



THE BULLETIN

BRITISH COLUMBIA COUNCIL
OF GARDEN CLUBS

APRIL 2026



Photo by Alice Jensen Stanley, Richmond Garden Club

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

LYNDA PASACRETA

PLEASE FORWARD TO ALL OF YOUR CLUB MEMBERS

Every year gardeners are faced with new challenges. It was recently announced that Vancouver had it's first winter without snow in over 40 years!

It is hard to know what to expect. Some annuals did not die and are still bravely throwing out the odd blossom.

There are so many bees out and about that rumour has it we may have a very fruitful summer. Thank goodness that we have many spring blossoms to accommodate them. Anna's hummingbirds are busy in the very robust blooms of the flowering currant and *Berberis aquifolium*, the Oregon grape.

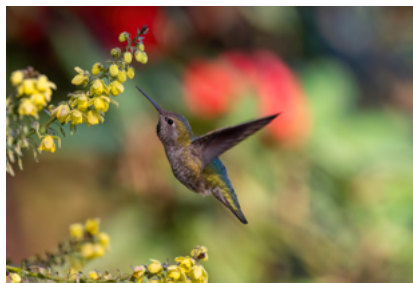
Migrating birds are showing up in great flocks in the gardens of Paulik Park, Richmond. Birds are claiming their nesting spots all around us as we garden. Bits of twigs, grasses, and other material are tightly grasped in their beaks as they fly overhead.

Springtime also brings out the need for the "big plan" for gardening clubs. Plant sale planning is well underway for some clubs, Earth Week planning is underway for mid-April, community gardens are waking up and getting ready for 2026 planting, and the BC Council of Garden Clubs is well underway with the planning for our in-person spring event, to be held Saturday, April 25.

Photo by Visnja Gasparic Vojvodic,
Richmond Garden Club

Behind the scenes, we have Cindy Tataryn, first vice president, organizing the very popular floral arts show for the event. Cindy has also brought in our keynote speaker, Dana Cromie. Ron Ouwerkerk, second vice president, has organized our light lunch and is working with Ann Peters, our treasurer, on streamlining our check-in process on the day of the event. Dorothy Barkley, our secretary, will be sending out the delegates package to our members a couple of times before the event. Betty Girard, our scholarship fund chair, has organized a scholarship fund recipient to speak about her journey in the horticultural industry. Frank Girard, our webmaster, is using his incredible technical expertise to figure out a way to make the old technology at our event location work with new technology so we can record the meeting for those who cannot attend. Lorna Herchenson, our membership coordinator, is busy working on creating spaces for our members to showcase their successes. She also adds colour to our tables with seasonal flowers.

So picture our team with bits of grass and twigs in their mouths as they hurriedly create a wonderful day of garden planning at our upcoming event!



SCHOLARSHIP FUND NEWS

BETTY GIRARD, SCHOLARSHIP FUND CHAIR

Do you want to make a real difference in the lives of horticultural students in BC? If so, then do we have the opportunity for you!

The BC Council of Garden Clubs Scholarship Committee is seeking a **volunteer** for a three-year term (2026–2029), helping support students in horticultural programs throughout the province. Last year we awarded a total of \$14,000 to 13 deserving recipients.

We work closely with the Vancity Community Foundation, which holds and professionally manages the scholarship funds. We meet by zoom 10 times a year and each committee member liaises with three to four post-secondary institutions. Highlights of the position include receiving thank-you notes from the students and attending the ceremonies where the scholarships are awarded.

You would take on the role of committee secretary for the first year of the term, then treasurer for the second, and finally chair for the third. Lots of support is available from the other committee members, and we greatly enjoy the work we do!

Some familiarity with computers is needed as we use webmail and a cloud-based record's system.

Elections will be held at the spring AGM on April 25. Please consider joining us in this satisfying volunteer role. If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact the us at scholarship@bcgardenclubs.com.

We would love to hear from you!

Betty, Debbie, and Pam



SCHOLARSHIP FUND NEWS
DEBBIE MELLENGER, SCHOLARSHIP FUND COMMITTEE
BC COUNCIL OF GARDEN CLUBS 2025 SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

Congratulations to our 2025 student recipients from 14 programs at 10 academic institutions across the province! From certificates to graduate studies, these passionate learners are advancing horticultural science in B.C. and shaping the future of the industry – one innovation at a time.

Institution	Award	Amount	Recipient
Camosun College	BCCGC Horticulture Award	\$1,000	Aurelia G.
Horticulture Centre of the Pacific	BCCGC Award	\$800	Robert M. Kevin P. Misty T.
Kwantlen Polytechnic University	BCCGC Horticulture Award	\$1,200	Shawn R.
KPU Farm School		\$500	Johnathan A.
Okanagan College Foundation	BCCGC Award Viticulture	\$600	Drew D.
Thompson Rivers University	BCCGC Horticulture Award	\$1,000	Jessica T.
University of British Columbia	BCCGC Rose Bancroft Horticulture Scholarship	\$1,500	Owen S.
University of British Columbia	BCCGC Horticultural Bursary	\$1,900	Sophie N.
University of British Columbia	UBC Botanical Garden BCCGC Horticulture Training Program	\$1,200	Aaron B.
University of Northern British Columbia	BCCGC Bursary	\$1,500	Baillie J.
Vancouver Island University	BCCGC Award	\$1,000	Jake A.
Simon Fraser University	BCCGC Mildred Wells Graduate Scholarship		No award
University of the Fraser Valley	BCCGC Scholarship	\$1,300	Alexandra P.



HOW TO DONATE TO THE BCCGC SCHOLARSHIP FUND

If you wish to make a donation by cheque please send it to:

BC Council of Garden Clubs
Scholarship Fund, c/o: BC Council
of Garden Clubs

10952 McAdam Road

North Delta, BC, V4C 3E8

Please ensure that the cheques are made out to the "Vancity Community Foundation" and the memo field shows "BC Council of Garden Clubs." If the person or organization that the donation is from does not clearly show on the cheque, please include a brief note with the cheque indicating who the donation is from and a return address (so that an income tax receipt can be issued).

If you wish to donate online with a credit card:

Go to
www.vancitycommunityfoundation.ca.

Click the "Funds" button on the top right side of the home page.

Locate the BC Council of Garden Clubs Scholarship Fund, either by scrolling through the list or searching "garden clubs" in the search bar.

Once on the BCCGC Scholarship Fund page, click "Give to this Fund" and complete the form.

OR

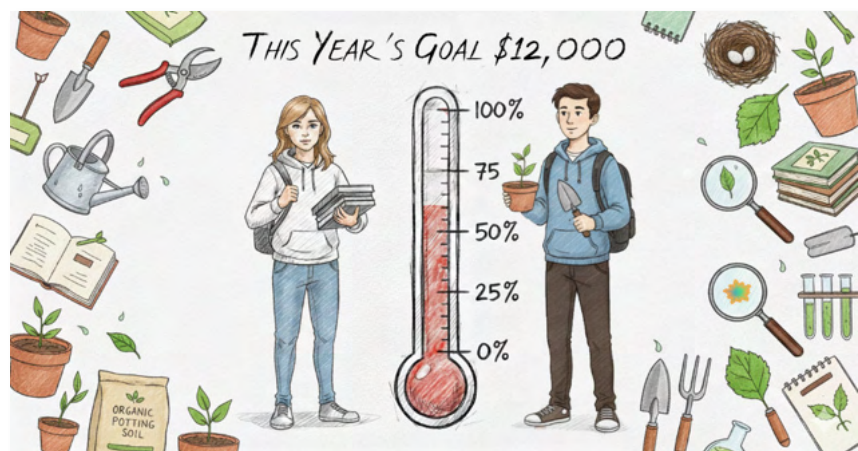
Go to www.bcgardenclubs.com.

Go to the "Scholarship Fund" on the top bar and click on the "Donate" page below.

Scroll down to the link to Vancity Community Foundation and click on it. This will take you to the BCCGC Scholarship Fund page.

Click on "Give to this Fund" and complete the form.

Thank You!






PRUNING HYDRANGEAS



BY THORA GISLASON, RICHMOND GARDEN CLUB

Pruning Hydrangeas – Fact Sheet



Identify your hydrangea first!

- These instructions are for mature plants. Newer plants will require minimal pruning
- Old wood vs. new wood: Old wood means the buds were set the previous year; so be cautious when pruning. New wood means that buds form in the spring, so you can do heavier pruning in the early spring before growth starts.
- For all varieties, you may want to leave the spent flower heads intact over the winter to provide bird and insect habitat.


Types that bloom on old wood (previous season's growth)			
<p><i>Hydrangea macrophylla</i>: Mophead</p>		<p>Bigleaf hydrangea with large flower heads usually in shades of pink, purple, blue, and occasionally white. Leaves are shiny with coarsely-toothed edges; leaf stems are short.</p>	<p>Blooms on old wood with buds set the previous year. You will recognize the new stems that grew the year before by their darker colour – they will have a bud at the tip. The flowering stems from the year before are lighter in colour. Prune lightly in late winter /early spring to manage shrub size and congestion, without having to give up enjoyment of blooms lasting into the fall.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove overwintered flower heads with deadheading cuts ¼ inch above the topmost bud. • Remove dead, diseased, and damaged wood • Rejuvenate older or congested shrubs by making thinning cuts from the base (up to 1/3 of the plant). • Avoid removal of terminal buds on stems as these will be this season's flowers. Only where winter damage has killed terminal bud, remove it by cutting back to next healthy pair of buds within 12" of stem.
<p><i>Hydrangea macrophylla normalis</i> (Lacecap)</p>		<p>The Lacecap is a style of flower, otherwise similar to the mophead. It has showy, sterile outer florets and inner fertile flowers that look like closed buds, giving the blooms a "shattered" look.</p>	<p>Same as above.</p>
<p><i>Hydrangea macrophylla serrata</i> (Mountain)</p>		<p>Smaller and more hardy than the other macrophylla plants; most (but not all) have lacecap flower heads.</p>	<p>No pruning is typically required, given the small size of this shrub. Where light pruning is needed to address damage or misshapen branches, follow general principles as other hydrangea above that set new blooms on last season's growth.</p>

<p><i>Hydrangea quercifolia</i> (Oak leaf)</p>		<p>Flower heads are usually (but not always) cone-shaped and the individual blossoms may be larger than those of mopheads. Leaves look like oak leaves and change colour in the fall.</p>	<p>Prune for shape only and to remove dead/damaged wood.</p> <p>Follow same principles as other hydrangea that set new blooms on last season's growth (e.g. <i>H. macrophylla</i>).</p>
<p><i>Hydrangea petiolaris</i> (Climbing)</p>		<p>Easy to spot as they are actually vines. Lace cap-style blooms and rich green foliage.</p>	<p>Also blooms on old wood with buds set the previous year. Prune for shape only and to remove dead/damaged stems.</p>

Types that bloom on new wood (this coming season's growth)

<p><i>Hydrangea arborescens</i> (Annabelle, Invincebelle, Incrediball)</p>		<p>Also called "smooth" hydrangeas. Rounded, dense flower heads that turn from white to green. There is also a pink variety. Leaves are thinner than mopheads and leaf stems are longer.</p> <p>This variety usually blooms earlier than mopheads.</p>	<p>Blooms on new growth, with flower buds forming in late winter or early spring. Prune in early spring, for bigger blooms.</p> <p>Stems may be cut back to 8" above ground or lower but new growth may require staking to support the large blooms. Other option is to cut stems at various heights 8-12" above ground for a staggered look in order to strengthen the plant's structure.</p>
<p><i>Hydrangea paniculata</i> (Pee Gee and Panicle)</p>		<p>Cone-shaped flower heads. Leaves are smaller than mopheads. Late summer blooming time with buds slower to show in spring.</p>	<p>Blooms on new growth, with buds forming in the spring; therefore, prune in late winter or early spring.</p> <p>Reduce last season's branches by at least 1/3 length, ideally down to 1 or 2 healthy buds up from a framework.</p>

Types that bloom on new AND old wood (reblooming, or remontant)

<p>Newer mophead and mountain varieties</p>		<p>Blooming season extends from spring through summer and occasionally into fall.</p>	<p>To maximize blooms, and to gain advantage of blooms on both old and new wood of the plant, prune the same way you would prune plants that bloom on old wood; in early spring remove dead branches.</p>
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FARMERS ON 57TH SOCIETY

BY SARAH WENMAN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, EDUCATOR

Farmers on 57th Society is a little nonprofit community-integrated urban farm, growing veggies, fruits, and flowers on the grounds of Oak Care Centre in South Vancouver.

Our produce is available via the harvest box program — picked up at our farm in South Vancouver.

Budding gardeners can take Grow Your Own Food classes — includes hands-on learning.

We run a volunteer learning program, therapeutic gardening program, and other community programs, workshops, and open house events.

Sales of our Community Supported Agriculture harvest boxes and gardening courses support all our social programs, which are focused on people with disabilities and other barriers to accessing fresh food.

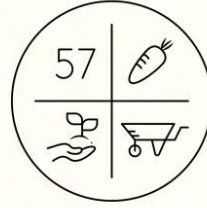
For more information about our group please visit our website www.farmerson57th.ca.

Mission: We nurture life, soil, vegetables, flowers, new growers, and connectedness through educational and therapeutic growing programs, ecological growing practices, and community partnership.





FARMERS ON 57TH



LOCALLY GROWN & HARVESTED

NON-PROFIT COMMUNITY-INTEGRATED

MAY - OCT

WEEKLY VEGGIE CSA

- Meet your farmers & eat fresh, local veggies. Pickup at our South Vancouver farm. Plus u-pick berries, recipes and more. Support local!

JULY - SEPT

FLOWERS

- Fresh-picked locally grown flowers. Weekly or bi-weekly bouquets. Workshops. Bulk flowers.

APR - SEPT

GROW YOUR OWN FOOD

- 12 outdoor classes of hands-on learning, led by gardening experts. Community garden plots. Workshops. Let's grow!

MAR - OCT

VOLUNTEER LEARNING PROGRAM

- Learn ecologically sustainable growing practices, meet new people and get farm fit.

FARMERSON57TH.CA
hello@farmerson57th.ca



SCAN ME

FAREWELL LESSER CELANDINE

BY LISA COLBY, RICHMOND GARDEN CLUB

March is a great time to do some early deterrence of a pretty but invasive plant that is becoming a problem in the Lower Mainland. Do a walk-through of your garden in early spring and if you notice that a small volunteer patch of lesser celandine has arrived, carefully take steps to get rid of it, pronto, before it spreads and becomes a problem that is difficult to manage.

Not to be confused with similarly named greater celandine (*Chelidonium majus*), lesser celandine or fig buttercup (*Ficaria verna*) is a perennial, fast-spreading, low-growing ground cover in the Buttercup family (*Ranunculaceae*). It has shiny heart-shaped leaves and bright yellow flowers. The flowers are very light sensitive, opening in the morning around 9 a.m. and closing around 5 p.m. for the night, a behaviour known as 'nyctinasty.' They also are known to close before rain and on very cloudy days. When closed, the flowers are quite inconspicuous because the undersides of their petals are green.

The plant first starts to bloom in mid-February, is in full bloom in March and April, and then fades as the weather warms. Its flowering is finished by late May, early June, at which point the above-ground portion of the plant typically withers and dies. The underground tubers are perennial and live on, sending up new growth again the following spring.

Native to Europe and Western Asia, traditional and folkloric medicinal uses are reputed to have ranged from a remedy for piles, to brewing it as a tea for sore throat, or mixed with lard as an ointment or poultice for external abscesses. Here in BC it is an aggressive invasive species, however, and is threatening some of our local ecosystems.

Lesser celandine emerges early, expanding to create dense mats that eventually choke out native spring wildflowers and displace local diversity. It spreads via prolific underground tubers and small bulblets. It is often carried into parks along waterways as bulblets are washed loose and travel downstream, but it also readily creeps or 'hitchhikes' inland, making it notoriously difficult to manage once established.

Ficaria verna photo and drawing of tubers from Wikimedia Commons



Removal Tips:

For small emerging areas that you want to tackle yourself: Dig out plants carefully in early spring (March) before they go to seed. But be very careful to remove all the small fig-like tubers in the soil as this is their primary means of spreading.

Repeated monitoring and manual removal over 2-3 years can be necessary. Repeat annually until they are gone.

Do NOT compost this plant. Home composting is likely to increase the spread of this species. Place all material in a marked sealed bag in the garbage.

For larger areas that are difficult to effectively do yourself:

You may wish to contact a professional landscaping company with experience in invasive plant species removal. On public lands, you are encouraged to report large sightings to:

[Reporting invasive species - Province of British Columbia](#)

invasiveplants@richmond.ca 604-276-4316

Additional Sources:

[Lesser Celandine – MGABC](#)

[Invasive Species Council of British Columbia](#)

[Ficaria verna - Wikipedia](#)



Fraser Pacific Rose Society
presents our Annual Rose Show
Roses Transcend Time



Saturday, June 20, 2026, 1:00 pm – 4:30 pm
Sunday, June 21, 2026, 9:00 am – 3:00 pm
Dogwood Centennial Pavilion
1655 Winslow Avenue, Coquitlam

INSIDE
FREE ADMISSION

The public is encouraged to enter their rose blooms into the show.
For more information, see our website www.fprosesociety.org
[/home](#) to download a pdf version of the rose show schedule

FOOD BLESSINGS IN PORT COQUITLAM
TINA CAMPBELL, PORT COQUITLAM GARDEN CLUB MEMBER

Food Blessings is a group of people have been rescuing food to give to those in need. They have been doing this for a couple of years now.

Tina, a member of Port Coquitlam Garden Club, has donated some egg cartons to the cause and intends to donate seeds if they want them, and excess produce she grows this year.

Food Blessings in Port Coquitlam has a Facebook Private Group Page if you would like more information about this organization.

Online Certificate Courses



Join a community of students who have learned to care for the land organically thanks to our cutting edge courses.



Growing Food



Ecological Plant Knowledge 1 - Natives



Organic Master Gardener

Spring, Fall & Winter Enrolments

BC Council of Garden Clubs Plant Sales:

🥦 Remember to add your plant sale events to the BC Council of Garden Clubs website in the events section. It is one of our most visited sites by people in your community.

We are here to make your jobs easier! Visit www.bcgardenclubs.com regularly.

2026

THE THEME OF THE YEAR | LE THÈME DE L'ANNÉE



Therapeutic Gardening Jardinage Thérapeutique

Plants  You.ca 

Les plantes vous  .ca 

Announcing the 2026 Communities in Bloom Theme — Therapeutic Gardening

This year, CiB is recognizing the restorative power of green spaces — gardens that nurture the mind, body, and spirit. For more information on therapeutic gardening — <https://bccib.ca>.






It appears that we as adults quite often miss the boat when working with young people in the garden.

Adults are used to planning, designing, and implementing garden programs, most times inviting young people to the table after the garden is finished.

Research has shown that it is more engaging for young people if they can get involved right at the beginning.

Young people learn the joy of belonging and the ability to make a difference. In a time where we rush towards efficiency and getting things done, by slowing down and allowing young people to create their gardens it fosters a sense of power, ownership, and independence.

Therapeutic gardening benefits:

-  Stress reduction and improvements in mood.
-  Shifts attention from instant gratification of digital interactions to the slow unfolding of life and nature in the garden.
-  Great way to get young people moving.
-  Gardening becomes an interactive, living classroom.
-  Improves social skills.
-  Gardening creates a deep connection to Mother Nature and the environment around them.

Source: Root in Nature. www.rootinnature.ca

NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS

We would **love** to feature your club or community garden in the newsletter. 🙏

Tell us about some of the projects your club or community garden is involved in.

You are invited to submit an article at any time (please include photos and name of author). Photos should be high resolution and you should include the name of the photographer if possible. Articles should be in the range of 300–500 words. If you have an idea for a

longer piece, connect with the newsletter editor in advance to discuss your idea.

Articles are due on the 15th of the month preceding publication. If they are submitted after that date, they will be held for the next issue.

The next due date is April 15 for May 1. Submissions/inquiries: newsletter@bcgardenclubs.com

Lynda Pasacreta, Editor

Pam Robertson, Copy Editor

BRITISH COLUMBIA COUNCIL OF GARDEN CLUBS

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Vacant | Immediate Past President

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