



BALCONY/CONTAINER GARDENING FOR LOCAL BIODIVERSITY

Hintonburg Community Association – www.hintonburg.com/greening

Do you live in an apartment building?

You can add to the biodiversity of the neighbourhood through balcony gardening using containers.

3 great reasons to plant native species in your balcony garden:

- ✓ Native species have evolved in our local climate so they will do better in drought and survive our winters. Also, they often don't require as much maintenance as non-native species (i.e., plant species brought in by humans).
- ✓ Many pollinators (e.g., birds, butterflies, bees) rely on native plant species. By planting native species, we're each doing our bit to increase biodiversity in our local neighbourhood and create important habitat for wildlife.
- ✓ There are so many gorgeous native flowers, shrubs and other plants!



How to garden with native species:

Planting in containers is quite different from planting in the ground (in terms of the amount of watering needed, roots surviving the winter in pots, etc.). The following links provide some tips to get you started on balcony/container gardening:

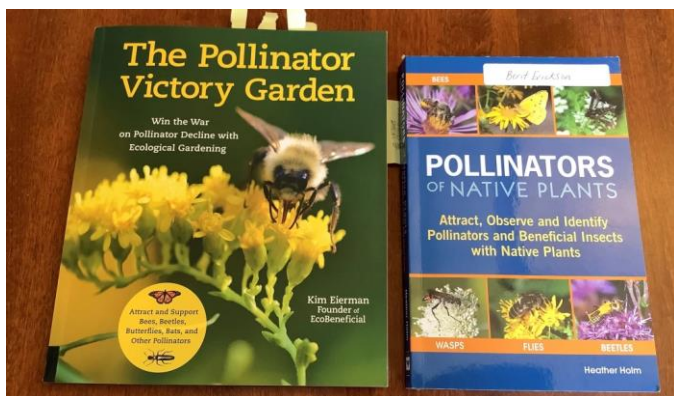
- Canadian Wildlife Federation's easy steps on [how to build a balcony garden](#)
- Youtube webinar specifically on [pollinator gardening on balconies](#)
- [Native plant gardening in pots](#) – including species suggestions
- Audubon's tips on [balcony gardening with native plants](#)
- The Facebook group [Ontario Native Plant Gardening](#) has discussed the topic a number of times

You can also search online for “container gardening” or “balcony gardening” with “native plants” or “pollinator plants.” There are lots of great leads!

Great resources to help out:

There are some fantastic resources to help gardeners new to growing native species. Here are some of our favourites:

- A [list of native species](#) that do well in containers. (Note: the plants covered here are native to North America, not necessarily specific to Ontario.)
- [The Corner Pollinator Garden](#) – Blog of a native species/pollinator gardener right here in Kitchissippi. There is SO much helpful information on this site - it's a great starting point.
- A neat [photo series](#) of about 90 native plants created by a local expert.
- [Ottawa Wildflower Seed Library](#)'s tips on planning a garden.
- [Wild Pollinator Partners \(Ontario East – Outaouais\)](#)
- [Ontario Native Plant Gardening Facebook Group](#)
- [Biodiversity in our Canadian Wildlife Gardens Facebook Group](#)
- The Ottawa Master Gardeners has some [talks about native species](#) as well as a good [youtube video](#) about invasive plants.
- In Our Nature's [Ontario Native Plant Resource Guide](#).



All photos courtesy of Berit Erikson



Sourcing native plants:

There are many sources of native plants around Ottawa. Here are a few of our favourites:

- [Ottawa Wildflower Seed Library Facebook Group](#) – Community sharing of native flower seeds and seedlings. This group is also fantastic for advice!
- [Fletcher Wildlife Garden Plant Sale](#) – Annual native species plant sale. Watch their website in April and early May for info.
- [A Cultivated Art](#) – A source of native species seedlings grown right in Ottawa.
- Other local sources are listed on the [Corner Pollinator Garden](#) website.

IMPORTANT: Many nurseries carry cultivars of native species. Cultivars are not native but are produced by horticulturalists from the native species. [Many gardeners feel that it's important to get the native species itself](#) because cultivars may not provide the same benefits (e.g., cultivars can be asexual so they won't produce pollen). Checking out the resources above will help you get the native species.

Get in touch!

Send the HCA environment committee an email. Write to info@hintonburg.com and put "balcony gardens" in the subject.

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