

Project Swallowtail Autumn 2026 Newsletter

Upcoming Events, Time to Vote, Grants, Member Stories

(any changes and updates to events will be posted in our [Calendar](#) listings) Please see our social media for more events, stories and photos



Project Swallowtail Pizza Party at Christie Pits Park was Lots of Fun

Thank you to all of our Project Swallowtail community and volunteers for a wonderful party in the park. The event was open to all and we estimate 75 people enjoyed pizza, some with native plants, taco salads, swapping plants and getting to know each other. Special thanks to Adam Barnes as the coordinator, Jode Roberts for the site and Chef Carl Heinrich, owner of Richmond Station for the delicious pizzas. We are looking forward to other opportunities to get together in the future. Please let us know if you have any gatherings in your own neighbourhood. We'd love to celebrate you.

Events

Municipal Election Oct 26 - Get out and Vote: 10 am to 8 pm

How can I know who to vote for?

Vote Compass is a tool developed by political scientist to help you explore how your views compare to candidates. The survey asks many questions on a wide variety of topics and gathers some demographic info on you. You can do the survey in an incognito browser tab and unless you want the results emailed to you, do not have to reveal your identity.

The results are truly comprehensive. You can see who you aligned with on the questions you answered, the candidates statements on those topics, their photo and bio if provided and links to their websites. See **Vox Pop Labs** for all data projects.

Environmental advocacy groups election links

<https://thewardsproject.com/elections>

<https://votingrecords.climatefast.ca>

<https://election.torontoenvironment.org/2026-municipal-election>

<https://ontarionature.org/ontario-municipal-elections-2026/>

VOTE COMPASS

2026

Ontario Municipal Elections

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PollinateTO Grants available until October 21



Grants of up to \$5,000 are available to support community-led projects that: Create a new pollinator garden or rain garden; Expand or enhance an existing garden by adding native pollinator-friendly plants; Convert a lawn area, boulevard or hard surface to a pollinator garden

Application Form

Sacred Earth: Preserving Indigenous Land - Oct 8, 5 pm to 8 pm



87 Milky Way, behind Parkdale's library

Stewardship Gardeners and Anishnawbe Nibi Gitigaan

Robin Rice
Ojibway & Potawatomi Wasauksing First Nation

Let's go beyond acknowledgement and learn how we take meaningful action in the preservation of Native land.

Registration required, Email Nibi2025@outlook.com

[Project Swallowtail Calendar listing](#)

Seed Harvesting, Plant Give-away and Garden Tour - Oct 17

October 17, 1:00 pm - 3:30 pm

South Parkdale Community Pollinator Gardens
102 Tyndall Ave Toronto, ON M6K 2E2

Hands on seed collection from our pollinator gardens with other great community members.

Join us our third annual Fall Seed Harvesting Tour! We'll visit a number of our pollinator gardens, harvest seeds, grow for next year and discuss seed storage. Take a free plant home while supplies last.

[Register](#)

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





Season End Native Plant Sale

Sunday, October 18, 2026, 1:00pm to 4:00pm

Early Autumn is a perfect time to plant, whether in your own garden, or the community garden you steward.

Block ambassador and native plant grower Douglas Counter is hosting a **season end sale of native plants** at his established pollinator gardens located near the Etobicoke Civic Centre. Featuring more than 40 species of native plants that he has lovingly grown from seed collected mostly from his own garden, this is an opportunity to source locally-grown organic plants—for sun, shade, and everything in between—at a very affordable price, and plant them now so they get a head start next Spring. You're also welcome to walk about Douglas' prairie, storm water infiltration boulevard, and woodland habitat gardens in their autumn beauty!

Douglas brings 29 years of practical experience gardening with native plants to his work as a block ambassador.

For details about the plant sale, including location and a PDF list of species available, please RSVP to Douglas today at dcu.humanature@rogers.com. Douglas will confirm location details with guests. Plants are available on a first come, first served basis, and the list of available species is subject to change.





Autumn Tour in Previous Newsletter

Tour 4: Sunday, October 11, 2:00pm to 3:30pm (Thanksgiving weekend)

Seed Harvest Workshop & Garden Tours

Workshop 1: Sunday, October 25, 1:00pm to 3:00pm

Workshop 2: Saturday, November 14, 12:00pm to 2:00pm

Mid-autumn is a perfect time for seed harvesting, whether you share your seeds with others, sow them for your own garden, or propagate plants as part of your seed-sitting efforts.

Join block ambassador Douglas Counter for a **free seed harvest workshop** in his established pollinator gardens located near the Etobicoke Civic Centre. Offered on two dates, rain or shine, this **2-hour workshop** includes:

- harvesting seed from plants with different seedhead structures based on ripeness and availability (take home the seed you harvest for drying and cleaning);
- demonstration of seed drying, cleaning, packaging, labelling, and storage; demonstration of seed sowing in seed trays and pots for natural outdoor germination;
- **PLUS** a short tour of Douglas' prairie, storm water infiltration boulevard, and woodland gardens—each a beautiful example of species-rich functioning habitat—with a focus on enjoying a garden's late autumn beauty and the wildlife it attracts!

Douglas brings 29 years of practical experience gardening with native plants to his workshops.

Spaces are very limited, so please RSVP to Douglas today at

dcu.humanature@rogers.com and include your **Workshop Number** in the subject line of your email. Douglas will confirm location details with guests.



Rewilding Toronto Exhibit - gone but still worth a look

The **David Suzuki Foundation** teamed up with ink-maker **Jason Logan**, artist **Pam Lostracco** and Gallery 1065 co-curator **Jode Roberts** to transform the gallery into an immersive paint-by-numbers mural inspired by Toronto's urban nature. The show ran from Sept 10 to 20. But there was a twist: the colours were made from ingredients foraged in the neighbourhood around the gallery. 215 participants foraged for plants, created the inks and painted the walls. Photos and the full article on the **Gallery 1065 website**.



Member Story

Growing Alongside My Garden by Beverley Song



I started developing my green thumb with one simple goal in mind – improve curb appeal. When Project Swallowtail had a plant sale in early spring, it seemed like the most economical choice for building out my garden. I bought two sun and two shade kits with a feeling of overwhelm as I rested them on the patio in preparation for planting.

I took some time to research each plant – how tall does it grow, how much space should I leave between each plant, and what sequencing should I use to be sure taller plants were at the back and smaller were at the front. Through this research, I started learning not just about their importance to pollinators but also their importance to the broader ecosystem.

I also learned about the impact of so many invasive weeds I was digging out to make space for the new plants; the soil changes these weeds cause, and even the alterations to what we believe to be native plants by commercial growers and the chemicals that can accompany commercially grown pollinator plants into a garden.

I was amazed at how fast my new native plants grew throughout the first season and even more amazed at how lush they came back for the second season. With only these few native plant additions, I started seeing the activity, hearing the buzz, and was even fortunate enough to have caterpillars on my milkweed within a few short weeks.

Pollinator and native plant gardening quickly became my hobby. This year, I sourced local growers, became a customer of the Toronto Plant Market, and used Facebook Marketplace to find garden stones for free. I prepared gardens along the perimeter of my backyard and spend time each day tending to the plants (on many days expanding the gardens to incorporate more plants), appreciating their growth and the fascinating wildlife now frequenting the yard.

I am also enjoying what the garden is teaching me about trusting the process, following intuition, exercising creativity and the beauty that can be found in imperfection. I've developed a quiet confidence that I didn't know was missing and learned to slow down from the pace of the world, connecting with the pace of nature. I've also enjoyed observing the gardening community and look forward to engaging, as the next step in evolving my journey as a gardener, with a love for creating habitat for those with whom we share this earth.

Looking Ahead: Don't forget to take pictures and stories 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.

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
