



LYNN VALLEY GARDEN CLUB
First established 1943

DECEMBER 2011

Meetings Schedule

LVGC meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month (except July and August) at St. Clements Church.

Please note that meetings start promptly at 7:15 pm.

Message from The President

Are you into themed trees or the traditional? For many of us, we love to bring out the old ornaments, possibly handed down from previous generations. Some of us might prefer one of this year's themes which are owls. I can imagine they look really cute tucked into the branches. In any event, however you decorate your tree, I hope it brings a festive touch to your home.

Outside in the garden the new laser light shows are making a magical display and without having to climb trees! I'm still trying to find the display Rosemarie has as it sends hundreds of little green lights up into her trees. You have to see it to appreciate it. Hers is a Bliss light display but sadly seems to be sold out everywhere.

The Holidays are a hectic time for people already stressed by the various demands of our lives. I hope you'll take the time to sit down and take it easy. Don't forget to call someone just to say hi. This time of year can be lonely for many people and after all, Christmas is about giving. Just a call can be such a special gift.

Speaking of gifts, one of the nicest gifts is to remember the various charities and give a gift on behalf of someone else or yourself. Last year some friends of ours decided to send a gift in our name adopting Samson and Delilah (owls). The year Stanley Park lost its trees we gave Rick's dad a tree in Stanley Park and he thought it was the nicest gift he received that year (his apartment looks over to the damaged area of the Park).

At this year's party on Dec. 15th we won't have a box for donations to the food bank as you can just pull off a tab at Save on Foods and donate on the spot or send a donation on line or by mail to the Food Bank. Cash donations go a lot further as items are purchased wholesale and are worth 3 times as much. As well, they buy what is specifically needed.

I wish peace and happiness for you and your families and the very best for you in 2012.



Merry Christmas

Bonnie

December 15, 2011
Christmas Party



January 19, 2012
TBA

Mailing Address:
Lynn Valley Garden Club
P.O. Box 16053
1199 Lynn Valley Road
North Vancouver, BC
V7J 3S9
<http://www.lynnvalleygardenclub.org>



2010/11 Executive

President

Bonnie Noakes

Vice President

Lynn Batt

Secretary

Lorraine Robson

Treasurer

Jan Lockmuller

Membership

Teresa Reid

Rosanne Matheson

Members at Large

Inga Steinebach

Cari Wineberg

Nancy Gelin

Jan Valair

Newsletter Editor

Diane Allison

theleaf@lynnvalleygardenclub.org

COMMITTEES

Plant Table

Audrey Dewan

Bernie Robb

Christel Glazer

Hospitality

Doreen Wakefield

Pat Phillips

Bright Spots

Laurie Parkinson

Sunshine/Door Prizes

Rosemarie Adams

Sound System Set-up

Maurice Jones

Hartwig Rother

Website

Brian Didier

Next Executive Meeting

7:30pm, Thurs. Jan. 5th at the home of Bonnie Noakes

The Leaf Deadline:

Sunday, January 8th or contact the new editor, Lynne Batt



Treasurers Report

Jan Lockmuller

As of November 30, 2011:

Operating funds

Committed to date:

Reserve:

Bank balance:



Tea Time

Doreen Wakefield, Pat Phillips

Please bring your own mug and remember the coffee we serve is decaffeinated.



Sunshine

Rosemarie Adams

Please let Rosemarie know of any of our members who have been ill or have lost a loved one. Please phone her .

Donations of new items for door prizes are always appreciated.



Membership Annual Report

Teresa Reid,

Rosanne Matheson

At the end of 2011 there are 125 members, including 6 honorary members. Membership is up from the 119 members we had at the end of 2010. There were 14 new members join this year.

Sadly, one of our honorary members *Peggy Hunt* passed away in February this year. Peggy, along with other notable early members was instrumental in revitalizing the Lynn Valley Garden Club in 1988.

Seventy members have renewed so far. For those that have not sent in their renewal forms there is still time to do this prior to December 31, 2011 or let us know if you will not be renewing your membership so we can register the new members on our waiting list.

We start 2012 with 5 people on the waiting list and a new Membership Committee consisting of Diane Sekora & Doreen Marbry.

We really enjoyed being on the Executive Committee and had a lot of fun meeting new fellow gardeners! We highly recommend members to be part of the Executive Committee it is a great experience and a fun way to meet people.

Thank you,
Teresa & Rosanne

Welcome to the new 2012 Lynn Valley Garden Club Executive

The following members were elected at our Annual General Meeting, held on November 17, 2011.

President:	Rosemarie Adams
Vice President:	Christine Gooch
Secretary:	(not yet filled)
Treasurer:	Harvey Lawson
Membership:	Doreen Marbry & Diane Sekora
Members at Large:	Rita Marshall & Chris Pharo will join Nancy Gelin & Cari Wineberg who are continuing for one more year
Newsletter Editor:	Lynn Batt

Many thanks to all of you for volunteering to serve on our next executive.

*The position of **Secretary** remains unfilled. Training will be provided. This is an equal opportunity position. Please speak to Bonnie Noakes or Carol Ferryman if you are interested.*

Scorzonera Hoffman's Schwarze

At the November meeting, Judith shared one of the latest successes from her bountiful garden. Here is a bit more information that she has sent in:



“A fine selection known for size, consistency, and flavor. A more refined and improved version of the common ‘Einjahrige’, with consistent long roots with black skin and white flavorful flesh. It is cultured and grown like parsnips, with a typical oyster flavored overtone. Scorzonera is an ancient rootcrop still utilized in simple dishes, but now being ‘rediscovered’ by haute cuisine chefs.”

I mentioned getting these seeds from *Westcoast Seeds*. That was incorrect. I got these seeds from **Stellar Seeds** a great small BC company.
<http://stellarseeds.com>

submitted by Judith Brook

Scorzonera Seed 'Maxima'



B.C. Council of Garden Clubs Meeting Report October 15, 2011

The first speaker was Elizabeth Elle from S.F.U., presenting *The Bees' Needs*. She said that bees range 50-200 metres from their nesting sites. There are about 20,000 species of bees in the world. Of these, 5,000 are in North American, and in B.C. there are 450 species. The European honey bee in B.C. is not native to Canada, and it, as well as the hover fly are not very good pollinators. In this province, there are three categories of bees. The first includes the mining bee, the solitary bee and the sweat bee. The second group has the mason bee and the leaf-

cutter bee, which is the largest of the bees. In the third category, there is the bumble bee, which is very social, the honey bee and the cuckoo bee.

Honey bee males do not have a stinger and are differentiated from females by facial hair, longer antennae and an overall fuzziness. The female honey bee is the only bee that dies after stinging. Males swarm together in a mating bunch, never really working, and without a place to sleep.

Bumble bees spend only one year in a colony. They overwinter in the ground - the small entrance holes quite visible. Old bird houses can also be used. In the spring, cultivation should be done with care, if at all. Leaving some plant debris as a cover in the winter is also beneficial. The western bumble bee is almost extinct, due to the loss of undisturbed grass areas, or frequently trampled ground. They are better pollinators.

There are many possible reasons for the collapse of honey bee colonies, some of these are viral and fungal, or the presence of mites, and unusual stress. Groups of hive travel great distances, crammed into large trucks, only to feed on a single crop like blueberries. Bees, like us, need a variety of sources for nutrition, not just one. The main cause though is habitat loss and the fragmentation of that habitat. In the wild, flowers produce seeds over a large uninterrupted area in great variety at different times. Now, 'islands' of wild plants, in less variety, can be isolated from the next so that bees have less to feed on.

We can support bees in our own gardens by allowing a small area for dandelions, by providing early flowering fruit trees, and by planting vegetables, all with a variety of flower shapes. For bumblebees, plants such as Oregon grape, heather, willows, grape hyacinths, Pieris and Rhododendrons, as well as a variety of Ribes are inviting to them, particularly those with blue or purple flowers. Remember, bats are also excellent pollinators. They are attracted by scented white flowers that open at night. A good website for more information is www.xerces.org.

Lori Pickering offered *Cycads – Rarest Plants on Earth*. These are the oldest plants on earth, growing since the Jurassic age, 250,000,000 years ago. They were the main food source for dinosaurs. Cycads range from 1-30 feet in height and there exists a photo of a tree that is a thousand years old. All of them contain a powerful neurotoxin which causes symptoms comparable to Parkinson's Disease. They are found all over the world in jungles, grasslands, forest floors, amongst rocks, etc. Some are very rare. Cycad fossils have been discovered in the Arctic, as well as Nova Scotia. There are 300 species within 11 genera, but half of these are endangered. They are all woody plants with the appearance of ferns and palm trees, and many are very spiky. The sago palm is the most common of these.

Cycads are dioecious with male upright cones and female recumbent cones, ranging from 3 inches to 3 feet in length. The seed can take years to germinate. Unfortunately there is only one insect that can pollinate the plants.

Zero Waste Challenge was presented by Peter Cech of Metro Vancouver. He spoke about the infamous North Pacific Gyre, a huge island of mostly plastic debris that not only threatens, but kills many marine species, especially birds. Thirty years ago, an average 3-4 pieces of plastic were found in autopsied birds...in 2009, an average of 50 pieces of plastic in each bird was normal, and now...?

The city is now diverting 55% of its garbage from landfills, with the goal of diverting 70% by 2015. Unfortunately two-thirds is from detached homes. We have to take much more responsibility! Landfills produce methane gas, which is 20 times more powerful than CO₂, the "greenhouse gas".

Our last speaker was Sarbit Mann, offering *Plant Importation & Protection*. She represented the CFIA (Canadian Food Inspection Agency). This includes food, animals, plants, pests and soil.

Unfortunately, reading directly from her "Powerpoint" presentation on the screen, with a smattering of photos and graphs (unreadable) was not the most stimulating way to end a very informative, engaging and entertaining conference.....say no more.

submitted by Corinne Robinson

Five Fabulous Medium-sized Conifers



Serbian Spruce
Picea omorika

This stiffly upright form of spruce with its proudly upswept branches, like a soldier standing stiffly at attention. Many conifers take up a rather large footprint at the base, but this one gives you substantial height with very little width generally getting 20-25 feet in height and only about 6 feet wide at the bottom. The lovely dark green short needles contrast nicely with the silvery undersides which you see quite nicely with the upturned branches. This conifer can get on quite nicely with good drainage, humic, slightly acidic soil in full sun to partial shade. There is also a very popular blue form called *Picea omorika* 'Bruns'.

Iseli's Columnar Blue Spruce
Picea pungens 'Iselis Fastigiata'

This variety of true blue spruce has a very slender growth habit. It grows very slowly to about 15-20 feet in height and about 7 feet wide. A stunning specimen at the back of the border, place this tree where you want to draw the eye. The lovely icy blue colour contrasts so nicely with dark greens and golds. This tree prefers full sun to get the best blue colour, in well drained average slightly acidic soils.



Fernspray Gold Hinoki Cypress
Chamaecyparis obtusa 'Fernspray Gold'

This is a lovely slow growing artistic conifer which grows to about 8 feet in height by about 6 feet. It has bright gold outer branches and branch tips, while the interior of the plant is a lovely fresh green. Its branches have a lovely fine fernlike texture. This plant prefers a bit of dappled shade in the heat of the afternoon to avoid burning the gold branches. Provide ample moisture in a well drained site with a nice humic, slightly acidic soil. This plant also makes a lovely bonsai specimen.

Silver Whispers Swiss Stone Pine
Pinus cembra 'Klein'

This compact soft looking mini Christmas tree shaped conifer is another lovely variety for the smaller garden. It is slow growing to about 12 feet high by about 6 feet wide. The rich green needles in bundles of 5 are striped with white giving the tree an overall silvery green effect. It is very densely branched and full looking. This specimen is best in full sun in well drained average to humic, slightly acidic soil.



Weeping Alaskan Cypress
Chamaecyparis nootkatensis 'Pendula'

This conifer has pea green branchlets with a slightly silvery blue underside. It holds out its branches in broad swoops while the branchlets dangle down. It can give you height in a garden without a lot of spread. It can grow to about 20-25 feet with about 8 feet of spread. This conifer prefers full sun to partial shade in well draining humic and slightly acidic soil.

borrowed from the Art's Nursery newsletter
to subscribe, visit www.artsnursery.com

ABOUT TOWN

December 9 - January 2, 2012 – **VanDusen Festival of Lights** -, 4:30 to 9 p.m. every evening except Christmas Day (December 25) when the Garden is closed. A magical experience for the whole family with 1.4 million twinkling lights. Evenings prior to Christmas also feature Community Choirs on the Deck and Santa in his Living Room. Special prices in effect – avoid the line-ups and purchase advance tickets at the Garden starting November 1st or call Tickets Tonight at 604.684.2787 or on-line at www.ticketstonight.ca



Christmas Tree Care Instructions

The secret of preventing your Christmas tree from losing its needles is to encourage your tree to drink water while in your house at Christmas time. The cut Christmas trees drink water, by capillary action, through its bark - in the same way that cut flowers drink water in a vase.

1. Ensure that you buy a fresh tree. This is best ensured by going direct to the grower - your local Christmas tree farm. Once there, check that the tree is fresh by gently running your fingers down the length of one of the lower branches. The needles should stay attached.
2. Once home, if you are not going to take the tree into your house immediately, place it in a cool, dry place out of the wind. Saw off the bottom 1" (3cm) of the trunk. This creates a fresh cut and opens up the pores in the bark, which otherwise block up with sap within a few hours of being cut. The tree is then able to drink water through these pores via capillary action. Then place the tree in a bucket of water, so that the tree can drink water.
3. Try not to expose your tree to sudden changes in temperature. So far, there is limited scientific evidence to support this, but on a very cold day/night, many gardeners are careful not to bring a plant from the outdoors straight into a very warm room.
4. Once inside the house, try and position your Christmas tree away from any heat sources such as radiators. Heat will dry out your tree faster, so the further from its source the better. Keep tree lights off when not necessary. The heat from the lights will dry out the tree as well.
5. Place your tree in plain water - not soil or sand which would block the pores in the bark.
6. Keep the Christmas tree stand topped up with water. Your Christmas tree may drink 1-2 litres of water per day, depending on its size and your central heating settings. This is very important as once the water level drops below the tree's trunk, sap will re-seal the bark within a few hours, preventing the tree from drinking any further water - even if you then re-fill the Christmas tree stand.

