

Sudbury Shared Harvest

FOOD FOREST PLANTS

note that not all will be found in all of the gardens



Anise Hyssop

Agastache foeniculum

A native plant with leaves and flowers that smell and taste like licorice and attract bees.



Apple

Malus pumila

The varieties we plant were developed at the University of Saskatchewan and are hardy to -40C. The seven apple trees in the eastern section of the Delki Dozzi food forest were planted by members of the Delki Dozzi Community Garden between 2012-14. Two more were planted along with other food forest plants in 2017 and 2018.



Asparagus

Asparagus officinalis

It takes a few years to become established, after which it will produce for decades and can be harvested every second day from early May to early July. Always leave at least one spear, however, which will develop fern-like leaves that will replenish nutrients for the plant later in the season.



Baptisias

B. australis & B. sphaerocarpa

These native wildflower species are NOT edible, but we plant them because of their ability to "fix" nitrogen (take it from the air and turn it into a useful form), providing a natural fertilizer.

They are also drought tolerant and attract pollinators. Baptisia take a few years to establish, but eventually become shrub-like and develop many bean-like seed pods, making seed collection very easy.



Bee Balm

Monarda didyma

Also known as wild bergamot, this is a native perennial planted mainly for its ability to attract pollinators. A member of the mint family, the flowers and leaves are edible. With a scent reminiscent of Earl Grey Tea, Bee balm's blooms are strongly flavoured and best used sparingly. Before we knew better, we planted a large number of cultivars (not truly native species) of the bright pink/red variety, but have been adding more of the natives, seen in the photo here.



Black Chokeberry

Aronia melanocarpa

not to be confused with Chokecherry, this is a shrub, also called "Aronia," produces very dark purple (almost appearing black) berries. Naturally understory plants, they grow well under trees and are resistant to drought, insects, pollution, and disease. The berries are astringent in flavour, but very high in nutritional value and taste better when cooked. The best flavour comes in mid to late September (even after some frost) when very dark in colour, .



Black-eyed Susan

Rudbeckia hirta

NOT edible, these were chosen for their drought tolerance, because they are easy to grow in our climate, and because they attract pollinators (and let's face it, they're awfully pretty!)



Blue Vervain

Verbena hastata

The flowers and leaves of this native wildflower are edible and have been used traditionally for a number of medicinal purposes. Another reason for planting is to attract bees and other pollinators.



Buffaloberry

Shepherdia canadensis

This small native tree was chosen for the food forest because it is drought tolerant, winter hardy and fixes nitrogen, meaning it helps build healthy soils. The berries are very nutritious, being especially high in vitamin C and also lycopene (an anti-oxidant). The berries are very sour and astringent, but after exposure to frost, the taste improves as the sugar content rises. The seed is easily chewed and consumed with the fruit.



Butterflyweed

Asclepias tuberosa

Also known as Butterfly Milkweed, it is not edible for humans and may even be toxic if consumed in large quantities, but is less toxic than common milkweed and spreads less aggressively. We chose to plant because it attracts beneficial insects and milkweeds are the only food for the larval stage of the monarch butterfly.



Catnip

Nepeta cataria

As the name suggests, this plant is appealing to cats, but young leaves are edible for humans and add a mint-like flavour to salads or can be dried for tea. We began discouraging its growth after a couple of years because it was crowding out more desirable plants, but determined plants still pop up in the main pollinator patch towards the front of the garden at Delki Dozzi.



Cherry

Prunus x kerrasis

These cold-hardy varieties of dwarf sour cherry were bred at the University of Saskatchewan. They produce smaller fruit than what you will find in a grocery store, but are good for fresh eating. Despite the name "sour cherry," the fruit are actually quite sweet when fully ripe. When the fruit first comes out, it will be a bright red colour (as seen in the photo) and will darken as they ripen over several weeks. They will not be sweet until they have taken on a dark red - nearly black! - colour.



Cherry Plum or "Chum"

Prunus cerasifera

A cross between western sandcherry and Asian plum, bred at the University of Saskatchewan to be cold-hardy, the fruit are approximately 3cm in diameter and can be eaten fresh. Our cherry-plum at Delki Dozzi has suffered some setbacks and has not produced fruit as of 2022, but it appears to be rallying (and we will be planting a new pollinator for it in 2023 following the previous one's demise). The "Chum" pictured here is at the Louis Street edible forest garden. Transplanted in 2022 from an unsuitable location, it soon began to thrive.



Common Milkweed

Asclepias syriaca

Important food source for monarch butterfly caterpillars and one of only three milkweed species on which the eastern monarch migration largely depends.

More than 450 other insect species also feed on the plant, including flies, beetles, ants, bees, wasps, and other butterflies.



Comfrey

Symphytum species

Comfrey grows prolifically and while NOT edible, it is known to have a number of medicinal qualities when used topically. Its deep-tapping roots pull up trace minerals for other plants to take advantage of, so its nutrient-rich leaves are a great compost activator and mulch. We often "chop and drop" leaves throughout the season to enrich the soil. The flowers are short-lived, but loved by pollinators.



Coneflower (purple)

Echinacea purpurea

Although Echinacea is known to have medicinal uses, our main reason for planting it is to attract beneficial insects.



Coneflower (green-headed)

Rudbeckia laciniata

A lowering plant in the aster family Asteraceae and native to North America. Also known as Cutleaf Coneflower, we planted them for their drought resistance and to attract pollinators.



Currants

Ribes rubrum & Ribes nigrum

The fruit is nutritious, especially high in vitamin C, and ranges from tart to sweet. Can be eaten fresh and makes excellent jelly, syrup or mixed with other fruits in baking. Red and black currants taste quite different from each other and both have been producing well in our gardens.



False Sunflower

Heliopsis helianthoides

Native to the prairie habitats of central Canada, it is drought resistant and grows readily in the Sudbury climate.



Goldenrod

Solidago species

We're not sure which species of Goldenrod we have, because we didn't plant them. When a new plant grows spontaneously in the food forest, we check the plant apps and if it's native to this area, it can stay!

Blooming as they do in late summer and fall, they are an important food source for many pollinators late in the season. Humans can also eat Goldenrod! It has often been mistaken for ragweed, which causes seasonal allergies.



Gooseberry

Ribes hirtellum

Wild gooseberry is a shrub native to Northern Ontario that grows to approximately 1 metre tall. Fruit from the varieties we have planted, which matures in midsummer, taste sweetest when allowed to reach a deep purplish-pink colour as shown in the photo. Ranging from tart to sweet, the fruit is high in vitamin C and good eaten fresh, as juice, and in smoothies.



Haskap

Lonicera caerulea

Relatively new as an agricultural crop in North America, Haskaps are native to the boreal forest and have been widely used in Japan for hundreds of years. We plant cold-hardy varieties developed at the University of Saskatchewan. The ripe fruit has a unique flavour, are high in antioxidants, and are resistant to most diseases and pests. The fruit will turn blue on the outside in early June, but are not ripe until a few weeks later, when they are purple (not green) on the inside.



Hostas

Hosta species

A member of the asparagus family, hostas are mostly known in North America as ornamental plants. There are a huge number of species, some better for eating than others. In Japan, the young leaves of Hosta montana are popular as a vegetable known as urui. Fresh leaves and stems are best harvested while young and tender. Hostas will readily re-grow their leaves after being chopped down to the base.



Lance-leaved Coreopsis

Coreopsis lanceolata

A native wildflower known to attract pollinators and other beneficial insects.

It is drought resistant.



Lupine

Lupinus species

Lupines are NOT edible and most of the ones in the food forest are not native to our area, but were chosen because of their ability to enhance soil fertility by “fixing” nitrogen from the atmosphere, providing a natural fertilizer for themselves and for other plants.

We often remove lupine flowers before they go to seed, because they have tried to take over whole beds in the food forest.



Oregano

Origanum species

Oregano has been used as a culinary and medicinal herb for thousands of years. There are many species and varieties of oregano. the cold-hardy perennial type spreads prolifically – all the oregano in our food forests started from one small donation from a volunteer’s garden!

The flowers are also edible and very attractive to pollinators.



Pear

Pyrus species

The pear trees at Delki Dozzi were planted in 2013 by members of the Delki Dozzi community garden. Harvesting pears is tricky because they have to ripen off the tree. If left to ripen on the tree, they will develop a mealy texture. Apply gentle pressure on the flesh just below the stem. If it is a little soft, it is likely ready and should detach from the tree with a gentle twist (if you need to pull hard, it isn't ready!). Allow to ripen at room temperature for a few days.



Purple Poppy Mallow

Callirhoe involucrata

This plant is NOT edible. We planted them at Delki Dozzi before we knew they're not native to Northern Ontario, but they are native to parts of North America and you have to admit they are lovely!



Raspberry

Rubus species

We have planted yellow, red and black raspberries in some of the food forests.

They will spread aggressively if allowed, so we haven't included them in most of the smaller food forests.



Rhubarb

Rheum rhabarbarum

The leaves are poisonous, but the stalks are edible. Rhubarb is easy to grow from divisions of established plants, so we are able to obtain donations from members of the community and now produce our own divisions for new gardens.

When picking, leave about one-third of the stalks to allow the plant to regenerate. Once established, this will allow it to be picked from late May throughout the summer and the plants can last for decades.



Serviceberry

Amelanchier alnifolia

Also known as Saskatoon berry, the trees we planted at Delki Dozzi in 2017 have been slow to develop and so far we have not managed to snap a photo of a ripe fruit (photo at left shows immature ones). When ready they are about the size of a blueberry, and a similar colour, but with some reddish tones. Although more common in the western provinces than in Ontario, it is native to the Sudbury area. The berries are rich in nutrients.



Sea Buckthorn

Callirhoe involucrata

Used for centuries in both Europe and Asia as food and for its pharmaceutical properties, the berries are nutritionally rich. The plant is able to fix atmospheric nitrogen and the ones we planted have been growing fast and spreading quite aggressively. We remove many suckers each year and you are encouraged to get in touch if you would like to plant a sucker in your own garden.



Swamp Milkweed

Asclepias incarnata

Swamp milkweed doesn't do as well in the food forest as the common one, because it likes wetter conditions.

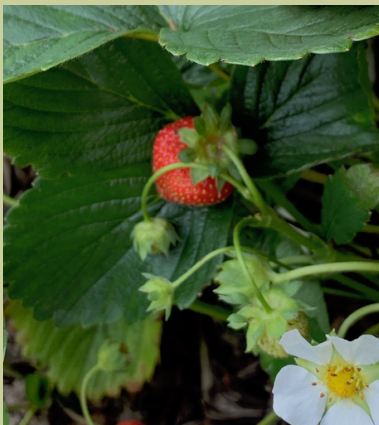
It is one of the best attractors of the monarch butterfly which feeds on the flowers and lays eggs on the plants. The emerging caterpillars feed on the leaves.



Silver Sage

Artemesia ludoviciana

Silver Sage is an aromatic plant and is a great drought tolerant ground cover for dry landscapes. It has grown prolifically in the Delki Dozzi garden since we planted it in 2017, so we often share with other gardens and we also encourage people to take a small cutting for your own garden.



Strawberry

Fragaria species

Most of the strawberries that we have planted are everbearing/day-neutral, which gives a much longer growing season than the common June-bearing type. Although they produce only a moderate June crop, they take a short break in summer then continue to produce from August until hard frost. They are easily propagated and we have added plants to other gardens from our original plants at Delki Dozzi.



Sweet Cicely

Myrrhis odorata

All parts of this plant are edible – leaves, seeds, roots, and flowers – and have a sweet, licorice flavour. The leaves can be cooked with tart fruits, such as rhubarb, to reduce the amount of sugar needed. Leaves can also be added to soups, omelettes and custards, or used fresh in salads.



Thyme (Creeping)

Thymus serpyllum

Also known as Mother of Thyme, it is a perennial ground cover that attracts pollinators. The leaves and flowers are edible, but with a different (and stronger) flavour than the thyme that is usually purchased commercially. It spreads prolifically.



Tall Meadow Rue

Thalictrum pubescens

Tall Meadow Rue sprouted on its own in the food forest and since it's a native plant, we decided to keep it.

It serves as a nectar source for various pollinators while also providing cover for small wildlife.



Wild Columbine

Aquilegia canadensis

This native wildflower is NOT edible. It was included for its ability to attract beneficial species, because it grows easily in our climate, and it is drought tolerant.



Walking Onion

Allium × proliferum

Also known as Egyptian onions or tree onions, this is a perennial plant similar to the common onion but with a cluster of bulblets where a normal onion would have flowers. Tree onion bulblets will sprout and grow while still on the original stalk and they may bend down under the weight of the new growth and take root some distance from the parent plant, giving rise to the name "walking onion".



Yarrow

Achillea millefolium

Drought-tolerant and used by some people for medicinal purposes, Yarrow is considered an especially useful companion plant, attracting beneficial insects and repelling some pests. It attracts predatory wasps, which drink the nectar and then use insect pests as food for their larvae. Similarly, it attracts ladybirds and hoverflies.

Sources:

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