

Peterborough Horticultural Society

Volume 165 **September 2026** Number 7

Wednesday September 23rd, 2026 @ 7pm, at the Lion's Centre "Wildlife Photography" by Dave Ellis

Join us in welcoming Dave Ellis to our stage. You may know Dave's work from his weekly column in the Peterborough This Week and Kawartha Lakes This Week newspapers.



Dave began writing a wildlife photo column for them in 2018 and continued until the newspapers ceased publishing in 2023. His column and photos were moved over to the Peterborough Examiner where he continues to write a column each week.

His photos have also been featured in Outdoor Canada Magazine, Canadian Geographic Magazine, The Toronto Star, PTBO News Canada, and in John McQuarrie's coffee table

book "Peterborough – Spirit of Place". Each year Dave and his wife, Astrid publish a calendar featuring the wildlife of Kawartha Lakes.

Originally from the Annapolis Valley, NS, Dave spent some time in Toronto before moving to Omemee in 2001. He and Astrid took up wildlife photography as a hobby in 2016.

Dave enjoys sharing his photographs and the stories that go with them at presentations all around the Kawarthas.

We look forward to seeing the natural world through Dave's lens.



This meeting will not be available on Zoom; Guests are welcome for \$5 per person

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President's Message – September 2026

Welcome Back, Fellow Gardeners!

After a wonderful summer break in July and August, it's hard to believe that September is already here! I hope you all enjoyed the sunshine, relaxed in your gardens, travelled, or simply took some well-deserved time to enjoy the beauty of the season.

September is a special time in the gardening year. While our gardens may be beginning to show the first hints of autumn, there is still so much colour and beauty to enjoy. The late-season perennials are putting on their final display, vegetables are ready for harvesting, and the cooler evenings remind us that the seasons are gently changing.



And what better way to welcome everyone back than with our Flower Show! 🌸

Our Flower Show is always a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the results of our gardening efforts and to admire the creativity, knowledge, and enthusiasm of our members. Whether you have been gardening for decades or are still discovering the joys of growing plants, we hope you will come out, participate, and enjoy the displays. Every entry represents time, care, and a love of gardening—and that is something worth celebrating!

As we begin another season of meetings, programs, speakers, and activities, I look forward to seeing familiar faces and welcoming everyone back.

So, dust off your gardening gloves, bring along your stories from the summer, and join us as we begin another exciting season together.

Welcome back, everyone!

Happy Gardening,

❖ **Anne Trudel-Inglis**
PHS President

A few of last year's September Flower Show & Tell entries



Membership Year = Calendar Year

Your existing membership is valid until December 31, 2026

If you have a membership for 2026, you should renew your membership at the end of October or November to continue to receive links for the virtual meetings in January & February and to attend the in-person meetings starting in March.

How do you know you have a membership for 2026?

That's easy – you should have a name tag that has the year "2026" on it 😊

If you don't, or you've lost your name tag and want to be sure, see Laura at the desk at the meeting and she will help you. If you aren't a 2026 member you can still attend the meetings for the rest of the year, the charge is \$5.00 per meeting.

We are not accepting 2027 renewals in September.

Information on how to renew (or join for the first time) will be available in October.

September Flower Show & Tell

September 23rd - This will again be an event where everyone gets to vote. There will be three "specimen" type categories and a "creative design" category, so start planning now!

There are two classes: Specimen Class and Design Class

In both the specimen and design classes, exhibitors may use the vessel or container of their choice.

Specimen Class

Section 1 – Flower(s), one cultivar, any type, perennial or annual, up to 5 stems.

Section 2 – Perennials, collection of up to 5 stems of any one perennial.

Section 3 – Annuals, collections of up to 5 stems of any one annual.

Design Class

"A Garden to celebrate" A design of late summer blooms, including blossoms or stems affected by pests or drought. The design should be suitable for a coffee or kitchen table – not exceeding 30" high and 30" across. Get creative! this can be a traditional arrangement, a mixed media type of design or a scene.

Pictures of Summer Show & Tell event – this is a repeat of the Houseplant picture competition with a twist!

In January you will be able to send in pictures of your most prized houseplants AND pictures from your garden from this summer. Voting will take place at the March 2027 meeting.

Details will be in the January 2027 newsletter but start snapping those summer pictures now!

“BUG” Club Corner

For 2026 (and possibly longer?) we will be posting articles on common bugs, both beneficial and non-beneficial species. We welcome responses to articles, ideas and/or suggestions.

Hail to the Monarch

When my eldest daughter - who lives in Ireland with her young family - was here for a few weeks in the summer, monarch butterfly spotting was at the top of their 'to-do' list during their visit. The monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*) has acquired mythical standing worldwide for its exceptional migratory pattern and for its vulnerability. In Canada, the monarch is listed as an endangered species under the Species at Risk Act.

Happily for all of us, the monarchs made an appearance. Early in August, sitting on our cottage dock in the Algonquin Highlands, we saw a few monarchs fluttering past. Over the next ten days, they appeared daily following the same path, visiting the odd pot of annuals on some of the docks. Back at home in Peterborough, they've become a daily sight in my small urban garden. It's a good year for local monarchs, perhaps a positive sign of increased population.



A newly emerged monarch!



The eastern monarch (a sub-species) is found east of Alberta (though not in Newfoundland and Labrador) and begins its migration in late summer to the mountains in Central Mexico. What's unique about its migration is that the butterflies that migrate south in late summer are not the same butterflies that return in spring. Those who return are one or two generations later than those who left.

Monarchs and milkweed go hand in hand. Milkweed is essential to monarchs as the preferred location for the female to lay her eggs and as the sole food source for the young caterpillars. For gardeners hoping to attract monarchs to their garden, swamp milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*) is a better choice than common milkweed (*A. syriaca*). Common milkweed spreads rapidly and aggressively and can easily take over a small

garden. Swamp milkweed is erect and tall with lovely pink flowers and more restrained in its growth. Another favourite for gardeners is the butterfly milkweed (*A. tuberosa*), it's a favourite source of nectar for the butterflies, but its leaves are hairy and less desirable for the caterpillars.



The monarchs in my garden are busy on the annual verbena (*verbena bonariensis*). They appear several times per day and easily spend 30 - 40 minutes gathering nectar from the blossoms. Verbena is not native, but it self-seeds in my garden and provides lovely late summer blooms, as well as being an excellent food source for pollinators.

There's a patch of common milkweed in a pile of neglected rubble at the side of my house, I examined it carefully but found no sign of the eggs or caterpillars. The eggs are light coloured, very small - about the size of a pin head - and have little bumps



Common milkweed, no signs of eggs or caterpillars

on them. Single eggs can be found on the underside of a milkweed leaf, nibbled leaves are a good sign that the young caterpillars are around. Once they are ready to pupate, the mature caterpillar often travels a short distance and forms a chrysalis. The chrysalis starts out green and turns black, becoming clear as the butterfly gets ready to emerge. The lifecycle of the monarch is one of nature's most intriguing stories; it's a joy to experience.

There are many groups that support monarch conservation:

- Canadian Wildlife Federation: <https://cwf-fcf.org/en/conservation/monarchs.html>
- Monarch Butterfly, <https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/species-risk-public-registry/factsheets/monarch-butterfly.html>
- The Butterflyway Project: <https://davidsuzuki.org/take-action/act-locally/butterflyway/>

❖ **Marjorie Vendrig**

Why are leaves dropping so soon?

Many cities in Ontario are reporting that their trees, notably Norway maples, are dropping all their leaves already. If you look closely, you will notice black, tar like dots on the leaves. We had a lot of rain and humid days over the summer which has encouraged "Tar Spot" fungus to proliferate much faster this summer. It has been

around for many years, just not as widespread as this year. It usually starts to develop in early to mid June looking like small green spots, and so we do not really notice it.

Tar spot is a fungal disease that does not necessarily kill trees, but it can make them look awful year after year. If you have several years of trees being infected it can weaken the tree since they keep dropping leaves too early before they can store enough energy for the winter.

It spreads by way of spores on the leaves that are airborne on windy days and wind driven rain. It can survive the winter on dead leaves on the ground and will appear again to re-infect the tree in the spring. It does not go away on its own.

That is why it is important to rake and dispose of leaves as soon as they fall. Composting them requires keeping the leaves under soil to prevent spores from becoming airborne in the spring. Do not shred them unless you can keep all the 'pieces' underground. Spraying fungicides would be unsustainable and are not recommended since they are very bad for pollinators and the tree would have to be very small to be effective.



Tar Fungal Disease has really hit the Norway maples all over Peterborough. They are non-native and seem to be more susceptible to this fungus but other types of Maples can be affected as well: red maple, silver maples and sugar maples.

When you are driving around town in the next few weeks you will notice a lot of dark brown trees that will be dropping leaves very soon. Please consider getting your rakes out early this month and bagging the infected leaves. Hire some students looking for pocket money!

In the early Spring, before trees open leaves, watch for infected leaves that are still on the loose and rake them up. If you need to water trees in the Spring, water at the base early in the morning so new leaves stay dry. When planting trees space them further apart and prune crowded branches so air can dry leaves faster.

Remember- Tar Spot will not go away on its own!

❖ **Laura Jack**

Sources: Garden Ontario, Reddit, Blog.davey.com

PHS Shirts for Members – still available!

Say hello to your new favourite gardening shirt! These shirts were so popular we will be selling them again this fall at the September general meeting.

Ladies crewneck t-shirt



Unisex crew neck t-shirt



Designed by the Board, to be screen printed right here in Peterborough.

Funds raised from sales will help us to broaden our scholarship donations for 2027 and we hope that visibility out and about in the community will spark conversations and interest and help attract new members.

Pre-sales will take place at this month's meeting. Shirts are \$25 each. In order to go ahead with the order, we need to confirm 24 sales. Please consider bringing extra cash with you this month to place your order. We will have blanks at the meeting to help determine the size and style you're interested in!

PHS Speakers for 2026

In Person meetings at the Peterborough Lion's Centre

Sept. 23: **Dave Ellis** – “Wildlife Photography”

Oct. 28: **Jessica York (Branch Ranch)** – Demonstration of Seasonal Decor

Nov. 25: **MJ Pilgrim** - “Christmas Trivia”
PHS AGM will take place after MJ's talk

There is no meeting in December and the January and February meetings will be virtual.

Remember to keep an eye out for further information in our newsletters and emails.

Gardening Resources

OHA Garden Ontario website <https://gardenontario.org> lots of downloadable resources and the Autumn 2025 Trillium

Peterborough Master Gardeners website is <https://peterboroughmastergardeners.com/> read the blog, ask questions, find events in Peterborough area.

There are a lot of websites, books and groups that provide resources – if you have a favourite one, please let us know and we will share in the newsletter

Upcoming Events and Activities

September 23rd – Flower Show & Tell (part of the regular members meeting)

January – accepting submissions for the Pictures of Summer Flower Show & Tell
Make sure to take pictures of your gardens before it's too late. We are hoping for lots of happy, fun memories to share in the Pictures of Summer virtual flower show & tell.

