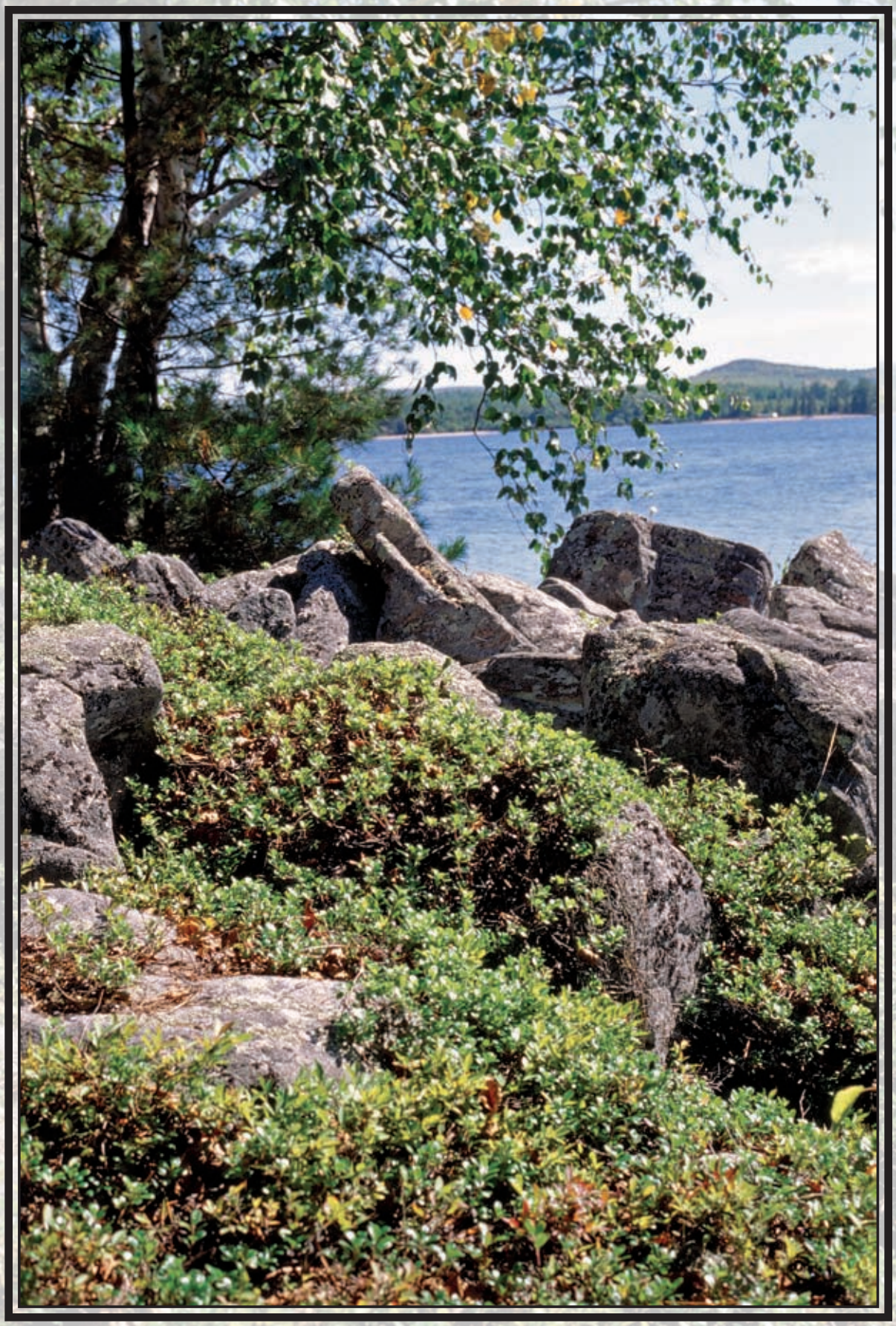


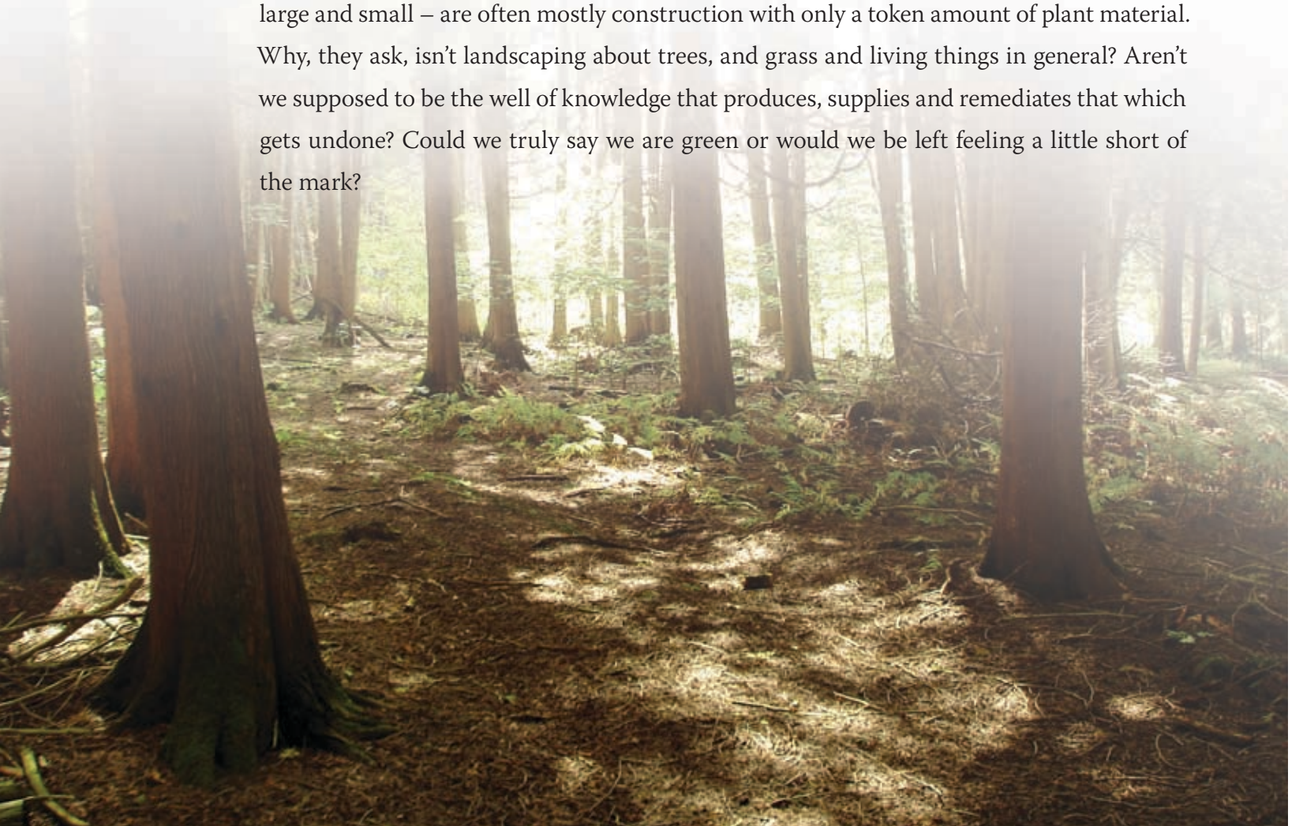
Arctostaphylos uva-ursi Bearberry

Ground Covers Unlimited
2007

Recently, Landscape Ontario has embraced the statement that we need to collectively think about what is needed to elevate the industry to the next level. In my opinion, while admirable, it might possibly end up looking as if we're trying to sell invisible clothing. And I'm fairly certain that most people would equate "the next level"' to mean an income and tax bracket above their current one.

Instead, I think we should consider how the objective would be perceived if it were a reality TV show. By contemplating the bad press and heading it off, we just might achieve "the next level". However, in this case, a successful show would need a hard-nosed investigator who probably would be environmentally sympathetic. The buildup is kind of exciting, isn't it? But could we face the audience and honestly say that the green industry is earth-friendly? It might be a bit hard to explain that greenhouse gases and greenhouses are not connected. And it might also be a tad difficult to come up with a good reason other than financial, why we truck plant material from one side of the continent to the other, just so a box store can have a sale special. Hopefully, this kind of questioning isn't used in the first few episodes. After all, we should get a chance to warm up before the main attack.

And, with or without sufficient warm up, we will need to explain why landscape projects – large and small – are often mostly construction with only a token amount of plant material. Why, they ask, isn't landscaping about trees, and grass and living things in general? Aren't we supposed to be the well of knowledge that produces, supplies and remediates that which gets undone? Could we truly say we are green or would we be left feeling a little short of the mark?

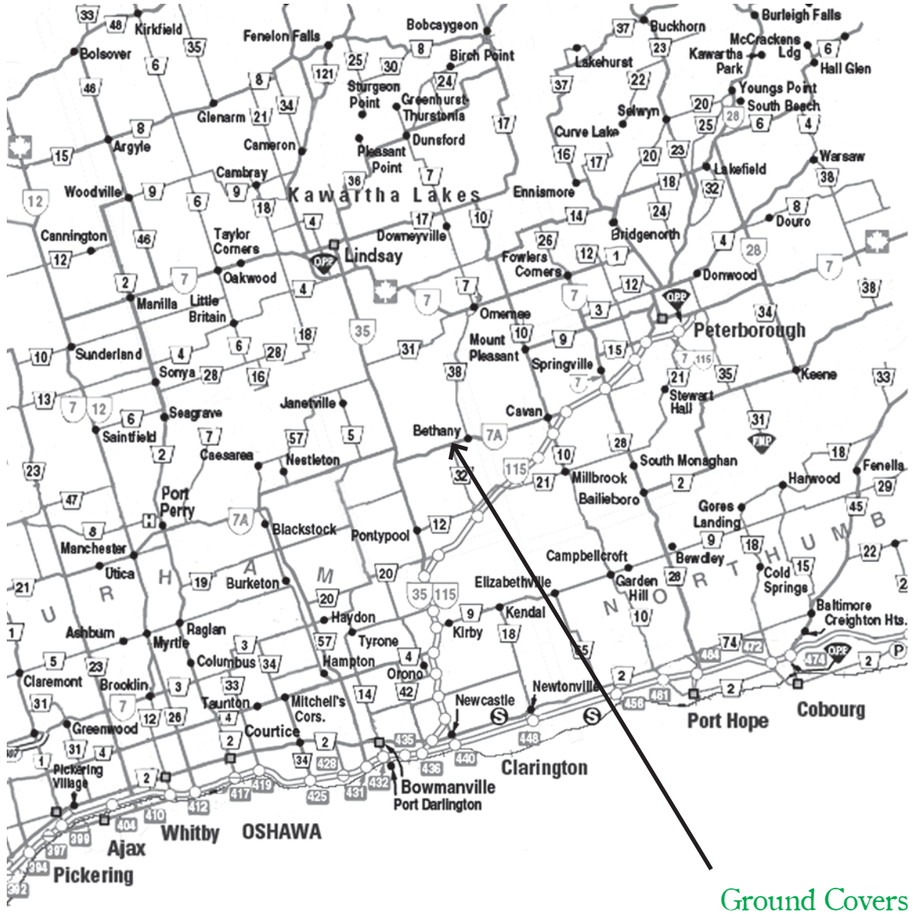


Anyways, don't worry. I won't be pitching the idea to the CBC. Instead, I believe that "the next level" is where we demonstrate our commitment to the principles of stewardship and where our integrity commits us to the best choices environmentally, with profit as a secondary motive. This may be idealism but it is also pragmatic realism. We must have and continue to acquire the knowledge to be good stewards. At the same time, we must be successful in the use of the living products that are the heart of the industry. How we do what we do will start to matter increasingly more. The resources we use to be green need to be assessed, analyzed and budgeted carefully. If not, we as an industry will simply look to be justifying our own cause.

Reaching "the next level" will take a while, but it can set us apart. We do have the ability to create a net effect that is positive; environmentally, socially and yes, financially. I think we are already on the road. We just haven't seen the sign to know how much further to go.

Happy trails – Ted & Sandy Spearing

Adiantum pedatum
Maidenhair Fern



Ground Covers Unlimited

TERMS & CONDITIONS OF SALE

1) 30 day credit terms are extended to those customers with an established record of prompt payment in the past. New customers placing an order for the first time are required to pay on C.O.D. basis. Further orders will be subject to C.O.D. terms until a credit record and references are established. Accounts not paid with respect to 30 day credit terms are subject to cancellation of such privileges at our discretion.
Overdue accounts subject to 2% interest charges.
2) Pick-up of stock is welcomed, arrangements for pick-up to be mutually agreed upon.
3) Prices in this catalogue are subject to change without notice.
4) Colour tags available at purchaser's option for material offered in 4" pots. Charges for tags are 5¢/pot over and above catalogue prices.
5) Pricing and discounts apply on a per-order basis.
6) $35 minimum deliver charge applies to orders below $1,000; fuel surcharge applicable to all deliveries above $1,000. Rates subject to change without notice.
7) Boxing/packing charges where applicable, charged at cost.
8) All orders are accepted on the understanding that the purchaser agrees to the terms and conditions as listed above.

A scenic area of the farm, this white cedar grove was once farmed land. After about 100 years, a reversion to lowland forest is reaching its peak with a variety of native ferns, such as Berry Bladder fern (Cystopteris), carpeting the ground.

Built in 1987, the main irrigation pond is filled entirely by systematic tile drainage throughout the nursery as well as surrounding field areas. This effectively collects any surplus nutrients, should there be any. Aquatic plants in the pond provide additional filtering. Vegetation and water management together produce high-quality irrigation water, visual beauty and an ideal place for a relaxing and refreshing swim.

We believe in field production as a means of producing high-quality, well-rooted and hardy material that adapts easily to a wide range of conditions. When potted plant material spends a portion of its growth in field production, complimented by time under poly or shade cloth, the entire production cycle is much more energy efficient than the same material grown completely indoors. Being environmentally conscious, many mulched beds with tight row spacings help reduce weeding, conserve moisture and maximize our most productive open land areas.

Built in 2000, this gutter-connected section of greenhouse combines old and new construction features. Known as pit-houses or earth-bermed, early greenhouse design took advantage of the energy savings from lowering the profile into grade. This was coupled with the open-roof concept which provides for crop quality by means of natural ventilation. The end product was a production space set six feet into grade with the most recent technology available for climate control. Additionally, an internal cistern was constructed to store rain and snow melt from the roof. The basic design will thus always be energy efficient and water conservative. More recently, the poly roof has been changed to a plastic which blocks the transmission of infrared energy from within the greenhouse. This heat trapping plastic is projected to further reduce fuel consumption by 15-20%.

Our commitment to the principle of minimal environmental impact is exemplified in this structure.

Catalogue Design by Melissa Spearing