

Recognizing subjects for Nature

There are numerous apps and websites available for identifying nature subjects.

Plants including wildflowers

Wildflowers (native and naturalized)

Our club now includes both native and naturalized species in our definition of “wildflower.” A naturalized plant is one that has escaped cultivation and formed a self-sustaining population in Ontario. This explains why some hardy *species tulips*—such as *Tulipa sylvestris* or *Tulipa tarda*—can be considered naturalized, while tender annuals like zinnias cannot survive our winters and therefore never establish themselves. This approach reflects current botanical practice and allows us to include the full range of flowers people encounter in Hamilton and across Ontario.

Plant Identification Apps

Several plant-focused apps can help identify wildflowers and distinguish species tulips from garden hybrids:

- **iNaturalist** — The most reliable tool for identifying plants in Ontario. It can often identify tulips to species level and shows whether a species is considered naturalized in the province.
- **Seek (by iNaturalist)** — Uses the same computer-vision model as iNaturalist and can identify many tulip species from clear photos, though it does not display naturalization status. Best for casual use.

These tools make it easier to recognize both native wildflowers and the naturalized species that now form part of Ontario’s modern flora.

We also have a wildflower directory on our website. [Wildflower Directory for Trillium Club](#)

[Membership](#). Please do not share outside the club. It has links to Flickr images for the flowers.

Animals: iNaturalist also does animal identification; it can ID almost anything alive.

Birds

iBird (iOS only)

iBird remains a detailed, illustration-rich field guide on the Apple App Store, but it is no longer available on Google Play.

[eBird](#)

Created by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, eBird lets you record bird sightings and submit complete checklists to Cornell’s global database. It’s the standard tool for logging observations, tracking your lists, and contributing to worldwide citizen-science data.

[Merlin Bird ID](#)

Merlin is Cornell’s fast, beginner-friendly identification app. It can identify birds by sight or sound and now works hand-in-hand with eBird. Use Merlin to figure out what you’re seeing or hearing, then use eBird Mobile to submit your checklist.

Butterflies and Bugs

[Leps by Fieldguide](#): Butterflies are some of the most beautiful insects you'll find in any garden, park, or hiking trail. This app is a crowd-sourced field guide to moths and butterflies.

Other Resources

Website:

We have several features on our website to help with subject recognition. Under [Membership & Docs](#)>[Tips and Tutorials](#), Item 7 has links to various common Ontario wildflower pictures taken by our members, sorted by flower name, reproduced below:

Wildflowers [Part 1](#) "A through G"

[Part 2](#) "H through S"

[Part 3](#) "T through Y"

Also, under [Membership & Docs](#), there is the page [Useful Links](#).

[ON Nature Guides](#) has guides on butterflies and moths, dragonflies and damselflies, frogs and toads, lizards, salamanders, snakes, spiders, and turtles.

Smartphone built-in apps

You can also identify many subjects directly on your smartphone just by taking a photo. On an iPhone, open the picture in Photos, swipe up, and look for a **Look Up** button such as *Look Up – Plant* or *Look Up – Animal*. Tap it and your iPhone will try to identify the subject for you. On Android, you can use **Google Lens**, which works from the Google Photos app or directly inside any Google search. Both tools can quickly identify plants, animals, and other objects right from your pictures.

Reviewing Clinic Images

I can't recommend strongly enough reviewing images from our clinics to see how images score. You can see the images under [Galleries, Trillium Clinic Galleries](#). The opening page shows the list of clinics. Click on an image of a clinic to view that clinic's gallery. You can click on individual entries and will see the titles, scores, and comments for an image if you click the little "i" icon.