What is a "wildlife-friendly" garden?

A garden that is wildlife friendly provides food, water, shelter, and places for local wildlife to make homes. It contains no chemicals, but it may include a bird, bee, or bat house, brush piles or rock piles. The Fletcher Wildlife Garden web site has lots of information to help you create a wildlife garden. Learn how to attract pollinators, how to build a backyard pond, which plants attract butterflies or suit sunny or shady gardens. We are an official Monarch butterfly waystation, one of many in Ottawa backyards and schoolyards that support this severely threatened butterfly, and we can help you create a Monarch waystation in your own backyard.

How can you help the Fletcher Wildlife Garden?

The garden is managed by volunteers, and we are always looking for more hands. Work groups meet on Tuesday mornings, Wednesday evenings, and Friday mornings, but we also need help with publicity, publications and special events such as the annual plant sale. Our volunteer groups are informal; come weekly or when you can or join one of our occasional weekend work bees. If you enjoy nature and working outdoors and if you want to learn about wildlife gardening and local plants, come and join us.

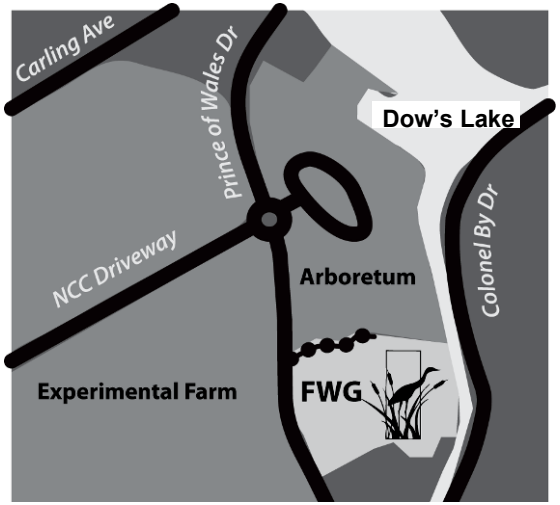
Who is Fletcher?

The Fletcher Wildlife Garden is named after James Fletcher (1852–1908), the first dominion entomologist and botanist at the Central Experimental Farm and a founding member of the Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club. The OFNC, which oversees the garden, is interested in all aspects of the natural world, from birding to botanizing, investigation to publication, and conservation to cooperation.

Gardening for wildlife

Loss of natural space is a major factor in the decline of many plant and animal species. The Fletcher Wildlife Garden was established in 1990 to encourage the creation or restoration of wildlife-friendly gardens and plantings in urban and rural areas. The garden includes a variety of habitats: two woodlots, an open field, an amphibian pond, a ravine, and a butterfly meadow that is also a Monarch butterfly waystation. Our Backyard Garden demonstrates local plants suitable for various garden conditions. Our web site and publications explain how you can use local plants to attract and support local birds, butterflies, pollinators, and other creatures; how to deal with invasive plants; and where to find other helpful information.

The Fletcher Wildlife Garden is a project of the Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club. Partners in the project are Friends of the Central Experimental Farm and Agriculture and Agri-Foods Canada;



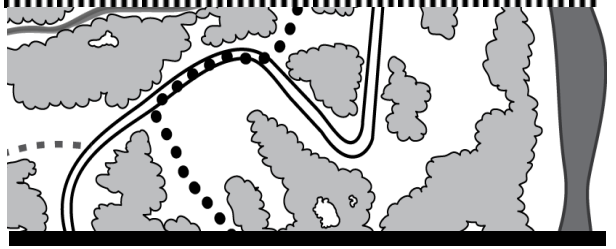
45° 23' 12" N 75° 42' 15" W

Landscape Ontario is an associate partner.

Visit us online to learn more, read our blog, newsletters, view photo galleries as well as learn about volunteering opportunities. Friend us on Facebook or follow us on Twitter!

A project of the Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club

Fletcher Wildlife Garden



Trail Map

for the Fletcher Wildlife Garden

Fletcher Wildlife Garden
Box 35069, Westgate PO
Ottawa, ON, K1Z 1A2

Webpage: **ofnc.ca/fwg**
Email: **fletcher@ofnc.ca**
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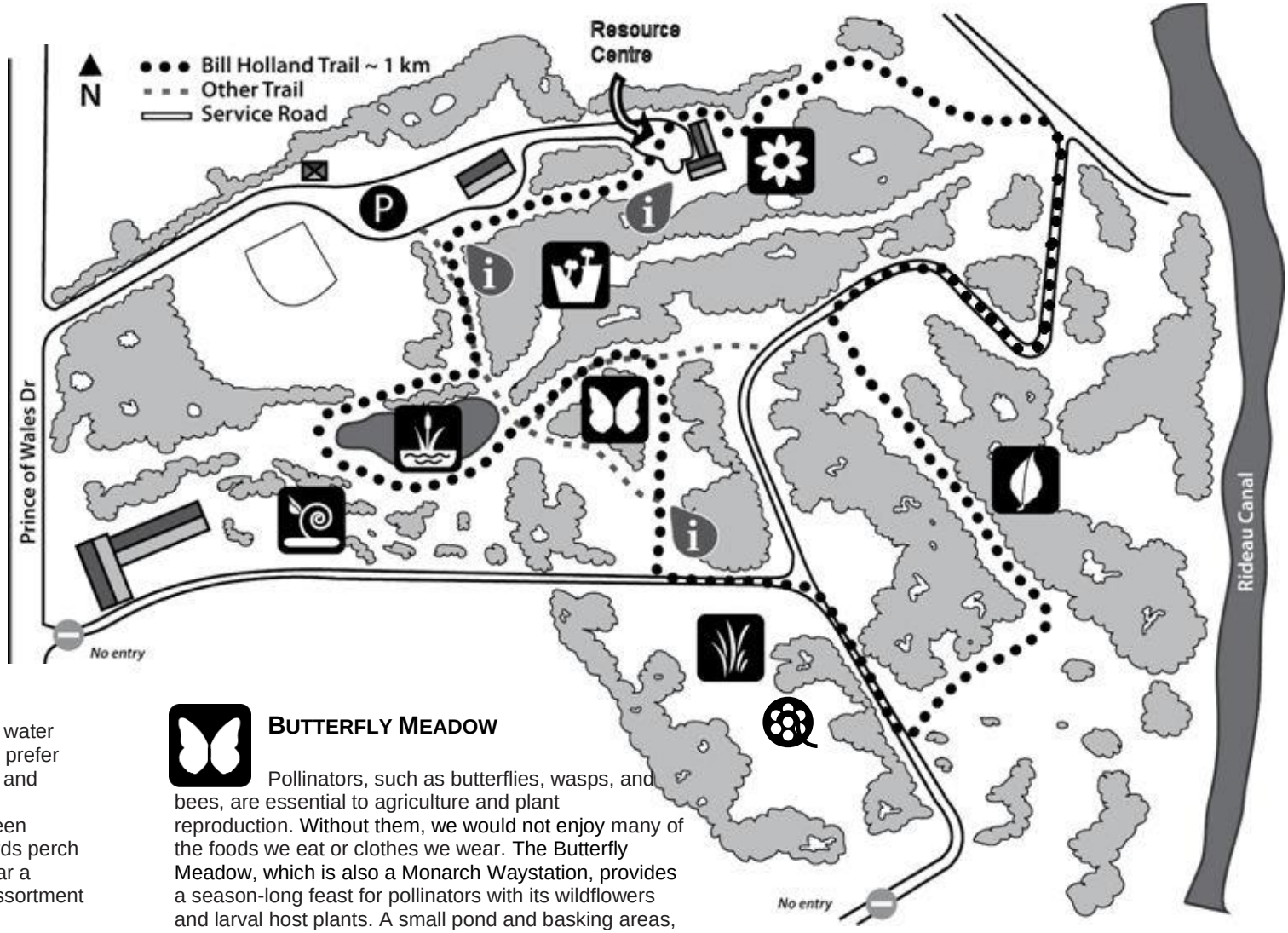
BACKYARD GARDEN

The Backyard Garden demonstrates how you can bring local nature into your own home landscape. Low-maintenance native plants in a variety of growing conditions create year-round interest. Food, shelter, water, and places to build a home are the elements of wildlife gardening, as our friendly chipmunk population will agree!

EVERGREEN WOODS

Under natural conditions, abandoned fields can eventually become forests as they are colonized by fast-growing “pioneer” woody species, followed by subsequent longer-lived trees. We have sped up the process in our Evergreen Woods by planting a variety of both types of trees. Now mature, the saplings we planted are reproducing and looking more and more like a “natural” forest every year!



AMPHIBIAN POND

The Amphibian Pond is an artificial water body created to provide a home for those who prefer wetter feet and roots. Fed by runoff, the water and adjoining creek are slow moving. Turtles sun themselves on our purpose-built raft while Green Herons nest in trees and Red-winged Blackbirds perch and nest in cattails. If you wait, you should hear a variety of frogs calling or spot the incredible assortment of insect life.

RAVINE

A ravine runs through the FWG from the Amphibian Pond down past the Backyard Garden toward the Rideau Canal. This is a secret and mysterious place that, like a hedgerow, forms a continuous band of dense vegetation that harbours all sorts of wildlife such as Cottontail Rabbits and Groundhogs. The many layers of trees, shrubs, and tangled undergrowth make it a haven for birds, including over-winterers.

BUTTERFLY MEADOW

Pollinators, such as butterflies, wasps, and bees, are essential to agriculture and plant reproduction. Without them, we would not enjoy many of the foods we eat or clothes we wear. The Butterfly Meadow, which is also a Monarch Waystation, provides a season-long feast for pollinators with its wildflowers and larval host plants. A small pond and basking areas, such as logs and rocks, were added, so our busy pollinators can enjoy a break in the sun!

OLD FIELD

Many wildlife species require the open, weedy habitat provided by old farm fields. Birds, insects, and small mammals all use our Old Field for nesting, feeding, and shelter. We have added nest boxes and mow our site every few years to keep shrub and tree species from establishing and evolving toward a forest community.

OLD WOODLOT

The Old Woodlot was transformed from a park-like setting into a mixed forest by adding leaf mulch and rotted wood and planting native trees, shrubs, and ground cover. In 2014, the removal of many large ash trees, killed by Emerald Ash Borers, has allowed us to plant a greater variety of local tree species and enrich the soil with wood from the felled trees. Standing dead trees (snags) provide important habitat, while fallen trees become “nurse logs”, releasing soil nutrients and fostering plant growth.

Revised 2020 **Pollinator boxes**

Please keep dogs on leash.

Please stay on the trails.