



2022 ANNUAL
REPORT





WE PLANTED:

1,884 native trees and shrubs through the **Backyard Tree Planting Program** with **665** property owners.

WE PLANTED IN:

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



CLIENT SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS:

88% of respondents said their species choice was influenced by LEAF

97% 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 York Region respondents said LEAF staff courtesy and professionalism was excellent or good



*I was **DELIGHTED** to discover LEAF: smart, friendly, helpful staff who helped me in every way to return my backyard to its former community of trees. Thank you so much!*



We increased habitat within our service area by distributing **80** Native Garden Kits

OUR GARDEN KITS

Butterfly Kits - meadowsweet, black-eyed susan and more

Songbird Kits - serviceberry, wild bergamot and more

Native Bee Kits - bee balm, common snowberry and more

Shade Thriving Kits - great blue lobelia, ostrich fern and more



We helped residents create wildlife-friendly yards through **3** educational campaigns that highlight native species: **Project Swallowtail**, **Bees Love Trees** and **Backyard Biodiversity**

BACKYARD BIODIVERSITY

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 INITIATIVE

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.

88

TOTAL TREES
PLANTED

250

TOTAL SHRUBS
DISTRIBUTED

13

SITES RECEIVED
TREES

17

SITES RECEIVED
SHRUBS

16

TENANT-LED
TREE CARE TEAMS

NATIVE SHRUB GIVEAWAY

We distributed over **950** free native shrubs in Toronto, York Region and Durham Region to promote planting native species on private property.

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





VOLUNTEERING WITH LEAF



VOLUNTEERING AT A GLANCE

Together, our **318** active LEAF volunteers dedicated over **5,000** hours participating in planting events, providing stewardship, raising awareness online and more! This year, we held **5** online volunteer orientations, where we gained **242** new attendees.

PLANTING IN YORK AND DURHAM REGIONS

We held **14** planting events in King, Markham, Oshawa, Richmond Hill and Whitby.

LEAF volunteers dedicated over **1,700** hours to plant over **3,250** native trees and shrubs on public lands in total.





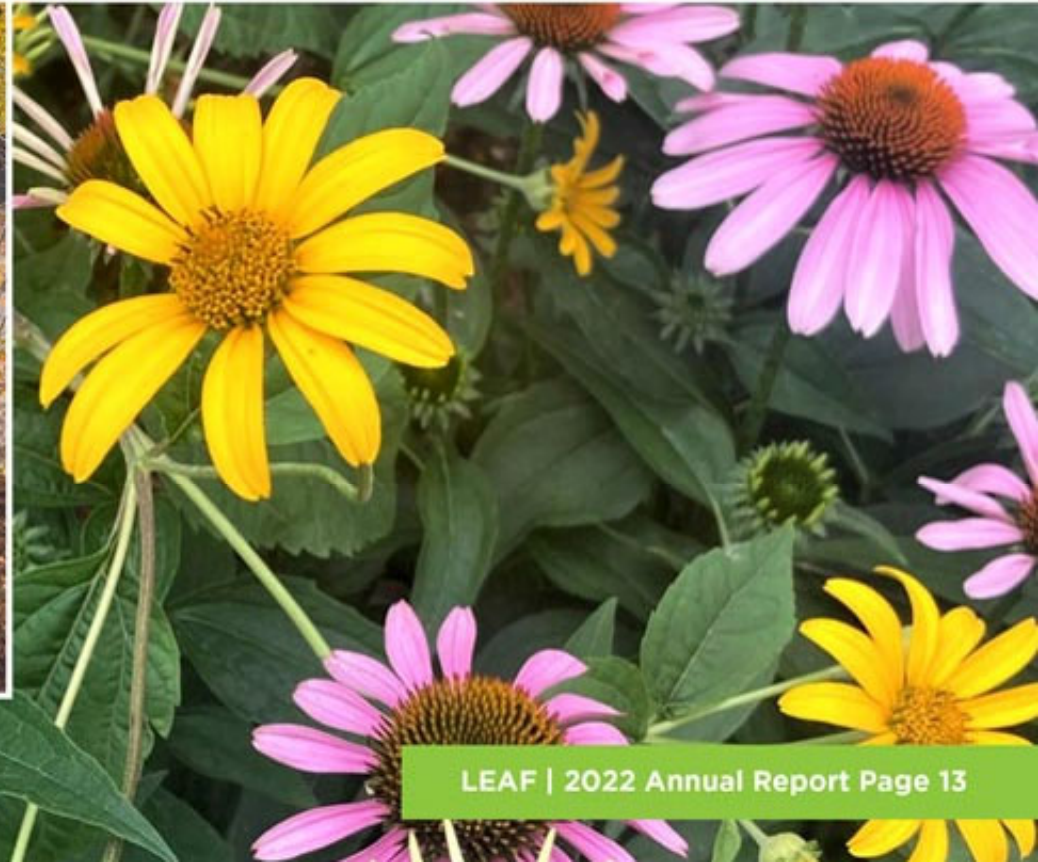
STEWARDSHIP IN YORK REGION

We want the trees we plant to survive and thrive! LEAF hosted **4** stewardship events in York Region. Staff and volunteers dedicated over **100** hours to removing **34** bags of invasive plant material and mulching over **800** newly planted native trees and shrubs.

THE URBAN FOREST DEMONSTRATION GARDENS

These gardens showcase native species and demonstrate the possibilities of naturalized spaces in urban areas, while also letting residents contribute to the improvement of their communities. Following preventative health guidelines, our dedicated volunteers kept these biodiverse spaces beautiful and inviting all year.

The LEAF Learning Garden at Wychwood Barns Park and our Urban Forest Demonstration Gardens were cared for by **42** volunteer garden stewards.







TREE TENDERS TRAINING

36 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

“It was a rich experience and I enjoyed going in-depth on different themes related to the urban forest. It has increased my awareness of trees in my community.”



YOUNG URBAN FOREST LEADERS

Our program provided four months of virtual training and mentorship to youth. Over the course of the program, participants identified planting and stewardship priorities within their own neighbourhoods, while raising awareness of the urban forest through targeted outreach. They also helped promote the native shrub giveaway in their communities.

15

PROGRAM
PARTICIPANTS

11

WORKSHOP
EVENTS

8

GUEST
SPEAKERS

4

PARTICIPANT-LED
PUBLIC WEBINARS

124

WEBINAR
ATTENDEES

YOUNG RAVINE LEADERS

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

Joined by **19** 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 guided ravine walk
- Engage in planting event





LEARNING WITH LEAF

We hosted **16** presentations, **5** tours and **1** workshop with over **700** attendees. To complement learning, we developed **5** activity sheets 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

Worked to build a strong work 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
- Implemented improved feedback methods for staff

A close-up photograph of a branch with vibrant green leaves and clusters of small, delicate white flowers. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green, suggesting a natural outdoor setting. The lighting is bright, highlighting the texture of the petals and the veins on the leaves.

RECONCILIATION AND ANTI-RACISM COMMITTEE

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

- Implemented anti-oppressive and anti-racism training for strategic planning
- Hosted Indigenous-led learning for LEAF program participants
- Trained participants in SpruceLab's Indigenous 'Earth Tending' skills-based program (green infrastructure training)



TRANSFORMATION AND INTEGRATION

LEAF is dedicated to modernizing our processes and technology so that the programming we offer to communities is efficient and resilient in the face of future disruptions, like those seen with the pandemic.

- Conducted an IT infrastructure and program process assessment
- Worked with IT professionals to take the final steps in moving to the cloud
- Transitioned Backyard Tree Planting Program operations to paperless

THANK YOU

TO OUR SUPPORTING PARTNERS

