

Workshops on climate-friendly landscaping coming to Dufferin

Written By **Paula Brown Local Journalism Initiative Reporter**

Dufferin County residents are invited to learn about climate-friendly landscaping and how to incorporate it into their own outdoor spaces with a new workshop series.

Dufferin's Youth Climate Activation Circle (YCAC) will be holding a series of three workshops on climate-friendly landscaping led by local experts throughout August.

'We hope that this workshop series will remind participants that climate action is within reach - it is attainable. There are actions we can take as individuals, households, businesses and communities that are small but meaningful,' said Sarah Cianfarani, a member of Dufferin's YCAC. 'Climate change mitigation and adaptation is not just in the hands of politicians and the government. It is a group effort, and it can start with local communities.'

The first workshop, called Bee the Change: Creating Pollinator-Friendly Habitats, will be led by Melanie Kramer and Karen Buckle from Credit Valley Conservation and will teach participants how to transform their outdoor space into a thriving pollinator habitat. The workshop is scheduled for Aug. 9 from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the Orangeville and District Senior Citizen Centre.

The second workshop in the series, guided by Mark Eastman from Weathered Rock Farm, will help individuals unlock their garden's potential and discover regenerative agriculture techniques to create a bountiful and climate-friendly garden. 'Get the Dirt on Regenerative Gardening at Home' will be held at the Grand Valley Community Centre on Aug. 15 from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

The third and final workshop, Throwing Shade at Climate Change: Landscaping for Energy Efficiency, will be led by Ian Payne from Enviroscope and Not So Hollow Farm. The workshop, which will take place on Aug. 26 from 2 to 3:30 p.m. at the Museum of Dufferin, will teach how residents can lower their energy bills, reduce water use and enjoy cleaner air with a well-designed landscape layout.

'It is our goal that participants leave with a newfound appreciation for sustainable landscaping and how it can positively impact the environment, while also inspiring them to make positive changes in their own homes and communities to create a greener future for Dufferin County,' added YCAC member, Emily Payne.

Those interested in taking part in the workshop series can register at <https://www.eventbrite.com/cc/climate-friendly-landscaping-workshop-series-2388369>.

Launched by Dufferin County in October of 2022, the Youth Climate Activation Circle (YCAC) is a volunteer program that supports the implementation of Dufferin's climate action plans and empowers youth to advance local climate solutions.

The volunteer climate program consists of eight local youth aged 16 to 25, who collectively design and implement a project that supports greenhouse gas emission reductions in the County.

Each year, the YCAC cohort will participate in three program phases: training, project design, as well as implementation and community knowledge sharing.

'YCAC has provided us a space to be with other people our age who are passionate about making a difference in a time of climate change, and has allowed us to make that very same difference by helping create a project to bring to our communities. That overall experience was something I never knew I wanted, and yet find myself so grateful for,' said Shelby Foster.

Between November 2022 and February 2023, Youth Climate Ambassadors participated in a series of climate change training

sessions to complete the first phase of the YCAC program. The training included an eco-anxiety workshop, a climate solution fair, connecting volunteers with local organizations and a session with the Dufferin County Cultural Resource Circle.

?The thing I enjoyed most about being part of the YCAC is meeting different people from the County of Dufferin who are already working to try to reduce climate change,? said Wendy Mogensen, YCAC member.

To learn more about the Youth Climate Activation Circle (YCAC) and about steps you can take to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and build climate resilience, visit www.dufferincounty.ca.