




# TORONTO MASTER GARDENERS ASK PLANT ID QUESTIONS



Image	Question	Answer
<div data-bbox="325 227 619 828" data-label="Image"> </div>	<p>Growing in ditches beside a gravel road in Township of Perry 25 minutes north of Huntsville. Cant find it in any of our reference books. Leaves are emerging from ground singly and veins are deep red.</p>	<p>It is challenging to identify a plant from a single leaf, and I consulted our team of Master Gardeners, several of whom feel that the plant is likely some sort of dock. Consider the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Rumex sanguineus</i> var. <i>sanguineus</i> (red-veined or bloody dock). See the <a href="#">Missouri Botanical Garden monograph</a></li> <li>• <i>Rumex obtusifolius</i> (broadleaved dock/ bitter dock). See <b>Illinois Wildflowers – Bitter Dock</b></li> <li>• <i>Rumex aquaticus</i> (Scottish dock). See <a href="#">Nature Gate's Scottish Dock</a></li> </ul> <p>Another suggestion was this might be pokeweed (<i>Phytolacca Americana</i>). See Ohio State University's Ohio Perennial and Biennial Weed Guide – <b>Common Pokeweed</b> Click on the above links and you'll see photos that show that these plants have leaves that resemble those of your mystery plant, in many respects. However, with docks and the common pokeweed, leaves generally emerge from the same clump, not singly. As well, these plants have lance-shaped leaves, which seem to differ quite a bit from the oblong-shaped leaf of shown in the photo you submitted. Finally, it is possible that the plant is related to dock, but is a sorrel (<i>Rumex acetosa</i>) - some sorrels have leaves that are shaped more like the leaf in your photo. For example, see Nature Gate's <b>Common sorrel</b></p>
<div data-bbox="266 933 552 1312" data-label="Image"> </div>	<p>My neighbour gave me this plant, that I planted las year. It is flowering right now (spring) and I have no idea what kind of plant is. I would like to know the name , and if is possible few info about it. Thank you for your time and help.</p>	<p>Your neighbour gave you a <i>Bergenia cordifolia</i>, commonly called <i>Bergenia</i> or <i>Pigsqueak</i>. It is a spring-flowering perennial that will multiply and makes a great ground cover once established. Once the flowers are gone, the leaves provide interesting texture and colour contrast. This perennial is very easy to grow and requires very little maintenance. It is best planted in a partly shady or morning sun location, as the leaves have a tendency to burn if planted in full sun. I cannot tell from the photo, but it appears to be planted in full sun. If you have a shadier location in your garden, it would be advisable to move it now while it is still a young plant.</p> <p><a href="http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx?kempercode=b710">http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx?kempercode=b710</a></p>

May 2019



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May 2019		My neighbor had the shrub pictured below in her front garden. What is it?	The shrub appears to be a PJM Rhododendron. These are small-leaf evergreen rhododendrons with masses of bright lilac flowers in early May. They reach a height of about 6 feet and have a spread of about 7 feet, at maturity. These plants like a protected site in part- to full-shade. Like all rhododendrons, they prefer a slightly acidic, moist soil with good drainage. They do well as foundation plantings. Care must be taken not to cultivate around their shallow roots. PJMs flower earlier than other evergreen rhodos, and their leaves and flowers are considerably smaller. They are frequently grown in the Toronto area because they are very cold-hardy compared to other rhododendrons. Like all rhododendrons, these plants can fall victim to a number of insect and disease problems, but if they are planted in the right location, they are easy-care, healthy shrubs.
May 2019		I saw this plant in a container in Brampton, Ontario yesterday. It was in full sun. The flowers are a brilliant deep magenta/red with yellow. The flowers are shaped like small snapdragons or orchids. There are multiple blooms at the end of stems with several small feathery, lance shaped leaves. Can you please identify this plant and advise if it an annual or perennial, soil and light requirements?	Beautiful plant you spotted! Without a clearer and close-up look at the plant's features, it is necessary to make some guesses that will help with identification, eg. the plant's height and preferred light conditions. I am also assuming that it is an annual that the homeowner bought in a ready-to-go pot made by a supplier, instead of a perennial that is grown as an annual in the GTA like so many of the potted plants we find in the stores at this time of year. My best guess is that this plant is <i>Linaria reticulata</i> , commonly known as Purple Toadflax. Here is more information about it.  <a href="http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx?taxonid=292432&amp;isprofile=1&amp;basic=Linaria">http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx?taxonid=292432&amp;isprofile=1&amp;basic=Linaria</a>
May 2019		Grows in Toronto. What is it?	This appears to be a remnant of <i>Pieris japonica</i> , which is an attractive plant that you might want to dig up and replant where you can enjoy it! These plants can be a bit picky about their environment and the soil condition they grow in. This species requires a sheltered siting from the winter winds, and is sensitive to winter burn, especially if it is a newer planting and roots are not well established. The soil should be slightly acidic PH, organically rich, moist, but well drained (it will not tolerate damp feet). Sun exposure ranges from part shade to full sun. For winter protection, it is very important to provide a wind barrier, and ensure that the shrub is hydrated before winter onset.  But if your transplant is successful, you will enjoy a lovely shrub. For details on it, refer to this <a href="#">link</a> .

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	Image	Question	Answer
May 2019		Hi there I just moved into a 60 year old property in Etobicoke with an overrun garden—there are certainly some beautiful shrubs and perennials and roses (literally) amongst the mess which is great! But i want to clear the mess and wish to see if these are weeds and if so, are they safe to remove by hand/shovel myself? I have pics of a couple more potential culprits; only lets me load this one here but hoping whomever is able to get back I can send you those pics too for ident. Thank-you so much!	<p>The plant you sent the picture of is most likely a <i>Petasites japonicus</i> or Butterbur. They are valued for their large showy leaves though they do flower in the spring. Here is some information on the plant.</p> <p><a href="http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx?kempercode=a645">http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx?kempercode=a645</a></p> <p>In the top right corner of your picture is a different plant that maybe invasive. It is safe to pull out but if you let it go to seed it will continue spreading. It is called Garlic Mustard. Here is some information to help you identify it:</p>
May 2019		we moved into a new house and this plant is growing in our garden. It is compact and moulded, but still early in the season. Early morning shade and afternoon sun. Soil seems quite good. Surrounding flowers include lupines, irises and lilies. Thanks so much!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I believe the plant is <i>Kalimeris pinnatifida</i> or Japanese aster</li> <li>• White, 1 inches flowers resembling small chrysanthemums are borne by the hundreds all summer, forming a cloud over the foliage. (These flowers look like little asters, while the cultivar <i>Kalimeris pinnatifida</i> 'Hortensis' has small double flowers that do look like little chrysanthemums.)</li> <li>• Blossoms may be tinged pink or blue, have creamy yellow centers.</li> <li>• The oval, pointed leaves are rich green.</li> <li>• spreads by rhizomes</li> <li>• 40-150 cm tall</li> <li>• I took the picture from Wikipedia, but there isn't any information there</li> </ul> <p>It's difficult to identify plants when they are young. If you find, as the plant grows, that it does not look like the picture above, send in another picture to us and we will continue to work on the identification.</p>

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	Image	Question	Answer
May 2019		I am looking for a rather tall/narrow evergreen (not a cedar shrub) for my backyard. Would you happen to know what trees this might be in the picture. This is exactly what I want. It's on my neighbours lawn but they don't know the type since they did not plant them.	<p>Even when enlarged, the picture you sent was not taken close enough for me to see the needles. Consequently, I'm not sure what it is. It looks like my 1st suggestion below based on shape, but the colour is not as bright as the Emerald Green.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Cedars (<i>Thuja occidentalis</i> or Eastern Arborvitae) are not always shrubs. The most popular tall narrow evergreen for sale in the Toronto area is Arborvitae 'Emerald Green'. Because it is so popular, common and numerous at nurseries, it is likely to be your cheapest choice. <i>Thuja occidentalis</i> is also a native plant. Emerald Green is a cultivar of the native species. The following link has some good information about this tree. <a href="https://www.thespruce.com/emerald-green-arborvitae-trees-2132081">https://www.thespruce.com/emerald-green-arborvitae-trees-2132081</a></li> <li>2. Juniper 'Spartan'. Just a few words about nomenclature - eastern red cedar (used to repel moths and line drawers) is not really a cedar at all but a juniper. Here is a link with info on Spartan. <a href="http://www.sheridannurseries.com/plant_product_view?EV0084">http://www.sheridannurseries.com/plant_product_view?EV0084</a></li> </ol> <p>A comparison of 1. and 2. above: <a href="https://www.hunker.com/12476600/a-comparison-of-spartan-juniper-emerald-green-arborvitae">https://www.hunker.com/12476600/a-comparison-of-spartan-juniper-emerald-green-arborvitae</a> Spruce Columnar 'Norway' The following link has information on this tree. It is an American site, but this tree is hardy here. <a href="https://www.monrovia.com/plant-catalog/plants/3252/columnar-norway-spruce/">https://www.monrovia.com/plant-catalog/plants/3252/columnar-norway-spruce/</a></p>
May 2019		My backyard has quite a few flowers growing under our trees (see attached). We're not sure what they are. We're also hoping to grow native plants that are ok with tree shade; would these fit the bill?	Yes, and these wild violets will spread like mad. (Some lawn services consider them a weed!) Consider yourself lucky.





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May 2019		I have recently moved into a new house, and in the un-maintained veggie patch the following is growing. It looks a little like Dill, and smells a bit like licorice. Can you tell me what it is?	Thanks for getting in touch with Toronto Master Gardeners, the plant in your photo appears to be <i>Foeniculum vulgare</i> or as it is commonly known, fennel. It is a member of the carrot family. Fennel has a thick taproot and feathery leaves. The best clue you gave was the description of its scent. Fennel leaves smell like licorice. Another notable thing about them is that they are the favourite food of a swallow tail butterfly. For information please refer to the following website: <a href="https://www.encyclopedia.com/plants-and-animals/plants/plants/fennel">https://www.encyclopedia.com/plants-and-animals/plants/plants/fennel</a>
June 2019		I can't figure out what kind of bush this is. I thought magnolia but no flowers. Upright form. New Leaves have a slightly red tone around edges.	It is always difficult to identify a plant from a photograph that was taken at a distance. Without a close up of the leaves and flowers it is difficult to be one hundred percent certain. Based on the look of the growth habit and the colour of the bark the bush in question could be downy serviceberry ( <i>Amelanchier arborea</i> ) or Canada serviceberry <i>A. canadensis</i> . This shrub prefers to grow in full sun to partial shade. In moist to semi-dry soil. It produces beautiful white flowers in the spring followed by edible fruit in the summer. Newly emerging leaves are a reddish purple changing to green in the summer and turning to yellow, orange to deep red in the fall.
June 2019		This plant grows in abundance in our backyard & I have been unable to identify it & wondered if you could help? Also do you have any suggestions as to how to eradicate, or control it?? Thank you for your help & your excellent website!!	Thank you for your complimentary comment on our website! The plant in your backyard is known as goutweed, <i>Agipodium podagraria</i> . You may be familiar with its green and white variegated form, which is also very common in Toronto gardens. Its other common names are ground elder and bishop's weed. As you have noted, it is very invasive and difficult to eradicate once it is established. Goutweed was originally introduced to North America as a groundcover, and was considered ideal in many ways as it thrives in all soil types and in conditions from full sun to full shade. It spreads vigorously by a system of underground rhizomes. The Toronto Master Gardeners website has an abundance of information about this plant and how to control and eradicate it. <a href="http://www.torontomastergardeners.ca/?s=goutweed">http://www.torontomastergardeners.ca/?s=goutweed</a>



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June 2019		Hi I live in Lawrence Park and have a relatively moist and shady garden - Every year my beds are invaded by a low growing weed that appears to spread and propagate via its roots and rhizomes - I find that in removing it I must get the entire root structure out or the fragments left behind will sprout - Please tell me what this weed is and how I can most effectively deal with it -	In order to make a correct identification, we look to plant characteristics such as bloom time, growing requirements, overall height as well as physical characteristics such as the leaf's shape, margin, how the leaf is positioned on the stem- alternate or opposite, is the leaf simple or compound as well as the flower arrangement, colour and shape. It is very difficult to tell all this from a photo that is taken at a distance. From your description I believe that the plant in question is gout weed. Goutweed was originally introduced to North America as an easy care groundcover, thriving in shade, partial shade, and full sun. It also grows in a range of soils. It spreads by underground rhizomes from which leaf stalks emerge. The leaves are comprised of three groups of three leaflets and can be green or variegated. We receive numerous questions concerning the eradication of this pesky weed. <a href="#">This</a> link lists a number of our earlier posts.
June 2019		I found this small tree /shrub in our garden and can not identify what it is from the unusual leaf shape? Any ideas? We back on the top of a ravine - soil is quite sandy. It is growing up beside a large white oak tree. I am wondering if it is a blue beech but the squared off end of the leaf seems novel. Thank you!	The client has provided an additional photo, below. I have e-mailed her with our suggested identification.  Based on the leaf margin- coarsely double toothed, the leaf appears to be an elm. The Wych Elm-Ulmus galbra usually has a 3 pointed tip. - <a href="#">Wych Elm Ulmus Glabra</a>
June 2019		I haven't been able to identify the plant in the image below. I have a few of the merging in my flower beds, and don't want to pull the until I have confirmed what it is.  Any help would be appreciated. The circle of leaves is about 3 inches in diameter. The plants have grown about 6 inches high.	Your plant is the lovely spring blooming <i>Eranthus Hyemalis</i> or winter aconite, and as you can see, it has gone to seed. It is the very first plant to bloom in the Spring when it is short with brilliant yellow double-buttercup-look flowers. As the season progresses the leaves expand and the petiole becomes longer so they are about 4 to 6 inches tall at this time of year. They are lovely, but they are prolific! One of my fellow master gardeners says: the seeds are cylindrical and roll everywhere and they ALL germinate! Here is some more information about winter aconite: <a href="http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx?kempercode=a446">http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx?kempercode=a446</a>

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June 2019		My son is tree planting in BC and came across this. Do you know what it is? I was thinking Willow or Cherry but not sure. Thanks!	This shrub/tree is most likely native to British Columbia--there are many types of willows that grow in northern B.C. As Toronto Master Gardeners, we are unfamiliar with these shrubs. However, you might check out this website of many of the willows that grow in B.C.: see <a href="#">here</a> . This site lists 53 different willows found in B.C. Perhaps you will be able to make an identification by using this website.
June 2019		Please help identify this plant, about 2 to 3 ft tall, hardy in Guelph, shade and drought tolerant, blooms mid to end of May.	Thank you for contacting Toronto Master Gardeners about your mystery drought tolerant plant. In order to make a correct identification, we look to plant characteristics and you have given us four: height, drought tolerant, bloom period, and perennial. We also look at the physical characteristics: the leaf's specific shape, edge, oppositely or alternately positioned on the stem; and the flower's petal shape and edge such as rounded, 'pinked' or fringed. These characteristics are unclear in the photograph. Following a long search of both cultivated and native plants, I offer two suggestions: Heliopsis helianthoides or oxeye daisy, bloom time June to August <a href="http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx?kempercode=g520">http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx?kempercode=g520</a> And Helianthus divaricatus or sunflower <a href="http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx?kempercode=k390">http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx?kempercode=k390</a> with July to September bloom time.

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June 2019		<p>Hello, Could I ask if any of these are weeds?</p>	<p>These don't appear to be weeds but ground covers. There appears to be several here. The top trifoliate leaf with the yellow flower appears to be a herbaceous ground cover called Barren Strawberry or <i>Waldsteinia ternata</i>. (P.237 What Grows Where in Canadian Gardens by Trevor Cole). Bigroot Cranesbill or <i>Geranium macrorrhizum</i> is the ground cover with the 5 petalled purple pink flowers. The others may be <i>Parthenocissus quinquefolia</i>. It is hard to determine the number of leaflets in the photo. If it is 3 then it could be Poison Ivy or <i>Rhus radicans</i>. But I doubt it. There should be green/brown flowers or hard white berries.</p> <p><a href="http://www.ontariowildflowers.com/main/species.php?id=2069">www.ontariowildflowers.com/main/species.php?id=2069</a> is another site to check for flowers if you are interested. Groundcovers are both decorative and problem solvers. Many thrive in shade or where lawns will not grow. Others prevent soil erosion and weed control. Some can be invasive. Check out (<a href="http://ontarioinvasiveplants.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/GMI-Booklet_FINAL-FOR-WEB_May132016.pdf">http://ontarioinvasiveplants.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/GMI-Booklet_FINAL-FOR-WEB_May132016.pdf</a>) In gardening jargon the term ground cover refers to plants that are used in place of weeds and improves appearance by concealing bare earth. Also go to the Landscape Ontario site for more information on groundcovers. They have a list Perennials for ground covers if you want to be more strategic about your garden planning. <a href="http://landscapeontario.com">http://landscapeontario.com</a></p>
June 2019		<p>Hello masters! I'd appreciate if you could help me identify a shrub in the backyard. The backyard is facing north and partly shaded, I believe the soil is clay. Location is north west of Scarborough. The shrub is very tall about 20 feet high. Has clusters of pink trumpet shaped flowers and the bark is peeling as you can see in the photo.</p>	<p>Your shrub is probably <i>Kolkwitzia amabilis</i>, otherwise known as Beauty Bush.</p> <p>More information about your shrub here: <a href="http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx?taxonid=268558">http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx?taxonid=268558</a></p>





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June 2019		Hi there this tall green is growing everywhere in in the backyard of my new place (& over the waning allium blooms) Goldenrod? And is it friendly; should I take all it back or let it be? Thanks so much!	The plants in your garden bed among the allium is indeed Canada Goldenrod. Canada goldenrod is a native plant that is found throughout Ontario in moist or dry fields and meadows, edges of forests, swamps, clearings, orchards and compost piles, and along roadsides, ponds, streams, fencerows and shorelines, and recently as a weed in cultivated fields. taper to both ends, have two lateral veins parallelling the prominent midvein and usually have widely-spaced fine to coarse teeth, and by its usually broad, pyramidal panicle. When the spread of Canada goldenrod is contained and it is not allowed to escape, its positive qualities can be enjoyed in the garden. The species flowers from the end of summer until the winter: small golden yellow capitula adorn the plant in their thousands. This perennial spreads by underground rhizomes and if left unchecked, this plant will take up all available space in the garden. If you like you can leave one clump in your garden to enjoy the late summer blooms and remove the rest. for more information on this plant please see: <a href="#">Goldenrod Groups</a> , <a href="#">Canada Goldenrod</a>
June 2019		Could you identify this beautiful Bush?	The shrub in question is <i>Daphne x burkwoodii</i> 'Carol Mackie'. These slow-growing, deciduous, semi-evergreen or evergreen shrubs with fragrant flowers are native to Europe and Asia. Carol Mackie' grows 3-4 feet tall and wide. It has a dense, round, mounded form. The small, narrow, oblong leaves are edged in gold to creamy white. Daphnes do best when planted in sun to part shade in humusy, well-drained soil that does not dry out. Daphne do not like to moved, so choose a permanent location. Established shrubs can be maintained by pruning after flowering.  The following links give additional information on this beautiful bush: <a href="#">Daphne x burkwoodii 'Carol Mackie'</a> , <a href="#">Daphne Shrubs</a>
June 2019		Looks like leucojeum but the bells come from all around the top of the stem. About 2 feet tall. Blooming now Mid June , Sun,	Without a close up of the flower and a photograph of the eaves it is difficult to be 100% certain as to the identification of the plant. That being said the photograpgh could be of <i>Allium cernuum</i> - nodding onion. The Windsor master gardeners have an ecellent article on this plant- <a href="#">Nodding Onion</a>  If this is not the plant in question please send us additional photos.  This could also be <a href="#">Nectaroscordum osculum subspecies. bulgaricum</a> -



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June 2019		We are trying to identify this plant found zone 7a Niagara-on-the-Lake. This photo shows the leaves.	This plant was quite a challenge to identify. I believe that the plant in question is <i>Centaurea cyanus</i> (cornflower). This plant blooms from May-June. <i>Centaurea cyanus</i> are annual plants which possess double daisy-like flowers in shades of blue, pink, lavender, white and maroon. They prefer full sun or light shade. The following links provide more information on growing this beautiful plant : <a href="#">How to Grow Cornflowers</a> , <a href="#">Centaurea cyanus</a>
June 2019		My friend found the attached plant growing in her garden. She lives in Napanee.	Thank you for your query concerning this mystery plant. Identifying plants from a less-than-optimal photo can sometimes be a challenge especially when it is early in the season but kudos to you for assisting your friend. When you mention that she “found” it in her garden, I assume she did not plant it herself and it is a surprise arrival. Some of the identifying characteristics such as erect stems with parallel-veined and clasping leaves leads me to venture a guess that it is an <i>Epipactis helleborine</i> commonly known as broadleaf helleborine or wild orchid. This is a non-native Eurasian species introduced to North America and is now considered invasive. Your friend might be able to confirm the identification later in the season when the plant blooms. She might find these websites helpful:  <a href="http://northernontarioflora.ca/description.cfm?speciesid=1003880">http://northernontarioflora.ca/description.cfm?speciesid=1003880</a>  <a href="https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/homeowners_battling_a_weedy_orchid_in_vading_lawns_and_flowerbeds">https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/homeowners_battling_a_weedy_orchid_in_vading_lawns_and_flowerbeds</a>

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	Image	Question	Answer
June 2019		Plant in garden of home I just moved into. About 6 ft. tall. Sturdy stem. Sandy soil. Facing West.	his tree is <i>Ailanthus altissima</i> or “tree of heaven”, also occasionally referred to as “Chinese sumac” for its resemblance. This is an invasive species which grows quickly and liberally self-seeds. It is impervious to bad soil, to drought, and to pests. <i>Ailanthus altissima</i> can be very difficult to eradicate because it can also reproduce quickly from any piece of root that remains in the ground. Here is a blog post that takes a gentle look at this invasive tree (including a good picture of a small seedling): <a href="https://www.torontogardens.com/2009/06/warning-dreaded-ailanthus-altissima.html">https://www.torontogardens.com/2009/06/warning-dreaded-ailanthus-altissima.html</a> The Toronto Master Gardeners have received many questions about this tree – specifically, how to eradicate it. This is not an easy task, but you should consider removing it for a couple of reasons: first, they do grow to great heights (hence the second part of the name, “ <i>altissima</i> ”) and secondly, they reproduce so prolifically and are so fast-growing that you may find your garden inundated with them. You are best to remove this tree by digging up as much of the root as possible and being vigilant about removing new saplings as they appear from pieces of root that may have been left in the ground. Cutting the tree down will only encourage suckers at ground level. If you google “Toronto Master Gardeners <i>Ailanthus altissima</i> ” you will be able to read several posts on this tree. <a href="#">Here</a> is some good basic information about this invasive species.
June 2019			This is the peony, <i>Paeonia lactiflora</i> , a familiar sight in the late spring garden. Yours is just coming into bloom. It is impossible from your photo to tell you what variety it is – there are innumerable cultivars of this popular perennial. Here is a website that will give you some background information about this lovely plant: <a href="http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/gardens-gardening/our-garden/notable-plant-collections/peonies.aspx">http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/gardens-gardening/our-garden/notable-plant-collections/peonies.aspx</a>

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	Image	Question	Answer
June 2019		Sand, in ravine area, facing west. In very overgrown garden in home I just moved into. Worried that it is sumac.	We think this may be <i>Prunus virginiana</i> , also known as chokecherry, which is a native species that is most easily identified when it is in bloom: its flowers are elongated clusters of white flowers. This is not a sumac. These websites includes some photos for comparative purposes: <a href="https://www.ontario.ca/page/chokecherry">https://www.ontario.ca/page/chokecherry</a>  <a href="http://ontariotrees.com/main/species.php?id=2027">http://ontariotrees.com/main/species.php?id=2027</a>
June 2019		I saw this perennial when visiting Niagara on the Lake recently and would like to know the name? It has small, pink, daisy like flowers, zone 7a.	The Toronto Master Gardeners do like challenges of plant identification. In order to identify plants correctly, having a clear focused photo(s) that include close-ups of the leaves and flowers is essential.  Our best guess is that the plant is a type of <i>Dianthus</i> ; maybe <i>Dianthus plumarius</i> .





# TORONTO MASTER GARDENERS ASK PLANT ID QUESTIONS

	Image	Question	Answer
June 2019		This plant is west facing, dry soil. Thank you!	<p>I believe that the plant in question is common buckthorn. <i>Rhamnus cathartica</i>, commonly called common or European buckthorn, is a weedy, thicket-forming, deciduous shrub or small tree that typically grows to 6 m (20 ft) high. European buckthorn was introduced as an ornamental shrub, but its seeds have been widely scattered by birds and other animals so it is common in fence lines, woodland, pastures and abandoned farmyards throughout southern Ontario. Today European buckthorn is considered to be an invasive exotic species in Ontario. Controlling Common Buckthorn before it becomes well established is your best way. A variety of mechanical control methods can be used to kill or remove buckthorn.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Pulling:</b> When the soil is moist, small plants up to 1 m (3ft) in height can be pulled. As Common Buckthorn grows, it puts down a deep root system very quickly (dependent on soil conditions) and sends out lateral roots that can be as long as 2 - 3 m which will also need to be removed. Larger plants can be dug out, or pulled out using a weed wrench tool.</li> <li>• <b>Mowing</b> will reduce stem numbers and vigour, and will eventually kill off most seedlings. It needs to be carried out in early and late summer for at least 2 – 3 consecutive years and is recommended for stems that are less than 2 years old.</li> </ul>
June 2019		I previously send a pic of this plant (ravine area, sandy soil, popped up all of a sudden though this is my first summer with this garden, southwest facing). thought it was buckhorn, and perhaps it is, but I can't seem to match it to the characteristics of a buckhorn. Please help solve the mystery. Thankyou :)	<p>Balsam poplar is notable for its pointed, shiny, oval-shaped leaves and resin-dotted undersides. Apart from other native poplars, this species has sticky, fragrant buds that smell of balsam. Male trees flower in long, hanging catkins before the leaves appear and female trees disperse fluffy seeds into the air in late spring.</p> <p>Shiny, dark green leaves are 6 to 12 centimetres long, pale underneath and often marked with brown. They vary from oval to wedge-shaped and have a sharply pointed tip.</p> <p><a href="https://www.ontario.ca/page/balsam-poplar">https://www.ontario.ca/page/balsam-poplar</a></p>




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	Image	Question	Answer
June 2019		Can anyone ID this for me? It only flowers in the even. Small dandelion looks flowers. The leaves are not prickly like the look. Someone suggested to me it may be a Himalayan Dandelion.	<p>From your photo and description, this is likely the prickly sowthistle (<i>Sonchus asper</i>). See the photo at Illinois Wildflowers – <a href="#">Prickly Sowthistle</a>.</p> <p>Note that the Himalayan dandelion (<i>Taraxacum candidatum</i>) does not have the prickly leaves of the plant in your photo - its leaves are linear and smooth. It is related to the common dandelion (<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>) – both are in the same genus, and are part of the aster family.</p> <p>It's interesting that all 3 of these plants are members of the aster family!</p>
June 2019		This plant is growing in full sun at my friend's residence in Trenton. It is about one foot tall and seems to want to take over. Apparently it was loaded with white flowers earlier in the season.	this bloodroot or sanguinaria canadensis
June 2019		I live in mid Michigan (Bay City) I only need to identify the flowers in the picture.	<p>Hi there, Based on your picture it looks like a cultivar of Weigela florida is which classified as a deciduous flowering shrub. I am not which one as there are many cultivars. For more information on how to grow them. Please see the following sites:</p> <p><a href="https://www.thespruce.com/weigela-bushes-care-facts-2132733">https://www.thespruce.com/weigela-bushes-care-facts-2132733</a></p>

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	Image	Question	Answer
June 2019		Could you please identify this flowering perennial? It is flowering now in a sunny area with sandy soil.	<p>The plant in question is Spiderwort, <i>Tradescantia</i> sp. Spiderworts typically grow in moist, well-drained and acidic (pH 5 to 6) soil, however they are known to be tolerant of many soil conditions. Spiderwort plants do best in partial shade but will do equally well in sunny areas as long as the soil is kept moist.</p> <p>You can read more about this lovely perennial at the following links: <a href="#">Spiderwort Flowers</a> and <a href="#">How to Grow Spiderwort Plants</a></p>
June 2019		This plant has popped up in my garden this spring and am very curious as to what it is. Would you be able to ID this plant?	<p>It's sometimes hard to identify a plant from a photo, so I asked other Master Gardener colleagues for their opinions. A few suggested this may be goldenrod, one suggested wild phlox, another thought it might be common ironweed and still another pigweed (amaranth). Take a look at photos of these lovely plants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ontario Wildflowers. <a href="#">Canada goldenrod</a></li> <li>• University of Connecticut Home &amp; Garden Education Center. <a href="#">Wild phlox? Probably not, this time of year</a>. I've seen a few phlox in bloom over the past 10 days or so, so have a feeling that your mystery plant is something else.</li> <li>• Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center. <a href="#">Common ironweed</a></li> <li>• OMAFRA. <a href="#">Ontario weeds: Redroot pigweed</a>.</li> </ul> <p>It's not always easy to identify plants. I suggest that you leave the plant in your garden and take a photo of it when it blooms. My bet is that it's a goldenrod, but this is not certain. I still have several plants in my garden that are mysteries - are they nasty weeds or will they be lovely perennials that I welcome to my garden? Only time will tell....Please send us a photo of the plant in full bloom - we should be able to identify it with more certainty then. And remember that a "weed" is just a plant that you don't like....if you like this one, keep it!</p>

# TORONTO MASTER GARDENERS ASK PLANT ID QUESTIONS

	Image	Question	Answer
July 2019		I have a weed that keeps cropping up from my neighbour's garden. It seems to have a very strong root underground. How do I get rid of it? Every day I uproot a few but mostly I am able to just remove the leaves and the root remains behind.	From your photograph, this appears to be the seedling of a Manitoba maple, <i>Acer negundo</i> , which is a frequently found in Toronto gardens. It is considered a non-native invasive because it can aggressively out-compete other native species. The Manitoba maple self-seeds prolifically via maple keys (samaras), and you should also try to remove these when you find them in your garden. Manitoba maples grow very quickly, and are best removed when they are the size of the plant in your photograph, before their roots take a firm hold. It is best to try to remove these seedlings completely by hand pulling them as you are doing, using a trowel and trying your best to get all the roots.
July 2019		This is taking over our yard. It grows feet overnight. We have looked everywhere trying to find out what it is. We have sprayed it with vinegar and salt mixture to kill it.	The plant in the centre of your photo appears to be a common milkweed, <i>Asclepias syriaca</i> , which is an Ontario native wildflower that reproduces by seeds (pods which burst with seeds attached to little floating white silky parachute-like structures) and by horizontal spreading underground roots which form new plants. This plant grows very quickly to reach its mature height. It may have appeared in your garden because many Toronto gardeners now actively grow milkweed which provides a vital habitat for many native butterfly species but particularly for Monarch butterflies, whose caterpillars eat milkweed leaves exclusively. This website has some closeup photographs that will help you to confirm this identification: <a href="http://ontariowildflowers.com/main/species.php?id=84">http://ontariowildflowers.com/main/species.php?id=84</a> Toronto Master Gardeners do not recommend or endorse any home remedies, so we cannot comment on the measures that you are taking, except to say that milkweeds are known to be resistant to many herbicides. Hand-pulling is the best method of removing the plants from your garden (however, please take care to avoid any contact of the plants' milky sap with the skin, eyes, or mouth). Continue to do this as new plants emerge and your population will eventually die out.
July 2019		This plant came with the house in Toronto 40 years ago, blooms in late June to early July, in full sun, rich soil, and crowded conditions (sorry! about that!). I have been calling it the "No-name plant". A lovely clear yellow. Roughly a foot in height.	This flower could be some type of evening primrose. We would need a more detailed photo of the flower in order to confirm its identification.



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	Image	Question	Answer
July 2019		Hello, please help in identifying this tree. Are there dwarf sizes of these trees available?	<p>The tree in the photo is a Japanese lilac tree, <i>Syringa reticulata</i>.</p> <p>The tree grows 6 to 8 meters high and is hardy to zones 2-3.</p> <p>Various cultivars are available. 'Ivory Silk' is a popular cultivar given its young blooming age and relatively smaller size (6- 7.5 meters).</p> <p>I am not aware of any dwarf versions of this plant.  <a href="https://landscapeontario.com/syringa-reticulata-japanese-tree-lilac">https://landscapeontario.com/syringa-reticulata-japanese-tree-lilac</a></p>
July 2019		<p>I previously wrote to you about an unknown shrub that I saw on a recent visit to Toronto from the UK. This time I hope that I have had more luck attaching the photo.</p> <p>Previous posted question: on a visit two weeks ago to Toronto I saw a beautiful shrub in a friends garden and I am trying to discover what it is. She couldn't tell me as she inherited the shrub when they bought the house. see picture below.</p> <p>It was approx 25 feet high. If I can ID it my next challenge would be to see if it could grow in England</p>	<p>The specimen in your photograph is the lovely <i>Cornus kousa</i>, a shrub or small tree, also known as Chinese or Japanese Dogwood. It is a species that grows well in Toronto, and is a showstopper at the end of the spring/early summer when it is in bloom. There are many cultivars, some with variegated leaves, others with splendid autumn colour. <i>Cornus kousa</i> also grows well in the UK. Here is some information from the Royal Horticultural Society: <a href="https://www.rhs.org.uk/Plants/96780/Cornus-kousa-var-chinensis/Details">https://www.rhs.org.uk/Plants/96780/Cornus-kousa-var-chinensis/Details</a></p>
July 2019		Please help in identifying this tree. This photo was taken today, July 8, 2019, and the flower has a really nice scent.	<p>The tree in the photo is <i>Tilia cordata</i>, the Littleleaf linden. It is known for its symmetrical shape, tolerance to many urban conditions and fragrant and attractive July bloom.</p> <p>You can find out more about this tree at Landscape Ontario's website:  <a href="https://landscapeontario.com/tilia-cordata-littleleaf-linden">https://landscapeontario.com/tilia-cordata-littleleaf-linden</a></p>