

# June Garden Tour in Forest Hills, Kitchener



## *Members Only*

Join us for the June Garden Tour in Forest Hills. The homes in this area were predominately built by Dutchmen Homes in the 1960s. They were built as the City continued to expand to the South.

During the tour, you will be touring 3 gardens on Village Crescent and another on Sweetbriar. This is a route that I often take while walking the dog. What I find impressive is how the scenery changes from early Spring through the Fall. The Crescent is lined by a variety of flowering Crab apple trees that present an excellent showing in Spring. Between the second and the third gardens that we will see is one front yard that features a huge Cucumbertree (*Magnolia acuminata*) that tops out at roughly 60'. The home owners tell me that the tree was acquired as a seedling from Woodside Park many years ago.

Another front garden features several Tree Peonies that unfortunately will not be in bloom at the time of our tour and several other unique Peonies.

The same wind storm that struck Rockway Gardens a few years ago when we lost a large number of trees hit this area. One of the gardens was in danger of losing a gazebo which caused the owner to make some ingenious adjustments to the gazebo to protect it from future storms while another lost some neighbouring trees resulting in a change from a shade garden to one of near full sun.

**Here are the four gardens that you will be touring:**



## **Garden A: 382 Village Crescent**

Memberships available here! (Cash Only)



Charlie and Ian are relatively new gardeners that decided they wanted to replace the grass with a nice garden design using plantings, stone and mulch. Their design has consistently brought Kitchener in Bloom nominations from passers by. As part of their design they decided to incorporate fruiting shrubs and trees in their front garden that include shrubs and trees: raspberry, blackberry, serviceberry, kiwi, Chicago fig, and Peach. While the plants are relatively young you will be able to see the thinking that is behind their plans. While they have a few raised vegetable gardens in the back yard, the focus has been on their front garden.

## **Garden B: 401 Village Crescent**





Veikko and Jane are long time gardeners who have been developing their garden over many years. Jane says that the desire to go without grass was Veikko's idea. She liked the grass but he just didn't want to fight with it so they began replacing it with plantings (groundcover and perennials) and a pond, a waterfall and an old fashioned hand pump on a metal drum that Veikko fills using a hose attached to their water barrels. The pond that features Koi is filled by another rain barrel and is covered by a pergola to keep the Great Blue Heron from returning for meals. It will soon become evident that Veikko is an engineer and Jane is the plant person. Plantings include Peonies, a grape vine and Wisteria.

## **Garden C: 427 Village Crescent**





Vivian is another long time gardener in the area. When they first purchased the house there was a pool in the backyard that they removed and replaced with a patio and plantings. She planted gardens around the yard which was initially a shade garden given some tall trees in the backyard but the setting has changed with the storm of a few years ago. Two of a neighbour's large trees came down and she has since removed a tree in her garden. Vivian's garden features a lot of roses that line the driveway and can be found in the back yard, Peonies, hostas, ferns and other foliage plants. It also contains a flowering quince, an Osier Dogwood and a young Japanese Maple.

While you can easily walk to the next garden by taking the path next to Vivian's garden and turning right at the top of the path, you might want to drive to the next garden.

**Garden D: 198 Sweetbriar Dr.**





Lubi has been gardening on this beautiful deep property for over 20 years. The property extends back to a tall fence that borders the Expressway. At first glance, I had thought that she had been given permission to garden a neighbour's property it is so deep. The front garden is an attractive perennial border that features a Fern Leaf Peony, Irises and Roses that she propagates herself among others.

The rear garden features a Concord Grape Vine and a Cherry Tree. It also contains a small greenhouse where she propagates 'all' of her vegetables for her vegetable garden at the very back of the property. Lubi tells me that when they first moved in, the back of the property was all weeds and they rototilled the garden to remove the weeds and turned it into a large fenced off vegetable garden where she grows tomatoes, broccoli, cauliflower, potatoes, herbs and much more (all of which she starts in her small greenhouse).