



THE LEAF

LYNN VALLEY GARDEN CLUB

Established 1943

February 2017

President's Message - Penny LeCouteur

A few days ago I was planning what to say in the February President's Message. I was going to mention the snowdrops and daffodils poking through the ground, I would wax poetic about the hellebores that have survived and thrived, and would probably have gloated a bit about the winter conditions back East. So today, when I must get this done before *The Leaf* editor starts hounding me, I look outside and what do I see? Snow, snow and more snow with predictions of further dumps of the white stuff in the next few days. I thought we had finished with this, but obviously not. At least when spring does finally appear, we will be all the more appreciative of its garden glories.

The February General meeting will also be special with Brian Minter lined up to give a talk. Tickets for this event have been snapped up by members and I am sure that the remaining few tickets will have been sold by the time you read this. VP Judith Brook has done a great job organizing this event and we owe her our thanks. And *thank you* too, to Daphne Page who has agreed to become our new MAL. This means that we have a full slate for the executive and also for our committees and this is the first time I will not be calling for volunteers in this message!

New member Kelly Robertson volunteered to be in charge of the *soil amendment/manure* sales list and money collection. Bonnie Noakes and Maria Issa and others will be driving out to the Fraser Valley to collect the bags and the bags will be available for pick up in the church parking lot before the March meeting. Please make sure you have cash or a cheque (made payable to "The Lynn Valley Garden Club") for Kelly when you collect your bags - if you have not already paid her.

Planning is continuing for the *annual bus trip*, this time to The Sunshine Coast. Details will be available later. We should now be starting to plan for the annual *Members' Gardens Tour* that usually takes place the second Saturday in July. Ah ha! - I knew that there would be an opportunity to call for a volunteer or two. This is a fun job; most of the organizing involves visiting the gardens beforehand so you can determine the order of the visits and produce a map with the help of Mr. Google. The biggest challenge is to persuade members to put their gardens on the tour. There is an unfortunate perception that a garden must be "absolute perfection" with n'ere a weed in sight, before it can be included. This is not true. It is great to visit all sorts of gardens, be they well-established or "just starting". If your garden is more towards the latter along this spectrum, consider all the wonderful advice (gardeners *love* to give advice!) that you will receive if you have your developing garden on our members' tour.

By the time you read this I should have winged my way south. I'll send back details of the glories of New Zealand gardens in their summer!!!!

LVGC MEETINGS

3rd Thursday of each month (except July and August) at
St. Clement's Church
3400 Institute Road
Please note that meetings start promptly at 7:15 PM

SPEAKERS

February 16
BRIAN MINTER
Garden Design & Special Interest Plants
(TICKETS REQUIRED - THERE ARE A FEW LEFT!)

March 16
DAVID SELLARS
Alpine Plants, Photography
April 20
EGAN DAVIS
Reducing Water Use and Increasing Urban Ecology
May 18
TREVOR TURNER
Water Conservation, Drip Irrigation

Mailing Address:

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<http://www.lynnvalleygardenclub.org>

2017 Executive

President

Penny LeCouteur

Vice President

Judith Brook

Secretary

Susan Huber

Treasurer

Jennifer Sydenham

Membership

Bonnie Noakes

Judy Sullivan

Members at Large

Catharine Winstanley

Rita Marshall

Maggie Davis

Daphne Page

Committees

Newsletter Editor

Maria Issa

Plant Table

Norma Buckland

Hospitality

Kitty Castle

Carole Cobbett

Susan Nicholls

Sunshine / Door Prizes

Carol Bell

Edie Rustemeyer

Website

Aline Burlone

Executive Meetings

1st Wednesday of the month

Next Meeting: March 1, 7:30 PM

Next Newsletter Deadline

March 08, 2017

If you have material to delight your fellow members - please submit it *via* the time-honoured routes or email to

<mailto:lynnvalleygardenclubnewsletter@gmail.com>

Thanks to all who contributed to this edition: and to Bruce Tennant for the photo below!



REPORTS

VP Report - Judith Brook

As listed on the front page - speakers are booked until May 2017.

Brian Minter tickets were snapped up, but there are a few left, going fast! Contact me if you want one.

Treasurer's Report - Jennifer Sydenham

- As of December 2016: \$5000 in equity; \$2000 in reserve; \$2280.53 in operating funds.
- Our fall donations to local garden-related projects will be proportionate to the Club's profits from LVGC Annual Plant Sale in the spring.

Membership Report for February 2017 - Bonnie Noakes

As of this *Leaf*, LVGC membership stands at 112: a good time to invite your friends to join!

Plant Table - Norma Buckland & ???

Norma at the Plant Table needs a partner-in-crime: you have till the March meeting to ponder the possibilities!

Hospitality - Kitty Castle & Carole Cobbett & Susan Nicholls

From March onwards, we are planning on putting out an insulated jug of hot water on the tea/coffee table at the next meeting. This is for members who bring their own teabags or just want hot water. Also our ever-constant reminder to try and remember to bring your own mug to meetings! We supply about 10 disposable cups per meeting, and then take them home for recycling. Thanks from your Hospitality team.

[Also from March onwards, while you are grabbing that mug and teabag - please also grab a non-perishable item for the food bank!! - *Maria*]



- *A beautiful garden is a work of heart*

-- *The garden is a mirror of the heart*

-- *There is always music amongst the trees in the garden,
but our hearts must be still to hear it*

SPEAKER

BRIAN MINTER

Thursday, February 16, 2017 – 7 PM!!

Instead of the February meeting, Brian Minter will speak to our club on '*Garden Design and Special Interest Plants*'.
YOU MUST HAVE A TICKET TO ATTEND; TICKETS WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE AT THE DOOR.

Brian Minter began sharing his passion for plants with British Columbia's gardeners when, in 1970, he and his wife Faye purchased Country Garden Store, a garden shop that had been part of Chilliwack's community since 1957. In 1977, the Minters discovered a piece of land nestled beneath Mt. Cheam and by 1980, that passion for plants was transformed into the 32-acre, world-famous Minter Gardens, which closed in 2013.

Brian, a University of British Columbia graduate (BA) and Master Gardener, quickly became BC's go-to garden expert through his experience at both the garden centre and the display gardens. As such, he has hosted countless radio and television shows, is a frequent gardening columnist and is the author of the Canadian best seller, '*Brian Minter's New Gardening Guide - Fresh Approaches for Canadian Gardeners*'.

A recipient of the 'Order of Canada', an 'Honorary Doctorate of Technology', and many other awards, Brian is well known from his magazine and syndicated newspaper columns and TV and radio programs. Brian is in demand internationally as a speaker by industry, gardening, and tourism groups. Brian has sat on the boards of many community organizations including as past Chancellor of the University of the Fraser Valley. Just recently, Brian received an Award of Merit from the Perennial Plant Association in recognition of outstanding contributions to the perennial industry. He was also inducted into the Gardening Writers' Association's Hall of Fame 'in recognition of a lifetime of exceptional work and spirit promoting gardening and garden communications to the public.'

Brian and Faye and their family own and operate Minter Country Garden Store (<http://mintergardening.com>).

Plant Sale Prep

Annual Plant Sale Saturday, May 13th 2017 – 10:00 am to 1:00 pm

Set up for the Sale: Friday May 12th early afternoon to (time TBA) evening

Dear Members, even though it feels like winter, February, spring is just around the corner, whether you believe in ground hogs or not.

The Members-at-Large plan to have soil made available for planting up, date and time to be announced we are working on it now. Dividing plants makes for a healthier garden overall and the surplus from your garden generates much need revenue for our garden club.

For those of you starting seedlings, as per West Coast Seeds, the soil for potting seedlings that works best, is the *Garden Mix*.

Please remember to:

- Label plants – name, habitat: shade/sun, size, colour of flower

– Your MALs

- Please clean the pots, presentation sells

Sign-up Sheets for volunteers will be circulated during the March meeting. The sale is a lot of fun. Volunteers are needed for both Friday PM and Saturday all day. There is a job for every skill set, plant labelers, pot cleaners, grunters, cashiers, ticket sellers, cleaners or a little of each of the previously mentioned.

– Your MALs: Rita, Catharine, Maggie and Daphne

To help your Plant Sale preparations:

Flower pots: Margaret Nakahara has a supply of clean (and sterilized!!!) small pots, which would be suitable for starting seeds. These would probably be very useful, especially if you are participating in growing veggie seeds from *West Coast Seeds*. Please contact Margaret to make arrangements for pick-up or be ready to pounce at the March meeting, as she will bring what's left. [Thanks, Margaret!]

Also – Judith saw some free pots on Craig's list....

Topsoil: The good news is - there will be some! The bad news is - your MALs are still working on it. A brilliant person at the Exec meeting (? was it Bonnie?) suggested that in the meanwhile, you can use your own topsoil to get things going, then fill in the unsightly holes you just dug - with the topsoil when that eventually comes in.

Hot off the press – THIS JUST IN!

Bruce will host the topsoil in his driveway!

West Coast Seeds: The West Coast Seeds are ready



to hand out: it might be best to start them earlier rather than later. Please contact Tom directly: 604-929-3782. See below for some interesting details!!

West Coast Seeds have generously donated seeds again this year for us to grow for the plant sale. The seeds will be made available starting at **8:30 PM Feb 16th, after the Brian Minter presentation and at the March meeting.**

If you have room on your windowsill, we can use the help. No prior experience necessary!

Bruce, Tom and Yvonne are happy to help you with

Peppers:

- Anaheim
- Belcanto
- California Wonder
- Cheyenne
- Chiles de Arbol
- Chocolate Beauty
- Dureno
- Friar's Hat
- Gypsy
- Hungarian Hot Wax
- Large Red Cayenne
- Matan (Nardello)
- Purple Beauty
- Pepperoncini
- Red Bull's Horn
- Red Habanero

Sweet Twingo

- Thai Dragon
- California Wonder ('14)

Cucumbers:

- Crystal Apple
- Cucamelon
- Green Dragon
- Homemade Pickles
- Jade Dragon
- Lemon
- Marketmore 76
- Olympian
- Saber
- Tasty Green
- Wisconsin SMR

Tomatoes:

- Alicante
- Amish Paste
- Aunt Molly's
- Big Beef
- Black Cherry
- Black Krim
- Early Girl
- Floridity
- Supremo Roma
- Sunrise Bumble Bee
- Sweet Hearts Grape
- Sweet Million
- Sweetie
- Vintage Wine
- Yellow Stuffer
- Big Beef ('14)



any growing information and currently we have a source of containers if you need any.

Bruce
Tom
Yvonne



A selection of the seeds we received: lots of tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, herbs and others to choose from ...

You might consider testing the germination of seeds that are a bit older

..and OH, the things that you could grow...! (a. k. a. Yvonne's List)

Squash / Zucchini / Pumpkins:

Benning's Green Tint
First Taste
Honey Boat
Jack Be Little
Jack of All Trades
Pattypan Blend

Small Sugar
Sunburst
Sunburst
Tivoli
Waltham Butternut

Other

Cauliflower White Blend
Cauliflower Galleon

Broccoli Green Magic
Cabbage January King
Cabbage Super Red 80
Lettuce Anuenue ('14)
Lettuce Steamboat ('14)
Lettuce Parris Island Cos ('14)
Summer Savory

PPP (Pig Poo Party!!!) coming to a parking lot near you - March meeting!

If your garden is in need of amendment then this is your moment! *Kelly Robertson* (604-839-5107) has volunteered to collect names and quantities desired of this organic gold. She and her list will be circulating at the Brian Minter talk - bring cash, or make your cheques out Lynn Valley Garden Club: \$10/~35 lb bag (and multiples thereof).

The Party Poopers, Bonnie, Maria, Whitney, Aline? (... and you?) will go pick up the beautiful stuff on **March 16** - departing before noon - so your order has to be in *before that*.

Last year, at both garden tours - the cultivators of the most beautiful flowers and gigantosaurus vegetables confessed to supplementing their soil with pig manure.... Now we know their secret!

Other Amendments - Nitrogen

- sourced by Judith Brook

Adapted from <http://www.rodalorganiclife.com/garden/grow-healthier-crops-using-these-natural-nitrogen-sources>

Nitrogen sources: One great way to boost nitrogen is by planting [leguminous cover crops](#), such as alfalfa, clover, hairy vetch, or peas. These plants collaborate with soil bacteria to absorb nitrogen from the air and deposit it in tiny root nodules—a process called nitrogen fixation. A cover crop planted in the fall or early spring and turned into the ground can provide most if not all the nitrogen needed by the crop planted afterward

Incorporating a vigorous stand of alfalfa, red clover or hairy vetch early in the season can provide most if not all the N needed by a subsequent vegetable crop. These crops may contain 100-200 lb of N per acre. About half the N in a green manure will be released during decomposition following incorporation

If you're looking for a high nitrogen organic fertilizer, animal-based organic nitrogen fertilizers are your best choice. They include bi-products of the cattle industry (blood meal), poultry industry (feather meal), and fisheries (fish meal, crab meal, shrimp meal).

For heavy feeding vegetables, I like the combination of alfalfa meal for early-season nitrogen, and feather meal as an organic slow release nitrogen source that starts releasing nutrients late in the season, for end-of-summer growth

Amount of N in specific items can be found here

http://www.plantstogrow.com/Botany/Workshop_notes/Notes/Organic%20sources%20of%20NPK.pdf

- ❖ Under the heading *Guest Speakers*
 - *Sam Cousins* (January 19, 2017 guest speaker) can be found under *Past Speaker by name* (<http://lynnvalleygardenclub.org/guest-speakers/past-speakers-by-name/>)
 - or *Past Speaker by topic – Invasive Species* (<http://lynnvalleygardenclub.org/guest-speakers/past-speakers-by-topic/>) which includes links to the video and sites he mentioned in his talk.

- ❖ Under the heading *Newsletter - 2017* - the January 2017 newsletter has been posted. (<http://lynnvalleygardenclub.org/newsletters/2017-2/>)

- ❖ Under the heading *Photo Gallery – Miscellaneous* you will find photos of Margaret Nakahara's orchid "Tama – Leah" which received a score of 83 points and was given an Award of Merit by the American Orchid Society (<http://lynnvalleygardenclub.org/photo-gallery/miscellaneous/>)

- ❖ Under the heading *Links*
 - Under the section *Invasive Plants and Pests* there is a list of the sites and video mentioned by Sam Cousins (<http://lynnvalleygardenclub.org/links/invasive-plants-and-pests/>)
 - Under the section *Seeds* there is a new site called the Seed Site (<http://lynnvalleygardenclub.org/links/seeds/>)
 - Under the section *Bees – bee project* there is a new link to the Border Free Bees website (<http://lynnvalleygardenclub.org/links/bees-and-neonicotinoids/>)
 - Under the section *Fruit and Vegetable Gardening* there is a new link to Planet Natural provides expert gardening advice and tips for growing healthy delicious food and beautiful, sustainable environments without harmful pesticides and chemical fertilizers. (<http://lynnvalleygardenclub.org/links/vegetable-gardening/>)

- ❖ Check the February and March calendars for up-coming events (<http://lynnvalleygardenclub.org/calendar-2/>) Click on the date of the event to find out further information and useful links.

Please email good links and PDF articles or photos to be posted on the website to lvgcwebsite@gmail.com



Under the heading "Stand up for what you believe in!"

We heard from Anna Marie D'Angelo at the January meeting that Metro Vancouver plans to reduce watering (!!!!) and that the new garden waste bin system on the North Shore is going to be sorely inadequate for those gardening and also keeping the municipal areas cleared. Edie and Darryl Rustemeyer followed up with this letter to the DNV Council. I am reproducing it here so that you have a pre-done letter to scavenge from when writing yours. It seems we are not the only ones concerned - as last week's "North Shore Snooze" also had a rather irate Letter to the Editor on the subject. ☺

"We are concerned about the reduced organics pick up with the new green waste bins coming to North Vancouver. We live on a corner lot in the District of North Vancouver (751 St James Rd E). As such we have two stretches of district owned boulevard to tend to. On St James the District, in its wisdom 30 some years ago, permitted the developer to plant tall oak saplings, which have since grown, as oak trees will, into large oak trees (two of them on the boulevard in front of our house). In the fall they produce copious amounts of oak leaves on the boulevard and into our yard. They are leaves not suitable for mulch or back-yard composting as they are heavy in tannins and break down very slowly. We are being asked to deal with green waste coming to us from District property by driving it to the land transfer green waste and paying a fee or paying an extra levy for an additional green waste bin.

We live and garden in a temperate rain forest in the District of North Vancouver. As such our yards and gardens produce a substantial amount of green waste through much of the year. We do back yard composting at our house and have a black plastic compost bin plus two substantial home made wooden bins. Despite these efforts we cannot

compost all the green waste from our yard. Stockpiling leaves *etc* in old green waste containers will not be a feasible answer as our yard produces substantially more than a container, week after week during the growing season.

Before there was adequate designated green waste pick up in the District, we often noticed green yard waste dumped in Princess Park across the street from our house. Where this no longer seems the case, we are concerned that the practice may resume in green spaces around the District if adequate green waste pickup is curtailed. As a result of yard waste dumping in public spaces, invasive plants will spread.

As a further note, our family assiduously recycles. We produce very little garbage for the landfill and could easily do with less than a small garbage can every second week.

Despite composting as much as we can, we feel the new plan for green waste is inadequate for a District of North Vancouver residential garden and we will be penalized inappropriately.

We are bringing our concerns to District Councillors as well. Looking forward to your response to this issue."

Chris Pharo wrote: "I visited DNV to find out more about the green waste proposal, and apparently they will be implementing it "soon", starting first with region 1 (the colours on the garbage collection schedule), and moving through the remainder at a rate depending on the success, or not, of the previous regions. So there is a bit of time for a concerted response to this silly proposal." The relevant links to this, and reduced watering were emailed to you on January 23 – so check your emails. If you missed it, please email lynnvalleygardenclubnewsletter@gmail.com and I will send you the links. - m

Remembering... imagining...

It takes a certain kind of bravery to start something: one never knows whether it will work, whether it will last, whether it's really worthwhile. *Lillian Speers* was among the founders of Lynn valley Garden Club. Now, with 20:20 hindsight, we can say that is was indeed worth it, that she was a true visionary – someone who had a great idea and followed through. Ultimately, it's the follow-through that counts. We were (hardly) around then – the post war years, the far end of the country, the small town, the great forest, (no Ironworkers' bridge yet!). It's hard to imagine what it must have been like in 1943. Yet here we are – so many years later - thriving, gardening, promoting good stewardship of nature. Lillian's daughter told me that they read *The Leaf* together and talked fondly of LVGC. Lillian leaves a great legacy.

Does anyone know whether Lillian lived on Panorama Drive in the 1960s? Wayne thinks that he "may have delivered groceries to her. My first bicycle delivery job."



...and while on the subject of good stewardship of nature:

Help Save Honey Bees

- *Jackie Morris*

We have enjoyed being a hive host for several years. The hives are owned by beekeeper, Art Barker, in Langley. It was his honey that was sold at the last plant sale. He offers both early hives (from early April to late August – good for pollinating early flowering fruit) at \$350 and regular season hives (early June to late August) for \$240. All you need to do is to have an appropriate spot for a hive. Art visits every 2 weeks to do any maintenance and is always happy to show you what is happening with "your" hive and bees. We have never had a single sting and you get 4 "free" jars of honey in the fall for each hive! They do not compete with native bees – in fact, we have noticed more native bees since we have had our hive.

www.bringingbackbees.ca art3bhoneybee@gmail.com 604-789-5323

Bruce Tennant's incredibly brave, foolish, hardy daffodil in December and January... wonder how the next snow dump affected this brave plant?



*How does my garden grow?
With silver bells and cockle shells...
and fertilizer, you idiot!*

*My husband said if I buy any more perennials he would leave me.
--gosh I'm going to miss that man!*



EVENTS

The Northwest Flower and Garden Show - Seattle (Feb 22-26)

- Rosemarie Adams

THE NORTHWEST FLOWER & GARDEN SHOW HAS SOME SPECIAL PACKAGES FOR CANADIANS ONLY! Check out these incredible rates! You MUST book online. You will not get these rates if you call the hotel directly. For questions only, please call 888-233-9527. Please note this number is for questions only as these rates must be booked online and not over the phone.

Please book your room by JANUARY 20th in order to receive the group rate. Reservations made after this date are based on availability and may or may not be at the group rate. <http://www.gardenshow.com/hotels/canadian-specials/>

If any LVGC members are considering going to the Garden Show in Seattle (Feb 22-26), this might be a good option for accommodation. For a rate of \$129 US you get a nice room at the Crowne Plaza, which is only a block away from the Convention Centre, breakfast, 20% discount in restaurant or bar, 20% discount off parking and a free two day pass for the show (per room occupant). You only need to stay one night to get the two-day pass. The hotel is nice, the food in the bar and restaurant is tasty and reasonable. ☺



Vancouver Master Gardener Spring Affair (March 12)

The VANCOUVER MASTER GARDENER SPRING AFFAIR will take place on Sunday, March 12 from 10:00 to 4:30 at the Michael J. Fox Theatre at 7373 MacPherson Ave. in Burnaby. Speakers are *Noel Kingsbury, Linda Chalker-Scott, Linda Gilkeson* and *Ciscoe Morris*. Tickets are \$50.00. Here is the link to more information <http://www.mgabc.org/node/1542>



Vancouver Orchid Society Annual Show and Sale (March 24)

The VOS Annual Show and Sale will be at the Floral Hall, Vandusen Gardens on March 25 & 26. For more information: http://www.vancouverorchidsociety.ca/?page_id=530



The 89th Annual Bradner Flower Show! - "The Birds & The B's"

Join the fun as we take you on a whimsical journey through the garden!

April 7, 8 & 9th Daily: 10 am to 5 pm at Bradner Hall & School, 5305 Bradner Rd, Abbotsford.

Fun for ALL AGES, Admission is only \$2. Opening Ceremony, Friday @ 2 pm with special guest Scott Pearce (picture) of GardenWorks, Global TV's Saturday morning gardening expert. Decorating for this year's show will be done by the talented and creative floral designers from Simply Perfect Flowers. On Saturday/Sunday see chefs, local wineries, special speakers & lots live music. Loads of interesting displays, crafts, art, food and, of course, 100's of varieties of daffodils. All proceeds from cut flowers donated to the Abbotsford Regional Hospital.

For more info:

Facebook.com/BradnerHall, bradnerhall.ca or bradnerflowershow@gmail.com

The Great LVGC Bus Tour!!! Committee



- Jackie Morris and the Bus Trip

***SAVE THE DATE - SATURDAY, MAY 27, 2017
LVGC BUS TRIP TO SUNSHINE COAST***

Mark your calendars now: Jackie Morris and her committee are working on this year's *Garden Club Bus Tour!* We will be touring the Sunshine Coast Botanical Garden (<http://coastbotanicalgarden.org/>), along with other garden(s) and nurseries. The bus will take us *via* the Horseshoe Bay, BC Ferries Terminal, drive us around the Sunshine Coast and return from Langdale Ferry Terminal back to North Vancouver. We will provide the times for pickup and drop-off and final cost after the bus & ferry reservations are finalized. Sign-up for this exciting road trip will start at the March LVGC meeting.

The "Compost Bin"

- Maria Issa

Why the "Compost Bin"? Because it's the last resort for whatever is left that I can't seem to categorize, make work or just need to deal with – or, for you poor, unsuspecting readers - that I feel I need to tell you/rant about.

Ergo:

1. So – WHO has Linda's grey bins? This is a major, unsolved mystery. If you feel you may have been the perpetrator who offered to return them to her, and then promptly forgot (that seems to happen to me with increasing frequency) – please tie a string to your finger, sneak the items onto the Plant Table... no-one needs to know – except Linda.

2. We will be trying a "Speaker Evaluation" system so that we have records of the real good ones, ones we would like to have again... and also to track the "close, but no cigar" talks for future avoidance. How else can we know whether we are meeting your expectations? There are also useful side-effects of this: if someone did a great presentation, we could potentially write him/her a nice note, that s/he could then attach to a resumé. In this way, we could help and promote up-and-coming horticulturalists. Yes, I am thinking of the *Invasive Plants* talk by Sam Cousins... No idea how the evaluation will be implemented – I'm still cooking that one.

3. We have been – again! – asked by new members to provide gardening advice. We have so many knowledgeable members that we should be able to provide a deluge. After all, isn't that why we all joined a garden club? But, how?

Each garden is unique, as are its problems. So – here is a proposal: Send your questions to *The Leaf* - I will collect them, publish them – and maybe at the next meeting's Bright Spot we could all discuss them... ???... What do you think?

4. There's a really cool app for your smart phone: Pl@ntNet... (<http://identify.plantnet-project.org>) Snap a picture, upload and it will tell you what it is. Well, it's supposed to. I've downloaded the app to my cell, but actually tried it on their website with Bruce's daffodil photo and the "Western Europe" setting. It worked a treat!

5. I promised you "*Bokashi*". I heard about this from a friend, but have not tried it. It might be an interesting "group science project". The short version is that it's another form of anaerobic composting using "pickling bacteria," (lactobacilli, yeasts and phototropic microbes).

While initially I thought that this might just be somebody's money-making proposition – indeed, getting started might be exactly that – the rest looks microbiologically legit. If the word "anaerobic" conjures up something nasty and smelly, then you are where I was with the skepticism. Then I read a number of links and the distillate is that everything biological can be reduced to a relatively sweet-smelling mush that does wonders for your garden.

You have to start it – like a yogurt starter – and feed it some bran, a bacterial mix (this is the \$\$) and your dinner scraps – including meat and dairy. Toss it all into an air-tight bucket, slap a lid on it to keep air out, smells in, store in a warmish place and wait. Use a second bin in the meanwhile. 2-3 weeks later, have a look. The results can be dried in the sun and added to start future Bokashis... and added either to the soil, or to your compost to give it a kick-start for the big stuff.

Why bother? I have a compost already...

Because:

- Admit it – just saying the word "*Bokashi*" is fun!!
- It is really easy and propagates a different lot of useful bacteria
- It can be done on a small or large scale (so a good option for home owners)
- Unlike worm compost, the 'active agent' doesn't make a getaway
- It generally doesn't produce bad odours (unlike a lot of other anaerobic processes)
- Produces a material that can be used as a 'slow-release' fertilizer in your garden
- Works great as a partner strategy to composting and vermicomposting (see *caveat* above, re escapees...)
- It can be used to deal with ALL kitchen wastes (even meat, dairy etc)
- Can be scaled up – can handle pet output

If there is any interest – I will start a batch with a commercial bacterial mix, then – if it works – share it around.

<https://www.planetnatural.com/composting-101/indoor-composting/bokashi-composting/>

<http://www.compostguy.com/bokashi-resource-page/>

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/how-to-compost-food-scraps-more-effectively-1.3046574>

"The home gardener is part scientist, part artist, part philosopher, part ploughman. He modifies the climate around his home."
- John R. Whiting

"Gardening is an exercise in optimism. Sometimes, it is a triumph of hope over experience."
- Marina Schinz

