



# MILL BAY GARDEN CLUB NEWSLETTER

Website: [www.millbaygardenclub.com](http://www.millbaygardenclub.com)

Email: [mbgcnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:mbgcnewsletter@gmail.com)

## Next Meeting:

**Date:** Tues, May 26th, 2026

**Time:** 7pm (doors open 6:30pm)

**Place:** Mill Bay Community League Hall  
(1001 Shawnigan Mill Bay Road)

**Activities:**

**Business Meeting; Members' Forum;  
Gardening Q&A; Library; Raffle;  
Plant Sales; Guest Speaker;  
Socializing!**



## May Brag Table Theme:

### The Merry Month of May!

With plant and flower identification and commentary provided by Barb Kohlman and helpers, 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. The bonus is a prize awarded randomly to one of the monthly participants. If you've never participated, give it a fling, be it flower, vegetable or fungus!

### A little ray of sunshine...

Club member and Flower and Garden show chair Janice Rose sends card on behalf of the Club to members experiencing illness or loss, bringing a spot of sunshine into a stressful time for a club member.

If you know of someone in the Club who is sick, in hospital, or has lost a loved one, please let Janice know and she will send a card on our behalf.



## May Speaker: Janice Currie on *The Atacama Desert*

*See page 3 for details*



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# President's Report

Richard Nelson

May is a month for Invasive Plant Awareness though most of us are aware of these vigorous garden intruders in every month. May is a month when we have a fighting chance at holding back the onslaught of many alien invaders of the plant world. The perennial invaders are busily investing the stored energy from the last growing season to bloom and make seed and so will die if cut back to the ground or lower. The annual invasive plants are popping up from seed that over-wintered in the soil and can be weeded out before they have a chance to seed again for future years. Taking the opportunity now to catch these nuisances when they are relatively weak can give us an advantage in favour of the more benign beauties we strive to grow.

Some strategic gardening practices can help us gain the upper hand on invaders. It is useful to spread mulch two to four inches thick around shrubs, trees and wherever there is bare soil. The mulch will shade out most emerging seedlings and make the plants that do emerge soft rooted and easily weeded out. Taking the initiative early can pay off well. When we received a dump of city garden waste which contained perennial Morning Glory a quick and sustained vigilant control saved us from an unyielding onslaught of binding vines for ever.

Persistence in controlling one or several particular target plants focuses the gardener's efforts and allows serial elimination from the worst problem and on down to lesser threats.

Confinement of an invasive species to an island between paths, roadways or other barriers will prevent spreading as long as the plants are not allowed to seed.

Wise gardeners keep alert for stowaway invaders riding along in pots of plants purchased or gifted. A gorgeous basket containing a dozen varieties may include one or more invaders that will gladly introduce themselves to your garden and spread with abandon. Be aware of plant characteristics by researching and talking to other gardeners, in particular beware when someone recommends a plant that will do well – sometimes they do too well. Soil, manure, compost and hay or straw are likely to contain viable seed of who knows what plant so know the source of these amendments.

Meanwhile just enjoy the garden in all the glory, we cannot control every weed in every corner so pick your battles and smile at the dandelions.

In Gardening

Richard

# Mill Bay Garden Club General Meeting Agenda April 28, 2026

- I. Call to Order: 7:00pm.
  - a) Approval of the Agenda:
  - b) Approval of the minutes of the previous General Meeting
  - c) President's Message: Richard Nelson
    - Community Flower & Garden Show June 5 & 6
    - AGM - June 23 at 1720 Baldy Mt Rd, Shawnigan Lake
    - Notice of motion to 2026 AGM
    - Nominations for Committee Leads & Executive Positions
    - Open gardens and garden tours
  - d) Executive & Committee reports:
  - e) Questions for the Executive:
  - f) Brag Table: "The Merry Month of May"
  - g) Garden related questions with our Master Gardeners
  - H) Sian Richards: Gardener's Warm Up

~~ Break ~~
2. Presentation 8:00pm. **Janice Currie - The Atacama Desert in Bloom**
  - h) Adjournment

## May's Speaker:

### Janice Currie on The Atacama Desert in Bloom

#### Speaker Bio:

Janice Currie is an avid plant grower and collector, gardener, and traveller. Her garden and greenhouses in Victoria, B.C. showcase the many plants she has seen in nature around the world. One of the favorite places she has botanized is the Atacama Desert in Chile. Although it is occurring more often than it used to the phenomenon of rain, for a brief period, in the desert produces an incredible display of blooming cactus, bulbs, annuals and flower laden vines. Janice would like to share her experience in this beautiful part of South America.

## Executive Members

### President

Richard Nelson

### Vice President

Kathy Code

### Treasurer

Gord Hamilton

[mbgcfees@gmail.com](mailto:mbgcfees@gmail.com)

### Secretary

Carol Goodger-Hill

### Past-President

Gill Keir

## Committee Leads

### Membership

Alicia Wonsiak

[mbgcmembership@gmail.com](mailto:mbgcmembership@gmail.com)

### Flower & Garden Show

Janice Rose

### Library

Katherine Miller

### Kitchen

Judy Raimondo

### Plant Sales

Carrie Nelson

*Cont'd next page...*

# Notice of Motion to the 2026 Mill Bay Garden Club Annual General Meeting

## Bylaws - Mill Bay Garden Club

Proposed changes in ***bold italics*** to replace underlined existing language.

1. Robert's Rules of Order shall be the guide for meetings.
2. Interpretation: Any pronoun in the by-laws refers to feminine and masculine.
3. Duties of Officers:
  - a) The President conducts the regular club meetings and is ex-officio, a member of all committees. He/She calls the meetings of the Executive Committee when necessary, and will appoint sub-committees as required. When a vacancy occurs on the Executive Committee, the president shall appoint a suitable person in the club to complete the term of office.
  - b) The Vice-President assumes the duties of the President in the absence of the President.
  - c) The Secretary keeps records of all meetings of the Club and the Executive Committee; also conducts official correspondence.
  - d) The Treasurer keeps a true account of all financial transactions, and deposits all funds in a local banking facility; also presents an Annual Report, and keeps an up-to-date membership list.
  - e) The Past President shall be a member of the Executive Committee.
4. A Nominating Committee of 3 members shall be appointed at least four (4) weeks prior to the Annual Meeting. The Committee will produce a list of nominees for the Annual General Meeting, will ask for nominations from the floor, and will conduct the elections. At the conclusion of the business meeting, the outgoing President shall turn the gavel over to the new President, and shall convene a short meeting of the old and new Executive to arrange for orderly transfer of signing authority, documents and any other appropriate business.

...from previous page

### Committee Leads (cont'd)

#### Bursary

Ann Baty

#### Sunshine

Janice Rose

#### Brag Table

Barb Kohlman

#### Memorial Garden

Heather Jenkins

#### Raffle

Stephanie Taylor

#### Website Administrator

Gord Hamilton

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

#### Social Media

Pat Spezowka

#### Newsletter Editor

Dave Byrnes

[mbgcnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:mbgcnewsletter@gmail.com)

## Social Media

If you use Facebook, don't forget to check us out and "LIKE" us.

[https://  
www.facebook.com/  
share/g/179g2iN22r/](https://www.facebook.com/share/g/179g2iN22r/)

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5. A 'Quorum' shall consist of 50% of paid up members or a minimum of 50 members.

***A 'Quorum' shall consist of 25% of membership or a minimum of 25 members. All members must be in good standing.***

6. Annual Dues

a) Yearly dues are payable by October 31st each year for existing members to remain in good standing.

***New members who join the club between January 1 and May 31 will pay half the annual dues and hold membership until August 31 of the same year. New members who join the club after June 1 will pay full annual dues and hold membership until August 31 of the following year.***

b) Honorary members are exempt from paying dues.

7. Consideration for all charitable donation proposals each year will be decided by a majority vote of the Executive /Committee Head Group at the May Executive Committee meeting.

Proposals for donations will be sent, in writing, to the Secretary prior to the May Executive/ Committee meeting which is held the second Tuesday of each month. Those donations approved by the executive/Committee Head Group will be voted on for final approval by the membership at the annual General Meeting. Criteria for consideration for any charitable donation will be the Club's ability to pay and the nature of the organization requesting donations with preference given to gardening-related requests.

8. The fiscal year shall commence on June 1st and end May 31st of the following year.

***The fiscal year shall commence on September 1st and end August 31st of the following year.***

## **Mill Bay Garden Club**

**Proposed Amendment to the above motion: Revise item 4. to include the title – “Committee Responsibilities”, renumber the existing language as item a) and add a new item b) The Membership Committee keeps an up-to-date membership list.**

**Proposed Amendment to the above Motion: Add to item 5. - Non-attending members may assign a proxy to an attending member.**

## Committee Reports

### From the Kitchen

Just the usual reminder for folks to bring their own cup for coffee time, and a big thanks to all the volunteers who signed up to bring treats and help in the kitchen.



*Judy*

### Social Media

Hello everyone,

Our Community Flower and Garden Show is coming up soon. Check our Facebook Group postings for ongoing information.

To join the group page please email me and I will send you an invite, go to our Facebook page and sign in, or click on the link below.

<https://www.facebook.com/share/g/179g2iN22r/>

Happy posting.

*Pat*

### Memorial Garden

Many thanks to all the cheerful volunteers who have helped with the Memorial Garden this year. Nick and I will keep an eye on it over the summer months and look forward to working with you again in the Fall.

Wishing you all a great summer.

*Heather Jenkins*



## Committee Reports (continued)

### Plant Sales Table - General Meeting

We had a great many plant donations at the monthly meetings this year. There's always a surprise plant or two for members to get excited about. This month I imagine will be no different as it is the time of year when plants are coming into their own or at their prime. These are always easy sellers and will likely be available at the June Flower & Garden sale as well.

Some plants such as colchicum, nerine lilies, and saffron crocus are Fall blooming plants & not showy at all this time of year. However, now is the best time to acquire & plant them so that you can enjoy them when they bloom in the fall. Dahlias are another "late bloomer" that can be planted out now. Some of these plants will be at the May meeting.

As you know, I am stepping down from the plant sales table at the end of June. I encourage you to consider the many benefits to this position:

1. It's easy. You set up tables, the treasurer gives you a float, people bring plants, you price them, sell them, clean up and give the money & float back to the treasurer.
2. You can learn a great deal from the donors and the many plant experts in the club who are willing to help identify plants if need be.
3. You meet many members you might otherwise not have the opportunity to converse with.
4. You have the advantage of being first to see the "new & unusual" plants people donate.

I'm happy to show anyone the ropes & pass the torch!

*Carrie*

### From the Cobble Hill Fair Folks

Plan now & Plant to enter! Enter your harvest in the Cobble Hill Fair, Saturday, August 22nd! Vegetables, flowers, preserves.

Fair catalogues will be out in July, Entries due by Saturday, August 8th. Visit our reps at your Garden Show for tips on entering!

# Flower & Garden Show 2026

## A Community Affair

Our Mill Bay Flower & Garden Show is a delightful spring into summer for members and guests alike. But it also celebrates a community that gives from the heart. Its success creates a web of giving that reaches well beyond two flower-filled days.

The Flower & Garden Show's main sources of revenue are the Silent Auction and the annual Plant Sale. Both depend 100% on member and donor contributions. Profits feed back into the community through charitable donations and student bursaries.

The Show opens its doors to local gardening vendors; many in turn support the Silent Auction with donations of their products. Our members contribute both through auction items and by bidding for a range of items that never fails to surprise and delight.

Members of the Victoria Master Gardener Association volunteer their time at the annual Plant Sale to answer "thorny" gardening questions. Our own Mill Bay Garden Club members grow and contribute flowers, shrubs and veggies from their gardens, and are enthusiastic customers as well! If you have a few perennials you can split or some volunteers to evict, please consider donating them to our sale. You can drop off donations between May 22 to June 03 to the Jenkins, who have generously offered their property as a staging area.

You may know that the South Cowichan Hospital Auxiliary hosts our delightful strawberry tea annually. Did you also know that their revenues from our show help support the Cowichan Hospice, the Cowichan District Hospital and Cairnsmore Place? Or that they run the Hospital Gift Shop? And, like our own club, they fund student bursaries.

None of this would be possible without a stalwart cadre of volunteers who plan and execute the show with enthusiasm and military precision. From the people who support the judges (and feed them!), to those who set up and strike the tents and tables, every volunteer is important. If you would like to join the people who work to make the Flower & Garden Show better and better, we would love to meet you! Get in touch with our volunteer coordinator Al Mikalishen.

## Flower & Garden Show 2026

### Silent Auction Committee

Jennifer Campbell

Susan Rudolph

Shari Wilson

### Donations

Our goal is to raise money for the club and local charities. We welcome goods, gift certificates or services. Goods can be anything you make, refurbish or repurpose. BE CREATIVE!

**Please complete the Silent Auction Donation Form at the end of the newsletter and return it to us with your donation to one of our meetings on April 28th, or May 26th.**

There will be a table at the front of the hall set up for donations. If you are unable to bring your donation to the hall, please contact Shari Wilson to arrange a time to drop it off at her house or the Cobble Hill Hall on the day of the show.

### Plant Sales Table - Flower & Garden Show

Hello and thank you to all who have volunteered to help with the plant table. We could still use another truck/trailer to pick up plants on Friday evening and deliver them on Saturday morning. Cash table is taken care of. Another volunteer for the afternoon shift at the table, 11:30 - 2:00, would be good.

A reminder that you will bring your plant donations to the Jenkins between Monday, May 25th and Thursday, June 4th. Please include as much information with the plant as possible, at least what it is! Colour, species and other particulars are also appreciated. Thank you for not donating invasive plants. Your support with donations, pick-up and delivery and working on the day is very welcome. This plant table will be a success because of all you lovely club members.

## Coming Events

- **Plantaholics Plant Sale 2026.** Saturday 30 May 10am-2pm. 1395 Benvenuto Avenue, Brentwood Bay. Cacti, Succulents, Annuals, Perennials, Tropicals, Orchids, Trees, Shrubs and so much more!
- **Victoria Cactus & Succulent Society 2026 Spring Show & Sale.** Saturday 6 June 10am-4pm at Brentwood Bay Nursery *and* Sunday 7 June 10am-3pm at 1395 Benvenuto Avenue. Admission by donation.
- **2nd Annual Duncan Rotary Garden Tour** 7 June 10am-4pm. Tickets \$30, available online April 1 - June 5. See poster.



Rotary  
Club of Duncan



# GARDEN TOUR


June 7, 2026  
10am - 4:30pm

Self Guided tour of 6 beautiful gardens!

*Master Gardeners at every stop to host and answer questions!*

**Tickets Available April 1 - June 7**

Or at these retailers **until June 7, Cash Only**

 **\$30** *All proceeds help support non-profits in the Cowichan Valley*

Available online **April 1 - June 5**



<https://gardentour2026.fundraiser.support>

*Plus limited cash-only tickets the day of the event at tour gardens*

**Duncan**

Buckerfield's Supply Store  
Volume One Bookstore

**North Cowichan**

Sandpiper Gardens & Glass  
Westholme Nursery

**South Cowichan**

Dinter Nursery  
Hillside Stone & Garden

**Lake Cowichan**

Home Hardware

Thank you to our sponsors!



## MBGC Elections

Volunteers for the 2026-2027 Executive and Committee Heads

### EXECUTIVE:

President: Kathy Code

Vice President: Sian Richards

Treasurer: Gord Hamilton

Secretary: Carol Goodger-Hill

### DIRECTORS:

Past President: Richard Nelson

### COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

Bursary: Ann Baty

Social Media: Pat Spezowka

Kitchen: Judy Raimondo

Library: Katherine Miller

Membership: Emily Bendall

Memorial Garden: Heather Jenkins

Newsletter: Dave Byrnes

Raffle: Stephanie Taylor

### STILL IN NEED OF VOLUNTEERS:

Flower & Garden Show:

General Meeting Plant Sales:

Web Site:

Please contact me (Gill Keir – Past President).

Thank you!

# Gardening Tips for May/June 2026

by Barb Kohlman

Start small, choose the right plants, care for your soil, water wisely, and enjoy the process.



## Start Small and Plan

Begin with a manageable garden space, whether a few pots, a small, raised bed, or a compact backyard plot. Starting small prevents overwhelm and allows you to learn as you go, gradually expanding your garden as you gain confidence.

## Choose the Right Plants

Select plants suited to your local climate and soil conditions. Native plants are often low-maintenance and resilient. When buying seedlings, look for healthy, bushy plants with dense foliage, which indicates strong root systems and better resistance to pests.

## Soil Preparation

Test your soil to understand its type—sandy, clay, or loamy—and adjust accordingly. Healthy soil is the foundation of a thriving garden. Adding compost or organic matter improves fertility and structure, supporting strong plant growth.

## Watering Tips

Water deeply but less frequently to encourage robust root development. Early morning or late afternoon watering reduces evaporation. Use the “finger test” to check soil moisture before watering to avoid overwatering.

## Pest Management

Use natural methods like planting marigolds to deter pests or spraying plants with mild soapy water. Regularly remove yellow or damaged leaves to maintain plant health.

Hope your plants are doing well. A very good growing season so far.

Barb K

## **Minutes of the Mill Bay Garden Club General Meeting April 28, 2026**

### **Mill Bay Community Hall**

President Richard Nelson called the meeting to order at 7:04 PM

Sally Emory moved adoption of the agenda; seconded by Janice Rose. Passed.

Fran Benton moved adoption of the minutes of the General Meeting of March 24, 2026; seconded by Nick Jenkins. Passed.

During the business meeting photographs from last year's Flower and Garden Show were shown on the screen.

President: The Flower and Garden Show will be on June 5 and 6. The AGM will be at the home of Carrie and Richard Nelson, 1720 Baldy Mountain Road, Shawnigan Lake on June 23, 2026. Last year Gayle Volker kept us informed of open gardens in the area. We need someone to take this over this year. On May 10, Carrie's garden at 1720 Baldy Mountain Road and Gord Hamilton's garden at 1287 Mile End Road in Cobble Hill will be open from 2 to 4 PM. If anyone else in the club would like to open their garden, please let us know.

We are looking for proposals for donations of our excess funds this year. If you have suggestions please contact a member of the Executive.

Past President: Gill Keir is still looking for volunteers for Vice President, Membership Chair, Chair of the Flower and Garden Show and the Plant Table. We are also looking for someone with an interest in the Web site. If finding speakers is putting you off from volunteering for the Vice President position, please know that there are others who will help. Perhaps some people would like to share the Membership position? This can also be accommodated. Please see Gill during the break.

Vice President: Kathy told us that the position of Vice President is a lot of fun. Tonight Bethany Couture will do a presentation on native plants.

Treasurer: The Flower and Garden Show term deposit has \$2300.00; the chequing account has \$3100.00. The club's regular account has \$3900.00; the term deposit \$1100.00 and the Bursary account \$3800.00. We will be giving out 2, \$1000.00 bursaries this year and we have \$700.00 left from last year's bursary.

Sunshine: Janice has sent out two cards to members who are ill. Please let her know if anyone needs a card.

Newsletter: Dave apologised to anyone who did not receive a Newsletter this month. Shaw/Rogers seems to be limiting the number of messages that go out from one account.

Memorial Garden: There will be a final clean up on May 9 at 10 AM.

Flower and Garden Show: It is 38 days till the show on June 6. There will be exhibits, a silent auction, vendors, a strawberry tea, plant sale and book sale. Everyone will have a lot of fun. Members of the Flower and Garden Show Committee were introduced and stood for applause. Then all those who have volunteered stood for more applause.

Al Mikalishen sent around the clipboard for volunteers to sign up. He is looking for a greeter and people with trucks. We need new blood so please consider volunteering this year.

Nick Jenkins encouraged members to enter flowers in the show this year.

Katherine Miller who is in charge of the Plant Table encouraged members to pot up plants now with the

name, the species and the colour.

The Silent Auction Team pointed out the silent auction donations table to the left as you enter the room. It was loaded with donations. The team of 3 is scouring the neighbourhood collecting donations. When you donate be sure to fill out a form so that signs can be made for the show. If you donate a special plant to the silent auction, fill out a form and either bring the plant the day before the show or bring it to Nick Jenkins. If you have a large item to donate, you can always call a member of the team to come pick it up.

Social Media: Pat said she would not put the open garden information on social media because she now has over 100 members. That might attract too many folks.

Library: Katherine showed us several books which included:

Grow your own mushrooms; how to choose and cook them by Folko Kullman. Green Books, 2021

Gardening in summer dry climates by Nora Harlow. Dimensions, 2021

The vegetable gardener's book of building projects. Dimensions, 2010

There are also several books in the library on native plants, the topic of tonight's presentation.

Raffle: There are lots of wonderful prizes tonight so pick up your raffle tickets at break.

Bursary: The choices of students to receive bursaries have been made. We need someone to present the award in Duncan in early June.

Plant Table: Carrie pointed out a lovely big pot of hostas and some Gary oak seedlings.

Kitchen: Judy passed around the clipboard for goodies in May and September. There will be no sign up in June since the AGM is a pot luck. Please include your cell phone number when you volunteer.

Carpooling: Sally said that now that the days are longer there is no need for carpooling but she will begin again in the fall.

Brag Table: Audacious April: Barb Kohlman and Fran Benton described the many items on the table tonight. There was a pot of fragrant lilac; a Gravenstein apple blossom, a huge white rhododendron flower, a blood root (Sanguinaria), a vase of iris flowers, black tulips, escolonia and kwanza cherry blossoms, a bonsai Cryptomeria and a vase of white heather, blue bells, white bells and ajuga.

Sian Richards, a physiotherapist and gardener showed us four things you can do to prevent injury in the garden.

1. Make a tight fist. A good grip is essential for pruning, shovelling, using a wheel barrow.
2. Improve your balance by placing your feet shoulder width apart, one foot in front, and extend both thumbs out in front. Move one thumb to the right and follow it with your eyes. Repeat by moving the other thumb to the left.
3. Reach above your head holding a garden pot. Gradually make the pot heavier as you lift, by placing small items inside it. Keep your arms straight and do not bend forward.
4. Bend your body. Practice bending from the hips and the knees. Bending from the knees gives you the most strength. Both types will stretch your muscles. Also hold on to the counter and sit backwards as if sitting in a chair. Do not allow your knees to go over your toes.

Sian also provided a handout.

The meeting paused for refreshment at 8:02 PM and resumed at 8:10.PM

The raffle tonight included garden tools, pots decorated with sun flowers, a gardening book and a spring planter from the new nursery on Cameron Taggart Road.

Kathy Code introduced our speaker Bethany Couture who gave us an illustrated talk on native plants in the area.

Gord Hamilton moved adjournment at 9:05 PM.