

## Victoria Day Weekend Magnolias at Royal Botanical Gardens

**Burlington ON, May 16, 2019** — Just in time for Victoria Day Weekend, Royal Botanical Gardens (RBG) is bursting with spring blooms, highlighted by the Gardens' brilliant magnolia collection. To celebrate these beautiful blooms, RBG has planned for a long weekend full of family activities.

RBG is home to many varieties of Magnolia with pink Saucer Magnolias starting to show some wonderful colour. Warmer weather should force these visitor-favourite flowering trees into full bloom in time for the weekend. Magnolias can be found throughout all RBG garden areas, with the largest collection at the Arboretum where visitors will also find the last burst of flowering cherries and early blooms of crab apple, redbud, and lilacs.

Magnolia are deciduous or evergreen trees or shrubs, with large showy, often fragrant flowers. The flowers usually open in spring before the leaves and are often followed by colourful cone-like fruit. More often than not, the leaves are large and oval in shape. A location with full sun or partial shade is ideal along with soil that is organically rich, moist but well drained. Most magnolias prefer to be planted in areas that avoid strong wind and frosts as in severe years the latter can cause damage to flower buds.

Magnolia is a large genus thought to currently consist of around 240 naturally occurring species in the wild. The primary natural range of Magnolia species is in east and southeast Asia with a secondary centre in eastern North America, Central America, the West Indies, and some species in South America. 131 species are currently threatened with extinction and of those 89 are endangered or critically endangered. The conservation of magnolias and other plant species is one of the reasons that the work of botanical gardens is so critical for the future of the planet. Look out for *Magnolia acuminata* (Cucumber Tree) which is Ontario's own native magnolia found at RBG

### **Weekend entertainment and educational activities**

#### **May 18–20**

Escarpment Train Exhibit; 10:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Rock Garden

Discover Lilacs, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Arboretum

Guided Tour: History of Lilacs, 11 a.m., 1 p.m. and 2:30 p.m.; Arboretum

Meet a Historical Character — Isabella Preston; Saturday and Monday, 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., Sunday, 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.; Arboretum

#### **Saturday, May 18**

Bumbling Bert Magic Show, 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.; Arboretum

History of Hendrie Park Heritage Walk, 11 a.m. and 2 p.m.; Hendrie Park. Meet in the tunnel.

#### **Sunday, May 19**

Mad Science, 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.; Arboretum

Wildflower Walk, 1:30 p.m.; Arboretum; Meet at the Nature Interpretive Centre front deck.

Back to Nature Hike, 2 p.m.; this Sunday — Cootes North Shore; meet at the Nature Interpretive Centre.

#### **Monday, May 20**

Little Ray's Reptile Zoo, 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.; Arboretum

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For more information, visit [www.rbg.ca/senses](http://www.rbg.ca/senses)

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