



Summary of  
Speaker Series: CFUW A/N General Meeting,  
March 23, 2021

**“Gardens Are a Microcosm  
for the World’s Environmental Health Issues”**

Speaker: Martin Galloway,  
Professor of Biology, TV host/presenter on  
*Harrowsmith Country Life* and presenter on the  
*Secret World of Gardens*,  
Owner of Chalk Lake Greenhouses

Martin Galloway’s presentation, “Gardens Are a Microcosm for the World’s Environmental Health Issues”, was highlighted by a PowerPoint presentation of incredible pictures of flora and fauna, most photographed by him in our southern Ontario natural environment. Martin wove amusing stories throughout the slide show and gave us glimpses of his teaching methods. These strategies helped us see ourselves situated within the earth’s ecosystem. He warned that although we see ourselves as above and separate from nature and feel it’s OK to “mess with it”, this is simply not true. Martin believes that we have become “plant managers but we’re not very good at it”. He cautions that our tendency to label certain insects, plants and animals as “good or bad” does a great disservice to our need for biodiversity and undermines our stewardship of our environment.

We hope to take his message to heart as we plan and plant our spring gardens with an emphasis on flowers and vegetation that are native to our environment. Planting more indigenous and mostly perennial species will attract and nourish the insects and animals that visit our yards. Martin’s message is to aim for living in harmony with nature and to strive for *interesting*, rather than pretty, yards which allow us the opportunity to appreciate and become a meaningful part of our ecosystem.

Martin Galloway teaches Biology at Seneca/York and has taught courses in Ecology, Philosophy of Biological Science and Genetics at the University of Toronto and York University. For many years he was a television host/writer/presenter of *Harrowsmith Country Life* and was a presenter on *The Secret World of Gardens*. Both programs provided close-up examinations of biological processes and the lives of different creatures in the garden. Martin has been the owner of Chalk Lake Greenhouses in Uxbridge for 50 years. It is a wholesale nursery specializing in Native plants and herbaceous perennials.

*Summary written by Kathy Wosnick for the CFUW A/N Program Committee*