



OVER THE GARDEN FENCE

East Gwillimbury Gardeners' Newsletter ("Teaser" Edition)

February/March 2020

Volume 23

Issue 1

Welcome back issue

*Welcome back to
another terrific year
with East
Gwillimbury
Gardeners!
We have a full
roster of great
speakers, day trips,
garden tours and
more planned for
2020!*



East Gwillimbury Gardeners' new board for 2020! Left to right: President Brenda Near, Past President Anne Hill, Heike Koch, Hélène Robert, Charmaine Hunter, Hilary Veenstra, Janice VanEvery and Stephanie Stearn. Missing: Ellen Power

COME MEET SOMEWONDERFUL PEOPLE

East Gwillimbury Gardeners gather on the third Tuesday of each month, February to November at 7:30pm in the Mount Albert Community Centre, Main Street, Mount Albert. There is a flower show, an interesting speaker, goodies to enjoy and wonderful people from your community to get to know.

We also have a youth club that meets at the same location at 7pm, third Tuesday of each month, Feb. to June, September and October.

Yearly membership: \$20 single, \$25 couple and \$30 family

Our amazing website has great information and resource links: <http://eastgwillimburygardeners.com>

Connect on social media via:



<http://facebook.com/eastgwillimburygardeners>

And on



[Instagram@eastgwillimburygardeners](https://www.instagram.com/Instagram@eastgwillimburygardeners)

East Gwillimbury Gardeners is a member of The Ontario Horticultural Association (OHA/ Garden Ontario) District 5
President: Brenda Near Past president: Anne Hill



Hello From East Gwillimbury Gardeners

Hello fellow gardener! Have we caught your attention? You have just picked up our “teaser” mini newsletter. To receive the entire newsletter you have to be a member of East Gwillimbury Gardeners! And how do you do that, you ask? Just fill out one of the membership forms in this booklet and come out to one of our meetings (see below). Speak to Ellen at the entrance and she will get you all set up with one of our fabulous membership packages full of great gardening goodies! Or check out our website: <http://eastgwillimburygardeners.com> to renew online.

UPCOMING EG GARDENERS' MEETINGS & EVENTS:

Tuesday Feb. 18th, 7:30 pm: “Highlights of the 2019 Buffalo Garden Walk” with our very own, Valerie Liney. Also our seed swap!
Junior Gardeners: Create and early spring garden.

March 17th, 7:30 pm: “Proud of my Pruning” with Sean James.
Learn all the techniques for perfectly shaped and healthy trees and shrubs.
Junior Gardeners: Planting Dahlia and Canna bulbs for plant sale



[Plant Paradise Country Gardens](#)

ROAD TRIPS! We will be doing three road trips again this year. Please join in the fun! Touring, shopping, picnics and more! Don't miss out. Pre-register at brendaaneat@gmail.com
March: Centennial Park Conservatory in Etobicoke
June: Oshawa Botanical Garden and Parkwood Estate for garden tour and

tea

July: The Giving Place tour

August: Anna's Perennials and the Seeds of Kindness orchard, Lindsay.

February 22nd: Get the Jump on Spring and Seedy Saturday, Toronto Botanical Gardens, 777 Lawrence Ave. East, 10am - 3pm, \$2.00 donation appreciated. TBG's annual Horticultural Open House with 30+ exhibitors including horticultural societies, garden clubs and environmental organizations, in addition to a floral design competition and show.
<https://torontobotanicalgarden.ca/enjoy/special-events/jump-on-spring/>

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Over The Garden Fence is published 5 times per year: Feb. /Mar.; April/May; June/July; Aug. /Sept.; Oct. /Nov.
EG Gardeners' newsletter was first published as “Over the Garden Fence” in August 1997.
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I welcome your submissions!

MORE GARDEN EVENTS in full newsletter!

October Speaker Summary: Charlotte de Keyzer: *"Life of a bee in the Urban Mosaic"*

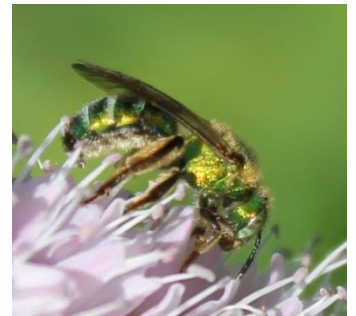


October seems like it was a long time ago but we had a very informative evening with Charlotte de Keyzer about native bees. Charlotte de Keyzer is a PhD Candidate at the University of Toronto. Her research focuses on the impacts of climate change and urbanization on plants and their pollinators. Charlotte has a passion for engaging the public and sharing her knowledge about bees with practically everyone she meets. She launched her own citizen science project,

Urban Redbud, in 2017, and recently created a blog called bee-washing.com, which addresses corporate greenwashing centred around bees. Her research has been published in peer-reviewed journals such as *Global Change Biology* and featured in the popular press by CBC and TVO.

Here are some informative tidbits from her talk:

- City bees are mostly native bees but not all native bees are city bees.
- City bees survive more on weeds and often the cut flowers at outdoor markets!
- For City bees the size of the habitat matters more than the complexity. Male bees are often smaller than females and only are there for mating. Females do "everything else".
- 90% of native bees live solitary lives.
- 75% nest in the ground.
- Females are often so tired from making the nest for the eggs, lining each cell carefully with leaves or mud and food for the emerging larvae that they die of exhaustion while closing the end hole and their body becomes the closure.
- Most bees are generalist or polylectic, meaning they will get nectar and pollen from a variety of plants. But some bees are specialists or oligolectic, meaning they gather only from a specific plant family. Squash bees are oligolectic. A very few bees are monolectic meaning they only go to one specific plant. For instance there is one bee that only feeds from the native Spring Beauty. What a short life!
- Most native bees do not travel far from their nest to gather food (up to 50m) so expect nest to be close to your flowers.
- Sadly the most common google search about bees is how to kill them.
- Instead we need to educate more on bee biology: most native bees do not sting, males have no stinger, nesting only lasts a month or two.

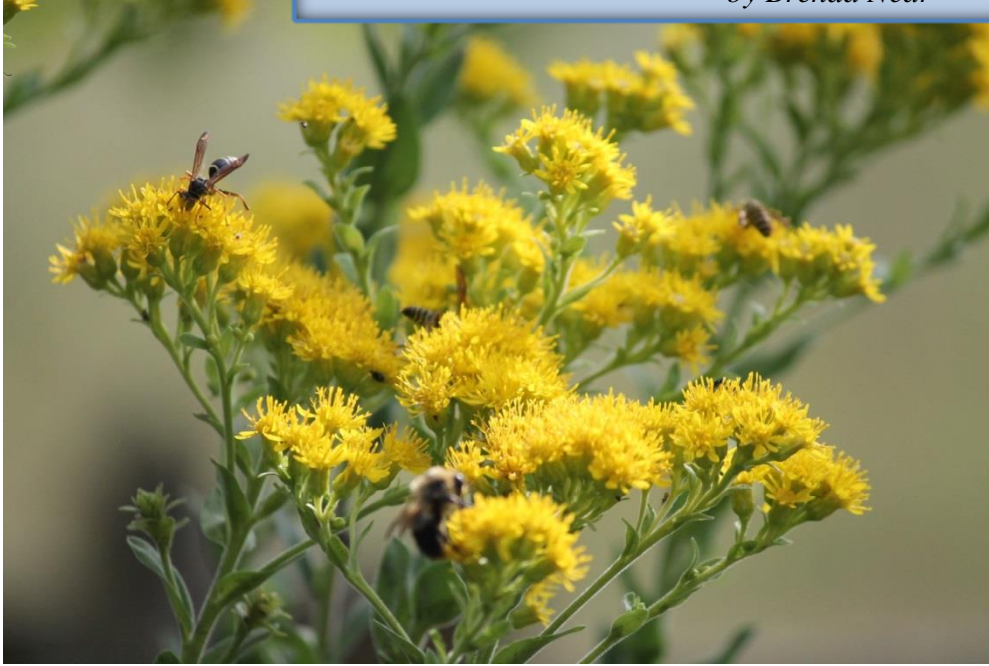


- The greater the number of bee species visiting a plant, the better the crop yield.
- Honey bees are actually rather poor pollinators as they tend to groom off the pollen.
- If you have trouble with carpenter bees, paint or stain your wood. They don't like it as well as natural wood. Then offer up a block of untreated wood nearby for them to go to instead.
- 15cm depth is optimal for bee condos or houses. This will promote the correct ratio of male to female eggs laid.
- Be bee friendly- ditch the heavy bark mulch everywhere! Be messier and lazier with garden clean up.



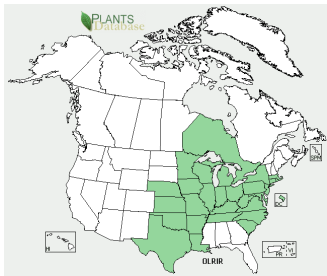
Native Plant Spotlight: Stiff Goldenrod

by Brenda Near



Solidago rigida or *Oligoneuron rigidum*, AKA Stiff Goldenrod, is a wonderful addition to the fall garden. It grows well in sandy, medium to dry soil in full sun to very light shade. As it blooms later in the season, end of August into September, it is a must have in a pollinator garden to provide nectar for fall migrating

butterflies and the last bees of the season. The flowers are a ray flower, more like asters than the typical golden rod, forming a flat cluster at the top of a thick stem. The alternating grey, green leaves are rough like sandpaper and add a nice bit of texture to the garden. Plant it at the back of the garden border because *Solidago rigida* grows 3- 5 feet tall. Stiff Goldenrod combines well with native grasses and looks good growing with other native forbs¹ such as hyssop, coneflowers, iron weed and asters. It is typically found in meadows, fields and along road sides but is a rarity in the Ontario wild due mostly to habitat loss, (<http://ontariowildflowers.com/main/species.php?id=66>). Stiff Goldenrod is native throughout the Great Lakes region.



<http://ontariowildflowers.com/main/species.php?id=66> Range map provided courtesy of the USDA website and is displayed here in accordance with their Policies)



¹ A **forb** or phorb is a herbaceous flowering **plant** that is not a graminoid (grass, sedge, or rush). The term is used in biology and in vegetation ecology, especially in relation to grasslands and understory. Wikipedia.org