What is Happening at The Arboretum
by Ric Jordan

Last month I talked about change and if there is one thing that has been changeable is the weather. Not sure I can remember a December/January quite like now with the fluctuations and lasting warm temperature that we have experienced recently. However looking at the long range forecast today more seasonable temperatures are ahead which will be welcomed. A number of individuals have called with questions re swelling buds on soft maples and magnolias in particular and wanting to know if anything can be done to slow down the process if it continues warm. Unfortunately no, we all have to take a wait and see approach and play the cards we are dealt on the weather front.

The grounds have seen many birders over the past few weeks as a Barred Owl has taken up residency and has offered many visitors great opportunities to see and photograph this lovely bird. Hopefully it will remain all winter and perhaps longer. Many have also visited to get good views and shots of a brown thrasher, an uncommon winter sighting, and a red-bellied woodpecker. Check Chris’ article or our web page for a report on our annual Winter Bird Count as well for information on winter birding at The Arb.

Sean and Lig have been busy with volunteers cleaning, stratifying and storing of seeds collected in preparation for the coming growing season and possible exchange with other institutions. We also have two Canada World Youth participants assisting us 3 days a week at the Hilton Centre. They are volunteering under the supervision of Polly and Kellen tackling a number of tasks where many hands make the work light or at least go by faster. More information on Ivanna and Yasmina next month.

Whether it be the weather or the fact that more people are discovering us and the benefits of a walk at The Arb we have noticed an increase in visitors this winter and they are most welcome. If it is during regular office hours Monday to Friday and you need to warm your hands or use the facilities at The Arb Centre do pop in, we only ask that if a group is meeting in one of the rooms please respect their meeting. Til next month....