

WHAT IS THE CONNECTION BETWEEN GROUND COVER PLANTS AND ATTRACTING AN ABUNDANCE OF MIGRATORY BIRDS TO YOUR PROPERTY? THE ANSWER IS INSECTS!!



Our native ground cover plants offer a wide variety of foods for insects



Up to 1100 different species of insects are attracted to our woodlands to feed on native plants



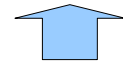
These insects are food for nestlings of over 240 species of birds
Baby birds cannot digest seeds in birdfeeders



Lawns offer little biodiversity of insect life to feed young nestlings, no nesting materials and little protection from predators. So, lawn dominated properties attract few bird varieties. The noise from lawn cutting discourages the presence of wildlife and can harm endangered species such as Hognosed Snakes.



Beware the Alien Invasion!
Periwinkle, English Ivy and Goutweed are not eaten by local insects because they are foreign and **insects cannot digest them**. So they offer no support for the food web that supports our wildlife. To slow down the spread of these highly invasive plants, they should be either culled or confined to planters.
Never export to neighbours' lots or Pinery.



Wood chip landscaping destroys native plant species and eliminates food that the insects and birds depend on.

As residents of Huron Woods, we are fortunate to live adjacent to Pinery Park's most protected section, an area designated as a Nature Reserve, one off limits to camping and recreational activities, one that serves to protect native flora and fauna. We can help by doing our part to protect the rare Oak Savanna ecosystem we share with Pinery.

The High Cost of Lawns in Huron Woods

“Because turf grass did not exist in North America before humans brought it here, the vast majority of NA insects have not evolved the ability to eat it. In sum, a lawn will not support many native insects. In the absence of healthy insect populations to feed on, the vast majority of other local wildlife-birds, bats, land mammals, frogs, toads, turtles, lizards, spiders and a myriad of other critters-literally cannot survive.”

<http://ag.udel.edu/udbg/ls> - <http://ag.udel.edu/extension>

- Human Toll**
 - ~lawns require more time and effort to maintain than in an urban environment
 - ~regular **top dressing, reseeding, fertilizing, watering and weeding** are needed to maintain lawns in our sandy soil
- Social Cost**
 - ~approximately **42%** of Huron Woods lot owners are part timers
 - ~regular mowing, trimming, leaf blowing disturbs the **peace and quiet** sought by many part time residents who come here to escape from noisy city life
 - ~removal of ground cover plants to create a lawn affects the **roots of neighbours' trees** which tend to spread out over several lots, and may be affected by fertilizers and other chemicals
- Health Cost**
 - ~removal of native ground covers and fallen logs destroys habitat for skinks, lizards which act as “**sinks**” for **Lyme Disease**. This helpful “tick consuming” lizard, native to Huron Woods, is endangered due to habitat loss.
 - ~some chemicals, like **Roundup**, are associated with numerous health problems <http://health-problems-linked-to-monsantos-roundup-1882002128.html>
 - ~constant watering attracts more **mosquitos** than would normally inhabit our lots, annoying landowners and their neighbours alike
 - ~mosquito borne **West Nile Virus** is a concern
- Environmental Cost**
 - ~removal of native ground cover plants results in **less food** for animals, and seriously undermines the “food web”
 - ~ removal of native plants destroys the “wood wide web” of **fungal threads** that exists in a healthy forest, and that facilitates underground glucose distribution
 - ~lawns diminish tree **root stabilization** afforded by roots of native plants, leaving trees more vulnerable to **destruction from high winds**
 - ~native plants provide bacteria which aid trees in **absorbing nutrients** from the forest floor; lawns do not
 - ~fertilizer run off affects the Old Ausable Channel causing algae blooms and over growth of aquatic plants

Renaturalizing Part or All of a Lawn

It's easier than one might think. Doing nothing for 7 years allows native ground covers to return, once again adding multiple benefits to us, our neighbours and wildlife. And, it costs nothing!

Please join us in our clubhouse for our guest speaker events:

Sunday, June 4th at 1:30 **Wildflowers** with Tom Lobb, lower lounge

Saturday, June 10 at 10 a.m. Especially for Newcomers, **The Poison Ivy Walk** with Sharon Callan, starts at the clubhouse mailboxes

Date to be announced: **Lyme Disease** with Lambton Public Health

Plant native! Native plants list is on the HW blog.

GOOD NEWS!

Environment Minister, Catherine McKenna banned the hunting of snapping turtles as of March 31, 2017.