

Summer 2026 Newsletter

Community Gardens, Garden Tours
and a new Native Plant Brochure



Beautiful by Nature

Design Tips for Toronto
Native Plant Gardens

Beautiful by Nature: Design Tips for Toronto Native Plant Gardens is a project of Project Swallowtail, The Garden Club of Toronto and The City of Toronto's PollinateTO program, led by Liz Dobson, Sharon Lovett and Annemarie Baynton. There are many guides to growing native plants but our brochure is special in the focus on design. Topics include, Colour that lasts all year, Focal Points for Impact, Framing, Layers and Borders, Texture and Structure, and Less Lawn, More Pathways. Native plant gardeners work WITH nature. The brochure can be downloaded [here](#).

Events

Kids Gardening with Nibi! - Friday evenings July to September



Anishnawbe Nibi Gitigaan (Parkdale's Indigenous Water Garden) is a vital community green space located on Dunn Avenue in Toronto's Parkdale neighborhood. Under the stewardship of Cree Elder Charlene Grandmaison, it provides a safe, welcoming space for

Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities to grow traditional foods and medicines, hold ceremonies, and participate in reconciliation.

225 Dunn Ave. Toronto, ON M6K 2S1
Every Friday June to September 5 to 7 pm
Register nibi2025@outlook.com



The garden regularly hosts events including:

- **Children's Gardening**
Programs: Hands-on activities like three-sisters planting.
- **Elders & Knowledge Keepers**
Sessions: Opportunities to connect, learn, and gather around a traditional fire.
- **Volunteer Opportunities:**
Community members are frequently needed for weeding, soil moving, and garden bed maintenance.

[Facebook Group](#) and **[Project Swallowtail](#)**
[Calendar Listing](#)



Garnet Flowers Community Pollinator Garden **Tuesdays evenings 6 to 8 pm - 2 Garnet Ave.**

On May 30, 2026 a team of dedicated volunteers came together to create a new 90-square-foot garden extension on the North side of Fiesta Farms employee parking lot at 2 Garnet Ave. Toronto ON M6G 1V5

The new 'Connector' garden on the Garnet Avenue right-of-way (on the west side of Christie) connects the sun & shade gardens that were planted in May 2021.
A huge shout-out to those who got their hands dirty and made it happen: Louise, Mina, Jodi, Richard, Todd, and Daniela!



Garnet Garden prepped for planting



Garnet Garden after planting



A big thank you to The **Horticultural Societies of Parkdale & Toronto**

for their funding and support.

And much gratitude for our other supporters: Ashforth Tree Care (mulch), Heritage Tree Care (stumps), Douglas Counter (discounted plants), and the City of Toronto (Butterfly Habitat sign).

Fiesta Farms staff maintain the grass on the right of way.

All contributions (great and small) help to nurture community and nature for wildlife!

Please consider supporting us by:

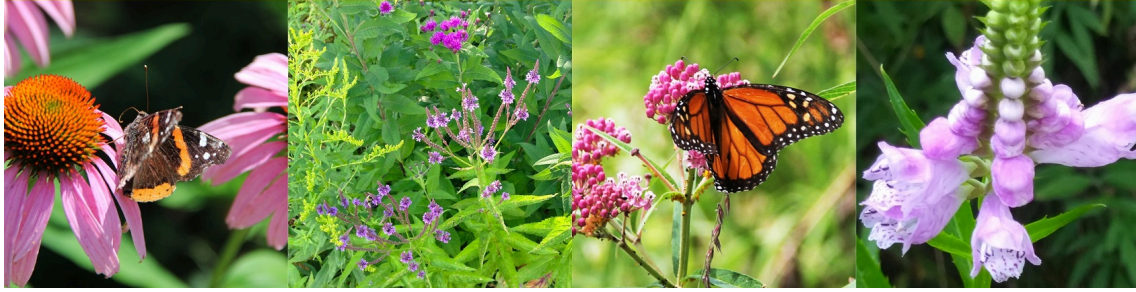
- joining our **'Garnet flowers' Facebook page:**
- dropping by to help us maintain the garden on [most] Tuesday evenings (6 to 8 pm), or for the occasional 'call-out'/'hands on' event
- donating native plants
- participating in a garden tour in September (date TBC - To Be Confirmed)

For more information, please contact Lisa Jayne **contact.jayne@gmail.com**.

2 Garnet Ave. Toronto ON M6G 1V5

Project Swallowtail event listing

Summer Garden Tours



Tour 1: Monday, August 3, 11:00am to 12:30pm (Civic Holiday)

Tour 2: Sunday, August 9, 2:00pm to 3:30pm

Tour 3: Wednesday, August 12, 1:00pm to 2:30pm

Tour 4: Saturday, August 15, 2:00pm to 3:30pm

Tour 5: Sunday, August 23, 1:30pm to 3:00pm

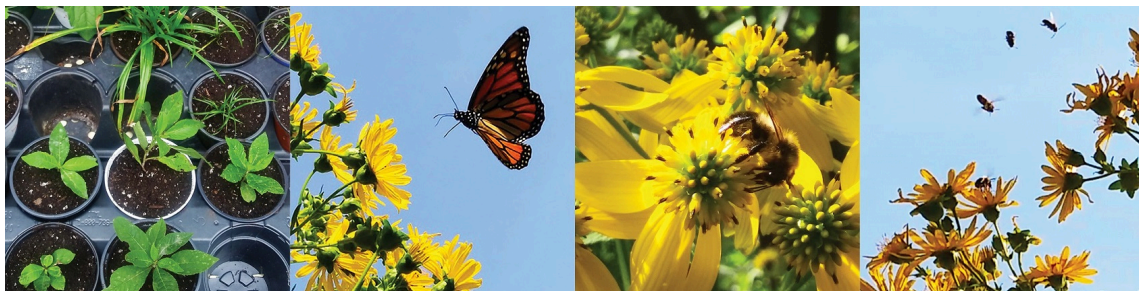
August provides peak bloom in native tall grass prairies, a perfect time to join block ambassador Douglas Counter on **a free tour** of his established prairie garden located near the Etobicoke Civic Centre. Offered on five dates through August, this **1.5-hour tour** includes: peak summer bloom in his prairie and boulevard gardens; native plant pairings; observing pollinators; how to enjoy your summers free of garden maintenance, and more.

Douglas brings 29 years of practical experience gardening with native plants to these tours of his species-rich prairie, storm water infiltration boulevard, and woodland gardens—each a beautiful example of functioning habitat.

Each guest will receive **a free organic native plant** of their choice (4 inch pot) propagated by Douglas from seed collected from his gardens; additional plants will be available for \$4 each.

Spaces are limited, so please RSVP to Douglas today at

dcu.humanature@rogers.com and include your **Tour Number** in the subject line of your email. Douglas will confirm location details with guests. If you're interested in plants but not the tour, please put **Propagated Plants** in the subject line. [Project Swallowtail Calendar](#)



Discovering Our Parish Gardens: How to explore them

by Jo-An Davies

The gardeners at Our Lady of Lourdes wanted parishioners to learn more about the beautiful gardens that surround our church and to encourage everyone to visit and enjoy these special spaces.

To help tell the story of the gardens, the Garden Ministry created an informative brochure featuring photographs, descriptions of the various garden areas, information about native plants, and prayers for our parishioners.

The largest garden, located along the street, contains approximately 70% native plants. In front of the rectory, visitors will find a thriving pollinator garden designed to provide food and habitat for pollinators, especially native bees.

The brochure explains why pollinators are essential to our environment and highlights some of the key native plants growing throughout the parish grounds.

During one weekend, members of the Garden Ministry spoke with parishioners after all Masses and distributed more than 500 copies of the brochure.

The response was enthusiastic, with many people expressing interest in learning more about native plants and pollinator-friendly gardening.

They also now know who our gardeners are and chat to us.



*photo: members of the Garden Ministry
Jo-An Davies (on the right) and Catherine Smee
(on the left)*



The outreach continued in the following weeks when Our Lady of Lourdes' gardens were featured in the Cabbagetown Garden Tour, Hidden Gardens and Private Spaces.

This garden won the City award as the best community garden in the City.

During the tour, more than 80 additional brochures were shared with visitors who came to explore the gardens and learn about the parish's commitment to support our pollinators. Through these efforts, the Garden Ministry hopes to inspire parishioners and visitors alike to appreciate the beauty of native plants, support pollinators, and recognize the important role each of us can play in protecting pollinators.

Do come take a copy from the back of the church.

For more info contact Jo-An Davies joannedavies2@gmail.com or see [Instagram](#)

Don't forget to take pictures for the Project Swallowtail Photo Competition!

We are looking forward to seeing stories and photos from your own gardens and your community outreach projects.

We really need people to judge the entries, provide prizes or to make any suggestions. Please email projectswallowtail@gmail.com. **Also let us know if you are**

planning on participating so we can send you tailored updates and other information.

Articles and Resources

[Quebec town recognizes trees as living beings with rights](#) (CBC)

[How the 'Picasso of ponds' went from shaping golf courses to making freshwater homes for wildlife](#) (The Guardian)

[Gardens that Give Back, Partnering with Nature to Restore Living Communities](#)
(Invasive Species Centre)

[Bumblebees can solve complex puzzles like chimpanzees and elephants, study finds](#)
(CBC)

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](#).
 - View events in our website [Calendar](#)
 - To contribute articles or messages, use the [Newsletter Content Form](#).
 - Feedback on our interactive maps. (available only to map participants)
 - Gardening and plant info on our [Google Drive](#)
 - Our new [Project Swallowtail website](#)
 - [Publications and Resources](#)
 - Project Swallowtail [Sign-Up form](#) (for friends and family, you are signed up)
 - To add your garden to our map please [Update your Profile](#)
 - Our April 2026 newsletter has links to our maps. If you are on the map you should have received it. If you need the links email projectswallowtail@gmail.com
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