



What's Growing On? The Fletcher Wildlife Garden Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 1

May 2011

Volunteers Wanted! Just Like You!

A great opportunity to learn more about local wildlife and gardening with native plants.

Our volunteer groups are very informal. New volunteers are asked to read our safety guidelines and sign a standard waiver ([English](#) | [French](#)). A brief orientation session is also provided. After that, volunteers join in working on whatever needs doing this week.

Some volunteers join one crew and come every week. Others work when they can. The only rules are: follow the safety guidelines and let the group leader know what you are doing. Some volunteers even come to the garden on their own in their spare time to work on ongoing projects.

We have 3 dedicated volunteer sessions: The new **Invasive Species Group** (Tues 9-12); the **Butterfly Meadow Group** (Wed 6– until dark); and the **Backyard Garden Group** (Fri 9-12).

For more info: www.ofnc.ca/fletcher/volunteer.php



Volunteers!

Contact Us!

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Battling the Invasives: Our newest volunteer group steps up to the challenge!

Several species of INVASIVE PLANTS have been encroaching on FWG since its founding in 1991. As a volunteer-operated organization, we need your help in managing and containing this problem, so we're expanding our volunteer group times to include a new **Tuesday Invasive Species Group (TISG)**. Dealing with invasives involves a good deal of physical labour, some of it light, some of it heavy and difficult, so muscle power is always required. But a variety of other tasks are planned, including researching invasives and best methods for dealing with them, monitoring both the spread of invasives and the effects of our



Dog-strangling vine: Grrr! Learn to identify it and then eradicate it!

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efforts, managing information collected in the research and monitoring processes, helping with communications / public education, and making sure the coffee's hot and snacks are plentiful.

We meet every Tuesday at the Interpretive Centre before heading out to our area of work.

Come with us and learn how to identify pernicious invasives—you will soon spot them all over Ottawa! You can even teach others and encourage them to tackle their own local patches.

For more information on how you can help with our most valiant warriors, please contact us at fletcher@ofnc.ca

ANNUAL NATIVE PLANT SALE

SATURDAY 4 JUNE

9:30AM-12:30PM

A great selection of native plants to bring a piece of Canadian nature to your home!

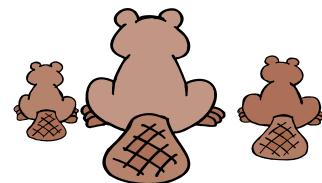


Beaver Tales! The Saga Continues

Once again, this winter we enjoyed a visiting beaver in our Amphibian Pond. However, come spring melt we assumed he had moved on—but no! On the 14th of May he was spotted once again.

We hope users of the FWG will respect our beaver as part of the local wildlife, and keep their dogs

under control. For more reading on the FWG beavers, check out this great note: www.ofnc.ca/fletcher/our_animals/beaver/FWG-Beaver-illus.pdf



WANTED: Items the Fletcher Wildlife Garden Could Use!

The Butterfly Meadow Group is looking for a used pool liner for their work. dlepagehibou@sympatico.ca

The Native Plant Sale invites anyone with extra boxes good for carrying bought plants to drop them off at the Interpretative Centre—hopefully, we can keep them out of the rain! Plastic bags would also be welcomed.

Nature Notes: Activity



Work is commencing at the start of a new season in the Butterfly Meadow. Diane and a couple of volunteers were busy today getting a site ready to plant a Monarch Waystation.

Nature Notes: In Bloom

Marsh marigold (Caltha palustris): The gorgeous yellow blossoms of this native species, can be found in most local streams and edges of wetlands. They are showy and beautiful and we have them growing at FWG! Thanks to some volunteers who planted them for us awhile back.



Nature Notes: Bug of the Month



The Spring Azure: Our first butterfly photo of the season at FWG courtesy of Jeewa! Although you can't tell when the wings are close, it gets its name from the brilliant blue of the wings when open. Seeing these butterflies flitting along is like seeing flashes of blue appearing and disappearing in front of your eyes. Silvery blues, summer azures and eastern tailed blues are the other three very similar "blues" in this area.

Nature Notes: Bird of the Month



Red-winged blackbird, female : The female blackbirds are back now and so nesting can commence, though where they are going to nest remains a mystery, given that most of the cattails in the pond have vanished. There are a few clumps here and there that may, just may, suffice. They nest in the dead cattails and usually there are plenty but not this year. Photo by Jeewa.

Nature Notes: Critter of the Month

Critters to be! Ropes of toad eggs. The females lay these eggs as they are mating.



Knowledge Note for the Month: Feeding Birds!

Some garden visitors had great questions about feeding birds: What is the best seed mix? Should we feed them in winter? Summer? Our detailed note is [online](#), but here are some quick pointers.

- Once you start feeding birds, keep it up until spring comes. Birds will depend on the food you supply and may have a hard time finding other food if you stop feeding them.
- Many books list peanut butter as an appropriate food for birds. However, because it is so sticky they can choke on it.
- Many commercial seed mixes contain a lot of filler—see our list for what certain birds really eat! Sunflower seeds are a common favourite.