



MILL BAY GARDEN CLUB NEWSLETTER

Website: www.millbaygardenclub.com

Email: mbgcnewsletter@gmail.com

Next Meeting:

Date: **Tues, February 27th, 2024**

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!**

February Speaker:

**Carrie Nelson on
Japanese Maples**

See page 3 for details



February Brag Table Theme:

Feisty February

With plant and flower identification and commentary provided by Barb Kohlman, 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.



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February 2024, Mill Bay Garden Club Agenda (Tentative)

- 1) 7:00 p.m.: Club Business
 - a) Approval of the agenda
 - b) Approval of the minutes of January 2024 Club general meeting
 - c) President's Report – Gill Keir
 - d) Executive Committee reports
 - e) Questions for the Executive
 - f) Brag Table
 - g) Garden-related Questions with our Master GardenersBreak
- 2) 8:00 p.m. Speaker: **Carrie Nelson on Japanese Maples**
 - h) Adjournment



Micro-Irrigation Sale Next Meeting

There will be a sale of micro-irrigation equipment at the March general meeting. We will have a table outside the hall, weather permitting, at 6 p.m.

A list of the equipment will be in the March newsletter. The equipment was kindly donated by club members Norman and Gwen Redcliffe, with proceeds to go to the Mill Bay Garden Club.

Bursary Committee is Looking for Members

The Bursary Committee has four keen individuals who spend some time in April each year reviewing about a dozen applications for two \$500 bursaries from Cowichan Valley grade 12 students.

We would like one or two additional volunteers for this committee. Besides reading, the time commitment includes a meeting to determine the final recipients. *Ann Baty*

February's Speaker (Tuesday, 27 February):

Carrie Nelson on Japanese Maples

The speaker for February 27 meeting will be Carrie Nelson. Carrie will present on Japanese Maples. Image attached is Acer japonicum "Aconitifolium" Common name Dancing Peacock,

Carrie is a lifelong gardener currently nurturing a large collection of mostly perennials including hundreds of Rhododendrons and about forty Japanese Maples. Carrie operated Silver Sage Nursery in the early 2000s and used this time

to build a highly varied collection of plant material.

The Japanese Maples in Carrie's garden bring color and interest to every season culminating in an explosion of foliage color in autumn.

Carrie's presentation will provide a broad overview of basic taxonomy, favorable

conditions, planting, pruning and insect and disease control. All this will be illustrated with images highlighting the tremendous variety of Japanese Maples through the seasons.



Executive Members

President

Gill Keir

Vice President

Richard Nelson

Treasurer

Gord Hamilton

Secretary

Carol Goodger-Hill

Past-President

Bernie Juurlink

Committee Leads

Membership

Pat Spezowka

Flower & Garden Show

Janice Rose

Library

Katherine Miller

Kitchen

Judy Raimondo

Plant Sales

Kathleen Mercer

Bursary

Ann Baty

Cont'd next page...

Upcoming Seedy Weekends...

- **Victoria Seedy Sunday:** February 25th, 10am-2pm, Quadra Village Community Centre, Victoria
- **Nanaimo Seedy Sunday:** March 3rd, 10am-3pm. Nanaimo District Secondary School, 355 Wakesiah Ave, Nanaimo.
- **Cobble Hill Seedy Saturday:** March 16th, 10am-2pm. Cobble Hill Community Hall & Stu Armour Hall, Cobble Hill *Mill Bay Garden Club will have a booth.*
- **Duncan Seedy Sunday:** March 24th, 10am-2pm. Si'em' Lelum Gymnasium, 5574 River Rd. Duncan.
- **Sooke Food CHI Seedy Saturday:** March 30th, 10am-3pm. Sooke Community Hall, Sooke.

Executive Elections Coming Up in June

A message from Bernie Juurlink

At the Annual General Meeting in June, members will be asked to vote in the new Executive for the Club year starting in September. The Executive is comprised of Officers, Past President and Committee Chairs. The Officers of the Club are: President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. Committees are: Bursary, Facebook, Flower & Garden Show, Kitchen, Library, Membership, Memorial Garden, Newsletter, Plant Sales, Raffle and Webmaster. There is also the function of 'Sunshine' that sends Club wishes to members and family that have fallen ill or passed away.

All these positions are open for Club members to be nominated to stand for election. Traditionally, however, the position of President is for a two-year period as is the position of Vice President, with the Vice President generally taking up the position of President when the President's two-year term is up. This year Gill Keir is finishing her two-year term; hence Richard Nelson will step into the position of President, unless of course someone else is elected for this position. If you feel there are individuals or yourself that should be nominated for the position of President or any other position on the Executive, please let me know.

Most members of the Executive are willing to stand again for the coming year; however, there are a number of positions that are clearly open in the coming year; these are the position of Vice President and the Chairs for Membership, Facebook and Webmaster. In addition, Stephanie Taylor would very much appreciate having a Co-Chair for the Raffle Committee.

So please nominate someone, or yourself, for any Executive position but especially for Vice President and the Committee Chairs mentioned in the preceding paragraph. Having been on the Executive for many years I can assure you that if elected you will enjoy being a member of the Executive as they are a wonderful group of people to interact with.



Committee Leads *(cont'd)*

Sunshine

Janice Rose

Memorial Garden

Heather Jenkins

Raffle

Stephanie Taylor

Website Administrator

Gord Hamilton

www.Millbaygardenclub.com

Facebook/Social Media

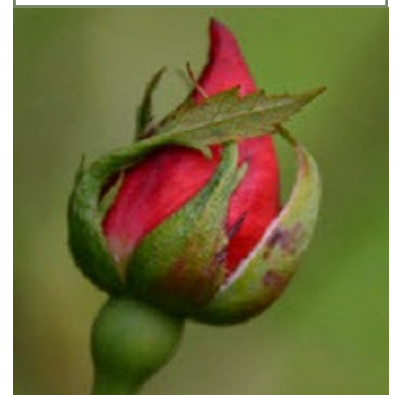
Pauline Dueck

www.facebook.com/millbaygardenclub

Newsletter Editor

Dave Byrnes

mbgcnewsletter@gmail.com



Social Media

If you use Facebook, don't forget to check

us out and "LIKE" us at:

www.facebook.com/

millbaygardenclub

Pauline Dueck

Facebook Coordinator

June 8 2024 Diamond Anniversary MBGC Flower and Garden Show

The Mill Bay Garden Club is once again hosting the Annual Plant Sale at the 75th Diamond Jubilee Flower & Garden Show on June 8th, 2024. The Plant Sale will offer a wide variety of potted perennials, veggies, herbs and other wonderful selections, generously donated by members and other contributors in the community. Proceeds from the plant sale will go to the Mill Bay Garden Club. As in past years the Mill Bay Garden Club uses the funds raised at the Flower & Garden show to help local charities in the Cowichan region.

We have a few Plant Sale committee volunteers returning from last year but welcome any member who would like to join us in preparing for this years sale. There will be a sign-up sheet at the Plant Sale Table. Come say hi and let us know if you can volunteer some time or equipment.

So, if you are out in the garden and thinking of dividing plants or making room for that special plant you just can't resist, keep us in mind and set aside some plants for the plant sale. Please remember to choose clean, undamaged pots and label with name and colour (if known). Also, please avoid potting up invasive plants. For a list of invasive species in BC please check out the link. <https://bcinvasives.ca/>

Stay tuned for more details in the coming meetings.

Kathleen Mercer
Plant Sale Committee Chair

Remembering Pip and Mary Jean

Our garden club has had a very difficult time losing two dedicated and special members in the past year. Pip Woodcock had been a member for a very long time and in fact stepped up to be President for two years when no one else wanted the job. Pip passed last August, 2023.



Photo: Family of Pip Woodcock



Photo: Barb Juurlink

This past Saturday February 17, Mary Jean Morrison died. She was also an active and valuable member of our club for many years. She led a stellar Silent Auction team for four years at the Flower and Garden Show.

Both Pip and Mary Jean will be deeply missed by the Mill By Garden Club.

Janice Rose

Committee Reports

Plant Sales

“There is always in February some one day, at least, when one smells the yet distant, but surely coming, summer.” — *Gertrude Jekyll*

Hi Everyone,

Hope you are all doing well. It was lovely to see the sun today. I've been working out in the garden and lots of plants are starting to appear. Sadly, some of the more tender plants were burnt or killed by the deep freeze of January. But not everything succumbed.

The delightful snowdrops and primula are peeking out and some of my hardier perennials are leafing out. Yay!!

Please keep us in mind, when you are out working in your garden. If you are thinking of dividing plants or making room for that special plant you just have to get, pot up your plants and bring them to the February meeting. Please remember to put your plants in pots and label with name and colour (if known).

The table will be set up at 6:30 and ready for your contributions.

Thanks,
Kathleen

Membership

We are now getting ready for Seedy Saturday on March 16th this year. This event is held at the Cobble Hill Hall, 3550 Watson Avenue and the Stu Armour Hall, 1438 Fisher Road in Cobble Hill. Luckily our table will be in the Cobble Hill Hall this year. We will have a club information table and due to the great response at our table last year we are going to be taking memberships this year. Thanks to Carrie & Alex our table at this event is manned.

Our membership dues are still only \$10/year. You can pay by sending me your information and then e-transfer to mbgcmembership@gmail.com or signing up at our general meetings. We accept cash or check.

Pat

Committee Reports (continued)

Library Notes

Thank you to all the club members who remember to return their books each month. It's appreciated by others waiting to borrow them.

Don't forget to make time before the meeting and during the break to check out our great selection of books on a variety of garden topics.

I'm always open to suggestions for new titles or topics for the library.

Yours in reading,

Katherine

Spring 2024 Plant Sales *by Elaine Scott*

Now that February is coming to an end, you have ordered, organized and even started some of your vegetable seeds, the ornamental garden is coming to life and things are getting exciting garden-wise, below is a list of spring plant sales that you just cannot miss.

24th Annual Seedy Saturday. March 16, 2024. 10-2

Our own Seedy Saturday is one of the most interesting Seedy Saturday's on the Island.

Plants will be for sale in the Stu Armour Hall, 1438 Fisher Road, while seeds, books and advice tables will be in the Cobble Hill Hall (the Farmer's Institute Hall) on Watson Avenue.

Mill Bay Plantaholics Sale

The Mill Bay Plantaholics are back again with a wonderful array of plants for sale. Work is being undertaken as we speak to make the ordering even easier than last year. The plant list will go live on April 20 while the pick-up date is May 4. If you are not already a customer contact Elaine Scott at TheScottRogers@aol.com to be put on the customer list. The profit will again be donated to the Cowichan Women Against Violence Society.

Vancouver Island Rock & Alpine Garden Society Sale. April 21, 9-4

This annual Spring plant sale will take place at the Mary Winspear Community Centre in Sidney. If you want the opportunity to buy rare and unusual plants grown and lovingly cared for by club members or offered by specialty nurseries, this is a sale that you cannot afford to miss. There will also be seed sales, an art display, tea, a silent auction and door prizes.

Cowichan Valley Garden Club Sale. April 27, 2024. 10-3

This sale will take place in the St. John's Anglican Church in Duncan. Indoor and outdoor annuals and perennial for both shade and sun gardens will be for sale. The garden club looks forward to sharing their bounty with their neighbours. Watch for sandwich boards and posters directing you to the sale.

Continued next page

Spring 2024 Plant Sales *Continued*

Cairnsmore Place and Hospice Volunteer Gardeners Plant Sale. May 11. 9-2

The in-person sale will be held at Cairnsmore Place, 250 Cairnsmore St, Duncan in the garden at the very end of Cairnsmore St. There will be a wide range of plants for sale again this year with a special addition of many beautiful daylilies. Wooden bird houses and bird feeders will also be for sale. All money raised helps to keep the gardens at Cairnsmore Place and Hospice House looking gorgeous. Your continued support for this important community activity is most appreciated.

Victoria Plantaholics Sale. May 25, 10-2

This sale will again take place on the old Bentwood Nursery site near Butchart Gardens. This annual event started in 2000 and rapidly grew from a few local propagators selling excess seedlings and cuttings into a large number of plantaholics selling all sorts of interesting and unusual plants. It has always been the sale to find that one unusual plant that you have been lusting over or that plant you did not know existed but cannot live without. For further information contact Bryan Emery at bryanemery85@gmail.com

Gardening Tips for February by Barb Kohlman

Well, normally I might suggest you go out and cut down your grasses and sword ferns —

But perhaps you will wait till next week or so until it warms up a bit. Some of the new fronds on the ferns are already starting to elongate and unfurl.

Also, a little too soon to remove any leaves that are still laying on your garden beds, but again when it warms just a bit more, do this to free the soil to bask in the sun — put them in your compost where they will break down further.

Get ready to layer about 2" of compost on your ornamental beds once the soil has warmed — nutrients for spring growth.

Along with the compost I broadcast my Borden's organic mix to be slowly broken down by the microorganism and released to the soil profile for the plants. From Borden's Mercantile, Victoria or you can mix your own from ingredients from Buckerfields.

Remember (when attacking those nasty slugs) they are a good addition to your compost bin dead or alive — alive they will break down cardboard and paper (carbon material = browns). I always move the native banana slugs to the bins. And if you get slimed — wash your hands/ tools with warm water and vinegar.

Cheers barb k



Crinum, the Curious Swamp Lily by Fran Benton

Sylvan Church always has a great little plant sale. I was helping one time and I noticed a big box of lily bulbs. These were enormous and I was told they were a donation from a garden remodelling project. I remember them from Hawaii as Crinum lilies.

They are a handsome perennial lily that can get remarkably large. I have killed them off numerous times because they are tender. My garden is a bit too cold for these big handsome lilies. Where Crinum shows its stuff is in the tropics. It is a popular plant in Hawaii where it is used in poolside and condo landscaping.



Its flowers are spectacular! I have heard it called spider flower because of the way it looks. Trouble with common names is they lead to confusion as there are numerous other spider flowers! I know of several people who grow it here but it

requires light soil and a warm protected spot. One friend grows it in her front yard and never brings it inside. She has her Crinum planted deeply. One species, *Crinum americana* is native to Florida. In cold climates, crinum lilies do well in pots on a patio during summer but must be overwintered inside. Whether grown in-ground or in a pot, the plants send out fragrant spidery flowers in shades of white, pink, and red in early summer. Flower stalks emerge above 2- to 5-foot-tall arching strap like green leaves. Sometimes plants grow a second flower stalk in late summer. In Hawaii they trim back all the excess foliage to make a big fat stalk with a handsome blast of flowers on the top. The stalks can be up to 8 inches around and are often a purple colour.

This plant is hard to find in local nurseries, so check online sources and perennial providers. Or come to Sylvan Church's annual plant sale!

One caution is that all parts of crinum lily are toxic to humans and pets.

Crinum lilies grow best in part shade but tolerate any amount of light. They are equally at home in dry, sandy soil and in moist soil at the edge of a pond, although moist soil is where they bloom best. Potted plants need a large container filled with good quality potting soil. This year I have stored a Crinum in the garage and I hope it will survive.

If you are one of the lucky ones and have that light soil and protection then you can grow Crinum outside. April through October is the best planting time. Avoid fall and winter to prevent cold damage. Choose a sunny or part sunny location in well-draining soil and some shelter from the wind. Dig a hole for each bulb that is about 10 inches deep. Bury the largest part of the bulb

underground, up to the place where the stem emerges from the neck or growing point. The neck should be positioned at soil level and the stem or growing point just above the soil surface.

Crinum lilies thrive for decades with little care as long as their basic requirements are met.

Crinum lily bulbs are hardy to 25°F, but they prefer the warmer weather in zones 8-11.

Crinum lilies don't require fertilizer to grow, but they produce more flowers when they receive a slow release balanced fertilizer in early spring. For crinums in containers, an application of half-strength liquid fertilizer monthly during the blooming season works well.

Pinch off flowers when they fade. Trimming any dead or damaged leaves is about all the pruning the crinum lily needs. After the blooming season is over, snip off the stem at its base.

Crinum are rarely bothered by deer and rodents. However, their leaves can attract grasshoppers and mealy bugs.

Crinum lily bulbs produce pups that can be separated from the parent plant. However, crinum lily doesn't like to have its roots disturbed, so only divide them when necessary. In early autumn, while the plant is not actively blooming, use a sharp spade to dig a wide circle about 2 feet around an established crinum lily. Gently lift the entire plant from the ground. Break apart or cut sections that contain one or more pups and immediately replant the sections. Do not let them dry out.





GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

7:00 pm, January 23, 2024

The January General Meeting of the Mill Bay Garden Club was called to order at 7:03 PM by President Gillian Keir in the Mill Bay Community Hall.

President Gillian Keir called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM in the Mill Bay Community Hall.

Norman Redcliffe moved approval of the agenda; seconded by Janice Rose. Passed.

Richard Nelson moved approval of the Minutes of the General Meeting of November 28 2023; seconded by Kathy Muirhead. Passed.

Executive Committee Reports.

Treasurer: Gord Hamilton reported that we are in good shape.

Raffle Table: Stephanie asked for donations for the raffle table.

Plant Sales: Kathleen has a sign up sheet for volunteers to help with plant sales at the Flower and Garden Show in June. She would also welcome contributions to the plant table.

Membership: Pat reported four new members tonight. The club has three membership drives each year. They are at Seedy Saturday, the Flower and Garden Show and the Cobble Hill Fair. She will need three volunteers for Seedy Saturday in March. This year she will be able to accept paid memberships at the table.

Library: Janice reported that we have two new books: Luschiim's Plants: Traditional Indigenous Foods, Materials and Medicines by Dr. Luschiim Arvid Charlie and Nancy J. Turner. Harbour Books, 2024. and The Crevice Garden. How to Make the Perfect Home for plants from rocky places by Paul Spriggs and Kenton Seth. Filbert Press, 2022.

Sunshine: Janice has sent several cards over the past two months.

Flower and Garden show: Janice said the show has been moved to a week later in June after much discussion to allow for later gardens to be able to contribute. It will now be held on June 7 for set-up and June 8 for the show. We are just beginning to organize it. Starting next month there will be a sign up sheet where you can sign up for specific jobs. Al Mikalishen would like some additional members on the Steering Committee to help with the planning. New members are invited to volunteer. We also need someone to steer the Silent Auction Committee.

Jim Wisnia recognized Norman Redcliffe who has put red dots on the heavier chairs in the hall that do not stack properly with the others.

Minutes continued on next page

Brag Table: The theme tonight is January Survivors. The table had only a few offerings. One was a sweet potato that is held by toothpicks in a glass of water. It sprouts roots and small leaves. Each of the sprouted leaves can be put in the garden in May and will produce a plant. There was an artfully designed container of various plants including mosses, climbing hydrangea and wild plum. Barbara reminded us to cut all the green leaves off fern, hellebores and hepatica by the end of January.

The meeting adjourned for refreshment at 7:35. It reconvened at 7:55.

Dustin Carlson drew the raffle tickets for tonight's prizes. They included a small shovel, a pottery bowl and a peace lily.

Richard Nelson introduced the speaker Dr. Colin Tamboline who is the president of the Victoria Lily Society and a member of the Vancouver Island Rock and Alpine Club. He showed a number of slides of the nine different divisions of hybrid lilies; discussed when and where to purchase them, how to prepare and plant them and how to propagate them. Lilies are a northern hemisphere plant that is well represented in Europe and Asia as well as in North America. A lot of our lilies come from China. Many are grown in the Netherlands and exported.

The nine different divisions are :

- 1) Asiatic hybrids which are available here in the spring and summer. They have no fragrance.
- 2) Martagon hybrids which are shade plants. They are very tall, grow slowly and are expensive.
- 3) Candidum hybrids (Madonna Lily). These are scented beautiful lilies that bloom in June.
- 4) American hybrids. Western North American lilies grow well in our climate. These include *Lilium pardalinum* (Leopard lily) and *Lilium Kelloggii*
- 5) Easter Lily
- 6) Chinese trumpets and Aurelian hybrids. These are available at local nurseries. They like the sun.
- 7) Oriental hybrids. These have a spicy scent, like the sun and can grow up to 6 feet high.. They include the Stargazer lily.
- 8) Interdivisional hybrids. These are very robust and come from crossing species and hybrids from different divisions.
- 9) Species. There are 120 different species. These are all true species and their botanical hybrids.

You should buy lily bulbs as soon as they appear in nurseries . Do not buy any that have begun to grow and do plant your new bulbs at once. Plant as early in the spring as possible. Good drainage is important. They love humus, leaf mold and well rotted horse manure. Plant as deep as three times the size of the bulb.

The Victoria Lily Society Cut Flower Show will be on July 6, 2024 at Lambrick Park Church Hall, 1780 Feltham Road in Victoria.

Kathy Muirhead moved to adjourn at 9:04 PM.