

# 2026 YEARBOOK



# Russell Gardeners

The **Russell and District Horticultural Society** is dedicated to engaging and educating gardeners of all ages. We encourage the improvement and beautification of our community through gardening, recycling, and supporting local businesses. Our goal is to enhance our community by making it even more beautiful while protecting the environment.

The objectives of our Society are to encourage interest and education in horticulture by:

- holding meetings and educational workshops;
- encouraging the planting of trees, shrubs and flowers in our community;
- promoting outdoor beautification;
- arranging field trips, competitions and exhibitions related to horticulture;
- distributing seeds, plants, bulbs, flowers, trees and shrubs;
- promoting the protection of the natural environment;
- promoting the circulation of horticultural information through any media;
- stimulating an interest in the study of horticulture in gardeners of all ages.

Russell and District Horticultural Society  
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Photo credits to: Grace Stapper, Louise Houle, Christine Lanthier, and Jacqueline Wyss.

# Table of Contents

Year in review 2025 .....	4
Junior Gardeners.....	5
President's Message .....	6
Acknowledgements .....	6
District Director's Message.....	7
District 1 Societies .....	7
Board of Directors .....	8
Committees .....	10
Membership.....	11
Life Members.....	11
Volunteer Hours.....	12
Special Events.....	14
Workshops.....	14
Day Trips .....	14
Plant Sale .....	15
March It on Out!.....	15
Garden Tour.....	15
Vedder Tree Sales .....	15
Mini Flower Shows .....	17
2026 June Flower Show Schedule.....	18
This and That.....	20
Notes .....	21
2026-2027 Meetings and Events.....	22



# Year in review 2025

by Grace Stapper

A Backward Glance --- Our horticultural society was able to enjoy an interesting and active year in 2025.

We hosted eight monthly meetings featuring a variety of interesting topics and speakers. Some of the topics featured were Horticultural Therapy, Rock Gardens, and Native Plants. Attendance at our meetings was good, averaging 50 enthusiastic attendees.

Members were able to register to learn something new and make unique projects, at workshops that were offered, workshops such as constructing Wire Alliums and Box Frame Succulent Garden. Another workshop, 'So, you want to enter a Flower Show' was also well attended.

We traveled to and experienced new places on the day trips, including the Purdon Conservation Area to see showy Lady Slipper orchids and to have a tour of the ornamental gardens at the Central Experimental Farm.

The annual plant sale was organized for May and this fundraiser raised just over \$2000. 'March it on Out', our indoor yard sale was well received and kept many donations in circulation instead of them ending up in landfill.

Members remained involved in beautifying our community, were involved in the upkeep of MacDougall park, working alongside township staff. Some of our members enjoyed helping out at the Russell library community garden and its Seed Library. We are pleased to work on activities with partners such as Eco-East Butterflyway Project and the staff and students at St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic High School.

Our society offered and ran a program for junior gardeners that drew 17 keen participants. The Juniors proudly exhibited their achievements at our September meeting where entries were judged and ribbons awarded.

This backward glance gives you a picture showing that we have enthusiastic members and willing volunteers. The Russell and District Horticultural Society remains a fun-filled group of gardeners and gardeners in training.



# 2025

*By the numbers*

## 1631

volunteer hours  
dedicated to  
the community

## 121

members

## 17

junior  
members

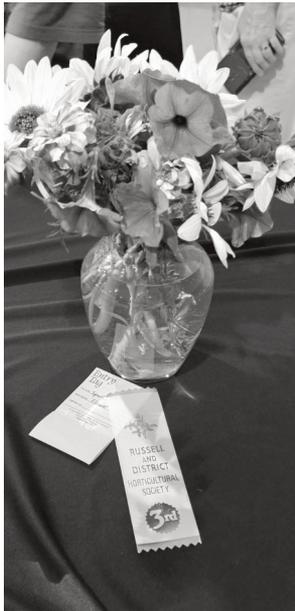
## 16

meetings,  
workshops  
and field trips

## Junior Gardeners

The Russell Junior Gardeners program is a great way to encourage our young gardeners. Our juniors receive seeds and plants in the spring and, with instructions and guidance, learn how to plant and take care of vegetables and flowering plants. There are also a couple of activities during the summer. We had a very keen group of Junior Gardeners in 2025 and they had a wonderful time growing their gardens!

For more information on the Junior Gardeners, contact our Junior Gardeners Liaisons, Julie Keravel and Laurie LeChausser.



# President's Message

Our enthusiastic directors and members have organized an interesting and fun filled year of activities and learning for you, as this 2026 yearbook illustrates. It's great to be working together with such a team of dedicated volunteers! It's interesting to note that the leading trend in gardening in 2026 is not a plant - it's a mindset. We are encouraged to consider that it's all about purposeful planting, in creating gardens that not only look good but do good too. Think of planting pollinator friendly varieties, long-lived perennials, and spring flowering bulbs which provide nectar and pollen food for early bees. Think of your gardens as mini ecosystems instead of plant and colourful flower displays. Your aim in the garden should be beauty that benefits nature, a garden that hums with life. Let go of a garden that is too tidy, go with the trend of relaxed planting. There is no need to feel guilty about some weeds, relax and enjoy the garden, it's the trend! Consider food sustainability also and plant nourishing vegetables, even in pots and among your flowers. Gardening possibilities are endless. I'm pleased to again be president of our horticultural society and look forward to sharing with you all that the year 2026 offers.

Grace Stapper, RDHS President

## Acknowledgements

The Society wishes to acknowledge and thank the following organizations for their cash donations, gift certificates, prizes and/or their professional talents that were donated this past year.

**Government of Ontario  
Russell Township  
Green Corners, U Pick Tulip and Flower Farm  
Beyond the House Garden Centre  
Eco-East Butterflyway Project**

We would also like to thank all our members and their families without whom our programs would not be as successful as they are.

# District Director's Message

In April 2025, the Kemptville Horticultural Society hosted our District 1 Annual General Meeting. We gave our fourth District 1 Service Award to Arline Rutter of the Kemptville Horticultural Society. It was wonderful to present it to her in the same year that she headed up the D1 2025 AGM Planning Committee.

The Society Presidents met by Zoom in October and decided it was still the best way to meet as a group. It certainly saved a lot on travel time. We had a few minutes together, in person, at the D1 AGM in April, so we had familiar faces in the zoom meeting in October.

Our societies continued with their community work, plant sales, garden tours and flower shows. Several Societies held Zoom-only meetings during January and February, then returned to in-person meetings for the rest of the year.

It was a great pleasure to attend a meeting at each of our Societies at least once during the year. Thank you very much to Louise Freeman, our D1 Assistant Director, Manja Bastian, our District Secretary/Treasurer, our Presidents, their Directors and Society members. Welcome to our new D1 Assistant Director, Rebecca Campbell, who joined Louise and I at several of our Society Annual General Meetings in November.

2025 was a very busy and rewarding year. I look forward to visiting each Society in 2026 and seeing their members at the District 1 AGM on April 18, 2026, to be hosted by the Vankleek Hill Horticultural Society.

Susan Ramsay, District 1 Director

## District 1 Societies

Cornwall & District Horticultural Society  
Gloucester Horticultural Society  
Kemptville Horticultural Society  
Martintown and District Horticultural Society  
Maxville and District Horticultural Society  
Russell and District Horticultural Society  
Seaway Valley Horticultural Society  
Vankleek Hill and District Horticultural Society  
Williamstown Green Thumb Horticultural Society

# Board of Directors



Grace Stapper  
President  
613-445-5737



Louise Houle  
Past President  
613-443-0514



Frances McCormick  
First Vice President  
613-363-0428



Christine Bourgeois  
Secretary  
613-247-7878



Christine Lanthier  
Assistant Secretary  
613-835-3397



Susan Barr  
Director  
613-496-3009



Kathleen Pitruniak  
Director  
613-448-3388



Linda DuHamel  
Director  
613-443-3756



Jacqueline Wyss  
Director  
613-293-0447



Manja Bastian  
Treasurer  
613-898-1801



Peter VanDie  
Assistant Treasurer  
613-821-3096



Cindy Anderson  
Director  
613-857-2287



Diane Sharp  
Director  
613-447-0468



Marianne Vedder  
Director  
613-445-5341



Laurie LeChasseur  
Director  
613-298-1559



Marilyn MacMillan  
Director  
613-445-3069



Julie Keravel  
Director  
613-445-6308



# Committees

## **Flower Shows**

Louise Houle, Pegi Holtz, Marilyn MacMillan,  
Alanna Groen-Brunsting

## **Day Trips**

Christine Lanthier

## **Garden Tour**

Louise Houle, Laurie LeChausser

## **High School Awards**

Marilyn MacMillan

## **Historical Records**

Margaret Helliker

## **Junior Gardeners Liaison**

Laurie LeChausser

## **Liaison with Russell Township**

Carole Van Die

## **Library Liaison**

Cynthia Anderson

## **March It On Out**

Kathy Pitruniak, Laurie LeChausser

## **Media and Communications**

Jacqueline Wyss, Grace Stapper, Laurie LeChausser

## **Memberships**

Manja Bastian, Linda Duhamel

## **Plant Sales**

Louise Houle, Pegi Holtz, Julie Keravel, Grace Stapper

## **Sunshine**

Linda Duhamel

## **Workshops**

Louise Houle, Pegi Holtz

## **Yearbook**

Jacqueline Wyss, Pegi Holtz

# Membership

Adult membership for the Society is \$15 per person per year (January to December).

For juniors the fee is \$10 per child per year.

By purchasing a membership, you agree to abide by the Russell and District Horticultural Society Code of Conduct and you can find a link at <https://russellgardeners.ca/membership> for all the info.

## Life Members

Life membership serves as recognition of participation in our Society and contributions to its program. It is presented to a member who has been actively involved for a minimum of 20 years, contributed to its programs and leadership, and shows a continued interest in horticulture.

We are proud to have the following life members: Barbara Boland, Margaret Helliker, Pegi Holtz, Louise Houle, Ann Jackson, Dorothy Kinkaid, Lindley McPhail, Alice Proper, Grace Stapper, Marianne Vedder and Jacqueline Wyss.

## Recording at Our Events

Please note that filming/photography may take place at any of our meetings and events for promotional and archival purposes. The photos and recordings may appear on the [russellgardeners.ca](https://russellgardeners.ca) website, in a publication such as the RDHS yearbook and/or social media. If you attend an event and would prefer not to be photographed, please let the photographer know in advance.

# Volunteer Hours

Your time counts! Volunteers are very important to the Russell and District Horticultural Society.

Each year, the Ontario Horticultural Association asks all societies to report the number of volunteer hours members contribute.

Please use this handy chart to track your volunteer hours and help us report them to the OHA by emailing your hours to [pvandie@magma.ca](mailto:pvandie@magma.ca) by December 1st.

## Category

1. Community Events: Time working at local fairs, community outreach programs, plant sales, Living Locally Fair and March it on Out.
2. Executive, Board and Monthly Meetings: Attending Executive and/or Board meetings. Include set-up and planning of general meetings (not time during meetings).
3. Executive, Board Members and Committee Members: Administration and Planning of events and meetings.
4. Flower Shows, Garden Tours: Planning and preparation time. Do not include time attending or viewing gardens by members.
5. Administration of, Planning, Planting, and Maintenance: Community Gardening, Conservation and Environmental Projects and Partnerships.
6. Special Events: Workshops, seminars/courses, District AGM, OHA Convention hosting, etc. (planning, volunteering and/or representing society as a delegate)
7. Yearbook, Newsletter, Website, Social Media: Time spent planning yearbooks, newsletters, developing and maintaining websites and social media.
8. Youth Activities: Time spent working with youth in schools, youth groups and the Junior Gardeners.
9. Other: (please specify)



# Special Events

## Workshops

Please make sure you register for these workshops on sign-up sheet at monthly meetings, or call Louise at 613-443-0514 or email at louhou51@gmail.com. Bring your own lunch and beverages. You must have a 2026 RDHS membership to participate in any of the workshops.

Workshops will be held at Pegi Holtz's place, 8730 Victoria Street, Metcalfe, unless specified otherwise.

Workshop fees are to be paid in advance to secure your spot.

### **Glass on Glass \$20**

Saturday, June 13th, 10am to 3pm

Choice of frame/window, mobile or garden totem. Supplies of multicoloured glass, baubles, glue, wire and glass cutters included. Bring your own totem pieces, frame/window (not exceeding 12x24), gloves, wire cutters, pliers (for mobiles)

### **Grapevine Wreath or Topiary Making \$20**

Saturday, October 15th, 10:00 to 3:00.

Please bring secateurs or loppers and any decorations you would like to include or share. We will provide the grapevine and may have some decorative balls, ribbons and evergreen cones.

## Day Trips

Stay tuned. Ideas are 'germinating'. Suggestions for possible day trips are being considered. Details and dates will be shared as they become available.





## **Plant Sale**

May 16, 2026 from 9am to noon (drop off donations between 7:30am and 9am) at the Russell Fairgrounds

Members and friends donate plants they have split or grown from seed, so this spring, when you are splitting your perennials, or planting seeds, remember to pot up some extras. This is a great way to share a piece of your garden with other local gardening enthusiasts.

The Eco-East butterflyway project group will be joining us again this year, sharing plants.

## **March It on Out!**

March 28, 2026 from 9am to noon at St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic High School

Drop off donations on Friday, March 27, 2026 from 5pm to 8pm and between 8am and 9am on Saturday.

## **Garden Tour**

The date for this year's garden tour has yet to be determined but when it does, you will be invited to visit private gardens, each with its own charm. At the end of the tour there will be a social which includes snacks and prizes.

## **Vedder Tree Sales**

Marianne and Jake continue to oversee this program and more trees will be available for sale this year. We will send out an email when trees are available. Make sure to sign up to receive the Horticultural Society emails so you don't miss out.

# Flower Show Rules

The Flower Show Convenors are Pegi Holtz, Louise Houle, Marilyn MacMillan and Alanna Groen-Brunsting

Rules governing RDHS flower show are as follows:

1. All entries must have been grown/produced by the exhibitor, except for the Arrangements class, where flowers may come from any source.
2. Individual specimens should be shown in a clear glass container.
3. The show committee is not responsible for loss or breakage.
4. Please have fun and share your treasures with all of us!

For the complete Russell and District Horticultural Society Rules Governing the Flower Shows, visit our website at <https://russellgardeners.ca/flower-shows>.

# Mini Flower Shows

Judges will be the members attending the meeting. No artificial flowers, please. Prizes are \$10 (1st), \$5 (2nd) \$3 (3rd)

## March 16, 2026

1. "National Wedding Planning Day" - an arrangement in a champagne glass
2. "World Music Therapy Day" - an arrangement to commemorate the day
3. "St. Patrick's Day" - a mostly green arrangement

## April 20, 2026

1. "Tartan Day" - an arrangement incorporating some plaid
2. An Easter themed creation
3. Mossy & Rocky etc.

## March 15, 2027

1. "Spring Ahead" - an arrangement incorporating a time piece to acknowledge daylight savings time on March 19th
2. "From the Library" - an arrangement that was inspired by a book you have read - bring the book
3. "Houseplant Whimsey" - jazz up a potted house plant

## April 19, 2027

1. "Earth Day" - an arrangement using "brown, blue and green colours, in a recycled container
2. "Commonality" - using the same elements make a pair (or more) arrangements to be displayed side by side
3. "Everlasting" - an arrangement using dried materials



# 2026 June Flower Show Schedule

Monday, June 15, 2026

Please note that entries must be in place by 6:30pm so that judging can start at 6:45pm.

## **Class: Flowers** **1st \$10, Ribbons for 1st, 2nd, 3rd**

1. Allium, 1 stem
2. Campanula, 1 cultivar, 3 stems
3. Euphorbia, 1 stem
4. Flowering shrub or tree, 1 branch
5. Flowering vine, under 40cm (above edge of container)
6. Iris, 1 stem
7. Lilacs, 3 stems
8. Peony, red, 1 bloom
9. Peony, pink, 1 bloom
10. Peony, white, 1 bloom
11. Peony, ltoh, 1 bloom
12. Peony, single, 1 bloom
13. Papaver (poppy) - 1 stem
14. Rose, red
15. Rose, pink
16. Rose, any other colour
17. Rose, floating
18. Rose, spray
19. Rudbeckia, 1 stem
20. Any other flower not mentioned above, 1 stem

## **Class: Foliage** **1st \$10, Ribbons for 1st, 2nd, 3rd**

21. Fern - collection minimum 3 varieties
22. Heuchera (Coral Bells) - 1 cultivar, 3 leaves
23. Heuchera Collection - minimum 5 leaves
24. Hosta - 1 giant leaf (measuring from the tip of the leaf, to leaf base over 10 inches)
25. Hosta - 1 large leaf (measuring from the tip of the leaf, to leaf base 6 to 10 inches)
26. Hosta - 1 medium leaf (measuring from the tip of the leaf, to leaf base 4 to 6 inches)
27. Hosta – 1 small leaf (measuring from the tip of the leaf, to leaf base 2 to 4 inches)
28. Hosta, miniature, any 1 cultivar, 3 leaves (measuring from the tip of the leaf, to leaf base under 2 inches)



29. Hosta, small, any 1 cultivar, 3 leaves (measuring from the tip of the leaf, to leaf base 2-4 inches)
30. Hosta, medium, any 1 cultivar, 3 leaves (measuring from the tip of the leaf, to leaf base 4-6 inches)
31. Hosta large- any 1 cultivar, 3 leaves measuring from the tip of the leaf, to leaf base 6-10 inches)
32. Hosta Collection – minimum 3 varieties, 2 leaves of each

**CLASS: Fruits and Vegetables 1st - \$10, Ribbons for 1st, 2nd, 3rd**

33. Collection of freshly cut herbs in 1 container, minimum 5 varieties, named on a separate card
34. Display of salad greens
35. Rhubarb, 5 stalks
36. Any other fruit or vegetable

**CLASS: Arrangements 1st: \$10; Ribbons for 1st, 2nd, 3rd**

37. "Nature's Wonder" - an arrangement with foliage only
38. "Tea Time" - using a cup and saucer create an arrangement
39. "Synergy III" - using three containers to create a unified whole by incorporating connective elements
40. "Pint Sized" An arrangement no larger than 5-10 inches in any direction
41. "The Sky's the Limit" - go wild; it's up to you to be creative

**Class: Photography 1st - \$10, Ribbons for 1st, 2nd, 3rd**

42. "Nesting Creatures" - a photo from nature
43. "Morning Dew"
44. "Art in the Garden"

**CLASS: Writing 1st - \$10, Ribbons for 1st, 2nd, 3rd**

45. A form of poetry that is written vertically in capital letters - please print "HONEY" in bold print

**CLASS: Art 1st - \$10, Ribbons for 1st, 2nd, 3rd**

46. A garden element you created

# This and That

Did you know, the word “bee” actually covers a very large collection of insects, many of which we have in our area. There are solitary bees, bumble bees, honey bees, burrowing bees, mining bees, sweat bees, leaf cutting bees, orchard mason bees, digger bees, sunflower bees, squash bees, carpenter bees and cuckoo bees to name a few.

Ikebana, or kadō (“way of flowers”), is the Japanese art of “making flowers alive” through minimalist, asymmetrical, and symbolic arrangements. Unlike Western vase-stuffed bouquets, Ikebana emphasizes structure, line, and space, often utilizing just a few branches and flowers in a low bowl (suiban) with a pin holder (kenzan). It embodies the principles of wabi-sabi (imperfect beauty) and seasonality. We will have a guest speaker in June who will talk to us about Ikebana arrangements.

The Butterflyway Project is a group of volunteers who work to improve local ecosystems by growing and sharing native Ontario wildflowers. This group will be at our annual Plant Sale on May 16 giving away a wide variety of native wildflower seedlings. Make sure to get some for your garden!

The 2026 colour of the year is “Cloud White,” and honestly, it couldn’t be more perfect for the garden. White flowers bring such a fresh, calming vibe to any outdoor space. If you mix them with pale, silvery foliage, you can even create a moon garden—a little nighttime oasis that really shines under the glow of the moon.

Delphiniums and hydrangeas are this year's perennials of the year, and it’s pretty well-deserved. Delphiniums bring those tall, dreamy spikes of colour that make any garden feel a little more whimsical. Hydrangeas, on the other hand, are like the reliable friend who always shows up looking gorgeous—big, fluffy blooms that shift shades through the season.

Broccolini is vegetable of the year, and it’s such a fun one to grow. It has that same crisp, earthy charm as traditional broccoli, but with a sweeter flavour and those long, tender stems that cook up beautifully. It’s one of those veggies that feels fancy without trying too hard, and it thrives in the garden with very little fuss. Harvest a handful and you’ve suddenly got the makings of a delicious weeknight dinner.

Go to [russellgardeners.ca](https://russellgardeners.ca)  
or scan this QR code to  
visit our website.



# Notes

A place to make notes such as reminders for workshops or day trips you've signed up for, or some interesting new thing you learned at one of our meetings.

# 2026-2027 Meetings and Events

## **Monday, March 16, 2026**

Meeting, Mini Flower Show and presentation by Braydale Lavender (Marilyn MacMillan, coordinator)

## **Saturday, March 28, 2026**

March it on Out!

## **Saturday, April 18, 2026**

District 1 Annual General Meeting hosted by Vankleek Hill Horticultural Society

## **Monday, April 20, 2026**

Meeting, Mini Flower Show and presentation by Lee Ann Smith on Wildscaping: Wild planting in a Strong Design (Cynthia Anderson, coordinator)

## **Saturday, May 16, 2026**

Plant Sale at the Russell Fairgrounds

## **Monday, May 18, 2026**

Meeting and presentation by Judith Cox on Vegetables in all Situations (Frances McCormick, coordinator)

## **Monday, June 15, 2026**

June Flower Show (see page 18 for the schedule). Meeting and presentation by Wendy Batson on Ikebana - Japanese flower arranging (Christine Lanthier, coordinator)

## **July 24-26, 2026**

OHA Convention in Oshawa



### **Monday, September 21, 2026**

Meeting and presentation by Deborah Doherty on how to have a bird friendly garden (Diane Sharpe, coordinator)

### **Monday, October 19, 2026**

Meeting and presentation on The Edible Garden with guest speaker Rebecca Last-Guenette (Cynthia Anderson, coordinator)

### **Monday, November 16, 2026**

Annual General Meeting with the election of officers, slide show recap of the year's events and houseplant sale

### **Monday, January 18, 2027**

Meeting and question and answer session. Bring your gardening questions, share your knowledge.

### **Monday, February 15, 2027**

Meeting and presentation by Ben Stapper on Fusion Gardening. Come and learn about what this new term, fusion landscaping, is all about: combining traditional elements of beautiful outdoor spaces with water wise techniques for stormwater management and conservation. (Marilyn Macmillan, coordinator)

### **Monday, March 15, 2027**

Meeting, Mini Flower Show and presentation by E.P. Power, Master Gardener on What's Bugging You (Marianne Vedder, coordinator)

### **Monday, April 19, 2027**

Meeting, Mini Flower Show and presentation by Kathleen Pitruniak on Composting Worms (Cynthia Anderson, coordinator)

## **Other Dates to Remember**

August 6-9, 2026      Navan Fair ([navanfair.com](http://navanfair.com))

August 13-16, 2026      Russell Fair ([russellagriculturalsociety.com](http://russellagriculturalsociety.com))

October 1-4, 2026      Metcalfe Fair ([metcalfefair.com](http://metcalfefair.com))

