

## Pondless Water Features – March 6, 2014

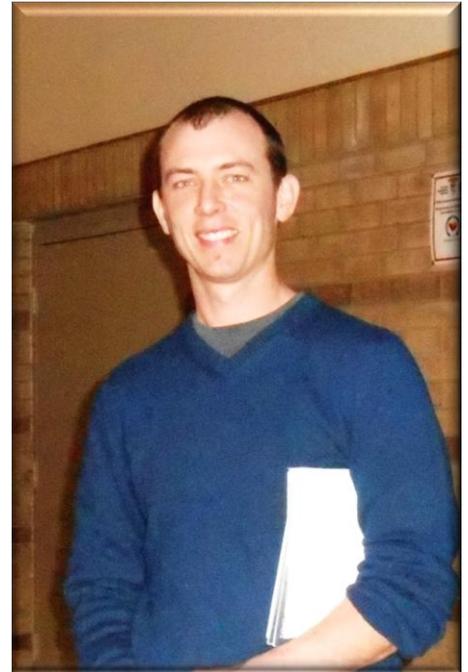
**Benjamin Stapper** is a landscape designer and horticultural specialist. He is a graduate of Landscape Technology at Humber College and has worked with a local design and landscape company for the past 14 years. Ben's talk to the GGG was on "**Pondless Water Features**".

Ben began by reviewing why we are so attracted to water in the garden, including the sound it makes and how it draws the eye through the landscape. Water also attracts wildlife including birds and of course, children love to play in water.

While ponds are popular, there are many reasons to have a pondless water feature. Space restriction might rule out a pond and ponds can be expensive to build and time consuming to maintain. In many locations, water more than 18" deep is considered a pool or pond and bylaws require a fence for safety. Pondless means there is no open water and any water that flows is never more than a few inches in depth.

Pondless features can be large or small and can be positioned anywhere on the property including near an entrance. They fit well in small back yards where space is limited. Moving water can be created in a number of ways including spouts, waterfalls and fountains. As well, any watertight, frost proof container can create a small water feature. Ben showed photos of some very imaginative and whimsical containers from which water flowed.

Ben outlined numerous types of pondless features that can be built from materials that we may have already or those that can be easily acquired. Most projects require a reservoir, a submersible pump, a liner, a hose and a power source. Liners should be of very good quality to avoid future problems. Rocks are popular as fountains and rocks with predrilled holes can be purchased locally.



*Thanks to Jane Rietze (photograph) and Elaine Routledge (write-up) of the March meeting.*

*(continued)*

Although you may want to hire professionals for larger jobs, Ben showed a video\* that demonstrated the steps to build a pondless waterfall yourself.

[\*<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ty0acUVBzYE> – ‘Aquascape's "NEW" How To Build a Pondless® Waterfall’].

When designing water features, mimicking nature is often useful. For example, when choosing stones and rocks, using only one type creates a more natural look than using an assortment of different types and sizes. Using fewer, larger stones and rocks is often more attractive than many smaller ones. It is important to design the feature to allow access to the water pump. Pumps must be removed in the fall but the water can remain in the water feature because the feature is designed to handle the expansion and contraction of water/ice in winter. Most of us will view our water feature from inside the house more often than outside. If possible, the feature should be positioned so that it can be seen and enjoyed from indoors.

We learned that water features can range from elaborate to uncomplicated and can fit within most budgets. Ben’s presentation, his beautiful slides and creative ideas really inspired us to consider how we might add water to our own gardens this year.