



LYNN VALLEY GARDEN CLUB

Established 1943

December 2017

### *President's Message - Penny LeCouteur*

This is my last *Leaf* message as president and I have to admit that I feel a bit nostalgic. It has been a lot of fun (more than I anticipated) and I have gotten to know lots of the club members. So now I will say my heartfelt "thank you"s: First to our hard-working VP, *Judith*, whose attention to detail and timing has kept the Exec functioning for the last two years and whose organization of speakers has been terrific. Secretary *Susan* has managed to capture minutes for both General and Exec meetings despite the sometimes 'wild' moments. Treasurer *Jennifer* has presented balanced budgets (except for a last minute rent increase) and made prompt payments for expenses. The Membership team of *Bonnie* and *Judy* arrive early to set up the membership table for every meeting and keep exemplary records of our membership. Our MALs (Members-at-Large) *Rita*, *Catharine*, *Daphne*, and *Maggie* did a great job with the plant sale and even kept smiling at the same time. Thank you to all those who have served on committees this past year or two years; the *Hospitality* committee who will be organizing a great repast for the upcoming Christmas party, *Carol* as our Sunshine person, *Aline* as our webmaster (mistress?), *Norma* for the Plant Table and of course *Maria* as The Leaf editor and intrepid plant rescuer. Without the dedication and work of all of these people the club would not be the happy and well-functioning organization that it is. And to all the club members, thank you for your contributions big and small and for your patience when a new executive has to find its way. Of course we still need *one more person to be a MAL* for the upcoming two years so if anyone would like to give the LVGC an early Christmas present here is your chance!!

I was watching my cats sleeping the other day and thinking that they might as well hibernate considering how much snoozing they do. That got me thinking about hibernation and wondering why some animals hibernate and others don't. Why don't humans hibernate? I started to think of the pros and cons of human hibernation. On the pro side, I wouldn't have to shovel snow, or take the garbage out to the curb at 7am on cold, wet morning; there would still no doubt be Christmas - the retail industry would have arranged for it to be moved into a non-winter month. I wouldn't need snow tires, and I wouldn't freeze my fingers trying plant out the saxifraga and mondo grass that Maria persuaded me to rescue on her latest mission. And then I thought about what I would miss: the early morning sight of frost sparkling on the bare branches of a tree, waking up to see snow weighing down every conifer in the garden, and the unexpected small, brilliantly coloured berries that glow against a snowy background. In other words I'd miss the garden in winter. So I will confine my hibernation to drinking a hot chocolate in front of the fire with the cats sleeping peacefully on my lap and watching the wonderful world of the winter garden.

I wish you all a very Happy Christmas and lots of gardening fun in the New Year!!

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all our members and their families - and did I mention what I'd like for Christmas? One more MAL for the club! - Penny

### **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*

### **PARTY DEC 14**

January 18  
**HOWARD WILLS**  
FERNWOOD NURSERY  
DEVON, UK  
**GREAT BRITISH GARDENS**

### **Mailing Address:**

Lynn Valley Garden Club  
P.O. Box 16053  
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North Vancouver, BC  
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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

Eddie Rستمeyer

### Website

Aline Burlone

### Executive Meetings

1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of the month

### Next Newsletter Deadline

January, 2018

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!



*We are skipping official reports as there was no Exec meeting: why? Because there are no issues, we have \$\$, YOU HAVE REMEMBERED TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP (right? If not, just fill out the form at the end of this newsletter!), the voting was done and everyone is looking forward to:*

## The Lynn Valley Garden Club Annual Christmas Party

Our annual Christmas party is on **Thursday December 14<sup>th</sup> 2017**, Note that this is the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month and not the 3<sup>rd</sup>. Starting time is 7:15 pm. *Please bring a plate with a sweet or savoury treat.* Hot apple cider will be provided.

For this meeting the door prizes will not be awarded randomly but as prizes for the **best Christmas sweater**. There will be two categories: *"The Ugliest Christmas Sweater"* and *"The Prettiest Christmas Sweater"*. If you can't decide whether your sweater should be in the 'ugly' or 'pretty' category don't worry - we will decide. (Actually if you can't decide it is probably in the 'ugly' category!!!) So if you don't have a Christmas sweater at all - beg, borrow or steal one.

There will be a choice of three or four different crafts this year. If you are very crafty you can probably manage to make all of them, or you might choose only one or two and have plenty of time for socializing, eating and drinking. The following is a quick description of the choices with instructions on what to bring. **REMEMBER TO PUT YOUR NAME ON SCISSORS, PRUNERS ETC.**

**Table One:** Margaret Nakahara will be demonstrating and helping members make a small Christmas table centerpiece. You will need to bring a TEA CUP, and a pair of SCISSORS (labeled with your name), hand PRUNERS or SECATEURS (again named). You might also want to bring a CANDLE to include in your masterpiece - or you can go to Table Two and make one! Everything else will be provided.

**Table Two:** Make a pair of beeswax candles (in Christmas red or white). A sheet of beeswax and a wick will be provided and a member of the Exec will show you what to do. This is straight forward to make and is a great hostess gift. If you want to make more than one pair, or if you want to buy more sheets and wicks (if available) at the end of the evening, the cost will be \$3.50 per pair.

**Table Three:** You will notice a number of paper snowflakes hanging around the room. You can make these by folding and cutting 6 separate squares, and then taping together with Scotch tape. Exec members will be available to show you how. Sizes range from 8" squares to 3" or 4" squares. All materials will be supplied but bring your own SCISSORS (labeled).

**Table Four:** Fir and pinecones by the sackful will be at this table to cover wire wreath frames. Maria Issa will be demonstrating how. [Maria has absolutely no idea, as she has never done this before - but we will make it up as we go along! -m] You might want to bring a RIBBON, Christmas BELL, or other DECORATION to finish off your wreath.



## REPORTS

As the *Hospitality Team* always reminds us:

“bring your own mug - **BYOM**” and as you are contemplating what goodies to create to feed the body – please consider – feeding the soul –

1.

If your heart is in it, please bring some items for the Food Bank. There will be a box to fill and Maria has promised to deliver it. Non-perishable items are best, but \$\$ donations are also gratefully accepted. If you want a tax receipt, then use a cheque with your name on it. [There will be a nice large box to fill to overflowing!!]

2.

Jackie Morris can still use some Christmas cards till Dec 11. You can drop them off to Jackie (in a plastic bag, on porch) or phone her.



**SPEAKER – Thursday, January 11, 2017**

**HOWARD WILLS - Biography, in his own words:**

I am a life-long gardening enthusiast (plantaholic!) with many years of experience of growing a wide range of plants. I run a small nursery specialising in *Sempervivums* (Houseleeks) and related plants. At Fernwood, I hold N.C.C.P.G. (Plant Heritage) National Collections® of *Sempervivum* and *Jovibarba* species and cultivars (Alpine Houseleeks) and previously, National Collections® of *Phormium* species and cultivars (New Zealand Flax) and *Rosularia* species.

I have exhibited these plants at all the major Royal Horticultural Society Flower Shows and the exhibits have been awarded RHS Gold Medals at Chelsea Flower Show, Hampton Court Palace, Gardener’s World Live, Tatton Park, Malvern and RHS Wisley Flower Shows.

The nursery is managed in an environmentally sensitive way and I am also very keen on watching, recording and studying our native fauna and flora. I also enjoy visiting gardens and natural environments both in the UK and in other parts of the world.

Great Britain has a large number of wonderful gardens showing an incredible range of plants and a fascinating diversity of gardening styles.

In this talk I describe a varied selection of British gardens that are, or have been, open to the public and which I have particularly enjoyed visiting, including some Scottish and Welsh gardens as well as those in England.





## *What's new on the Lynn Valley Garden Club Website?*

*-Aline Burlone*

- Under the heading **Guest Speakers** - Elke Wehinger, Pamela Dangelmaier, Wendy Leroux (October 19, 2017 guest speaker) can be found under **Past Speaker by name** (<http://lynnvalleygardenclub.org/guest-speakers/past-speakers-by-name/>) and under **Past Speaker by topic** - Fall in Love With Unusuals (<http://lynnvalleygardenclub.org/guest-speakers/past-speakers-by-topic/>)
- Under the heading **Bulletin Board- Interesting article** (<http://lynnvalleygardenclub.org/bulletin-board/interesting-articles/>) there are two interesting articles on bees - one is from Popular Science and the other is an interactive article on bees from the New York Times (which also contains more articles at the end of the page)
- Under the heading **Newsletter - 2017** - the October & November 2017 newsletters have been posted. (<http://lynnvalleygardenclub.org/newsletters/2017-2/>)

### *New links on the website:*

Clicking on the links will take you to the website page that has that link - why not explore a few other links while you are there!

- The **Saltspring Apple Company** site contains information on all the varieties they grow.
- **Gardenia Creating Gardens** has sections containing many ideas and information regarding garden designs, planting ideas, growing plants as well as sections to find plants using different criteria.
- The **Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation** is an international nonprofit organization that protects wildlife through the conservation of invertebrates and their habitats. They take their name from the now extinct Xerces Blue butterfly (*Glaucopsyche xerces*), the first butterfly known to go extinct in North America as a result of human activities. (They are located in Portland, Oregon)



*If you are wondering what to buy for Christmas for someone who has everything -*

*here is an idea: they surely won't have this!*

*- Submitted by Judith Brook*

*More and more people are considering insects as a protein source... (from News 1130 online, Nov 24, 2017)*

COPENHAGEN - One of Finland's largest food companies is selling what it claims to be a first: insect bread. Markus Hellstrom, head of the Fazer group's bakery division, said Thursday that one loaf contains about 70 dried house crickets, ground into powder and added to the flour: the farm-raised crickets represent 3 per cent of the bread's weight. "Finns are known to be willing to try new things," he said, and according to a survey commissioned by Fazer "good taste, freshness" were among the main criteria for bread.

According to recent surveys of the Nordic countries, "Finns have the most positive attitudes toward insects," said Juhani Sibakov, head of Fazer Bakery Finland's innovation department. "We made crunchy dough to enhance taste". The result was "delicious and nutritious," he said, adding that the Fazer Sirkkaleipa (Finnish for Fazer Cricket Bread) "is a good source of protein and insects also contain good fatty acids, calcium, iron and vitamin B12."

"Mankind needs new and sustainable sources of nutrition," Sibakov said in a statement. Hellstrom noted that Finnish legislation was changed on Nov. 1 to allow the sale of insects as food.

The first batch of cricket breads will be sold in major Finnish cities Friday. The company said there is not enough cricket flour available for now to support sales nationwide but the aim is to have the bread available in 47 bakeries in Finland in a subsequent round of sales.

In Switzerland, the supermarket chain Coop, began selling burgers and balls made from insects in September. Insects can also be found on supermarket shelves in Belgium, Britain, Denmark and the Netherlands.

The U.N.'s Food and Agricultural Organization has promoted insects as a source of human food, saying they are healthy and high in protein and minerals. The agency says many types of insects produce less greenhouse gases and ammonia than most livestock - such as methane-spewing cattle - and require less land and money to cultivate.



## 52 Million-Year-Old Tomatillo Fossils Rewrite Veggie History

- Sourced by Judith Brook

<https://www.npr.org/sections/thesalt/2017/01/10/509171881/52-million-year-old-tomatillo-fossil-rewrites-veggie-history>

ANGUS CHEN



This 52-million-year-old

fossilized tomatillo was found in Patagonia, Argentina, shedding light on the origin of nightshade plants. In this specimen, the slender stalk is preserved, and the former papery and lobed husk is broken at top to reveal the large, fleshy berry underneath — now turned to coal.

*Photo: Peter Wilf, Penn State University*

The nightshade family includes some of the most economically important and useful crops on Earth. That includes, of course, deadly nightshade or belladonna,

which produces the medicine atropine, as well as potatoes, tomatoes, chili and bell peppers, tobacco and eggplant.

Scientists thought the family came into existence about 40 million years ago based on genetic evidence from living plants and the fossil record, says Richard Olmstead, an evolutionary biologist at the University of Washington. But the discovery of two new nightshade fossils pushes the age of the family back considerably further.

The fossils are imprints of ancient tomatillos about the size of a pen cap. The tomatillo's papery husk is left behind as a network of fragile black lines on a slab of white rock. Based on atomic age dating, the fossils are about 52 million years old, at least a dozen million years older than when scientists thought the first nightshade plant emerged on Earth, says Peter Wilf, a paleobotanist at Penn State University and the lead author of a new paper published in *Science*.

The Laguna del Hunco fossil site in Chubut, Patagonian Argentina. Workers here are collecting abundant and diverse plant fossils. *Photo: Peter Wilf, Penn State University*



Wilf and his team found the fossils in the Patagonia region of Argentina, at a site that was once an ancient lake-bed. "The plants that generated these fossils were alive in a temperate rain forest next to a volcano," he says. When it finally snapped together [that] we were looking at a fossil tomatillo, it was quite shocking. It was disbelief. It was joy coupled with disbelief."

The discovery changes the history of nightshades, says Olmstead, who was not involved with the work. There is no other nightshade fossil as well-preserved as these, which show details of the tomatillo's stem, husk and berry. "It's a tremendous find. It provides insight totally absent from the fossil record and our understanding of the family prior to this," says Olmstead, who was not involved with the work.

That the fossils were once tomatillos — think the tomato's green, tangy cousin — and the time the plant lived are both critical to understanding the nightshades' evolution, Wilf says. For one, tomatillos evolved relatively late compared to other nightshades. "So the great grandfather of the tomato and the tomatillo, the ancestor of all the nightshades, must be older than 52 million years. A lot older," he says. Maybe as far back as the age of the dinosaurs, Wilf thinks.

Nightshade fruits on a stream in Pennsylvania. The fossilized tomatillo likely floated from shore and sank in a deep lake in Patagonia 52 million years ago. Photo: Peter Wilf, Penn State University



name Wilf and his crew gave the tomatillo fossils, *infinemundi* or "at the end of the world," is a reference to that changing Earth. "It's a nod to the modern and ancient location," Wilf says. "It's at the edge of Argentina, so the end of the world that way. And it's at the end of this time in Earth's history."

This ancient tomatillo fossil displays characteristic papery, lobed husk and vein details.

Photo: Ignacio Escapa, Museo Paleontológico Egidio Feruglio

Two connections to the evolution of nightshades and this time period can become more apparent now. Organisms stuck in cooling regions of Earth had to adapt and evolve into new species that could tolerate the change, Olmstead says. "The contraction of warm tropical climates spanning the Earth left behind lineages that adapted to the cooler climates." Then about 25 million years ago, the Andes Mountains began rising quickly, creating many new habitats in the

nightshade's native South America.

The discovery of the fossil tomatillos means nightshades had to live through all of these change in the last 50 million years. "That's absolutely true! The plants [are] evolving into diverse habitats that co-exist at the same time," Olmstead says. They're the right conditions for a family of plants to split into hundreds or thousands of new species that need to create new adaptations to their new homes. And nightshades, it seems, thrived. There are the delicious array of foods in the family that we know, as well as other useful plants like petunias and *Datura stramonium* or jimsonweed, which produces a hallucinogenic fruit. In total, nightshades now have over 2,400 extant species.

[.....and in case you want to read the actual scientific abstract, like I did, herewith:....]

Wilf, Peter; Carvalho, Monica R.; Gandolfo, Maria A; Ruben Cuneo, N. *Eocene lantern fruits from Gondwanan Patagonia and the early origins of Solanaceae*. *SCIENCE* 2017, **355** (6320 )p71 - 74.

The nightshade family *Solanaceae* holds exceptional economic and cultural importance. The early diversification of *Solanaceae* is thought to have occurred in South America during its separation from Gondwana, but the family's sparse fossil record provides few insights. We report 52.2-million-year-old lantern fruits from terminal-Gondwanan Patagonia, featuring highly inflated, five-lobed calyces, as a newly identified species of the derived, diverse New World genus *Physalis* (e.g., groundcherries and tomatillos). The fossils are considerably older than corresponding molecular divergence dates and demonstrate an ancient history for the inflated calyx syndrome. The derived position of these early Eocene fossils shows that *Solanaceae* were well diversified long before final Gondwanan breakup.





...and now for a few good things in life – that are not free:

## Interesting Event

Please join us on **Friday, February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2018** at The HR MacMillan Space Centre to attend a garden design lecture featuring **Jo Thompson** from London England who will be presenting 'A Garden In Its Place'. (\$25)

- from *Rosemarie Adams*

Tickets are now available at [Eventbrite.ca](http://Eventbrite.ca)  
**The Garden Design Group** -  
<http://www.gardendesigngroup.ca>

## A bit of biochemistry for you!

### Photosynthesis

In the process of photosynthesis, plants convert radiant energy from the sun into chemical energy in the form of glucose (or sugar).





