



EARTH BOUND GARDENS
Five Acres to

Explore

WRITTEN BY GLORIA HILDEBRANDT
PHOTOGRAPHED BY MIKE DAVIS

Seeing Earth Bound Gardens in Red Bay on the Bruce Peninsula in July, rewards the visitor with stunning displays of blooming daylilies in vast garden beds. There are more than 950 different daylilies grown here. But this is only one of their achievements. These gardens also specialize in plants that are native to Ontario.



Brenda Sutherland kneeling among the glory of just one of the Daylily fields.

Begun in 2008, Earth Bound Gardens has been a labour of love for Judy Larkin and John Close as well as Brenda Sutherland. Brenda describes their commitment: “We are three friends who have shared a common passion for gardening, and a vision of integrating that passion into a way of life for more than 30 years. The joy of being able to live, work and grow on this land and share our knowledge and gardens with the public has been ongoing.”

Why Daylilies

Judy explains their specialization in daylilies this way: “As we were planting our first gardens, we were looking for plants that would have a presence in our rather ambitious layout. We were on the hunt for hardy plants, that put on a show, would survive and thrive in our very sandy soil and require little care.

“The first cultivars that we put in were some of the most popular and commonly available at the time, Catherine Woodbury, Frans Hal, Rocket City and lemon lily or *Hemerocallis Lilioaphodelus*. They were great and did exactly what we wanted. They were dependable, pretty and tough!

“As our gardens expanded, so did our collection of daylilies and our awareness of just how many beautiful flowers were out there waiting for a space in our garden. It seems many other people loved them too. Daylilies became one of our best sellers, and attracted more visitors to the garden. One of these visitors introduced me to the Ontario Daylily Society. I began attending meetings and that was that. I was officially hooked! Our collection grew and expanded to include the back field propagating bed which now



◀ Looking deep into the stamens of Dear Prudence.



► The Daylily called Dance Til Dawn in one of the display beds.



◀ Jersey Spider has an unusual shape to its petals.

► Total Eclipse has the most dramatic colour.





▲ Red Mulberry is native to Ontario. Birds and humans love its berries.



▲ A vast array of Daylilies in pots available for sale. Earth Bound Gardens' plants are a generous size.

is home to over 500 plants!"

Daylilies are easy to grow, say these experts. They want full sun to part shade and regular moisture in soil that drains well. They enjoy bone meal when transplanted and when the warm season begins. When large, they can easily be divided.

In the case of unusual colours of daylilies, one surprising tip is to "remove

spent flowers," as Brenda says, "to prevent plants self-hybridizing to the dominant colour of yellow or orange."

Judy adds that daylilies don't need to be cut back in the fall, but dead foliage should be removed in the spring to keep the plants healthy.

As for the Orange Daylily, or *Hemerocallis Fulva*, although it can be

seen growing wild, it isn't native. It is an escapee from gardens and is considered an invasive species by some people. Trying to remove it from a cultivated garden can be quite an exercise in persistence, as it will regrow from a small part of root.

Daylily flowers only last for one day, although the plant can put out new flowers for weeks. Some

are even repeat bloomers. There are no daylilies that are native to Canada.

Daylilies are not to be confused with lilies, some of which are native to Ontario. True lilies are grown from bulbs, grow on single stems and have flowers that last for several days. The lilies that are native to Ontario are Michigan Lilies, Wood Lilies and Canada Lilies.

Favourite Daylily Appetizer

BY BRENDA SUTHERLAND

PHOTO PROVIDED BY EARTH BOUND GARDENS



All *Hemerocallis* (Daylilies) have edible flowers. They are crunchy and slightly sweet. The thicker the petals the better. Because the flowers only last a day, you can enjoy them knowing they have been enjoyed in yet another way before finishing their show! You can pick your colour and create a gorgeous starter salad. We put a layer of lettuce as the base, preferring a Buttercrunch variety if possible. A large slice of tomato or several small slices as per availability comes next, then a larger-sized Daylily blossom, stamens removed. The blossom is stuffed with a basil or marjoram-infused cream cheese after finely chopping the herb of preference into the cream cheese. Drizzle balsamic glaze over the blossom and tomato. If available, tuck in a blossom or two from a Nasturtium.



▲ A tall, healthy stand of Joe Pye Weed grows in the display gardens.

Native Plants

Judy has been interested in native plants her whole life. When Earth Bound Gardens opened, Brenda, John and she began learning about the native plants of South Bruce Peninsula.

“So many are rare or endangered,” says Judy. “People wanted Lady Slippers and Orchids. I was discouraged that they were

being dug out of the wild.”

Judy maintains that there’s a native plant for every use, but first, she urges people to know where the plants are coming from.

“Get to know the growers,” she advises. “Are they really native plants? We want to preserve Ontario’s natives.” The type of garden they’re intended for is critical. A lakefront property, a



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In addition to Common Milkweed, shown here, Swamp Milkweed and Butterfly Weed are available. Native Milkweed is an important host for butterflies.



▲ Wild Bergamot, also called Bee Balm, growing near Milkweed.

pollinator garden, a formal garden, can all be perfect for different natives.

“We love to help people with their needs,” adds Judy. “You should know your garden condition, type of soil and moisture level. Native plants attract pollinators and animals better than cultivated plants.”

Earth Bound Gardens has an extensive supply of native plants, around 95 different varieties. Many natives are established in their five-acre touring garden, open to the public, and the plants demonstrate how they may look when mature. The owners have a special dedication to Bruce Peninsula plants and have much knowledge to share. Plants may be bought from their greenhouses and the outdoor areas of the garden centre.

“Native plants are less work,” Judy points out. “They tend to be hardier and have less disease. Don’t be afraid of planting native plants. Every native plant we can get into the ground helps the environment.” **NEV**

For more information about Earth Bound Gardens see www.EarthBoundGardens.com.



▲ The rare and endangered Hart's-tongue Fern, a perennial evergreen fern, grows abundantly in shaded forests in the wild on the Bruce Peninsula.



▲ One of the greenhouses at Earth Bound Gardens, which grows native plants from seeds that are sustainably sourced.

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