WEST CARLETON
GARDEN CLUB & HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

THE WATERING CAN | NEWSLETTER

Welcome

Welcome to the October 2026 issue of the West Carleton Garden Club's newsletter, *The Watering Can*! This month our theme is *The Fall Garden*.

In this issue, you can find:

1. **News & Events** – Check out this editorial for information on our October meeting (and the annual WCGC Seed Swap!), our speaker, community events and Housekeeping updates
2. **In the Garden** – In line with our theme, this month's article is on *Putting the Garden to Bed*, along with some tip and tricks.
3. **Club Highlights** – recaps from September in case you missed it!
4. **Test Your Skills** – Do you have what it takes to spot the four garden helpers this month?
5. **Profile of the Month** – check out our horticultural highlight this month!
6. **End Notes** – Reminder for October's meeting and upcoming information

We hope you enjoy the newsletter, and happy gardening!!



Thank You and Welcome!

Thank you to everyone who contributed to our Fall Flower Show! We had some lovely specimens to showcase – clearly our late summer gardens are in full bloom. For more details see our Cub Highlights section.

Big thanks to Berit Erikson for her talk on *Attracting Birds to Your Garden* – it was both informative and engaging.

A big welcome to our all our new members! We are so happy you've joined the Club and look forward to gardening together ☺

WCGC News & Events

Join us Oct 13 at Carp Memorial Hall (3739 Carp Road) for the WCGC Seed Swap and monthly meeting:

Seed Swap

- Bring in your saved seeds by 6:45 for the annual Seed Swap!
- Please ensure they are in a labelled envelop, airtight jar, or hand-made seed packets. Please include plant name, plant height, growing conditions (sun/part shade), flower colour (if possible)
- Reminder that you can bring in plants to swap too
    - Please bring them in a labelled pot and bring them home if they are not taken

WCGC Meeting

- At 7:30pm we will be hearing from Master Gardener Nancy McDonald on The Fall Garden: Activities to Beautify, Protect, and Nourish Your Garden
- *This talk will highlight key fall tasks from the Master Gardeners of Ottawa Carleton Garden Calendars for September, October, and November, including what to plant, store, move, or divide; the importance of topdressing; and garden cleanup that leaves "the leaves " for beneficial insects, seed heads for overwintering birds and winter interest. We will also discuss what needs winter protection and how to provide it. There is still fun—and a little work—to do in the garden, and these activities will help improve your garden for 2027*

New from the Ontario Horticulture Association I Garden Ontario

- **Garden Ontario 50/50 Raffle**
  The fall 50/50 draw takes place Oct. 18. Ticket sales support horticultural education and grants across Ontario. GardenOntarioRaffleBox
- **Seedy Saturday/Sunday Grants**
  Applications are due **Nov. 15**. Forms are available at **gardenontario.org** under Resources.

Other Notable Ottawa-area Events

- Celebrate the changing seasons with at Flying Moon Farm in Beckwith on October 17 from 1:30–4:30 p.m. Spend the afternoon bringing in the harvest, closing garden beds, and taking part in hands-on seasonal farm activities followed by herbal teas and honey-inspired snacks. Pay what you can (suggested $10-$40)and get tickets here: EventBrite Flying Moon Farm



In the Garden

Putting the Garden to Bed

October is a month of transition in the garden. As temperatures cool, it can be tempting to cut everything back and rake every leaf—but a little restraint can benefit both the garden and the wildlife that depends on it.

Remove diseased plant material and spent annuals but consider leaving healthy perennials standing. Coneflowers, black-eyed Susans and ornamental grasses add winter interest, while seed heads provide food for birds and hollow stems offer shelter for beneficial insects.

Fallen leaves are valuable too. A light layer beneath trees, shrubs and perennials provides winter habitat and gradually returns organic matter to the soil.

October is also a good time to divide overcrowded perennials, plant spring-flowering bulbs and lift tender bulbs for winter storage. Continue watering newly planted trees, shrubs and perennials until the ground freezes.

The fall garden doesn't need to look perfectly tidy. Leaving some stems, seed heads and leaves helps create a healthier garden—and one that continues supporting wildlife long after the growing season ends

October Garden Checklist

- ✓ **Plant spring bulbs** before the ground freezes.
- ✓ **Lift tender bulbs** such as dahlias and gladiolus for winter storage.
- ✓ **Empty outdoor containers** that may crack during freeze-thaw cycles.
- ✓ **Clean and sharpen garden tools** before storing them.
- ✓ **Make notes for spring** while this year's successes (and lessons learned!) are still fresh.

Tips and Tricks:

Saving Tender Bulbs

Tender bulbs such as **dahlias, cannas and gladiolus** won't survive an Ottawa winter in the ground. Save them now to enjoy again next year!

- **Wait until frost** has blackened or damaged the foliage before lifting.
- **Dig carefully**, leaving space around the plant to avoid damaging bulbs and tubers.
- **Let them dry** for several days in a cool, sheltered location before storing.
- **Store somewhere cool, dark and frost-free** for the winter.
- **Check periodically** and discard anything showing signs of rot

Club Highlights

We had a wonderful and busy September meeting with the Fall Flower Show and a talk from Berit Erikson on attracting birds to your garden.

Fall Flower Show

We had a wonderful turnout for the Fall Flower Show; check out the exhibits to the right!

- Brenda Baird won a $25 gift certificate for highest aggregate points
- Other winners included Angela Bonneau (Judges Choices, Horticulture), Donna Caldwell (Best in Show, Design), and Joanna Dowes (Judges Choices, Horticulture, and Best in Show, Design)

Congrats to our winners and thank you to our judges and to Dan Stumpf for taking the pictures!

WCGC Bursary Winner

Each year we sponsor a bursary for a graduating student at West Carleton Secondary School. This year the winner is Owen Dods from Carp!

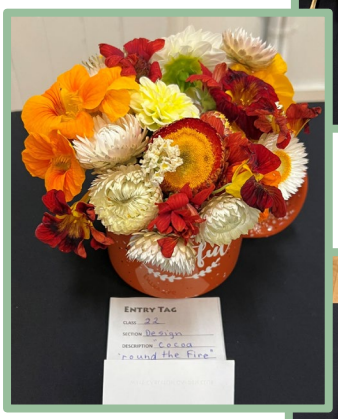
Owen is now attending Fleming College in the Fish and Wildlife Technician program. He hopes to also eventually attend University to study marine biology. Congratulations Owen!

Housekeeping

We have two small vases and a ladies' beige jacket that were left at the Hall after our September meeting. The jacket and vases have been locked away in our storage cupboard and can be claimed at the October meeting.









Photos courtesy of Dan Stumpf



Test Your Skills

Look closely at the photo below.

Can you spot the 4 garden helpers that are beneficial to leave in place over the winter?



Answer: Seed heads, fallen leaves, hollow stems, ornamental grasses

Profile of the Month

Sugar Maple

- ✓ Spectacular orange, red and yellow fall colour
- ✓ Native to Eastern Canada
- ✓ Seeds provide food for birds and small mammals
- ✓ Mature trees provide nesting and shelter habitat
- ✓ Fallen leaves return nutrients to the soil
- ✓ Can live for several hundred years



End Notes

Reminder! WCGC October Meeting

- Join us Oct 13 for our monthly meeting and the annual Fall Seed Swap; Master Gardener Nancy McDonald will be speaking about the Fall Garden.
- Seeds should be brought in and placed by 6:45 with the meeting starting at 7:30pm.

Coming in November...

- We are welcoming Master Gardener Lee Ann Smith to our meeting who will be speaking on *Wildscaping : Approaching Garden Design by Emphasizing Native Plants and Grasses*