

## Carleton Place & District Horticultural Society Meeting Recap – September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025

I'm delighted to report that our September meeting was well attended and filled with positive energy.



Here's the recap:

### **Opening Remarks - Rick Roberts**

President Rick Roberts called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., beginning with a land acknowledgment of the Algonquin Anishinabe Nation.

Rick introduced the theme for the evening as ***Gardening with Native Plants***. This theme was proposed and coordinated by our Climate Change and Biodiversity group who recommended the guest speaker and set up a large display of native plants and plant giveaways.

On behalf of Rob Drapeau, our Photography Contest Coordinator, Rick reminded members that all photo submissions for the Photography Contest must be received by the October 1st meeting. Judging will take place later in October and results shared at the November meeting. Further details can be found on our website front page (Photography Competitions) and in the September 2025 newsletter (attached to this email).

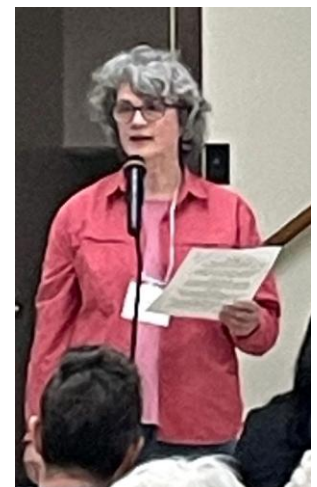
### **Treasurer's Report - Linda Bartlett**

Treasurer Linda Bartlett presented the financial report for the fiscal year spanning from October 1, 2024, to September 30, 2025. For this period, the organization's income totaled \$9,659.00 and expenses were \$7,332.00, resulting in a surplus of \$2,327.00. The current bank balance is \$9,690.00. Linda asked all receipts be submitted for any outstanding approved expenses for the current year as soon as possible. She also noted that the proposed 2025/2026 budget includes increased allocations for both the Youth Program and the Flower Show Committee.

### **Hospitality Committee Update - Kilby McCann**

Kilby McCann provided details about the upcoming **Jams and Jelly Competition**, which will take place during the November 5 meeting.

The entries will be judged by Helen Halpenny, and biscuits will be provided for taste-testing. Kilby also extended a special thanks to Donna, Sheila, Anita, and Heather for providing the desserts for the evening's refreshment break.



### **Flower Show Committee Update – Barbara Fowler**

Barbara Fowler extended a heartfelt thank you to all the volunteers and participants who attended the summer Flower Show and enjoyed the Ice Cream Social. She offered a special note of appreciation to the Hospitality Committee for their excellent work. For the upcoming Fall Flower Show at the October 1st meeting, we encourage you to select the best bloom from your garden to enter. Don't worry about having a fancy vase; simple containers like jam jars or sauce bottles are perfect for your entries. Entry tags are available this evening. Please remember that all entries must be placed on the tables before 7:00 p.m. on the evening of the show. Doors open at 6pm for exhibitors to set up... doors open for meeting participants at 6:30pm.

### **Carleton Place Public Library Seed Program - Cindy McBride**

Cindy announced that the Carleton Place Library is currently accepting seed donations. They are requesting dried seeds to be submitted in an envelope, clearly labeled with the date and the type of seed. The seeds will be distributed in the Spring of 2026. In addition, September is Library Card Sign-Up Month. Anyone who signs up for a new library card will be entered into a draw to win a gift basket of cookies.

### **Recognition - Dianne Elliott, Paul Pietsch**

President Rick Roberts acknowledged the recent retirements of two long-serving members, former Director and Secretary Dianne Elliott and former President Paul Pietsch. Dianne served for 19 years as Secretary and 4 years on the Executive Board, while Paul dedicated 20 years to the organization. Rick extended his gratitude for their many years of invaluable service which was supported by extended applause from the members. Dianne and Paul continue to be active members of Carleton Place and District Horticultural Society providing wise council to those who take up the torch.

### **Introduction of Guest Speaker – Irene Tobis**

Irene Tobis offered a glowing review of our speaker, Melanie Ouelette, who is founder and Chair of her incredible initiative, the Ottawa Wildflower Seed Library. Melanie's vision was to create a grassroots project to make native plant seeds more accessible to the community. Since its inception, the organization has experienced exponential growth, now supporting 5,000 community gardens. To date, they have provided 100,000 free seeds from 265 native plant species, with all seeds carefully organized and labeled for easy access.

### **Guest Speaker - Melanie Ouelette, *Native Plant Gardening.***



The following summary of points covered by Melanie was recorded by Debbie Guthro:

- **Understanding Cultivars and Native Plants** - A cultivar is a specific type of cultivated plant that has been bred or selected by humans for particular traits, such as color or size. These traits are maintained when the plant is propagated. A helpful hint for identification is that cultivar names are often enclosed in quotation marks on plant tags, for example, *Echinacea purpurea* Magnus. In contrast, a native plant is a species that naturally occurs and has evolved within a specific region or ecosystem. These plants are perfectly adapted to the local soil, climate, and wildlife without human intervention. To ensure success in your garden, it's essential to select the right plants for your specific growing conditions.
- **Sourcing and Planting Native Seeds** - The Ottawa Wildflower Seed Library (OWSL) offers free seed giveaways. You can place an order online and have the seeds mailed directly to you. The ideal time for planting these seeds is during the winter—specifically in December, January, and February. The recommended method is winter sowing, which involves planting the seeds in pots and leaving them outdoors. You can find detailed instructions on "How to Winter Sow" on the OWSL website.
- **Some suggested native plants to consider:** Anise Hyssop; Nodding Onion (similar to Allium); Wild Strawberries; False Sunflowers; Rough Blazing Star (*Liatris*); Sundrops; Wild Bergamot; Big Bluestem; Black-eyed Susan
- **A critical note:** Always avoid taking plants from the wild. You should only use seeds from personal gardens to prevent introducing invasive species. Remember, ***the goal is to harvest seeds, not the entire plant.***
- **Fall Garden Care and Aesthetics** - Native plants are often considered "messy" due to their natural growth habits, and aesthetics are important to many gardeners. Instead of removing all plant material in the fall, consider leaving leaves and stems. Leaves provide essential habitat for insects, and leaving stems about a foot long creates small holes that serve as nesting sites for cavity-nesting bees. If you are interested in seeing how native plants can be used in a designed garden, you can visit "Fletcher's Native Gardens" located near the Experimental Farm in Ottawa. This is a great place to see how native plants and grasses can be incorporated into a structured landscape. Many native plants can also be successfully grown in containers. For example, Big Bluestem grass can be grown in a pot and left outside during the winter, and it will return each year.



### Refreshment Break & Native Plant browse

Members enjoyed donated desserts, drinks, social time and viewing the many Native Plants displayed and questions answered by our Climate Change and Biodiversity Group volunteers. . As usual, our Hospitality Committee and treat donors came through spectacularly!

**Meeting Resumes** - Rick Roberts extended his thanks to the Hospitality Committee for organizing, providing and presenting the evening's excellent selection of refreshments. He also noted that our

volunteer dessert donors are scheduled through the end of December 2025. The Hospitality Committee is now welcoming members to volunteer refreshment donations for the 2026 meetings. Did I mention how much I enjoy squares and cookies :)

### Plant Giveaway

A Native Plant Giveaway was held, offering each member in attendance the opportunity to take home at least two plants for their gardens. Additionally, several established native plants were awarded as door prizes.



Climate Change and Biodiversity Group's plant giveaway was awesome!

Congratulations to the lucky winners: Brenda Cupper, Ann Harbord, Gail Pahwa, Kilby McCann, Audrey Downer, Sally Ouelette, and Kelsey, who each went home with a new plant for their garden. Irene Tobis invited members to a viewing of her native plant garden on Saturday, September 6th, at her home on Queen Street in Carleton Place.



### Closing Remarks

Rick Roberts recognized the efforts of the Climate Change and Biodiversity Group for their hard work in organizing and providing all the native plants for the giveaway. He concluded the meeting by reminding everyone about the next General Meeting on October 1, 2025. Since that announcement the speaker who was scheduled has cancelled. **UPDATE:** Bri Logan (Speaker Coordinator) has arranged an interesting speaker with a timely topic for our October 1st meeting. Our new guest speaker for October 1st is **Penny Foster** from Beckwith Farm who will speak about **Canning Jams and Jellies**. Penny will also

recommend things that can be grown in our gardens for canning. This topic is especially timely with our Jams and Jellies Contest coming up at the November meeting.

Who is Penny Foster? "*The Beckwith (from Beckwith), a quirky heirloom farmer that pickles most everything! Growing unique and rare hot peppers, tomatoes of every colour of the rainbow, and even pawpaws! Join us to discuss pickling and preserving, from fruit and vegetables, to flowers in your yard!*"

### **Meeting Adjourned**

The meeting ended at 8:50 p.m.

This meeting recap is brought to you by Debbie Guthro (notes), Bri Logan (photos), and yours truly (photos, editing and setup)

Happy gardening, Rick

### **Member Communications**

#### **Carleton Place & District Horticultural Society**

Communications Coordinator: Rick Roberts, President

Website: <https://cphorticulture.ca/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/carletonplaceanddistricthorticulturalsociety>

Instagram: [https://www.instagram.com/cp\\_and\\_district\\_hort\\_society/](https://www.instagram.com/cp_and_district_hort_society/)