



February 2012  
Volume 1, Issue 5

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Mill Bay Garden Club  
1001 Shawnigan Lake/  
Mill Bay Rd  
Mill Bay Community Centre  
At Kerry Park Rec Centre

# Mill Bay Garden Club Newsletter

Do you have some free time? Are you able to help some of our



club members? The MBGC Executive would like to invite and encourage our club members to come help out club members Peggy & Jack Tyler to clean-up their gardens and do some general yard-work. Peggy and Jack



have decided to sell their house here in the valley, due to mobility issues after Jack's stroke.

If you are able to help out, there is a work-party arranged for:  
**March 3rd 1.00 to 4.00**

Peggy and Jack's address:  
**3869 Lefran Road, Cobble Hill, BC V0R 1L0**

If you have any questions or anything you'd like to know, please feel free to contact *Heather Jenkins* who is coordinating the work-party efforts.  
Phone: 250-733-2268  
Email: [fishface1@gmail.com](mailto:fishface1@gmail.com)

## NEXT MEETING DATE:

**Tuesday, February 28<sup>th</sup> @7pm**

**PLEASE REMEMBER YOUR MUG FOR COFFEE OR TEA**

*Goodies, coffee and tea are provided by Your Donations*

# President's Report

*Ajay Oppelaar, MBGC President*

Knock on wood, but I think winter is over. The 2-week extended forecast on the day I'm writing this has a half-and-half mix of sunny and cloudy days and one "chance" of overnight snow forecasted for 7 days out. How can they possibly know that? Our gardens are telling us spring is coming and I'd rather listen to nature than meteorologists. In many areas of my neighbourhood, permafrost is normal until mid March but this year, only overnight frosts have occurred. I celebrated by planting some spring blooming bulbs last week in ground that is usually frozen solid. Yes, I should have planted them last fall for early blooms. I'll have dozens of Erythronium "Pagoda" blooming in May instead of April, but at least they'll bloom.

I am going to apologize in advance for the length of this report. I've stated before that I intended to use the newsletter as a forum to deal with much of club business so as to reduce the time that the business portion of our general meetings may require, allowing for more time devoted to speakers, Q&A and the Brag table. After last month's general meeting, several members expressed their concern about the length of time it took to conduct our business for the month. Your Executive discussed this at our February Executive meeting in great length (pun intended!).

We have all agreed to use the newsletter more to report the

business of each seat to MBGC members. Of course, we do have a responsibility to the club to conduct important business during the course of general meetings, but we will try and keep it short and sweet. These meetings aren't about the Executive; they're about you, the members. Please do check the newsletter for reports and read them thoroughly. Any questions and concerns you have may then be asked of the Executive during the general meetings.

We are pleased to welcome Carmen Stanek to the Executive Committee as the new Raffle Chair. Carmen replaces Jim and Joan Cawker and is a new MBGC member just this season. Normally, Chair positions are filled at the AGM and voted upon by the general membership. Within our constitution however, a provision is made that should an Executive seat become vacant during the active season, the President will appoint someone to that spot. Thank you Carmen for stepping up and offering to fill the position. Please make Carmen feel welcome and appreciated by bringing handfuls of tnoonies, loonies and quarters to our next meeting to purchase raffle tickets. Remember, the more the raffle brings in, the more we give back to the community each June at the AGM. Also consider donating items to the raffle, the more we have the more fun it is!

At our last general meeting, a question was raised about why the Christmas Potluck is held in December instead of November as it used to be. The answer is that the hall isn't decorated for the holiday season until December and about

five years ago the Executive Board and Committee decided to move the date from the fourth Tuesday of November to the first Tuesday in December. This left a "hole" in our season with no meeting in November and members suggested that we now hold a regular meeting for November. Your Executive discussed this at our February Executive meeting and voted unanimously to recommend to the club members that we hold a general meeting in November from here on out. At our February 28<sup>th</sup> general meeting we will ask for a motion from the floor on this matter to be discussed and voted upon. Keep in mind, the minimum cost of holding a meeting each month is \$155, but it can be up to \$180 dollars, depending on the distance our speaker may be traveling to attend our meeting.

To ensure club members know everyone, we will be using a new name badge system in the future, beginning at our March meeting. When you arrive at the meetings there will be a file box of name badges for every member who has paid dues for the season. The box will be located at the first table on the left side of the room when you walk in, the membership table. We ask that you please find your name-tag, wear it during the meeting and on your way out the door, simply drop it in the return box. This will insure that we all can match up people's names with their faces, which can be especially helpful for our new club members to get to know you without having to ask your name.

'Who the heck was that I just speaking with?'

New members who sign up will have a nametag ready for them at the next meeting they attend. If you have an existing nametag, by all means continue to wear that, if you so choose. We do need a volunteer to organize the nametags each month and be responsible for looking after this program. Dee will be making the nametags; all you'll need to do is alphabetize them monthly. It should only take a half-hour each month and we would appreciate the assistance.

For newer members and those whom may not remember, the monthly newsletter and the website both have sections dedicated to "Market Place" where MBGC members may list garden services and garden related items for sale or barter. Contact Dee Evans at [MBGCnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:MBGCnewsletter@gmail.com) to submit a listing or go to the website at [www.millbaygardenclub.com](http://www.millbaygardenclub.com) and follow the menu. I personally found it a great source last year when I was looking for hostas and got responses from three different members. Now that's networking!

Remember that we do have member forum time scheduled into each general meeting, should you have any garden related project(s) or event(s) you would like to share with the club. Contact me either before the meeting or even at the meeting, if you would like a few minutes. There are no hard and fast rules here; we just want the members to be able to have a voice within the structure of meetings.

The Flower and Garden Show plans for June 15-16 are in full swing. A Secretary for that Committee is still

needed and we encourage everyone with a bit of free time to join the Committee in any capacity. Especially for newer members, it's a great way to meet people and see how the club operates on a higher level. The next planning meeting is Monday, February 20, 7 p.m. at the home of Show Chairman Heather Gibbins. If you don't know where she lives, email me at [arkengardens@gmail.com](mailto:arkengardens@gmail.com) and I'll get directions to you.

As the weather warms up and you start dividing and moving perennials in the garden, please make sure and pot some up and get them to Elaine Scott for the MBGC Plant sale that occurs during the Flower and Garden show in June. This plant sale is our only income outside of membership and is vital for the survival of our club. If each club member donates 6 plants it becomes easier to reach our goals when giving that money back to the community at the AGM.

We are still looking for a location to hold the AGM on June 26<sup>th</sup>. You need to have room for (usually) more than 100 people and whole bunch of tables that we'll be bringing along for serving the food and dining. Ruby Armor has offered her home and garden for the AGM if nobody else is willing to host the event.

A suggestion was made that perhaps the MBGC would consider attempting to establish a community garden project for the Mill Bay area. The Executive feels this is more than we should tackle as a small club. Having said that,

there is nothing preventing a group of volunteers from within the club from working together as a separate committee and spearheading an effort by contacting the CVRD about this issue.

Our presence at Seedy Saturday on March 10<sup>th</sup> will be to offer information on both the club and the annual Community Flower and Garden Show. Dee Evans has given the brochures and posters a makeover and they are terrific! We would still like to have a few volunteers to man the table, please contact me if you are interested in helping out.

Lastly, I had lunch with the Cowichan Valley Garden Club President Diane McAmmond and we discussed joint ventures such as the summer garden tours and a bus tour. We are looking for a few members from both clubs to form a bus tour committee who will be charged with developing and organizing a viable bus tour. Both our clubs have not been able to sustain a tour on our own for the last 3 years and we would like to attempt to resurrect this program. Should we be unable to plan and book a sell out tour this year, we'll most likely want to retire the idea permanently.

Hope to see you all at our February meeting on Tuesday, 28<sup>th</sup> to listen to our own Bill Herring share his vast knowledge of growing veg for the home garden. Bring your questions, and paper and pen. To ensure that everyone can hear Bill and his answers, please do not talk during the explanation, so everyone can hear what Bill has to say.

# Upcoming Speaker Schedule

## February 2012 Mtg:

Tuesday, February 28<sup>th</sup>, 7pm

Bill Herring will speak on vegetable growing, and answer questions about veggies.



## March 2012 Mtg

Tuesday, March 27<sup>th</sup> - 7pm

Club Master Gardeners will hold a clinic and will welcome your questions and comments.

# Welcome to New Members

MBGC would like to wish a warm welcome to our newest Members to the club this month.:

- Leslie Sutton
- Laurie Kerester
- Heather Lavender
- Maggie Beischer

# RIDE SHARING

We have had many requests from members who require transportation assistance to get to club meetings and events. So far we've connected 4 people with rides to meetings and your Executive thought a great way to help those in need would be to include a "Ride-Share" section in the newsletter.

Beginning in January, you will be able to post a request for a ride-share through your Newsletter Editor Dee Evans. For privacy issues, we will not be post-ing your phone number or exact address if you would like to find a ride. Instead we will post the name of the person requesting a ride, and a general location of their home, i.e. close to Kilmalu and Telegraph Roads. If you can provide a ride for a member and would like to respond to a ride request, we will then provide their phone # to you.

If you have any questions regarding this program, please contact Dee Evans at [mbgcnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:mbgcnewsletter@gmail.com) or 250-510-6848 or Ajay Oppelaar at [arkengardens@gmail.com](mailto:arkengardens@gmail.com) or via phone at 250-743-6551.

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Topic: Veggie Gardening by MBGC Bill Herring
- Date: February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2012
- Time: 7pm
- Location: Shawnigan Mill Bay Community Hall
- Speaker: Bill Herring
- Topic: Composting Basics
- Date: March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2012
- Time: 10am – 12pm
- Location: Composting Centre Victoria, BC
- Link: <http://www.compost.bc.ca/team/communityeducation.htm>
- Topic: Plant ID and Culture Glendale Gardens
- Date: March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2012
- Time: 1:30pm – 4:30pm
- Location: Glendale Gardens Victoria, BC
- Link: <http://hcp.ca/courses/>
- Topic: Growing Food
- Date: March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2012
- Time: 1:00pm
- Location: Royal Roads Univ
- Link: <http://gaiacollege.ca>
- Topic: Bringing Wildlife to your backyard
- Date: March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2012
- Time: 1pm – 4pm
- Location: Glendale Gardens Victoria, BC
- Link: <http://hcp.ca/courses/>
- Topic: Cobble Hill Seedy Saturday
- Date: March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2012
- Time: 10am – 3pm
- Location: Cobble Hill Hall 3550 Watson Ave
- Cost: Free

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## Notes from the Library

Come and check out our MBGC library at the next meeting. We have 18 new publications so far this year and books ranging on every garden subject. Our newest books include information on growing vegetables, pond plants, growing grasses, pruning and a super little book on clematis. Books may be taken out for one month and need to be returned promptly so other members can borrow them. Our library welcomes any donation of books so if you have some gardening books that have been "weeded out" and need a new home, please consider the MBGC library as their next stop!

# Gardening Tips

Barb Kohlman

Tips for March:

Remove leaves that were protecting beds over the winter---add them to your compost. Use them to mix with grass clippings once you start to mow.

Prune woody plants now---while they are still dormant. Blooming before June 1<sup>st</sup> prune now--- blooming after June 1<sup>st</sup> , prune after they bloom. Roses--- wait till the Forsythia blooms.

Spray dormant oil on flowering and fruit trees before buds open---if you choose. Bad bugs will be smothered---but so will the good guys!

Can still assess your garden for winter interest and decide where you need to add an evergreen or something of interest for next year.

Mark the positions of your spring bulbs after flowering for future reference.

Divide and relocate perennials as they emerge from the soil.

Start lettuce and early greens in cold frames.

Tuck cool-weather spring flowers like primroses, winter pansies, *Cyclamen coum* into containers to brighten up dull days.

Feed rhubarb and berry plants. I like a liquid organic fertilizer.

Throw a handful of Epsom salts on the root area of your rhodos and other evergreen shrubs. This offers them some magnesium to help green up the leaves.

Remove all that winter debris and cut your grasses down now-- -before new growth really starts..

## February's Brag Table

The theme for our Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> meeting's Brag Table is "Bodacious Buds".

With plant and flower identification and commentary provided by this month by Ali Morris as Past President Barb Kohlman is sitting in for our secretary this month. The Brag Table is a great part of our monthly meetings. It's a fun and interactive way to share what's going on in your garden without having 170 club members trying to find parking outside of your house. The bonus is a prize awarded randomly to one of the monthly participants in this program. If you've never participated, give it a fling, be it flower, vegetable or fungus.

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Topic: Native Plant Gardening  
Date: March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2012  
Time: 9:30am – 12:30pm  
Location: Swan Lake Sanctuary  
Link: <http://www.swanlake.bc.ca/adult-programs.php>

Topic: Milner Gardens & Its Rhodos  
Date: March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2012  
Time: 7:30pm  
Location: St. John's Anglican Duncan  
Link: <http://www.cowichan.rhodos.ca/meetings>

Topic: Cobble Hill Seedy Saturday  
Date: March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2012  
Time: 10am – 3pm  
Location: Cobble Hill Hall 3550 Watson Ave  
Cost: Free

Topic: Fruit Production Workshop  
Renovation Pruning  
Date: March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2012  
Time: 10am – 2pm  
Location: Beacon Hill  
Link: <http://www.harbourliving.ca/event/fruit-production-part-2/2012-03-10/>

Topic: Plant Knowledge  
Date: March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2012  
Time: 6:30pm  
Location: Royal Roads Univ  
Link: <http://gaiacollege.ca>

Topic: Worm Composting  
Date: March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2012  
Time: 10am – 12pm  
Location: Composting Centre Victoria, BC  
Link: <http://www.compost.bc.ca/learn/communityeducation.htm>

Topic: Duncan Seedy Saturday  
Date: March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2012  
Time: 10am-3pm  
Location: Mercury Theatre 331 Brae Rd, Duncan  
Speaker: Vendors  
Cost: Free

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# Mill Bay Garden Club Meeting Minutes

## Tuesday January 24<sup>th</sup> 2012

President’s report:  
Ajay Oppelaar  
7:03 p.m. call to order.

Bill Herring:  
Moved acceptance of the minutes from October’s general meeting Dee Evans seconded the motion. Carried.

Thank you to tonight’s set up /kitchen/clean up crew. The club needs a new Raffle Chair. Ajay thanked Joan and Jim and a cake will be cut at our tea break.

Flower and Garden Show still needs a Secretary, and assistance for the Chairs. The first meeting is Monday January 30 at 7 p.m. at the home of Heather Gibbins, 2741 Arken Terrace.

Seedy Saturday volunteers. Mary Gale, Janice Rose, Dee Evans, Marion Clapham and Cliff Stainsby will be distributing seeds and promoting the club.

Your Club membership gives you a discount at some garden centres. Ajay will compile a list of those centres which give the discount.

We need a location for our AGM June 26<sup>th</sup> 2012 (4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday). Please contact Ajay if you could accommodate 100-120 people. Ruby offered if no one else comes forward.

Vice President’s report: Cliff Stainsby  
Speakers update, requests for possible topics. In February, Bill Herring talking about winter vegetables; in March Master Gardener’s round table; In April we have Joy Story talking on “Permaculture”; in May perhaps “Pond Gardening”; Sept and Oct – we need suggestions. Summer open garden series - we are hoping members will open their gardens to others; contact Cliff if you are interested.

Bill Herring asked why we don’t have a regular monthly meeting in November as the Christmas party is held in December. It is suggested that the Executive discuss this and bring it back to the membership.

Treasurer’s report: Gale McIntyre, Treasurer’s report is posted.

Secretary’s report: Elizabeth Coulter in Arlene Dench’s absence.

Executive Committee reports:

Flower and Garden Show:  
Heather Gibbins  
Meeting will be held January 30<sup>th</sup> at 7pm at Heather’s house.

Newsletter:  
Dee Evans  
Rideshare info is in newsletter; feel free to forward the

Newsletter to other people; please send Dee info for the newsletter.

Website:  
Elizabeth Coulter  
Please advertise rideshare on the website.

Membership:  
Heather Gibbins  
We welcomed 4 new members tonight. Visitors here were introduced

Library:  
Janice Rose  
17 new books, many have already been taken out.

Plant Sales:  
Heather Jenkins  
Evergreens & other plants available

Raffle:  
Joan Cawker  
Some nice vases available tonight & a basket of primulas;

Kitchen:  
Diane Regan N/A

Historian:  
Mary Gale  
Christmas collage of pictures on display; highlights from 1987 were given by Mary.

Members Forum:  
Joy is teaching a class in Dun-can 6:30-8:00 Wednesday nights in Duncan.

Brag Table with Barb Kohlman "New Year's Cheers". Several nice entries tonight, with interesting foliage and /or colour. Winner won a bag of sea soil;

Q&A with Bill Herring  
John Tyler had a stroke on Christmas Day; he is in hospital and will be in hospital for a while yet. He would appreciate visits; Room 621 South in Vic Gen hospital. Bill spoke about growing potatoes.

Coffee Break

Raffle

Speaker:  
Clay Whitney gave a wonderful talk on heritage fruit tree care and pruning; he also spoke about types of tools and how to care for them, and about the importance of saving our heritage fruit trees. Clay's email address is [afruitnut@yahoo.com](mailto:afruitnut@yahoo.com) and he welcomes questions and information about any very old heritage fruit trees in the area.

Respectfully submitted by:

Elizabeth Coulter  
For Arlene Dench

## GARDEN CENTRE DISCOUNTS

These Vancouver Island retail merchants offer a 10% discount for card holding Garden Club members. Please present your club membership card prior to purchase. No card = no discount.

### Alba Plants

1810 Koksilah, Cowichan Bay 250.746.1555

### Arrowsmith Greenhouses

2880 Alberni Highway, Qualicum Beach  
250.752.592

### Art Knapp

5325 Cordova Bay, Saanich 250.658.1013  
6469 Metral, Nanaimo 250.390.1151

### The Big Barn Market

1286 McKenzie Ave, Saanich 250.477.4435

### Borden Mercantile Co LTD

3960 Borden 250.479.2084

### Buckerfield's

All locations discount on plants and garden products

### Danica Nurseries

6705 Danica Place 250.652.2718

### Dig This

All locations [www.digthis.com](http://www.digthis.com)

### Down to Earth

1096 Derrien Place, Victoria 250.391.9366

### Garden Works

All stores. Also offers an Ardent Gardener program, \$10 for \$60 in coupons

### Green Thumb Nursery

6261 Hammond Bay Road, Nanaimo  
250.758.0944

### Le Coteau Farms

302 Walton Place Saanich 250.658.5888

### Little Elf Garden Centre

1062 Goldstream, Langford 250.478.4557  
No discount on annuals

### Long Lake Nursery and Florists

4900 Island Hwy North, Nanaimo  
250.758.5012

### Marigold Nurseries

Both locations: 7030 Bell McKinnon Rd,  
Duncan 250.597.2526

Saanichton 250.652.2342

### Sandpiper Garden and Glass

2891 Laurel St, Chemainus 250.246.2421

### Scent-Sational Plants

830 Sayward Road, Saanich 250.658.3544

### Urban Oasis

4649 West Saanich Rd, Saanich  
250.479.6868

You may find a few garden centres and nurseries that are not on this list that may offer a discount. Not all businesses contacted answered phones or returned phone calls.

*Continued from Page 7*

Topic: Worm Composting  
Date: March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2012  
Time: 10am – 12pm  
Location: Composting Centre  
Victoria, BC

Link: <http://www.compost.bc.ca/learn/communityeducation.htm>

Topic: Troubleshooting  
Townhall  
Linda Gilkeson  
Date: March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2012  
Time: 1pm – 4pm  
Location: Glendale Gardens  
Victoria, BC

Link: <http://hcp.ca/courses/>

Topic: Landscape Design  
& Planning  
Ken Nentwig  
Date: March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2012  
Time: 6:30pm – 9pm  
Location: Glendale Gardens  
Victoria, BC

Link: <http://hcp.ca/courses/>

Topic: Duncan  
Seedy Saturday  
Date: March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2012  
Time: 10am-3pm  
Location: Mercury Theatre  
331 Brae Rd, Duncan  
Speaker: Vendors  
Cost: Free

Topic: Advanced  
Composting  
Date: March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2012  
Time: 10am – 12pm  
Location: Composting Centre  
Victoria, BC

Link: <http://www.compost.bc.ca/learn/communityeducation.htm>

Topic: Open House  
Abkhazi Gardens  
Date: March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2012  
Time: 12pm – 4pm  
Location: Victoria, BC

Link: <http://www.blog.conservancy.bc.ca/2012/01abkhazi-garden-open-house-2/>

Topic: Building a Mason Bee  
Condo  
Gord Hutchings  
Date: March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2012  
Time: 1pm – 4pm  
Location: Glendale Gardens  
Victoria, BC

Link: <http://hcp.ca/courses/>

## “Grow Food w/ JOY”

### Organic Gardening Classes

The Sunflower Café  
149 Canada Avenue  
Duncan, BC  
Wednesdays - 6:30 – 8pm

March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2012  
Winter Gardening with Bill Herring

March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2012  
GROW FOOD in Containers

March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2012  
Growing Healthy Soil

Cost: 3 for \$50.00 or \$20.00 each, past participants \$15.00.  
For more info contact Joy Story at [growfood@shaw.ca](mailto:growfood@shaw.ca)



## A Beginners Guide to Greenhouses

Around this time of year I begin to think, boy, it sure would be nice to have a greenhouse in my backyard. I do have a small one, but it's just something I knock together in April to hold seedlings prior to planting, little more than a glorified cold frame. So, why don't I have a real greenhouse in my back yard? I'm not sure. Just haven't got around to it, no space available, not cost effective. These are the usual excuses, but they aren't very strong ones.

### Making the Commitment

I know I'll be looking closely at all the greenhouses on display at the spring garden shows. I'll also be asking all kinds of questions and carefully considering the pros and cons. After returning home, I might even venture into the garden with a tape measure to size up suitable locations. I do this every year, but somehow the commitment is lacking. Part of the problem is that it's a conundrum. If I use space in the garden for a greenhouse, where would I plant all the extra stuff that I'd be sure to grow in it? I barely have room now.

And so it goes. Maybe you aren't trouble by indecision and are happily planning for a new greenhouse. If so, here are a few tips to keep in mind.

### Basic Guidelines

Look twice at the quality, especially if you get the bug at a garden show. There are high-

quality greenhouses on display at reasonable prices. The framework is usually solidly constructed of aluminum with



*A wide doorway is key for hauling things in and out.*

windows of glass or polycarbonate, but I've also seen flimsy plastic frames. These look fine at first glance, but you wouldn't want to be inside one during a wind storm.

It's easy to say buy the biggest, but do consider where it will be situated. Out of the way at the bottom of the yard might be the first choice, but unless you like trudging through snowbanks to visit your orchids, the closer to the house the better, provided it will receive plenty of sunlight. Additionally, having a greenhouse close to the house means it will be easier to provide heat, light (if required) and water.

Finally, do ensure good drainage beneath your greenhouse. I might wax nostalgic about packed dirt floors, but these really are impractical. Paving stones or gravel are far superior, or better still, install a concrete base. Either way, ensure the greenhouse is anchored to the ground. There's no point buying one if you're going to donate it to a stranger three blocks away after the first gust of wind.



### Additional Considerations

Before signing on the bottom line, think about the extras. How will you heat it? How will you cool it? How will it be ventilated? These are important factors to consider and they need to be addressed. A greenhouse might produce wonderful



*Consider the extras, such as heating and cooling, ventilation, etc.*

evocative fragrances, and your very own tomatoes in January might prove delicious, but if the cost of growing them is equivalent to a trip to California to pick your own, you might want to hang on to the growing space.



*Take into account where all the extra plant life will go during the growing season.*

Text by David Hobson  
Photos by Marnie Wright

Courtesy of Lee Valley Gardening Newsletter



## GARDEN CLUB PLANT SALE

Your plant sale committee would like to remind you that the annual Mill Bay Garden Club Plant sale will take place during the Community Flower and Garden Show at the Cobble Hill Farmer's Institute Hall on June 16, 2012. We depend on you to have a successful plant sale. As you begin to clean up your garden, please remember and pot up those plants that you no longer want in your garden, but that others may desire. We would kindly ask that you refrain from donating invasive plants and the Committee does have the prerogative to refrain from selling plants that it considers to be invasive. Last year we raised \$1,029 for the Club. This money goes a long way to assisting the club in supporting worthwhile gardening related projects.

Elaine Scott, Plant Sale Chair



# EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

Ajay Oppelaar.....	President .....	743-6551 .....	<a href="mailto:arkengardens@gmail.com">arkengardens@gmail.com</a>
Cliff Stainsby.....	Vice President .....	743-7483 .....	<a href="mailto:cliffas@shaw.ca">cliffas@shaw.ca</a>
Gale McIntyre .....	Treasurer.....	743-9342 .....	<a href="mailto:zonagale@shyaw.ca">zonagale@shyaw.ca</a>
Arlene Dench.....	Secretary .....	743-5644.....	<a href="mailto:jaden2@shaw.ca">jaden2@shaw.ca</a>
Barb Kohlman .....	Past President.....	743-4485.....	<a href="mailto:barbkohlman@shaw.ca">barbkohlman@shaw.ca</a>
Dee Evans.....	Newsletter .....	510-6848.....	<a href="mailto:mbgcnewsletter@gmail.com">mbgcnewsletter@gmail.com</a>
Diane Regan .....	Kitchen .....	743-7314 .....	<a href="mailto:di_regan@hotmail.com">di_regan@hotmail.com</a>
Mary Gale.....	Historian .....	743-9329.....	no email
Heather Gibbins.....	Membership.....	743-0424.....	<a href="mailto:heathergibbins@yahoo.ca">heathergibbins@yahoo.ca</a>
Janice Rose .....	Library.....	743-5897 .....	<a href="mailto:aretiredrose@gmail.com">aretiredrose@gmail.com</a>
Joan Cawker.....	Raffle .....	715-1904.....	<a href="mailto:jwmj@shaw.ca">jwmj@shaw.ca</a>
Heather Jenkins.....	Plant Sales .....	733-2268.....	<a href="mailto:fishface1@gmail.com">fishface1@gmail.com</a>
Elizabeth Coulter.....	Website .....	743-2117.....	<a href="mailto:elizabethcoulter@shaw.ca">elizabethcoulter@shaw.ca</a>

## Club Kitchen Duties:

Please check to see if you are scheduled to bring anything for the next meeting to serve at the coffee break

### 1 Litre of 2% Milk:

Addy LaVigne

### Cookies / Goodies:

Annette Gupton  
Linda Nelson  
Betty Underwood  
John Cassells

### Kitchen Helpers:

Shirley Durand  
Sharron Nivens

### Set-up & Clean-up:

Kathy Edmunds  
Valerie Robinson  
John Cassells  
Cori-Lee Fisher



Courtesy of the Saltspring Island Garden Club

## SECRETS FOR GROWING HEALTHY HEIRLOOM TOMATOES

By Marsha Goldberg- Eagleridge Seeds

Heirloom tomatoes have gained in popularity in recent years. There are many reasons. Their unique flavour has no comparison to modern cultivars. We have been sold on disease resistance and uniformity at the expense of true tomato flavour.

Proper plant maintenance goes a long way to avoiding potential problems when growing our heirloom beauties. Good hygiene is crucial and should start at seeding time. Use sterile soil and containers. The ideal temperature for germination is 70 F (19 C). Start in greenhouse inserts, cover seeds 1/4 inch deep and then transplant seedlings after the true leaves appear. Plants average four inches in height at this stage. A three to four inch pot gives adequate space for plants to mature. Liquid fish fertilizer is applied at this stage of development. Liquid kelp can be applied to soil and foliage to ensure disease resistance.

Preparing the garden for transplanting is extremely important. Fungal and bacterial disease prevention is crucial for coastal gardens. Never compost any part of the plant and practice crop rotation each year. Tomatoes love deep soil on the acid side for proper uptake of nutrients. Apply a well balanced acid organic base fertilizer into each transplanting hole. Bury each plant deeply to encourage new roots to grow along the stem. A strong root system contributes to a plant's ability to ward off problems. Liquid fish fertilizer is applied after transplanting and a plant support system or tomato cage should be installed.

As the first flowers appear it is time to decrease the nitrogen. Give liquid potassium and phosphorus to encourage blossom and fruit set. Potassium is crucial for tomatoes. Wood ashes are a good source, along with langbeinite or green sand but liquid organic fertilizers are faster acting. Kelp is good at this time to ensure a good supply of trace elements. Calcium is required to avoid a nasty condition called blossom end rot but dolomite lime should not be used for tomatoes as it changes the pH balance. Oyster shell ground up is better. Throw a good handful around the base of each plant, then water well. Magnesium is important for fruit set. Old Italian and English tomato growers have known this secret for ages and have given epsom salts to their plants. A handful around the base of each plant or mixed into a watering can will give your plants all the magnesium they will need.

Tomatoes are heavy feeders but if you have followed the program above, it is time to stop feeding. Keep all

foliage off the ground and use a straw mulch around the base of all your plants. This keeps the moisture even and prevents splash back from the soil on to the leaves. Most fungal diseases come from the soil splashing on the leaves. Encourage good air circulation with staking and giving ample room between your plants, at least 3 feet. Never water from above. Use drip irrigation or a watering wand to water the base of the plants only. Deep watering discourages fruit from cracking and allows the ripening fruit to develop complex flavours. Too much water interferes with flavour development of the fruit. The idea is to strike a balance.

In outdoor growing, pruning the plants themselves has caused a raging debate over the years. It is always easier for a plant to



grow leaves than to produce fruit! Too many leaves generally means too much nitrogen but sunscald on the fruit is caused by not enough leaf cover. Always prune on a dry day to avoid potential fungus attacks. Use clean cutting tools and sterilize with peroxide ahead of time. On indeterminate plants (the ones that continue to set fruit and blossoms) the suckers that grow between branches can be removed to encourage straight plants. Remove foliage from maturing fruit in the greenhouse and thin out extra branches that are not producing to ensure good air circulation. Mould and bacteria are more common in greenhouses without good ventilation and high humidity.

Nutrition is also more important in the greenhouse than outdoors. Be prepared to fertilize longer. The same applies to pot culture. Many heirloom varieties do well in pots on your deck or placed anywhere in a sunny spot. Determinate varieties which are smaller plants that set all their fruit at once are the best for pots, along with cherry types, and early season selections. There are also a large group of tomatoes that can be classified as semi-determinate. They max out at 5 feet or so but continue to produce through the season. This applies to a lot of the old time cultivars and most of the paste types.

I am happy to assist with further inquiries and recommendations. You can reach me at [www.eagleridge-seeds.com](http://www.eagleridge-seeds.com).

## MESSAGES OF INTEREST FROM OTHER CLUBS ETC.

Canyon Ridge Daylily Farm welcomes you to our 2012 season. Our website is fully updated and full of many beautiful cultivars at reasonable prices. Because we are centrally located in western Canada, our daylilies can reach your door in a matter of days, instead of the longer postal waits from Eastern Canada. Take advantage of this and also the fact that we are completely TAX FREE. It all adds up!

Our offer to garden clubs for 2012 is FREE SHIPPING and HANDLING on club orders over \$200.00. Join together with other club members, create and send your order under one name and address. Be sure to write the name of your gardening club on the order form.

Also new for 2012 is our free monthly [email newsletter](#). Anyone interested can just email us at [questions@canyonridgefarm.com](mailto:questions@canyonridgefarm.com) and we will add your name to our list. I've attached our January newsletter for your interest. You can also find us on [Face Book](#), we would love to hear what's new in your gardening part of the world.

All the Best  
Lynne Cherot and Chris Boulanger  
Canyon Ridge Daylily Farm  
[www.canyonridgefarm.com](http://www.canyonridgefarm.com)  
[250-491-1124](tel:250-491-1124)

***VANCOUVER ISLAND HEATHER SOCIETY  
ANNUAL SPRING HEATHER SALE  
SATURDAY MARCH 31, 2012  
COBBLE HILL FARMER'S INSTITUTE HALL  
10:00AM -NOON (OR UNTIL SOLD OUT)***

We always ensure that we have unusual varieties on hand and this year there will be eight new introductions. Starter kits consisting of 10 plants and a planting diagram, individual summer, fall and winter flowering heathers and heaths plus tree heaths will also be on sale. Members of the Society will be on hand to help you make your choices. Experienced buyers will advise you that it is essential to get to the hall prior to the sale starting, in order to get the best selection.

For more information contact Elaine Scott at 250-743-0965 or

[TheScottRogers@aol.com](mailto:TheScottRogers@aol.com)



the Cobble Hill 12th annual  
**Seedy Saturday**

Saturday 10th March from 10 am to 3 pm  
 Cobble Hill Hall, 3550 Watson Avenue,  
 in the heart of Cobble Hill Village

Celebrate our '100 Mile Spring' with  
 organic & heritage seeds  
 plant starts for food & flowers  
 bulbs & tubers, figs & ferns  
 mason bees & their houses  
 winter veggies & edible sprout seeds  
 garden furniture & gardeners' soaps  
 permaculture & master gardeners  
 seed exchange & kiddies' fun

presented by the Shawnigan Cobble Hill Farmers' Institute  
 for information please call 250-743-7305 or 250-734-8036  
 our thanks to Cowichan Press

# COBBLE HILL SEEDY SATURDAY

## '100 MILE SPRING'

The 12th annual Cobble Hill Seedy Saturday invites you to help us celebrate our '100 Mile Spring' with everything a gardener could need - or want! Over 30 vendors will offer a full range of organic and heritage seeds, plant starts, flower and fruit shrubs and bulbs - and mason bees to fertilize them - native grasses and ferns, edible sprout seeds and even organic salves and mineral soaks for sore gardeners' bods!

Our informative and helpful Master Gardeners can always answer the most obscure and esoteric questions, while the permaculture people have all kinds of ideas about how you can make your garden more sustainable and interesting. Everyone is always itching to share their plant lore, and Mums and Dads can unleash the kids on the children's' activities while they visit with friends, take advantage of free seeds at the seed exchange table, and load up those cloth bags with wee envelopes of summer's garden joy.

A delicious light lunch is available through the 4-H community club, so plan to come and soak up enough inspiration to propel you into the garden! This extremely popular community event is sponsored by the Shawnigan Cobble Hill Farmers Institute, which celebrated its 100th anniversary a few years ago and continues to blossom from deep roots in our bucolic Cowichan agricultural tradition.

Date: Saturday, March 10th 2012 10 am - 3 pm

Location: Cobble Hill Hall, 3550 Watson Avenue, Cobble Hill Village

Call: [250-743-7305](tel:250-743-7305) or [250-743-8036](tel:250-743-8036)  
Email: [cobblehillseedysaturday@gmail.com](mailto:cobblehillseedysaturday@gmail.com)

Admission: Free

## Spring Plant Sale

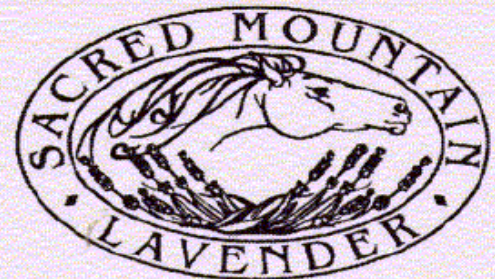
By Sharon Sullivan

The Plant Sale this spring will take place on April 28th at the Farmer's Institute. This years potting-up session at Pat Spiers' place for the spring plant sale will take place on Monday February 20th. If the ground is still too frozen for plants to be dug up, then we will move the date to February 27th.

In preparation for the potting-up session and plant sale, I have a few requests:

- 1) Could you let me know by return e-mail whether you are able to help out this year on Feb 20th and/or could you help out with the labeling at a later date (to be determined) .
- 2) Pat has asked if everyone could bring some plants from their garden or a friend's garden to pot up at her place on February 20th. If we all ask one friend then maybe we will have a little more plant material to work with and of a broader variety. During past sales people donated garlic, seed potatoes, etc.
- 3) If anyone is doing starts for their own garden, could you kindly do an additional few seeds for the plant sale. If you need help potting these up we can arrange another date to pot with soil, pots and a crew. Let me know.

For more information, please contact me at [sullivansaltspring@gmail.com](mailto:sullivansaltspring@gmail.com) or phone me at 653-0086



View our organically-grown Lavender plants in a wide variety of sizes, colours and species. Custom orders are our speciality. Also visit our gift shop with products hand-prepared from our lavender fields

Hours May to September  
Wednesday to Sunday

10am - 5pm or by appointment  
401 Musgrave Road  
(on the paved part)  
653-2315

LAVENDER FESTIVAL

JULY 15, 2012

[www.sacredmountainlavender.com](http://www.sacredmountainlavender.com)

**Please call to register: 250-479-6162**



All courses are at  
**The Horticulture  
Centre of the  
Pacific**  
505 Quayle Road,  
Victoria BC

**Bring Wildlife to your Backyard**

Sunday March 4<sup>th</sup> 1 PM – 4 PM

As habitat disappears and more species are put at risk, gardeners can step up and make a difference by introducing naturesscaping to their gardens. This technique of gardening provides animals with habitat for resting, nesting & food as they travel across the landscape and requires less water & general maintenance. Using examples of naturesscaped gardens, local ecologist & invasive species specialist **Marian McCoy** will teach you how to attract wildlife & biodiversity to your garden. This interactive workshop will include a walk through the Gardens at HCP.  
HCP Members \$25.00  
Non-HCP Members \$35.00

**Learn to Mosaic**

3 Sundays in March 11<sup>th</sup> 10 AM-3 PM, 18<sup>th</sup> 10 AM-1pm & 25<sup>th</sup> 10 AM – 12 noon

In **3 sessions**, artist **Anne Swannell** will teach students all the basics & discuss more advanced techniques. You will learn how to: prepare the base, cut & adhere the tiles, grout & seal. No experience is necessary. All will go home with a beautiful 16” square floral mosaic panel that can be wall mounted or used as a table top.

To ensure personal attention this class will be **limited to 8 students**

All materials & tools supplied.

HCP Members \$135.00 Non-HCP Members \$190.00

**Pruning Techniques**

Monday March 12<sup>th</sup> & Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> 6:30 – 9 PM & Saturday March 17<sup>th</sup> 9 AM-12 noon.

An understanding of how & why plants respond to pruning will help you get the results you want with any plant in your garden. We prune to control size, to

increase flowers & fruit production and to correct damage from pests, diseases & weather. **Patty Brown** will teach this

**3-session** course on theory & technique. Two in-class sessions will cover the theory & the third, on the Saturday morning, will be a practicum in the Gardens at HCP.

HCP Members \$90.00

Non-HCP Members \$125.00

**Troubleshooting Townhall  
Getting Ready for the 2012 Garden**

Sunday March 18<sup>th</sup> 1 PM – 4 PM

Bring your questions to a troubleshooting workshop with **Linda Gilkeson**. The session will start with a presentation on common garden questions for this region; why are my beets so tiny and how to get a good stand of carrots and what’s with this powdery mildew?! There will be plenty of time for participants to ask questions and find out how to solve problems for this year and better yet, avoid them altogether.

HCP members \$25.00

Non-HCP Members \$35.00

**Landscape Planning & Design**

Monday 6:30 PM – 9 PM

March 19<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup>, Apr. 2<sup>nd</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup> May 7<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup>

This 8-session course will take you step-by-step through the landscape design process. From imagining to gathering the information to drawing the plans to selecting the plants and materials, you will be led, coached and informed by instructor Ken Nentwig. Based on your own project- up to ½ acre, you will learn how to see through the landscape designer’s eyes. Be prepared to spend some time getting to know your site as you’ve never seen it before and to create a design that will suit your lifestyle and budget. Some basic tools will be required, paper and some related materials will be provided.

HCP Members \$240.00

Non-HCP Members \$340.00

[Learn More...](#)

**Build a Mason Bee Condo**

Saturday March 31<sup>st</sup> 1 PM – 4 PM

Bring our native pollinators to your backyard by learning how to build a successful bee condo. The design encourages periodic viewing of the bees within & has two styles of channel widths to attract a range of species throughout the summer season.

No prior carpentry experience is necessary. Some basic sawing & hammering skills would be a benefit but regardless of skill, **Gord Hutchings** will ensure all students will go home with a bee condo ready to paint & set up in the garden! All material & tools provided  
HCP Members \$40.00  
Non-HCP Members \$55.00

**Ethnobotany of Southern Vancouver Island**

Saturday April 14<sup>th</sup> 1 PM – 4 PM  
For many thousands of years the local First Nations have used the many different species of plants in all aspects of life. In this course, **Charles Knighton** will introduce you to the ethnobotany of Southern Vancouver Island including the history of food gathering and related technologies. A short classroom session will be followed by a tour of the Ethnobotany Trail at HCP.  
HCP Members \$25.00  
Non-HCP Members \$35.00

**Planting a Chefs' Garden**

Saturday April 14<sup>th</sup> 9 AM – 11:30 AM  
Add zest & flavour to all your cooking by adding a chef's selection to your vegetable garden, (or a box on the balcony!) **Lynda Dowling** will teach you how to grow, harvest and use a wonderful selection of herbs and send you home with new recipes, a selection of six herbs & the confidence to use them.  
HCP Members \$35.00 incl. materials  
Non-HCP Members \$49.00 incl. materials

**Basketry – Diagonal Plated Basketswith Willow Bark & Paper**

Saturday April 21<sup>st</sup> *or* Sunday April 22<sup>nd</sup> 9:30 AM – 4:30 PM  
In this workshop **Joan Carrigan** and her students will explore two types of diagonal plaiting using two different materials. Students will learn how to harvest and prepare willow bark & weave a square basket. Then they will weave a flat pouch with a lid using watercolour paper.



This easily accessible and versatile material offers many creative possibilities. All materials are included.  
HCP Members \$110.00  
Non-HCP Members \$154.00

**Resilient Gardens for a Changing Coastal Climate**

Sunday April 29<sup>th</sup> 11 AM – 1 PM

Our local conditions are changing along with the global climate; what does this mean to our food gardens; to our food security? **Linda Gilkeson** will teach you how to design adaptable fruit and vegetable gardens, how to help your plants through 'weird weather' and what you need to know to become a resilient gardener in these challenging times.  
HCP members \$25.00  
Non-HCP Members \$35.00

**Pollination 101**

Sunday April 29<sup>th</sup> 2 PM – 4 PM

Crops from apples to zucchini and all seed saving depend on the successful fertilization of flowers – this is pollination. **Linda Gilkeson** will review plant biology and the different types of flowers. Pollination agents and environmental factors such as temperature that can affect fertilization will also be explained. Learn why some plants don't fruit, how to attract pollinators, how to hand pollinate and how to avoid cross-pollination to make sure the seed you save is "true" to the variety.  
HCP members \$25.00 Non-HCP Members \$35.00

**Container Vegetable Gardening**

Saturday May 12<sup>th</sup> 1 PM – 3 PM

**Linda Petite** will teach you how to grow a wide variety of beautiful vegetables in containers and how to utilize vertical gardening to save space and maximize yield. The session will cover: how to start & maintain a container garden, which soil mixes & fertilizers work best, the do's & don'ts of watering, how to choose the best varieties and how to trellis your favourite vining vegetables. Join us for this fun hands-on workshop, take home some veggie starts and start your own container garden.  
HCP Members \$30.00 Non-HCP Members \$42.00

**Native Bees of the Gardens at HCP**

Saturday June 9<sup>th</sup> 1 PM – 3 PM  
Six different families of bees are found in our area throughout the spring & summer. 70% of our native pollinating bees are ground nesters.

Some are not even what you might think of as bees as they are quasi-social. Most are solitary and the most eusocial bee is the beloved bumble bee. Come & learn with

**Gord Hutchings** about what plants they visit, their biology, habitat requirements and visit some of their forage areas in the Gardens at HCP.

HCP Members \$25.00  
Non-HCP Members \$35.00

**Basketry – Nantucket Style Purse**

Sat. June 16<sup>th</sup> *or* Sun. June 17<sup>th</sup> 9:30 AM – 4:30 PM  
Perfect for everyday use.

**Joan Carrigan** will teach you how to make this durable and attractive shoulder basket using a spiraling twill weave. It has a wooden base in the Nantucket style, the sides are woven with dyed cane over reed and there is a leather strap for carrying. This is a basket that is fun to weave and fun to use. All materials are included.

HCP Members \$110.00  
Non-HCP Members \$154.00

**Troubleshooting Townhall for the 2012 Garden**

Sunday September 30<sup>th</sup> 1 PM – 4 PM  
Bring your questions to a troubleshooting workshop with **Linda Gilkeson**. This post-mortem of the 2012 summer will start with a presentation on common garden questions for this region and cover this past growing season *and* where you should be for the winter garden. There will be plenty of time for participants to ask questions and find out how to solve the problems presented this year and how to avoid them in 2013!

HCP Members \$25.00  
Non-HCP Members \$35.00

**Garden Inspired Gifts**

Saturday & Sunday October 13<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup>  
Taking inspiration from the natural world, **Lynda Dowling** will help you unlock your imagination to make

charming and unique gifts for the holidays, Project details of this two day workshop to come. All materials will be included.

**The Floral Toolbox**

Saturday October 20<sup>th</sup> 1 PM – 4 PM  
Gardeners might be savvy about growing flowers but are often at a loss when it comes to using them in an arrangement; nor do they see the potential beyond flowers to foliage, leaves, sticks & stems! Floral designer Anne Bowen does and she will open your eyes too. You will work on learning the basic tenets of design and, using your new skills, create a free-standing arrangement in your own vase and a container arrangement using oasis. Please bring one small to medium size vase, small secateurs or snips- we will supply everything else.  
HCP Members \$50.00  
Non-HCP Members \$75.00

**Zen & Now**

Sunday Oct. 21<sup>st</sup>  
Artist and garden designer **Robin Hopper** has reworked & updated his immensely popular and irreverent tongue-in-cheek slide and lecture presentation to trace the development of Japanese Gardens from their beginnings to a personal interpretation of the five basic Japanese garden styles featured in the Metchosin garden of **Chosin Pottery**. The lecture will be followed by lunch at **Nourish Garden Bistro**, and then it's off to Metchosin with Robin for a guided tour of his beautiful garden at the height of its fall colour. **(Optional lunch is an additional \$20.00)**  
HCP Mem: Lecture *only* \$15.00 Non-Mem \$25.00

**Basketry using Northwest Material**

Saturday Oct. 27<sup>th</sup> *or* Sunday Oct 28<sup>th</sup> 9:30 – 4:30 PM  
This workshop with **Joan Carrigan** will introduce students to the harvesting, preparation and weaving of western red cedar bark, west coast sweetgrass, willow bark & beargrass. A variety of techniques will be covered including regular & reverse twining, twill weave and X-lashing. These materials are lovely to work with and students will be sure to treasure their new baskets.

