

# THE LEAF

LYNN VALLEY GARDEN CLUB

ESTABLISHED 1943

January 2020

## President's Message - Norma Austin

I hope by now that all your Christmas stuff is stored away. From conversations with friends, I discovered that people have a different cutoff point as to when this should... must... happen. At our house, Christmas isn't over until our artificial tree is stripped, collapsed, and boxed. Yes, it is as sad as that sounds. Outdoors, the single string of green-coloured lights that outline our eaves stay on until the end of January, to add some cheer when daylight fades.

This makes me think back to our LVGC Christmas party. I had a great time... hope you did too! Members who stayed to clean up were delighted to hear Wayne Smith play Christmas music... BEAUTIFULLY... on the piano. Maybe we can entice him to play earlier next year? Unless, of course, that would be the only reason you would stay and clean up, 'cause the concert doesn't start 'til then ;-) You know that's obviously a joke because most members stay and help tidy up at the end of all our meetings. What a great club we are :-)

This last Wednesday, we had a joint executive meeting at Susan Huber's house, of retiring and current executive members for a get-to-know-you social with a bit of business thrown in. There were 19 of us!... with lots of food and lots of laughter. I think it was Penny who quipped, after the new executive slate was accepted in November, that "it couldn't have happened to a better bunch of people"... or something like that. So true!!

Here is something to consider for this year - we are planning our annual bus trip for April instead of in June, see Rosemarie Adams' info in this newsletter. There are some spectacular rhododendron and spring gardens, which BC is known for, for us to visit. It's also a good time to hit the nurseries. Our plant sale remains in May. Our 'members'gardens' tour would then be moved to June. This may entice members who have shown their gardens in July to show them in June this year. Please don't let that deter you from showing yours for the first time! Then, in July, you can sit back and enjoy your own garden after sprucing it up for visitors. In fact, that's one reason I entertain at my house... so I will take the time to clean it... even places where nobody should be looking! And, after everybody is gone... my home looks fantastic.

In closing, our club owes Anna Marie D'Angelo and her team a big round of applause for all that they have accomplished during the last two years. On a personal note, I owe her a big THANK YOU for all her help and continuing guidance. I treasure her friendship. As all good things that come to pass, when the time comes, I will pay it forward.

## LVGC MEETINGS

3rd Thursday of each month (except July and August) at

St. STEPHEN'S Church  
1360 E 24th Street

Please note that meetings start promptly at 7:15 PM

## SPEAKERS

Jan 16  
**CHRIS JENNINGS**  
*Shade Plants*

Feb 20  
**THE VEGGIMATES**  
*Growing Vegetables*  
**SEND YOUR VEG-RELATED QUESTIONS TO THE LEAF**

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<http://www.lynnvalleygardenclub.org>

January LEAF photo credits to Rita Marshall, Norma Austin, Sue Callahan, Bruce Tennant, Wayne Smith



## Executive 2020

### President

Norma Austin x

### Vice President

Jacquie Morgan x

### Secretary

Susan Huber x

### Treasurer

Ginette Handfield x

### Membership

Sue Callahan x

Doreen Marbry x

### Members at Large

Pat Holmes x

Lori Herman x

Suzanne Mazoret x

Jackie Morris x

## Committees

### Newsletter Editor

Maria Issa x

### Plant Table

Norma Buckland x

### Hospitality

Sharon Carabetta x

Maggie Davis x

Susan Nicholls x

Daphne Page x

### Sunshine/ Door Prizes

Lorraine Robson x

### Website

Aline Burlone x

### Executive Meetings

1st Wednesday of the month

WEDNESDAY, FEB 5

chez Sue Callahan

x

### Next Newsletter Deadline

JANUARY 25

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: Rosemarie

Adams, Jackie Morris, Sharon

Carabetta, Kim Tucker, Irene

Dudra, Bruce Tennant, Wayne

Smith



## SPEAKER

CHRIS JENNINGS --- Thursday, JANUARY 16, 2020

### SHADE PLANTS

Chris founded the Vancouver Shade Garden Society in 2003 and has been its President for most of the time since then. The Society has focussed on learning all about shade-loving plants and how to grow them well. On their journey, they have learned an enormous amount of interesting information, and Chris is always happy to pass on knowledge of shade gardening to other interested clubs, by way of slide presentations and handouts. He gives broad general presentations on shade gardening, while highlighting many common and unusual shade plants, as well as gives detailed presentations on specific families of shade plants.



## REPORTS

### VP - Jacquie Morgan

Penny has handed over her VP mantle to Jacqui, who is now actively recruiting speakers. If you have ideas or suggestions for her, she would be grateful.

### Treasurer - Ginette Handfield

Under Ginette's expert hand, LVGC continues to be financially very stable. She writes:

"As of 31 December 2019:

Cash on hand: \$ 407.85

Bank balance: \$ 10,645.69

**Total: \$ 11,053.54**

With 2019 now behind us and all the expenditures in as far as I know, I can report that our financial results are quite close to the forecast you saw in the November Leaf. Due to our great plant sale in 2019, our revenues actually exceeded our expenses by \$556, compared to the \$1,680 shortfall we had budgeted for the year."

### Hospitality - Sharon Carabetta, Maggie Davis, Susan Nicholls, Daphne Page\*

"A few items were left at our December event - to be claimed January 16th at the hospitality table:

1. Large hard plastic Christmas platter, Santa and reindeer picture.
2. Hard plastic dinner plate, green with candy canes.
3. Large snowman coffee cup.

[While you may not wish to own up to owning any of these, there is nowhere to store them... - m]

*\*Breaking news: Daphne has joined the intrepids - and she too, can boil water!*

### MALs - Jackie Morris, Pat Holmes, Lori Herman, Suzanne Mazoret

[FYI: MAL= "Members At Large" - technically the voice of the members on the Executive. In practise, they also take on the organization of the Plant Sale - no mean feat!]

The new MALs are looking forward to organizing the Plant Sale but have quite the shoes to fill! Here is some information and how you can help.

- Tentative date for the Plant Sale and set up: **Friday, May 15, and Saturday, May 16** (while this is the date in our contract with the Church, it is subject to Church needs. We may not know until March.)

- Please dig up, divide and pot up plants as weather permits. To easily sell and get the best price, plants need to have nicely leafed out and be of a decent size by the Plant Sale. Anything small or dormant will not likely sell.
- Soil for potting – we are looking into this and will send out an email when it has arrived and where it will be. Please do not call to ask, as it is dependent on when the supplier has it in stock and when it can be delivered.
- Please bring any lawn signs you may still have to the next meeting as we know there are still a few out there.
- Start collecting beer flats and Costco boxes.
- Raffle donations are needed (Please contact Jackie!).
- **We need volunteers** to organize the following, if they are to go ahead (contact Jackie if you are interested):
  - Promotion at Lynn Valley Centre on the Saturday before the Plant Sale – organizing and attendance, along with other club members
  - Raffle – selling tickets at the Plant Sale
  - Garden Paraphernalia table -- pricing and management at the Plant Sale
  - Invasive Plants Table at the Plant Sale – organizing/stocking with samples
  - Honey Table at the Plant Sale – selling at the Plant Sale
  - Club t-shirts, either the older dark green ones or last year’s lighter green ones – to organize orders to arrive before the Plant Sale for new members and those who don’t have either.

## Membership

Thank you to all who renewed: we have 132 members. All the people who were on the waiting list have been contacted both by phone & email. We expect to have most of them coming to the meeting this Thursday. Hopefully by then we will have a better idea if we are full, or still have room. That doesn’t mean you can’t bring guests – of course you can!! - \$5. While some people were heard to mutter that “the club is getting too big, it’s hard to meet anyone” - that is patently untrue. The moment you pile in to help, you make friends and discover the “better bunch of people” referred to by Norma and Penny. This club is unusual in the way it is a source of friendship and fun.

Apparently, the lovely printed copies of The Leaf are not being picked up by those who asked/paid for them. Why? This is exactly why most of you get The Leaf electronically: it’s easier and cheaper to *not* read it that way and doesn’t damage the environment.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS



### VEGGIE NIGHT THURSDAY, FEB 20, ST STEPHEN’S HALL

**6:15 PM** (before regular meeting)

Please join us as we revisit the requirements for seed-growing success. We will try to cover containers, soil, water, light, heat, choosing seeds *etc* and to answer any questions you may have. There will be Westcoast Seeds to hand out and start growing for the Plant Sale.

**8 PM** or so (after the business meeting)

Whether you grow your veggies from seed or buy them at the Plant Sale, how can you successfully grow them? As the “speaker” of the evening, members of the club will talk about their favourite vegetables and herbs and what they have learned to plant, grow and harvest them.

**FOR SALE:** LVGC's enormous (100 inch), old-but-good-as-new projection **screen** with **stand** – and **carry case**. No, I don't have a picture of it (it's in my garage with the spiders) – but you probably remember it from St. Clement's. Similar items on Craig's list ask for \$200. For you, cheap at half the price... and the \$\$ goes to a lot of good causes. If you want it – you have till mid-March to claim it, after that it goes up on Craig's list. Contact Maria at [lynnvalleygardenclubnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:lynnvalleygardenclubnewsletter@gmail.com)

**PLANT TABLE:** If you participated in the first-ever **BIG DIG** and some of those plants have taken permanent root in your garden, please don't forget to make your appropriate **Plant Table donation** on the honour system. *[note to self: Maria you owe them \$\$]*

**BIG DIG #2:** With the current weather, nobody in their right mind – not even yours truly – wants to go out and dig. However, we have been invited back for Round 2!! Unless I hear to the contrary as people are champing at the bit to dig earlier, The target date is mid or late March. By that time, any hidden plants may have declared themselves, there might be more soil for potting up – and more of you will have organized all those extra flowerpots that you will bring.



## THE GREAT LVGC BUS TOUR

Yes: there will be one this year (possibly with a new and improved, very swish bus)!!! Rosemarie is the organizer-in-chief, so all scathingly brilliant ideas of where to go and what to see should be sent to her. Rosemarie writes:

We will have a sign-up sheet at January and February meetings. Payment must be made by the March meeting. Diane Sekora and Doreen Marbry will be keeping track of sign-up;

We will be visiting several private gardens and nurseries in the Fraser Valley, details still to be determined.

Cost \$20 per person.

Bus will leave at 8 AM sharp and return approximately 5 PM; could be later, depending on traffic or any delays encountered during the day.

Please remember to bring your lunch, a drink, wear comfortable shoes and dress for variable weather. You may need a raincoat or umbrella (or hopefully, sunscreen!).

Full itinerary and details of gardens to be visited will be handed to you when you board the bus.

Please sign up and pay promptly to confirm your seat. Payment is due by no later than our March general meeting – after that date any seat reservations not paid for will be given to people on the waiting list.

If you cannot attend the January or February meeting and wish to go on the trip, please contact either Diane xxxxxxxx, Doreen (xxxxxxx) or Rosemarie (xxxxxxx) and your name will be added to the list – providing space is available.

This has proved to be a fun event in past years – great opportunity to mix and mingle with your LVGC friends and neighbours – get on board!

Your Bus Trip Committee

Rosemarie Adams, Doreen Marbry, Diane Sekora

*[If you're new and haven't yet experienced The Great LVGC Bus Tour – you must try to come. It's a hoot – and a brilliant learning experience – ed]*



**THE BC COUNCIL OF GARDEN CLUBS:** The January 2020 Bulletin is now online. Just cut and paste this into your browser: [https://bcgardenclubs.com/wp-content/uploads/2020Bulletin/2020-January.pdf?mc\\_cid=e0022a3503&mc\\_eid=4c452c7310](https://bcgardenclubs.com/wp-content/uploads/2020Bulletin/2020-January.pdf?mc_cid=e0022a3503&mc_eid=4c452c7310)



*[Random things to ponder: if Tim Horton's is offering the Royal Sussex-es lifetime coffee to come to Canada, maybe we could make them Honourary LVGC members...?]*



*A Christmas, Kwanzaa, Hannukah, Pancha Ganapati, Yule, Saturnalia ...  
Holiday Song Without Words*







*If you have a garden and a library, you have everything you need.*  
--Marcus Tullius Cicero

*"God Almighty first planted a garden. And indeed, it is the purest of human pleasures."*  
---Francis Bacon



## Overheard at the Exec Meeting

-- "Oh WOW!! What an amazing table of goodies. My New Year's resolution lasted right up to Susan's door."

-- "My pig poo wasn't poo-ish, it was too rotted." "Really? Mine had big bones in it!" "Bones? What kind of bones? Was the pig poo from Picton, the serial killer?" "Naaah, just animal bones." "How do you know?" "Remember, I'm a nurse."

-- "When my husband found out I was going to replace Shirley as "Sunshine", he wondered if I was going to pose for one of those photos..."



## Protect Your Poor Plants

- sourced by Irene Dudra

Phoenix Perennials sends out some useful stuff - and Irene passed these on - exactly when we need it most!

1. Collect fallen leaves or other organic material and pack them around or pile them on top of less hardy plants.
2. Put upside down pots on top of budding or blooming hellebores and other plants or bulbs in growth or bloom.
3. Throw old sheets, towels, or plastic overtop of more delicate plants. For taller plants like hardy citrus and other subtropicals, make a teepee out of bamboo or wooden stakes and cover in plastic.
4. If you get a good snowfall before the full cold snap hits, be glad. Snow is insulating and will protect your plants. The Inuit knew what they were doing with their igloos! You can collect and shovel snow on top of any plants that need protection.
5. Bring pots up against the house, especially on an east or south wall. Mulch the top with fallen leaves or other organic material. Wrap pots in bubble wrap or cover with old sheets or towels.
6. Bring plants that can't take a cold snap into the house for the duration of the severe cold. Keep them in a cool room to try to minimize shock. Then put them back outside again after the cold has passed.



## Lettuce Gro-Op - Bruce Tennant

(another song without words)



This summer I grew, and harvested from, this "Orange Sun" sweet pepper plant. When it came to the end of the growing season and I was cleaning up the garden I noticed one very small lonely pepper on what appeared to be a fairly healthy plant.

I brought it inside and nurtured it in my 'bathroom greenhouse' and lo and behold (please note Christmas phrase) it continued growing and is now turning orange.

Mother Nature is a source of constant amazement!

"I believe they are perennial in warm climates - it is the cold that kills them. So they must like your bathroom temperature!!

I have lettuce under the lights in the basement and some under cover in the green house and it is growing -I'm the same I just don't want to pick it!!! ----Aline"



## Winter Green

- Wayne Smith



I thought my leeks were worth a look. They're nice and tender now, and I can raise my nose going past the leeks at Superstore. I'm still getting a few beets from my trays but the celery was more of a lesson than a meal: they grew and I am still getting tops and some thin stems, but they seem to be heavy feeders so I will have to give them more fertilizer next year. I also buried some celery plants deep in raised beds hoping they will regrow in the spring. Hope springs eternal.



I will also try re-growing some leeks by leaving a few inches of stem and replanting them in the trays in fresh soil.

The wonderful winter greens I planted in late fall became a feast but not for me, but for the rats. I gathered what was salvageable and replanted them in the greenhouse.

I have new beets, spinach, carrots and leeks coming up in the shop skylight and I have a small fan going near the plants which seems to be keep them plants healthy.



This morning I went out to the greenhouse to stare up at sodden skies, near frozen rain pouring down, and look for a bit of hope. Last year my strawberry runners in six-inch pots all but died outside in that February deep freeze so last summer, I planted new runners in smaller pots so I can move or cover them. I rooted the plants in moss from the bush with a quarter teaspoon of time release 15 15 15 in the bottom of each small pot. I've been pulling the plants out of their pots for a peek occasionally. Today I was pleased to see a burst of healthy white roots. Soon I'll plant the potted runners through holes drilled in large plastic buckets filled with moss and hang the buckets up in the greenhouse. I find the moss buckets to be much lighter to handle than soil and give air to the roots; some compost and fertilizer is added too.



## The Gardener's January

- from "The Book of Garden Magic" 1935, R.E. Biles

Old Winter sad, in snow yclad,  
Is making a doleful din:  
But let him howl till he crack his jowl,  
We will not let him in.

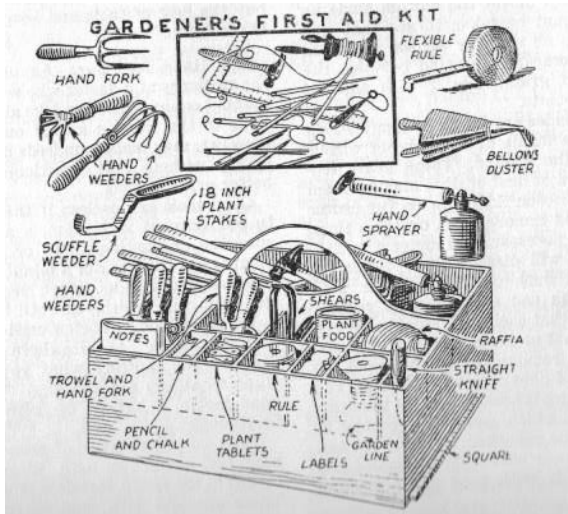
- Thomas Noel

The name January is derived from the two-faced Roman god, Janus, to whom the month is dedicated. The door-keeper of heaven, he faced both the past and the future and as the deity to be propitiated at the beginning of all enterprises, he was made guardian of the fortunes of the New Year.

It seems a merciful system which divides the calendar into years and months. For some reason it seems impossible for the human mind to grasp the idea that all things, both good and evil, run in cycles. And as spring follows winter, so does better fortune follow that which seems to us adverse. Most of our troubles come from extremes of pessimism or optimism - through lack of foresight we attempt either too little or too much. Good planning will help us in our gardens and in our lives to make each succeeding year a HAPPY NEW YEAR. [...]

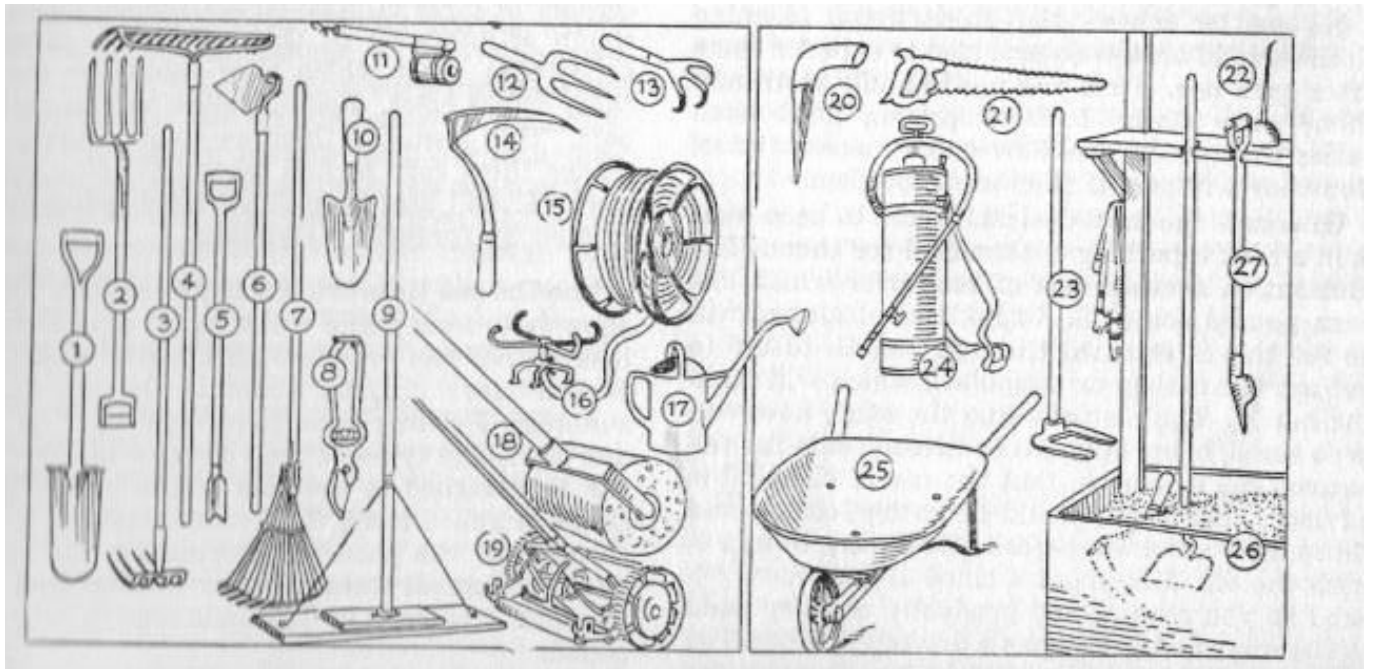
Mahomet is quoted as saying "If I had but two loaves of bread, I would sell one and buy flowers to feed my





soul." In January, I would sell one to buy wood for the fire. Then, from a practical standpoint, I would use the ashes on the Asters next summer. [...]

Make an inventory of your garden supplies, tools, fertilizers, spraying materials and other necessities. Order your seeds early and buy only the best quality, remembering what a saving they will make to you in labour, patience and satisfaction. Old edge tools should be gone over and sharpened for the coming season. New handles should be placed and friction tape wrapped about that split which always pinches your finger. Paint the handles a very bright colour to find them easily in the long grass and to help you remember to take them in at night. [the book then sends us to Chapter III- a specific treatise on tools. Here are the images from the book.] [I'm missing 3,14,18,22,23,24]



## EVENTS

### SPEC 2020 SMALL FARM SESSION

15 Feb 2020, 9:30 AM - 5:00 PM

Spruce Atrium, KPU Surrey, Surrey - \$10.00

Day-long conference for small-scale farmers in Metro Vancouver.

### THE EDIBLE GARDEN PROJECT

Seedy Saturday (a local seed exchange)

March 7th at North Shore Neighbourhood House

times and details to follow



## The Compost Bin

- Maria Issa

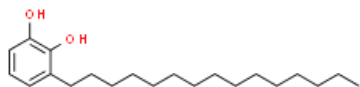
Having spent the morning shoveling the heavy white stuff and shaking off the rhodo branches so they don't break, I'm not really in BIG DIG mode. However, I am always plotting: the current issue is a big magnolia. Those of you who did the BIG DIG may remember that lovely, huge tree to the East of Keven's house, on the lower level; close to the winter jasmine. Gotta save that tree – somehow. Current thoughts swirl around getting Wall and a tree-moving company to donate the move, and DNV or the City to donate the spot. I'm sure one of those mega backhoes could extract the tree and slowly inch its way to the new home.... If only we can find a landing spot for it. The DNV head of Parks answered my pleading email and passed me on to one of her team: fingers crossed, watch this space for developments.

As I am abandoning all of you for February, there will be an honorary Guest Editor for the February issue of the Leaf. I am grateful to Sue Callahan and I promised that I will start her off, and then she can fill in the gaps. Aline is wrestling with the gmail, to get the Leaf and other info to you so please be patient as good things are bound to happen, but maybe differently. Change is good – as that is the definition of life.

My thoughts are turning to warmer climes and here is an interesting item – we saw this in the Yucatan: *The Incredible Coincidence of a Poisonous Tree Growing Next to Its Antidote*. These trees, found in Mexico and parts of Central America, are an arborological wonder. [<https://www.atlasobscura.com/articles/the-incredible-coincidence-of-a-poisonous-tree-growing-next-to-its-antidote>] by John Peck, June 2016.

“THE JUNGLES of Southern Mexico and Central America are ruled by a tangled gang of trees and vines. The vegetation of this region grows thick and quickly, making it almost impossible to navigate without a machete and a compass. Even more surprising, perhaps, is that the greenery itself is a hazard: There are at least 11 species of plants and trees in Central America which are considered poisonous to the touch and can cause severe contact dermatitis, a horrible burning rash.

There is only one, though, where the poison and the antidote grow side by side. The offending tree's official name is *metopium brownei*, known locally as cheché or black-sap poisonwood and it's highly unpleasant. The bark and leaves of *metopium brownei* contain a high dose of an oily substance called urushiol, the active chemical agent in poison ivy and many other similarly gifted plants. When this chemical invades your skin, it sets off an elaborate, internal alarm system.

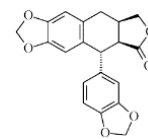


Langerhan cells, your body's guard dogs, alert the immune system to the presence of intruders and summon T-cells to deal with the infection. They do this by calling for back-up, releasing signal proteins called cytokines and chemokines which order white blood cells called lymphocytes to assassinate the infected cells. Here's the problem: The T-cells and lymphocytes also call for back-up creating a chain-reaction which leads to a vicious cycle of attack and alert. It would be like every soldier in the army calling in their very own airstrike, then the pilots calling in more troops who call in more airstrikes, and so on. The blistering rash that follows is a physical symptom of the human body's natural reaction to this chemical assault. (For those who prefer cartoons to text-books, there is a lovely animated explanation of the body's reaction here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PzunOgYHeyg>)



Typical treatment of urushiol-based skin infection in North America is limited to a thorough scrubbing and topical application of calamine lotion. This doesn't actually treat the painful chemical process taking place below the surface, though, so much as calm the redness and help stop its spread.

Fortunately, the remedy is close. A tree called *Bursera simaruba*, known by locals as chaka and sometimes called the Gumbo-Limbo tree is a bioactive species which, when processed correctly, acts as an antidote to cheché. The chemistry behind this relationship is complex, with several bioactive chemical compounds in the bark and leaves of *bursera* working together. Several studies identified chemical constituents including *picropolygamain*,



*amyrin* and *elemicine* that are both individually beneficial to the human body and also combine to produce a powerful antioxidant. This is the key to shutting down your body's reaction to the toxins in cheché. The antioxidants break that painful cycle of alert and attack raging below the skin, essentially calling a cease-fire and allowing the body's reaction to stop. Active chemical agents also work to alleviate inflammation of the affected



area, reducing swelling and itching. [read the rest on the website, you can also read about the antimicrobial properties of Mexican medicinal plants here: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1572557X06030145>].

Rita says to try these!! (if you have already broken that new Year's resolution) *Coconut-chocolate-pecan cookies*  
400 g sweetened shredded coconut; 2 cups semisweet chocolate chips; 1/3 cup chopped pecans; 1 300 ml can condensed milk. Preheat oven to 350°F baking sheet with parchment paper; mix ingredients; make 2" balls. Bake 18 min.