



Arboretum News

Summer 2011

Would your group like to have a guided tour of the Aurora Community Arboretum?

If so, let us know and we'll arrange a convenient time.

Would you like to help the Aurora Community Arboretum to grow? Members—and working volunteers—are always welcome!

You'll find contact information on page 2 of this newsletter. We'd be happy to hear from you.

Visit our web site for information on current events—and you'll find lots of seasonal photographs too!

www.
auroraarboretum.ca

Our Arboretum Includes a Meadow

The northern part of the Arboretum has some trees, invasive shrubs and lots of grass. The plan, already under way, is to turn it into a unique feature—The Meadow.

It'll take some time, but when finished we'll have about 10 hectares of grassland. It'll be a home for meadow birds (and their song) and other flora and fauna that thrive in this environment. It'll also be an educational gem for young and old, as they will have the opportunity to walk in a meadow as well as a forest.

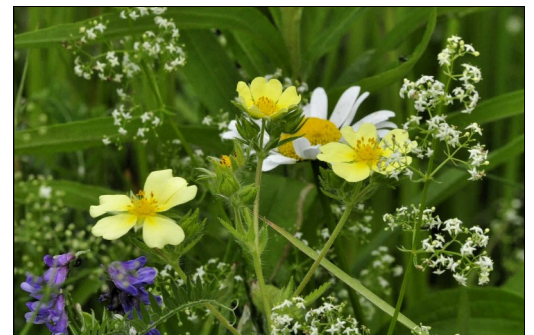
We started the process of change in May. Using funds provided by TD Friends of the Environment, we had an educational sign installed in The Meadow. Then, also funded by TD Friends of the Environment, we brought in a tree-spade and moved over 140 trees from the middle of the meadow area. These trees went into a Shelter Belt along Industrial Parkway, north of Canine Commons.

In the fall we plan to move small conifers to a new location as well. We will also start removing some of the invasive species of shrubs that have found a home in The Meadow over the past several years.

We will retain, and develop, a treed area around the north entrance of St John's Road. New grass trails have been created in The Meadow. Visitors can now get a sense of what the future will bring. And the wildflowers are wonderful this year!



TD Friends of the Environment Foundation



Upper right: a map of The Meadow. Centre right: a tree-spade with tree, about to be relocated. Lower left: tall grasses this year on a Meadow trail. Lower right: Meadow wildflowers.

Arboretum Nurseries

2011 has been the year when our Nursery program started delivering a significant number of trees and shrubs to the Arboretum. This year we planted over 200 plants from stock that was raised from seed over the past 3 years. Yes, it takes work ... but it also reduces our inventory cost. Every tree we plant in the Arboretum (A Town park) is owned by the Town of Aurora.



The nurseries (including cold frames, etc.) have been replenished this year and will deliver more trees and shrubs for the Arboretum over the next several years. Current inventory includes about 70 plants that will become part of the specimen collection. About 300 can go into future shelter belt planting projects. Another 300 can enhance the stock in what will become our Bottomland Forest area. It all takes time. Of the spring survivors, probably 80% will be ready to move to the Arboretum in 2012. Others may take up to 5 years to mature sufficiently.

The future is green!

Watering in the Summer

You might think that our biggest job in the Arboretum is planting trees, and for a relatively short time in the spring, you would be right. This spring ACA members and volunteers planted 1060 trees and shrubs.

However there is an even bigger job after the planting—watering these trees and shrubs. Newly planted trees need to have regular watering for the first 2 to 3 years in order to have a high survival rate. We cannot rely on Mother Nature, and this year proves the point. We had lots of early spring rain ... and then came July and heat. There was some rain, but not enough when temperatures were running in the 30's. So we water.

We have a system to identify plants that need watering. Many of the young trees in the Arboretum have coloured plastic streamers attached. These streamers tell us what year the tree was planted, so our watering crews know which trees need water the most. We'll keep watering on a regular basis for 2 or 3 years to minimize our losses. When the trees have developed a good root system, they will be able to survive and prosper without additional water.

Watering is important and time-consuming work. We'd be happy to have another couple of trained watering crews so the work load can be shared more widely. New volunteers in 2011 will get training with our watering equipment and make a contribution this year. And next year they will help us add another thousand trees and shrubs to the Arboretum.



Trees marked for watering, and the tanker we use (inset)

Fern Leaf Beech

Fagus sylvatica asplenifolia

Introduced in the early 1800s, the Fern Leaf Beech is a deciduous tree suitable for growing in Zone 5. It is slow growing, reaching a height of 20m and width of 13m. Pyramidal in shape when young, it eventually becomes oval when mature. The leaves are dark green in summer turning to a rich brown in winter, and it keeps its leaves attached until early spring. Leaves are lanceolate in shape—narrow, very deeply cut, making them look somewhat like a fern leaf—hence the name. The bark when



mature is grey and smooth. Every three to four years it will produce small prickly bur-like seed pods containing two three-sided seeds, usually devoured by squirrels. The Arboretum has a fine specimen east of the stone path at the outfield of ball diamond 1 near the old Bur Oak.

This newsletter is published by the Aurora Community Arboretum Inc.

For more information on Arboretum activities or events, or how to become a member, telephone (905) 727-9774 or e-mail: trees@auroraarboretum.ca or membersandvolunteers@auroraarboretum.ca

You can visit the ACA website at www.auroraarboretum.ca

