WEST CARLETON
GARDEN CLUB & HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

THE WATERING CAN | NEWSLETTER

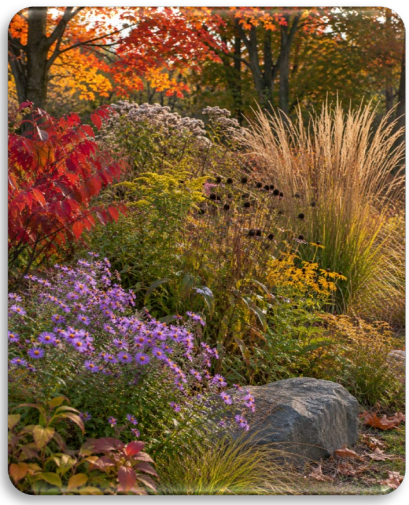
Welcome

Welcome to the November 2026 issue of the West Carleton Garden Club's newsletter, *The Watering Can*! This month our theme is *Wildscaping* with native plants and grasses.

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 *Wildscaping*, along with some tip and tricks.
3. **Club Highlights** – recaps from October in case you missed it!
4. **Community Events** – what's happening in and around our community this month.
5. **Test Your Skills** – It's a *WILD* word search!!
6. **Profile of the Month** – check out our horticultural highlight this month!
7. **End Notes** – Reminder for November's meeting and upcoming information.

We hope you enjoy our *WILD* newsletter this month!!!!



Thank You and Welcome!

Thank you to Donna Cook for organizing the annual Seed Swap and to all who participated – we hope you (and your garden) is set for next spring! For more details see our Cub Highlights section.

Big thanks to Nancy McDonald for her presentation on *The Fall Garden* – it couldn't have come at a better time!

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

Let's Get WILD!!!!!!

A little club business, followed by a walk on the WILD side!!!

Join the WCGC for our Annual General Meeting, followed by an inspiring presentation from Master Gardener Lee Ann Smith (see right).

Logistics:

- 7:30pm,
- Carp Memorial Hall, 3739 Carp Rd

Meeting Details:

- AGM: We'll begin the evening with our Annual General Meeting, which will include a review of Club activities and an update to our Constitution.
- Presentation: "Wildscaping" is gaining more traction around the world, as home gardeners and landscaping professionals shift their priorities to a more naturalistic approach. Does this mean our gardens have to look "wild" or messy? What if you already have a well-established garden and wish to incorporate more native elements? What is "wildscaping" exactly?

  This presentation introduces the wildscaping approach to garden design, including how this type of garden is implemented and offers some real-life examples of wildscapes large and small.

Lee Ann Smith, Master Gardener

Lee Ann is a member of the Master Gardeners of Ottawa Carleton and has been an active gardener in Ottawa for over 40 years. The beauty found in nature continues to inspire her, as a gardener as well as a poet and photographer. She studies horticulture and landscape design at the University of Guelph and contributes regularly to Master Gardener advice clinics and newsletters. Visit her website.



In the Garden

Wildscaping with Native Plants and Grasses

Wildscaping offers an opportunity to combine thoughtful garden design with the ecological benefits of native plants. Beyond supporting birds, pollinators and other wildlife, native species bring distinctive textures, seasonal colour and natural movement to the landscape.

Native grasses are particularly versatile in garden design. Their architectural forms provide structure and contrast throughout the growing season, while their changing colours, seed heads and winter silhouettes extend visual interest well beyond autumn. Combined with flowering perennials, shrubs and trees, they can create layered, dynamic plantings that evolve throughout the year.

Wildscaping also invites us to reconsider some traditional garden practices. Retaining seed heads, allowing leaves to remain in selected areas and leaving perennial stems standing through winter can provide valuable habitat for beneficial insects and other wildlife.

The challenge, and opportunity, lies in balancing ecological function with aesthetic appeal. Through considered plant selection, repetition and structure, a wildscape can be both beautifully designed and rich in biodiversity.



A beautiful garden, structured, and wild-life friendly garden

Tips and Tricks

5 Easy Ways to Start Wildscaping

- ✓ **Start Small.** Replace a section of lawn or garden beds with native plants.
- ✓ **Plant in Groups:** Clusters help pollinators find food.
- ✓ **Leave the Leaves:** They provide winter shelter for beneficial insects.
- ✓ **Keep Seed Heads Standing:** The offer food and cover for wildlife during the colder months.
- ✓ **Skip the Pesticides:** Let beneficial insects do their job..

Club Highlights

We had a wonderful and busy late September/October between the Carp Fair, the Annual Seed Swap, and an excellent presentation by Nancy McDonald on *The Fall Garden*.

Carp Fair

The WCGC Had a great showing at the fair (see right), with many participating and winning entries! Congrats to all.





Carp Fair Photos courtesy of Brenda Baird

October Meeting

- We had a great turnout at our annual seed swap - thank you to Donna Cook for once again organizing, coordinating, and planning this annual event for our members
- Nancy McDonald gave a wonderful presentation on the fall garden and what to plant, keep, store, or divide – thank you for this engaging (and timely!) presentation

Community Events

- **Carp Garden Centre Wreath-Making Workshops:** Get creative with fresh seasonal greenery! November workshops are now open for registration at carpgardencentre.ca
- **Friends of the Farm Hidden Network:** Discover the fascinating microbial world beneath our gardens and its role in plant health. November 21, 2 pm. Neatby Salon, 960 Carling Avenue.
- **Garden Ontario's 50/50 Lottery:** Support horticulture across Ontario while taking a chance at winning some cash! The Ontario Horticultural Association's 50/50 lottery helps fund gardening education, environmental initiatives and community beautification projects. Tickets are on sale now, with the next draw taking place January 2, 2027. GardenOntario50/50Draw

Test Your Skills

Can You Find These Wildscaping Words?

Native – Seeds – Birds – Grass – Leaves – Meadow – Habitat - Roots

R	O	O	T	S	O	T	L	S	I
V	A	F	S	O	G	N	H	C	H
D	T	A	T	I	B	A	H	U	N
P	D	S	A	C	U	I	D	R	S
N	B	E	E	S	E	E	D	S	R
A	I	V	F	V	N	G	V	G	C
T	R	A	V	G	U	R	D	P	R
I	D	E	W	O	D	A	E	M	T
V	S	L	T	P	V	S	A	D	H
E	L	O	O	P	M	S	E	L	I

Words can be horizontal, vertical and backwards!

End Notes

Reminder! WCGC November Meeting

- Join us November 10, 7:30pm for our Annual General Meeting and presentation.
- Master Gardener Lee Ann Sith will be presenting on Wildscaping with native plants - it's going to be WILD!

Profile of the Month

Little Bluestem

(Schizachyrium scoparium)

- ✓ Native to Ontario
- ✓ Blue-green stems turn striking copper and reddish-bronze in autumn
- ✓ Thrives in full sun and well-drained soil
- ✓ Drought-tolerant once established
- ✓ Provides overwintering habitat for insects
- ✓ Can be left standing until spring
- ✓ Brings colour, texture and movement to the garden throughout the seasons



Coming in December...

- Food. Social. Gifts.
- Need we say more? Join us for our holiday potluck, social, and silent auction December 8!