



August 2025 Newsletter

Summertime Gardens

Now is the time to get together with your neighbours to share your knowledge, trade plants and start collecting seeds for next year's gardens. Please let us know about your connections, your plants and your activities for our next newsletter at projectswallowtail@gmail.com



Events

The South Parkdale Community Pollinator Gardens

We have A Pollinator Garden Tour and Talk with author Stephen Humphrey and garden coordinator Ally Liske coming up on Sunday, August 10 and Weed and Water Wednesdays throughout August.

Come join us, everyone welcome!



Pollinator Garden Tour and Talk August 10

Facebook



Weed and Water Wednesdays in August

Instagram

Etobicoke Habitat Garden Tours - August

Douglas Counter



Block Ambassador Douglas Counter is kindly hosting Project Swallowtail members for **free tours** of his habitat gardens containing over 120 species of native plants, located near the Etobicoke Civic Centre. Each tour lasts about 1.25 hours and includes plant identification, tips on habitat creation and design, storm water capture and more. Each guest will receive a **free organic potted plant** of their choice, lovingly grown by Douglas from seed from his

garden. Douglas will also be offering additional propagated plants for sale, including unusual species, with a portion of these proceeds going to Project Swallowtail's *Seed Sitters* program.

Please RSVP to Douglas today at dcu.humanature@rogers.com and include your tour date as the subject line of your email. Douglas will confirm location details with guests.

Tour 2: Saturday, August 9 at 11:00am

Tour 3: Sunday, August 17 at 1:00pm

There will be additional Fall garden tours - stay tuned

Articles and Activities

Project Swallowtail Advocacy Group

Mosquito Spraying



Project Swallowtail's Advocacy Committee works on various issues (e.g., bylaw enforcement reform, municipal policies and practices related to leaf collection, prioritizing native species in municipal tree choices for residents, impacts of honeybees on wild bees), and has recently added mosquito spraying to the list of issues the Committee is researching.

The Committee is concerned that residential use of mosquito spraying companies is on the increase and that this negatively affects all insect life, including pollinators. At this stage, the Committee is compiling information and doing outreach to various scientists, organizations, and experts on pesticide use and impacts. We are also exploring alternatives to mosquito spraying. If you have information to contribute or resources to recommend to the Committee, please email projectswallowtail@gmail.com.

City of Toronto Larviciding Program

Remembering Sheila Colla

Sheila Colla, a pioneering force in conservation science who was known for her work on pollinator health, urban ecosystems and environmental justice died on July 6th, aged 43. Her research centred on wild bee species – most notably the rusty-patched bumblebee – helping to raise both scientific and public awareness of their endangerment. She is remembered for her leadership in interdisciplinary research, her mentorship of emerging scientists and her unwavering dedication to both scientific excellence and environmental advocacy.



Her most enduring impact may not be what she discovered in the field, but what she cultivated in others. The Colla Conservation Lab at York became a refuge of its own—for early-career researchers, especially women and people of color, for whom science had never felt like a place of belonging. In a discipline still shaped by gatekeepers and quiet bias, she opened doors with unshakable purpose. She did not wait for permission to lead. She gave it.

Outside academia, she did the same. Whether organizing East Enders Against Racism or challenging institutions for token gestures, she remained blunt, clear-eyed, and unapologetically just.

Colla's family has requested that those wishing to honour her legacy plant a native flower or tree, upload a bumblebee sighting to BumbleBeeWatch.org, write to government officials in support of pollinator protection plans.

References for above

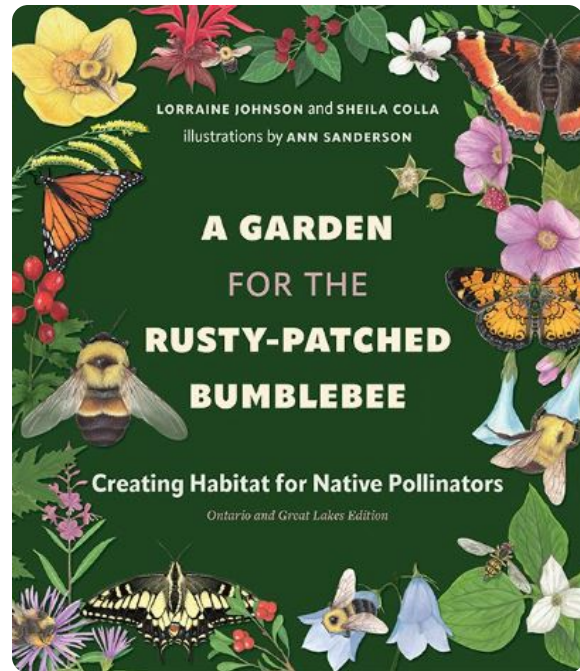
[York University](#)

[Colla Conservation Science Lab](#)

[Heritage Funeral Obituary](#)

[Monga Bay](#)

[Wildlife Preservation Canada](#)



Toronto Nature Stewards New Sites for 2026



Toronto Nature Stewards (TNS), with the agreement of the City of Toronto Urban Forestry Division, runs a stewardship program on public land in ravines and natural areas without

direct City supervision. Sites are managed by Lead Stewards who have been trained, follow agreed-upon protocols for ecological restoration, and report their stewardship activities.

We support the ecological restoration of ravines and natural areas by picking up litter, removing invasive plants, planting native species, and monitoring the environmental impact of stewardship activities. We meet as small, local groups to care for approved sites in Toronto's ravines and natural areas. Each stewardship site has been approved by the City of Toronto and each stewardship group is committed to stewarding their local site for several years. There are currently **48 approved sites**.

Site Applications for 2026 are now open. Each site requires a Lead Steward who needs to apply for and if accepted agree to nurturing the site. The Lead Steward training program, which runs from February to March, entails five online sessions of two-hour classes and some hands-on learning. Registration for Lead Steward training will open later in the fall. If you are interested in becoming a Lead Steward, joining an existing site or receiving winter training, please contact coordinator@torontonaturestewards.org

Toronto Parkland Survey - Phase 2

Online Survey Now Available until September 14



NOTE: Many of our members who grow native plants also participate in activities like Stewardship in Toronto parks. Frequently when surveys are done, people who appreciate those activities and others that celebrate nature over active recreation in parks do not have as loud a voice as those who use parks for high impact recreation and sports. We would like to have you let the city know how much nature means to you by taking the survey and commenting on your preferences.

We are excited to announce that a new [online survey](#) about proposed updates to the **Parkland Strategy and Parks and Recreation Facilities Plan Review** is now available! In Fall 2024, thousands of community members citywide provided feedback in Phase 1 of our engagement process to help inform the updates to these plans.

This summer, help shape the future of your community's parks and recreation facilities and review and provide feedback on the proposed updates to both the Parkland Strategy and Parks and Recreation Facilities Plan. We encourage you to share the survey widely with your network.

You can also share this [promotional Facebook post](#) and this [promotional Instagram post](#) with your networks.

Thank you,

Project Team – The Parks and Recreation Facilities Plan and the Parkland Strategy
Parks & Recreation, City of Toronto

Gardening and Plant Info

These files have been posted to help you successfully grow your native plants. They are on a [Google Drive](#) so those without a Gmail account may have issues. These are on a website accessible to all [High Park Nature Plant Care and Sales](#)

We'd Love to Hear From You!

We're looking for more stories, events, photos, and updates to share with the Project Swallowtail community in our newsletters!

- To share an event, please add it to the **Event Form**.
 - To contribute articles or messages, use the **Newsletter Content Form**.
 - Feedback on our interactive maps. (available only to map participants)
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To be included on our interactive map, connect with others, and receive emails for active members (like seed sitters), please **update your profile** using your personalized link below. Be sure to provide consent for communications, indicate your gardening roles, and share your interests!

Project Swallowtail

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