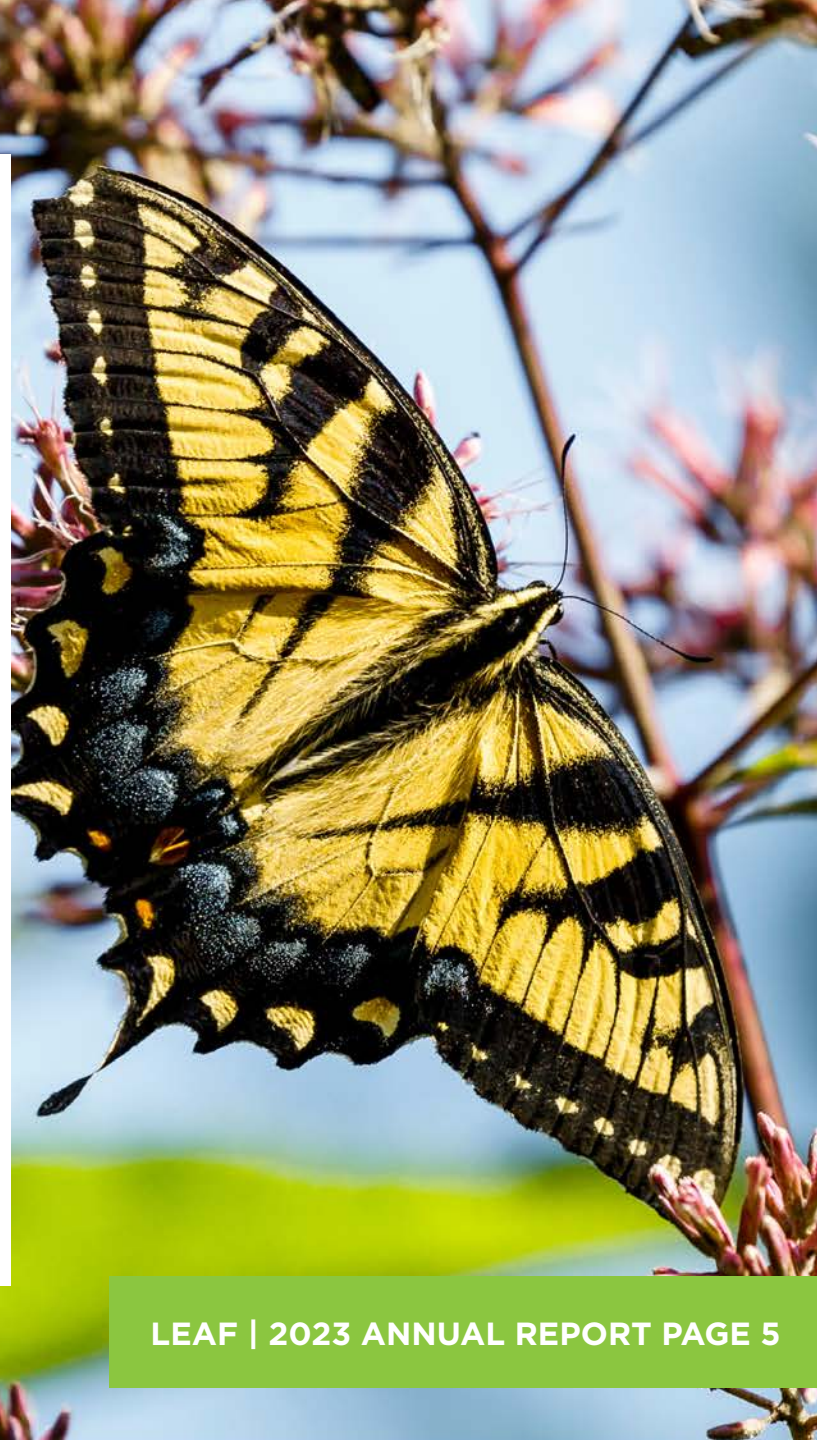
## OUR GARDEN KITS

**Butterfly Kits** - Nurtures native butterfly species with suitable food sources and shelter.

**Songbird Kits** - Offers both shelter and nourishment for our feathered companions.

**Native Bee Kits** - Creates essential shelter and provides food for a variety of native bees.

**Shade Kits** - Adds colours and textures with a variety of species that thrive in low-light areas.





## BACKYARD BIODIVERSITY

We helped residents create wildlife-friendly yards through the Backyard Biodiversity campaign.

This campaign promotes peaceful coexistence with urban wildlife in our yards. We offer useful tips to maximize **#BackyardBiodiversity** through blogs, factsheets and more.





## TORONTO COMMUNITY HOUSING (TCHC) PLANTING AND STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM



This program aims to improve urban forest cover and quality of life for TCHC tenants by planting trees and engaging the local community in their stewardship.

**58**

TOTAL TREES  
PLANTED

**288**

TOTAL SHRUBS  
DISTRIBUTED

**9**

SITES RECEIVED  
TREES

**16**

SITES RECEIVED  
SHRUBS

**16**

TENANT-LED TREE  
CARE TEAMS





## NATIVE SHRUB GIVEAWAY

We distributed **498** free native shrubs in Toronto to promote planting native species on private property.

Shrubs were offered to individuals who participated in our educational and volunteer activities.









## VOLUNTEERING AT A GLANCE

Together, our **438** active LEAF volunteers dedicated over **5,900** hours participating in planting events, providing stewardship, raising awareness and more! This year, we held **4** online volunteer orientations with **205** new attendees.



## PLANTING IN YORK AND DURHAM REGIONS

We held **12** planting events in King, Oshawa, Richmond Hill and Whitby.

LEAF volunteers dedicated almost **1,900** hours to plant **3,350** native trees and shrubs on public lands.







## STEWARDSHIP IN YORK AND DURHAM REGIONS

LEAF hosted **5** stewardship events in York and Durham Regions. Staff and volunteers dedicated over **100 hours** to remove **49** bags of invasive plant material and mulch over **875** newly planted native trees and shrubs so they can survive and thrive.



## URBAN FOREST DEMONSTRATION GARDENS

These gardens showcase native species and demonstrate the potential of small naturalized spaces in urban areas when neighbours work together. Our dedicated volunteers kept these biodiverse spaces beautiful and inviting all year.



The LEAF Learning Garden at Wychwood Barns Park and our **five** TTC Urban Forest Demonstration Gardens were cared for by **50** volunteer garden stewards.







## OUTREACH WITH LEAF

Our outreach team educates the public on the benefits of the urban forest and encourages them to take action. This year, they represented LEAF at **27** community events throughout Toronto, York Region and Durham Region and spoke to over **1,200** residents.







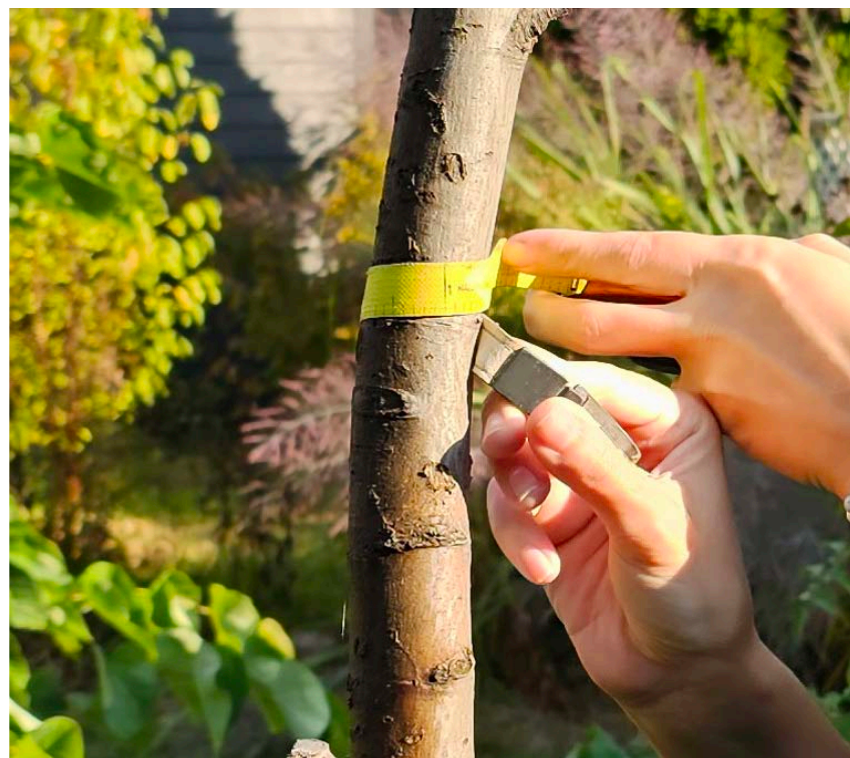


## TREE TENDERS TRAINING

**50** individuals graduated from our Tree Tenders Volunteer Training course.

Lessons included:

- Tree biology and functions
- Tree identification
- Tree planting, care and maintenance
- Municipal bylaws and policies



*This was a wonderful course that developed a lot of different skill sets that serve as useful professional development, as well as networking opportunities.*







## YOUNG URBAN FOREST LEADERS

Our program provided four months of training and mentorship to youth. Participants identified planting and stewardship priorities within their own neighbourhoods, while raising awareness of the urban forest at **4** public tree tours offered in Dorset Park and Spenvally Park. They also helped promote native shrub giveaways in those communities.

**20**

PROGRAM  
PARTICIPANTS

**14**

WORKSHOP  
EVENTS

**5**

GUEST  
SPEAKERS

**6**

PARTICIPANT-LED  
PUBLIC EVENTS

**97**

EVENT  
ATTENDEES





## YOUNG RAVINE LEADERS

This program aims to empower the next group of ravine advocates in the City of Toronto!

Joined by **30** Toronto youth, we explored the City's ravines through a mix of virtual and in-person activities.

## PARTICIPANTS WERE ABLE TO

- Learn from ravine experts
- Network with industry professionals
- Explore career and volunteer opportunities
- Participate in a guided ravine walk
- Volunteer at a planting event





## LEARNING WITH LEAF

We hosted **3** presentations, **9** tours and **1** workshop with over **280** attendees. To complement learning, we developed a fall **backyard biodiversity** activity sheet to facilitate safe and fun outdoor exploration.

Educational events highlighted tree identification, benefits of the urban forest, the value of biodiversity and more.









## **PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE**

We worked to build a strong culture that encourages a healthy work-life balance, resilience and positive mental health.

- Provided staff with access to self-care funds
- Provided staff with work from home tools and resources
- Provided staff with safe and proper lifting training for fieldwork



A close-up photograph of a branch with several clusters of small, bright yellow flower buds. The buds are in various stages of opening, with some showing more detail than others. The background is blurred, showing more of the same branch and buds.

## **RECONCILIATION AND ANTI-RACISM COMMITTEE**

We learned from and collaborated with racialized communities and experts to facilitate anti-racist organizational change and reconciliation.

- Provided reconciliation and anti-racism training to LEAF staff
- Supported the installation of a mural by an Indigenous Woodland artist at the Bathurst Urban Forest Demonstration Garden
- Trained participants in SpruceLab's Indigenous 'Earth Tending' skills-based program (green infrastructure training)



The background of the entire page is a close-up photograph of green maple leaves. The leaves are vibrant green with some showing slight yellowing at the edges, suggesting a summer or early autumn setting. The leaves are densely packed, with their characteristic three-lobed shape clearly visible. The lighting is natural, creating soft shadows and highlights on the leaf surfaces.

## TRANSFORMATION AND INTEGRATION

We have been dedicated to modernizing our processes and technology so that the programming we offer to communities is efficient and resilient.

- Worked with IT professionals to take the final steps in moving to the cloud
- Hired a Digital Project Coordinator to facilitate the ongoing transformation of our technology infrastructure



# THANK YOU

## TO OUR SUPPORTING PARTNERS



Ontario  
Trillium  
Foundation



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