



905-699-2197
SeanJames@SeanJames-Consulting.ca
10765 Fifth Line Nassagaweya, Rockwood, ON. N0B 2K0

www.seanjames-consulting.ca

Thank you for your interest in my list of presentations!

Of all aspects I'm involved with in the horticultural world, my favorite, by far, is educating. Herein is a listing of my presentations for your consideration. Hopefully there's something for everyone, although I'm open to new ideas. (Have a look at 'What We Used to Kill' below.) My years of horticultural experience and my history of public speaking will pay off for you. You can contact me by e-mail at SeanJames@SeanJames-Consulting.ca.

I've created landscapes from Nova Scotia to California. I have spoken to horticultural societies, Master Gardener chapters, environmental groups and service clubs throughout Ontario for more than 30 years. I've presented at Canada Blooms, the [North West Flower and Garden Show](#), several botanical gardens, and at landscape trade shows, including HortEast and CanWest, and have taught at the college level for almost two decades.

It can be difficult to assemble a list of speakers a year in advance. A common challenge is to replace a speaker who drops out at the last minute. Please keep this on file for future opportunities in case I'm available on short notice to help out. **Best of all, I'm very familiar with the Zoom platform, having used it for teaching and many hort society presentations!**

A long and short version of my bio are included for your files, and you may cut, paste and edit as you like.

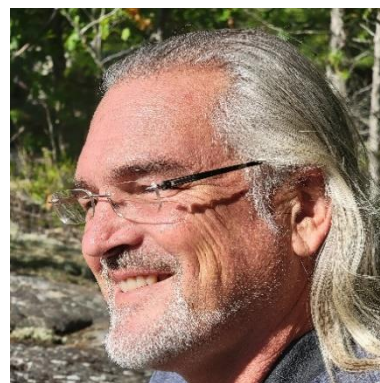
For small groups -- such as horticultural societies and nature groups -- my 2023 rates are \$120/hour, including travel from my door, back to my door, with a minimum fee of \$360 for in-person meetings. If you schedule your group's 'business' *after* my presentation, you will save up to \$60! To incentivize reducing my carbon footprint, Zoom meetings can be presented for \$290.00. HST is additional to all fees. Rates for larger events will be determined on an event-by-event basis. Contact me for a firm price.

Horticultural consultations and customized workshops are also available.

Yours in Nature,



905.699.2197 • sjames@seanjames.com
469 Woodward Avenue, Milton, ON L9T 3B7



Sean James NPD, FLP, & Master Gardener

CTRL + RIGHT CLICK ON ANY OF THE LOGOS ABOVE TO FIND ME ON SOCIAL MEDIA AND FOLLOW/SUBSCRIBE, OR SEE THE ORGANIZATIONS I'M PART OF





Bio: Long version

"Named by GardenMaking magazine as one of "20 Making a Difference" and by Landscape Ontario 2020 & 2021's Garden Communicator of the Year, Sean has been gardening professionally since he was sixteen and speaking to horticultural societies for more than 25 years. A graduate of the prestigious Niagara Parks School of Horticulture, he has instructed for Mohawk College and owns 'Sean James Consulting & Design', focusing on writing, designing and consulting (and a few little 'boutique' hands-on jobs!). He is a 2X past-president of the Milton & District Horticultural Society. He has participated in the professional advisory committee for the Landscape Program at Niagara College, and the Mohawk College horticulture curriculum, chaired the Environmental Stewardship Committee for Landscape Ontario, and the Environmental Committee for the Perennial Plant Association. He designed the sustainable Anderson Parkette in Oakville (for which he won an international award from the Perennial Plant Association) and several other landmark gardens. He has written several regular eco-gardening columns as well as articles for GardenMaking magazine, Ontario Gardener, [Trellis](#), been published in several books (including the Canadian Gardener's Guide – 3rd edition) and manuals including the Master Gardeners Reference Manual, The Red Seal Study Guide (Environmental Practices Chapter), and several stormwater manuals, as well as in the global digital newsletter for the Perennial Plant Association. Sean had the honour of being a member of the committee that created the new [Ontario Landscape Tree Planting Guide](#). He's also a member of [Master Gardeners of Ontario](#).

He had the privilege to help put together the national educational standards for Horticultural Apprentices nationally and provincially. He's been featured on the CBC, now including filling in for Paul Zammit occasionally on 'The Gardening Show'. and on two HGTV shows, including 'Green Force' and 'Marriage Under Construction'. He's co-hosted 'the Garden Show' with Charlie Dobbins and been on the radio in Halifax and Ottawa with Niki Jabbar. He sits on the Ontario Invasive Plant Council's Horticultural Outreach Collaborative. He's been a judge for the All-American Selections Garden Competition, and the Ontario Spokesperson for Garden Days Canada.

He has spoken from the Maritimes to Seattle and landscaped from Nova Scotia to California. Sean grew up surrounded by nature, near Crawford Lake in Campbellville, so it was destined that he would choose a career like landscaping."

And a really short version: "Sean owns 'Sean James Consulting & Design'. Named by Landscape Ontario as 2020 and 2021's Garden Communicator of the Year, gardening has been Sean James' passion and profession for almost 40 years. A graduate of Niagara Parks School of Horticulture, a Master Gardener, writer, and teacher, Sean focuses on eco-gardening techniques. He has spoken at events from the Maritimes to Seattle and landscaped from Nova Scotia to California. Sean had the honour of being part of creating the new Ontario Landscape Tree Planting Guide, the Grow-Me-Instead guide, the Ontario Horticultural Apprenticeship Curriculum, the national Red Seal Occupational Standard, and the Master Gardeners Reference Manual. He has chaired the Environmental Stewardship Committee for Landscape Ontario and the Environmental Committee for the Perennial Plant Association" and fills in for Paul Zammit occasionally on CBC's 'The Gardening Show'."

(Feel free to cobble together what you think would interest your membership.)





Sean James

All speeches run between 45 minutes to 1 hour (with questions anytime) followed by an 'official' question period. For some talks, more in-depth 1.5- and 3-hour versions are available.

NEW!

Nifty Native Plants II – More Great Options

Following up on Nifty Native Plants, since there were just too many more great options to leave out, this presentation will focus on more great, and often overlooked species that deserve a home in our gardens. We'll also talk about some of the biodiversity these species support, and, for some, care points to make them at home in our ever-more beautiful yards. Interest has exploded in this area of horticulture recently!



NEW!

An Appetite for Gardening: Incorporating Edible into a Traditional Landscape

Many home gardeners (but, sadly few professional landscapers/designers) are looking to grow more of their own food, but why relegate edible plants to the back corner, punishing them like they've misbehaved? "Go sit in the corner. Think about what you've done!" Many fruits and veggies are beautiful and offer wonderful texture and colour; think about eggplant, rhubarb and kale! Growing vines (beans, squash, tomatoes) on trellises and espaliering fruit trees can also be a great way to use vertical surfaces to embiggen your landscape and fill the pantry at the same time! We'll discuss all options!



NEW!

Fusion® Gardening II – Dive Deeper

Following the success of 'Fusion™ Gardening', it's time to get into more of the how-to details, such as testing for soil type, how to actually construct a rain garden, governing flow and capturing every rain drop possible through a variety of methods, how to build specialized drought-tolerant gardens such as 'scree gardens', and more!



20+ Bulletproof Plants

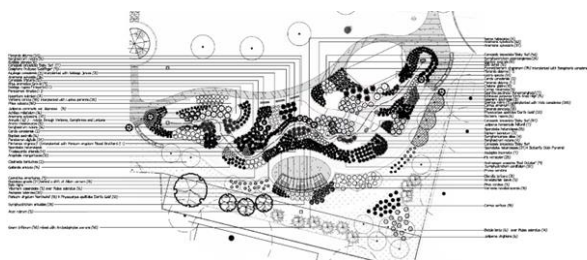
Gardening can be challenging. We'll look at different situations and which plants thrive in them. (The original request was for 20 plants, but it couldn't be kept to only that number!)

Folks think that certain circumstances are challenging. The truth is one needs to know the right plants.

NEW!

Designing and Building a Butterfly Garden (& getting it off to a good start!)

It takes a while to get things off the ground – butterflies AND gardens. This is the story of the creation of the new Val Fleming Butterfly Garden in Beamsville, from beginning to end, first meetings, through design, Redesign, installation, bumps along the road, and maintenance/establishment. Essential for those who're thinking of creating a butterfly garden, or a biodiversity support garden in general.



Flowers for Feathered Friends

Gardening to attract birds can be mixed with any other kind of gardening, but requires a few specific considerations. It also has benefits to your landscape beyond the joy of birdsong. This is a talk for more than just birders, covering concepts such as biodiversity and native plants.

Nova Scotia Summer: A Horticultural Epic Tour

Summer, 2016, and the Fern Ridge Gang went to Guysborough, NS to install an eco-landscape, came back, and went down and came back... and so on. This resulted in upgrading an incredibly biodiverse 120-year-old mill pond. Along the way, we visited a litany of botanical gardens... and more.



Take a chance! ☺

Keeping it Green: Keeping it Beautiful

It is one of my fundamental beliefs that whatever your sustainable palette – permaculture, native plantings, rainwater handling etc. – beauty should be the starting point. If we don't make these initiatives beautiful, folks won't buy in.

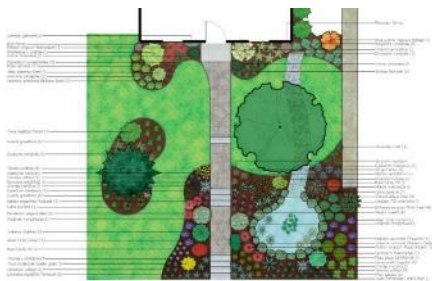
This is an in-depth talk on design principles and discussing several 'green' gardening techniques.



Growing Gracefully:

The Evolution (Creation?) of a Garden from Young to Mature

Like a battle plan, a garden design doesn't last past the first shovel in the ground. Gardens evolve, year after year. Plants over-thrive, while others die. Shade pushes out sun-loving plants as trees mature. We'll look at how this progression happens and how to embrace it. A large and frequently-overlooked topic.



NEW!

Texture Workhorses: Sedges and Grasses

Only recently appreciated, grasses offer interest throughout the year, increase biodiversity and offer sound and movement. Their close relatives, sedges, are indispensable in the fast-growing area of rain gardens. Horizons will be broadened!

Fusion® Gardening

Encouraged by many municipalities and regions, Fusion Gardening® blends LID (rainwater handling) with xeriscaping (drought-tolerant gardening) and enfolds plantings to enhance biodiversity. One of the main foci of this style is to engage the public with *beauty*. Since it's so important that property owners take up this gauntlet, we'll address the backbone of each of these disciplines, and discuss how to do each artfully. With climate change, storms are becoming stronger and less predictable. Droughts are getting longer. Many of us seek to use our gardens to do 'Good' for biodiversity. Fusion Gardening™ does all these things by minimizing water use, keeping the water that falls on our property ON our property, and, through the favouring of native and wildlife-supporting plant choices, support the life that visits our yards."



Simply Shrubs!

Today's gardener is searching for more eco-friendly planting designs, and you can become that expert! Focusing on native plants and nativars (cultivars of native plants), we'll talk about some of the best shrubs for all types of gardens from rain gardens through shade and sun and look at tolerance to soil types as well.





B4 Gardening: Beautiful Blooms for Birds and Bees

We LOVE butterflies in our gardens, and we recognize that bees, upon which our food supply depends, are under stress. Any garden can be a pollinator garden and we'll discuss how, with a brief discussion about pollinators themselves.

A broader picture than "Flowers for Feathered Friends", this talk also covers attracting pollinators and other desirable wildlife to the garden. This ties into how biodiversity will benefit your garden...and how incredibly beautiful it can be.



What to do With a Downpour: Ornamental Ways to Handle Rainwater

Urban development has resulted in large areas of impermeable surfaces. This leads to poor water quality and erosion as well as drying of the creeks during droughts. Techniques will be discussed to aid in infiltrating rainwater into the soil while beautifying your landscapes and allowing a more unusual palette of plants to be used. Rain gardens can be a beautiful addition to any yard and can allow the planting of some truly interesting plants. They also help the environment by infiltrating water to clean it and restore the water table and base-flow (the water that seeps through the ground to our creeks). We'll cover how to design and build a rain garden, including placement, construction, and plant choices.



Working WITH Nature

- a common-sense approach to avoiding pesticides in the garden
- how to let nature do the work by encouraging soil health, biodiversity, and proper plant care
- just a few slides and lots of information and answering of questions

Nifty Native Plants

Why do we think that going native means a sacrifice in beauty? It does **not**! We'll discuss various desirable ornamental natives, including some you may not know as native, and their benefits to birds and pollinators. Location suitability will be dealt with, including addressing difficult soils and situations. We may even get into the debate on 'Nativars'! One of the most popular speeches!





Xeriscaping: The Necessary Wave of the Future

Many gardeners think drought-resistant landscaping needs to look like a desert. It CAN (and that would be pretty cool!) but it doesn't NEED to. Selecting plants for sun or shade that aren't thirsty still allows a large palette of species that are surprisingly low-maintenance. We will cover different gardening techniques such as drip irrigation, as well as styles of landscaping such as scree gardening.



Making a Splash: Water in the Home Garden

- design, construction, & maintenance of water features
- less work than you think...no weeding & no mowing!
- plant choices
- plus, a bit about rain garden construction



Looks Good Enough to Eat! Permaculture: Living off YOUR Land

- the basic principles of growing food on your property
- creative solutions for city yards
- keeping it ornamental
- using edible natives and perennials to be eco-friendly





It Doesn't End in August: Extending Interest in the Garden

- a study, month by month, from September to December and beyond
- combinations and individual plants
- breaking down the belief that the spring garden is the climax, and the rest of the year is the denouement

Fall Cleanup: The Green Way - Updated

- addressing the many misconceptions about what to do in the fall
- labour-saving techniques
- extra information about biodiversity and general horticulture

Fighting the Triffids: Native Alternatives to Invasive Ornamentals

We love plants, but some of the plants we love are a bit too enamoured with our natural areas. They're not native to Canada and they move aggressively into our wild spaces. There ARE non-natives that are fine in our gardens! We'll talk about which plants we'd like to avoid and some better options – native and non-native, non-invasive – that might be better options. We'll also touch on how to control some of the aggressors. How invasives affect our biodiversity will also be addressed.

English Cottage Gardens: A Canadian Approach

- an in-depth presentation of design principles, matching plants to soil, and planting combinations
- slide presentation of perennials and examples of cottage gardens – even shady!



Rocks, Blocks & Wood: Understanding Hard Landscaping

- using stone, wood, and interlock in the landscape
- common mistakes
- heavy focus on design principles
- dealing with contractors

The Devil's in the Details:

Landscaping a Small Yard... Some Design Tips from a Pro

Small yards, in many ways more than large yards, have great potential. A short slide show will be analyzed to share ideas and help guide you.





Proud of My Pruning

- Become a pruning hero and learn the methods and science of pruning, including what NOT to do, where to make proper cuts for healing, (and a possible video demonstration for Zoom).
- how to prune woody ornamentals – shrubs to trees – young and old
- an in-depth pruning demonstration of how to make proper cuts and maintaining aging shrubs
- a short discussion on identification of diseases and how to deal with them
- how much to prune, specialty pruning methods, such as pollarding and coppicing, WHEN to prune and long-term concerns
- Everyone needs to hear this but may not know it.

Bringing Back the Nearly Dead: Renovating an Existing Landscape

- dealing with a landscape afflicted with the usual challenges, step-by step
- Starting with a standard landscape, we erase those challenges and redesign the situation.
- how to use the existing material & assets when upgrading older landscapes
- design principles and construction priorities & winter interest
- rejuvenative pruning techniques
- principles of hard landscaping (using stone, concrete & wood)

Close Companions: Using Perennials and Annuals Together

- discussion on how to keep colour in your garden through the entire season
- keeping costs and maintenance low
- using colours together
- using bulbs, tender perennials (e.g., Dahlias) and self-seeding annuals, with perennials



Reduce Your Maintenance: Groundcovers & Mulches

No one calls a landscaper looking for something, 'sorta. . . Palace of Versailles'! The first request is usually 'low maintenance'. The best and most visually-appealing way to reduce work is by using mulches and groundcovers. We'll discuss a variety of both, their pros and cons and how to design with them. We'll also touch on natives and biodiversity enhancement, which are becoming major interests. The soil microbiome will be included.





Practical Perennials

We focus on 50 or so perennials that provide easy care, long periods of interest, seasonal colour, salt and shade tolerance. We'll also cover how to grow them and spring and fall maintenance, as well as thoughts on designing, growing & winter interest. (This talk is normally an hour and a half, but there's a shorter version available.)

What We Used to Kill: Caterpillars and Their Host Plants

It wasn't so long ago that if something was nibbling on our plants, we whipped out the insecticide. In recent years there has been an explosion of interest in pollinators, including butterflies and moths. Folks frequently seek advice on how to identify various caterpillars, larvae and other insects. Equally important is how to enhance our gardens to provide habitat for these creatures. Host plants and garden maintenance will be topics of discussion.



The Art of Lighting

- if you've put so much work into the landscape why not enjoy it at night... when you are home?
- different types and styles of lighting the landscape with a focus on low-voltage fixtures
- what to look for and how to deal with contractors
- the potential negative effects on lighting



Couples and Threesomes: Companions for Hostas

Utilizing the potential of a shade garden

- an in-depth look at using more than just Hostas to bring all aspects of garden design to a shade garden
- includes discussion of biodiversity and sustainability



NEW!

Talk Dirty: Soil, and the Things Living in it

We are continuously learning about soil and its importance to plant health and climate change. The latest information and research will be discussed. We will present and answer several trend-setting questions. How do we steward the soil microbiome? What are the beneficial bacteria and fungi? What activities harm the soil and therefore the plants? Can better soil stewardship also mean lower maintenance? It's a dirty topic, but someone's got to cover it.

Catching a Garden: Photography Tips for Real Gardeners

- not high tech! Just a simple look at how to photograph nature and more
- I am a semi-professional (just a bit in my spare time but I have sold works and done paid shoots)
- we will NOT discuss f-stops and aperture sizes and all that...it's not usually necessary with today's cameras
- we will discuss composition, colour, form and perhaps a few useful tricks



NEW!

A Pillar of Salt... and Plants that Tolerate It

- designing and planting for roadsides, sea sides, and other salty conditions
- with boulevard gardens gaining ground but slip and fall insurance claims on the rise, choosing plants that can tolerate salt is of particular interest to gardeners and municipalities alike
- restrictions on boulevard gardens will be discussed
- touching on how these plants often support biodiversity



NEW!

Life-Magnet: Creating a Layered Native Garden for Biodiversity:

With the expanding trend toward landscaping to enhance all forms of life, the question becomes...how. By choosing plants favouring native species, and creating layers including varying heights of plants, focusing on what food and habitat niches those plants would fill, the life cycles of many species can be supported. This involves looking at all life stages: from birth (larva and eggs) to adulthood; and from first food sources to berries and insects. Also worth considering is where creatures need shelter; old logs, standing trees, twiggy shrubs for nesting, and more. We'll delve into recommended plant choices, design considerations, the 'native vs. non' issue, and finer details such as supporting obligat feeders (those that can feed on only one genus or species).





Fundraising

Consider offering a course to your membership or the general public. Stack several speeches together or choose more in-depth/longer presentations from the courses below.

Hire me for the day, offer lunch (when we did this for Oakville Master Gardeners many moons ago, a local Subway donated lunch) and charge participants to raise money for garden projects or just top up your organization's coffers. As with any of the talks above, I'll promote your group through my newsletter and social networking platforms.

Woody Plants: Their Appeal and Uses in the Landscape (Full Day)

- a 6-hour presentation of the advantages and concerns surrounding woody plant choices
- includes discussion of plants suitable for rain gardens, attracting birds, invasive species, native species, hardiness zones, and suitability to soil type

Dig Deeper: Landscape Plants and How to Use Them (Full Day)

- a 6-hour presentation on various types of plants: annuals, perennials, trees, shrubs and *even veggies*
- design considerations will be addressed throughout
- includes discussion of invasive species, plants suitable for rain gardens, attracting birds, native species and suitability to soil type

Do-it-Yourself: A Design Workshop (Full Day)

The morning will involve a presentation on all aspects to be considered to create a landscape design: construction basics; prioritizing needs; aesthetic principles. Afternoon will be spent working with participants, one on one, to help them create their design.

Participants should bring a design of their property, preferably measured to scale, photos of their house and garden, paper (11x17 is best), a ruler or scale, pencils and erasers (or the host group can provide stationery and supplies).

Typically, the host group provides a simple lunch to participants – maximum of 12 participants.

Xeriscaping: Drought-tolerant Landscaping (Half Day)

With municipalities beginning to charge what water actually costs, and with an increasing awareness of environmental issues, this is a valuable presentation. Plant choices, whys and hows, and different styles will be discussed.

This is a 3-hour workshop on all aspects of reducing water use in the landscape.





NEW!

Texture Workhorses: Grasses and Sedges

A half-day delve into many types of sedges and grasses, including some of the more obscure and interesting species as well as how to care for them. Many different areas (e.g., rain gardens, dry shade) will be covered as well. Surprising how much there is to learn about this overlooked topic!



NEW!

Talk Dirty: Soil, and the Things Living in it

This is a much more in-depth talk about soils than the 1-hour version. We are continuously learning about soil and its importance to plant health and climate change. The latest information and research will be discussed. We will present and answer several trend-setting questions. How do we steward the soil microbiome? What are the beneficial bacteria and fungi? What activities harm the soil and therefore the plants? Can better soil stewardship also mean lower maintenance? It's a dirty topic, but someone's got to cover it.

NEW!

Fusion® Gardening

A half day hands-on workshop where participants work together to design and install a (temporary or permanent) Fusion® Garden including a rain garden and xeriscape. The presenting organization will need to provide the space and materials, whether borrowed in the case of a temporary installation, or donated/purchased, in the case of a permanent installation. This was a big hit at the CanWest trade show in Abbotsford, B.C.!

Encouraged by many municipalities and regions, Fusion Gardening® blends LID (rainwater handling) with xeriscaping (drought-tolerant gardening) and enfoldings plantings to enhance biodiversity. One of the main foci of this style is to engage the public with *beauty*. Since it's so important that property owners take up this gauntlet, we'll address the backbone of each of these disciplines, and discuss how to do each artfully.





NEW!

Ornamental Ways to Handle Rainwater

Want to know most of what there is to know about this important topic? Think you can sell tickets and make money for your group, or just think it's important enough to make it an 'event'? Urban development has resulted in large areas of impermeable surfaces, leading to poor water quality and erosion, as well as drying of the creeks during droughts. Techniques will be discussed to aid in infiltrating rainwater into the soil while beautifying your landscapes and allowing a more unusual palette of plants to be used. Rain Gardens can be a beautiful addition to any yard and allow the planting of some truly interesting plants. They also help the environment by infiltrating water, restore the water table and base-flow (the water that seeps through the ground to our creeks). This process also helps clean the water of particulate matter and chemical pollution. We'll cover how to design and build a rain garden, including placement, construction, and plant choices.

