



# THE LEAF

THE LYNN VALLEY GARDEN CLUB

Established 1943

January 2023

## President's Message - Lorraine Robson

The transition to a new year always feels full of fresh possibilities and new beginnings. Don't get me wrong though; I love tradition, too. My family *always* enjoys a cheese fondue on Christmas Eve and, for us, it *has* to be a big turkey on Christmas Day. I have loved the LVGC tradition of making a Christmas craft at our December party: a wreath of evergreens for the door, a centrepiece with a candle for the holiday table, or a decorative bell made from an over-turned flowerpot. When we decided to fill and decorate hampers for Sage House at our party this past year, I wasn't sure how well the new plan would be received, but Wow! We filled 21 beautifully decorated hampers with gifts for women and children fleeing domestic violence, added several items to the Giving Tree at Mt. Seymour United Church for youth in care, and filled Maria's vehicle with contributions for the Food Bank! I was moved by your generosity and enthusiasm for helping others and touched when one member wrote to say she hoped this community-giving would become a new LVGC tradition at our Christmas party. Several others remarked on how much they enjoyed the event and one characterized it as "meaningful." Thank you to Sarah Gray for taking the lead in organizing the party, to Barb Downman for suggesting the idea and helping, and to everyone who contributed gifts and nibbles! Thanks, too, to the Hospitality team for providing their hot apple cider, another much-loved LVGC tradition.

The juxtaposition of old and new is apparent on our club Executive this month, too. I am saddened to have to say farewell to these retiring members: Gillian Konst, Donna Wasyluk, Barb Downman, Penny Le Couteur, Courtney Mitchell, and Ann McKinnon. I have enjoyed working with you all and so appreciate your contributions to the club! At the same time, I'm delighted to welcome Judith Brook, Jennifer Sydenham, Alison Parkinson, Linda Downs, Jacquie D'Auria, and Ann McKinnon (in a new role). A lovely LVGC tradition is the giving of a \$25 gift card to Maple Leaf Nursery as a little thank-you token to members completing their term of service. (Let's not call it a "tour of duty"! 😊) I know we can never repay you for all your good work and dedication to the club, but I'm looking forward to giving the cards to you at our January General Meeting.

An old tradition being renewed at our January meeting is the Plant Table. Thank you to Norma Buckland who staffed the Plant Table in pre-pandemic times and to Cath Rickey who is taking over in that role. Please bring donations of plants, garden books and magazines, or garden-related items for sale at the Plant Table, but please, please remember to take them home with you if they don't sell. You can bring them back another time if you like, but don't saddle Cath with them. Most items sell for a few loonies or toonies, but if you have a special plant that's worth more, please mention a suggested price to Cath or put a price tag on it.

Our January speaker is Heather Edwards on the Eco Sculpture program in Burnaby. You may have seen some of these beautiful plant-filled sculptures in Burnaby parks and civic sites. It's quite an art to choose and arrange the sedums, grasses, and other plants over a

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

**Mount Seymour United  
Church**

**1200 Parkgate Ave,  
North Vancouver,  
BC V7H 2X9  
(604) 929-1336**

*Meetings start promptly at  
7:15 PM*

### **SPEAKER:**

**HEATHER EDWARDS  
ECO-SCULPTURE PROJECT  
IN BURNABY**

If you need to contact  
anyone at LVGC please  
use email or phone! If you  
must send a thing - phone  
to get the address and send  
it to a VIP (list is on the  
next page)

**PLEASE USE  
ELECTRONIC ACCESS**  
Your emails are welcome!  
[lynnvalleygardenclub@gmail.com](mailto:lynnvalleygardenclub@gmail.com)

## Executive 2023

### President

Lorraine Robson x

### Vice President

Judith Brook x

### Secretary

Sarah-Jane Gray x

### Treasurer

Jennifer Sydenham x

### Membership

Ann McKinnon x

Alison Parkinson x

### Members at Large (MAL)

Linda Downs x

Jacque D'Auria x

Marilyn Bullock x

Brenda Reid x

## Committees

### Plant Table

Cath Rickey x

### Hospitality

Sharon Carabetta x

Susan Nicholls x

Daphne Page x

Miriam Scott x

Leneen Webb x

### Sunshine / Door Prizes

Rosamond Hughes x

### Website

Aline Burlone x

### Newsletter Editors

Maria Issa x

Margaret Campbell x

### Executive Meetings

February Executive meeting will

be chez Jennifer Sydenham

Newsletter items to



[lynnvalleygardenclubnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:lynnvalleygardenclubnewsletter@gmail.com) Feb 8, 2023

### Thanks to LEAF contributors:

Rosemarie Adams, Barb Downman, Norma Ferguson, Gillian Konst, Penny LeCouteur, Rita Marshall, Ann MvKinnon, Bonnie Noakes, Lorraine Robson

frame so that they survive and thrive for months. I've seen a whale, a carousel horse, and giant insects made this way, so I'm looking forward to learning more about how they do it.

In February, we'll be welcoming Brian Minter to speak to us. *Members of the club will have until January 31 to pick up their free ticket from V-P Judith Brook, so if you want to attend that talk, don't delay.* Judith will bring tickets to the January 19 meeting. Any remaining tickets will go on sale to the public at \$15 each on February 1. Brian will be bringing plants to sell after his talk, so we're looking for two more volunteers to help him set up and sell. Please let me know if you're willing to help. We won't be holding the regular business part of the meeting or serving tea and coffee since we'll likely have so many visitors that night. Your Executive team has been working overtime to organize all the details of this event and we hope you'll be asexcited as we are!

Our amazing Plant Sale is another grand tradition of the LVGC, so save the date for that: Saturday, May 13. In truth, we spend Friday setting up and sell any remaining plants on Sunday, so save more than one day so you can join in the fun. We'll be going with the distributed version at club members' gardens in the Lynn Valley area again this year. I love the energy of our Plant Sale and it's what allows us to book such great speakers and to donate so much money to worthwhile causes. In 2022, we donated \$5,600!

We'd love to set up a hands-on seed-starting workshop in early to mid-March, and we're looking for someone who would like to coordinate an activity like that, so please let me know if you'd like to organize it. Maybe one or more of the Veggimates might like to take the lead? It could be held on a driveway or under a carport and would be a great way to meet other club members and develop new skills. If you've never grown a plant from a seed before, prepare for a miracle! The idea that a juicy tomato or a bright zinnia could grow from a little brown or tan seed with just the addition of soil + sunlight + water is remarkable and brings great joy.

As I said, the new year brings fresh possibilities and new beginnings. Some are wrapped in little seeds, and some are found in club members. I wish you joy in discovering both in 2023.

Here's to celebrating old and new traditions together, to meeting old friends and making new ones. Happy New Year to you all!!



## SPEAKER

### Eco-Sculpture Program in Burnaby: HEATHER EDWARDS



Heather Edwards is the Manager of Parks Planning, Design and Development in the City of Burnaby. Her work revolves around community and environmental program development. She has a Bachelor of Recreation Studies and a Master of Landscape Architecture from the University of Manitoba. Heather will be speaking to us on one of the projects she started, the Eco-Sculpture Program. They are different from topiary - another

Photo coincidentally and magically of eco-sculptures in Burnaby - by Gillian Konst!

gardening art – where a single plant is pruned into a shape. Instead, eco-sculptures start with a metal frame that's packed with soil. Plants are selected for their colours and textures. A design is created, and the structure is mapped to show where each type of plant goes. As the they grow, the design fills in, creating an imaginative living sculpture.



### ***Vice President – Judith Brook***

Come to the January LVGC meeting to pick up your free ticket for our **February 16, 2023** speaker, **Brian Minter**, on *“Exciting Plants for a Changing Climate and What the Future Holds”*.

There will be no business portion at the February meeting, and on that day the timing is: Doors open at 7 PM; Presentation at 7:30 PM.

We have set aside FREE tickets for members' use only, with additional tickets for sale to the public at \$15 after January 31.

There will be plants for sale after presentation - Cash only.

Get your fee *ticket from Judith Brook at the January meeting* prior to the business portion or during the break.

See you there!



### ***Treasurer – Donna Wasylik handing off to Jennifer Sydenham***

Bank Balance as of January 1	\$17,276.98
In Petty Cash	<u>\$100.00</u>
Total	\$17,376.98

### ***Membership – Ann McKinnon & Alison Parkinson***

Thank you to everyone who renewed their membership for 2023. We are now at 156 members with room for another 19 members. While we were sorry to lose 16 members from 2022 (14 lapsed and 2 deceased - Joyce Page and Luisa Veschini), we have added 22 new members to the club for 2023. We look forward to getting to know these new members and hope you will join us in making them feel welcome when you meet them at the meetings.

Due to the recent increase in the membership cap to 175, we will now be able to offer membership to the remaining people on the waitlist. With luck we may still have a few membership spots available at this year's plant sale. In the past, the lack of membership spaces and a very long waitlist had been a disappointment to keen plant sale shoppers.

We are hoping to have the new 2023 membership cards ready for distribution at the January 19<sup>th</sup> meeting. Unfortunately, serious illness derailed what was looking to be the perfect turnover to the new team. Thanks to the early renewals Barb Downman processed over the past few months, with a bit of scrambling we may be able to get back on track. If not, the membership cards will be available at the February 16<sup>th</sup> meeting. This should still give you lots of time to collect your card before you want to use your 10% discount at Maple Leaf Garden Centre for your spring plant "fix".

### ***MALS – Marilyn Bullock, Jacquie D’Auria, Linda Downs, Brenda Reid***

Planning for the 2023 Plant Sale has begun. Once again, we will be using the multiple site format that has worked so well for the last two years. Our regular and temporary church locations are still not able to accommodate us and no suitable indoor venue has been found. Last year’s site hosts would be preferred, if possible, as their locations are known to the attendees. The number of sites would be 5 (reduced from 6 last year) to make it easier for the MALS to oversee them.

The **Plant Sale** will be held on Saturday **May 13th**.



# THE CHRISTMAS PARTY AND THE WONDERFUL THINGS YOU DID

A photo essay with thanks to Rosemarie Adams, photographer *par excellence*!





***Christmas Card Donations***

***- Jackie Morris and Courtney Mitchell***

Jackie and I thank you for collecting so many Christmas cards for donation to the Wish Drop-In Centre. I took over 300 cards to the Wish office, which they distributed at their Christmas dinner on December 16th.

The cards were greatly appreciated. While Jackie and I did not attend because of ongoing Covid concerns, we know from previous experience how happy the women are to be able to select cards for their friends and families. We encourage you to continue collecting cards during the year so we are able to donate lots of them again next December.

When I went to the Wish office, it was shocking to see the how much worse the homeless situation is in the Downtown East Side. Please keep these people in your thoughts.

## *Our Donation to North Van City Library and the Wild Bird Trust - Lorraine Robson*

The \$300 that LVGC donated to our library this year has been used to grow their collection of books on gardening and sustainable living. Walter Zicha Jr., Head of Acquisitions and Collection Management, sent us the following letter:

"Hello again Ms. Robson and to all the folks at the Lynn Valley Garden Club,

I spent a little bit of time today to do some book selections for the generous \$300 donation that you folks provided to us. I selected a number of materials that are forthcoming publications or classic/core titles that we could use in our collections. These titles should be available here at the North Vancouver City Library over the next couple of months. The titles we ordered include:

- At Home, with Nature: A Guide to Sustainable, Natural Landscaping
- Back to basics: a complete guide to traditional skills
- Compost city: practical composting know-how for small-space living
- The edible ecosystem solution: growing biodiversity in your backyard and beyond
- Gardening for birds, butterflies & bees: everything you need to know to create a wildlife habitat in your backyard
- Gardening hacks: 300+ time and money saving hacks
- The Good Garden: How to nurture pollinators, soil, native wildlife, and healthy food - All in your own backyard
- Happy Planet Living: Simple ways to live a climatic positive lifestyle and make a big difference
- The Herb Gardening Handbook: A beginner's guide to growing and harvesting herbs no matter your space
- Plant and Grow Together: Your community gardening handbook
- Modern homesteading: advice and inspiration for cultivating a better life.
- Rebel Gardening: A beginner's handbook to organic urban gardening
- The regenerative garden: 80 practical projects for creating a self-sustaining garden ecosystem
- Resilient Garden: Sustainable gardening for a changing climate
- Small-Scale Homesteading: A Sustainable guide to gardening, keeping chickens, maple sugaring, preserving the harvest, and more
- Sustainable Gardening for Dummies®

We are thrilled to be able to order and receive these in the near future. We would like to sincerely thank you again for your contribution. In appreciation,  
Walter Zicha"

Here's a happy thank-you note from the Wild Birds Trust for our club's donation to them.

Hello Lorraine

We received your generous contribution and lovely message of support and alliance. And I will pass along your kind words to Nicole and Sam. In the new year, the tax receipt will be mailed to you.

Wishing you and the Garden Club members wellness and a flourishing year of native species and positive change.

regards,

Lianne Payne

*Operations Manager, Wild Bird Trust of BC*



*I grow plants for many reasons: to please my eye or to please my soul, to challenge the elements or to challenge my patience, for novelty or for nostalgia, but mostly for the joy in seeing them grow. – David Hobson*

## *Passages and Fond Memories*

### *A Tribute to Joyce Page*

Joyce Page passed away on December 30, 2022.



*Susan* – friends since grade 11. Joyce came by her love of gardening through her childhood in her Mother’s garden – a beautiful display of flowers and vegetables – even asparagus! It was always a pleasure to see how Joyce honoured her family’s gardening traditions while adding in her own unique choices. Joyce was always up for a garden tour and never stopped wanting to learn more about other gardens - her inquisitive mind was always at work.

*Audrey* -- Joyce was a much admired and respected teacher. She was competent, inspirational, creative, caring, and very well liked. We became close friends when we spent time together in Costa Rica. We then traveled together several times. She was passionate about bird watching, photography, traveling and gardening. She had a beautiful garden and loved to share plants and knowledge with others. She will be missed by many.

*Pat and Jackie* -- We first met Joyce when we were MALs together in 2008. We hit it off right away and, once our time together as MALs was over, we started meeting once or twice a month, breakfast at White Spot before Joyce went to Silver Harbour, and always a quick sushi meal before garden club. Then lunches and visits to each other’s gardens and, after the start of Covid, regular Zoom meetings.

*All of us* -- Joyce was talented, artistic and kind. She had an eye for beauty. She was a retired teacher, an excellent gardener, an award-winning photographer, bird enthusiast, and world traveller. Her tales and photographs of her adventures in Costa Rica every year were inspiring, as were her photos of penguins in Antarctica, puff legged hummingbirds in Peru, and boobies in the Galapagos. Her photos of her flowers were stunning.

Joyce’s six-member photography club told her they were going to wish her a happy 70th birthday by Zoom on April 25, 2022, which was her birthday. Joyce didn’t know that it was a surprise party and was to include family and other friends, maybe 20 in all managed to attend. We were to say how we met Joyce and maybe add some details. She was so gracious. After each person was finished, she said kind and interesting things about them, in effect introducing them to the others. It was a longer party than anyone expected and she must have been tired and maybe sore, but you wouldn’t have known it. It felt to some like a Living Wake – beautifully done. And Joyce’s graciousness and interest in everyone continued to her end.

We are sure she touched the lives of many garden club members and will be remembered fondly by everyone who knew her. She is survived by sister, Gayle, brother, Doug, niece, April, nephew, Stephen, great nephew, Talieson, other relatives and many friends.

---- *Susan Huber, Audrey Beugger, Pat Holmes and Jackie Morris*

The picture in Antarctica was taken by Joyce’s long-time friend and traveling companion, Louise Shaffer.

We also wish to acknowledge the passing of some of our gardener friends at Lynn Valley Garden Club: our long-time members, Luisa Veschini; and Lana Wightman. Lana passed away unexpectedly on December 5, 2022. She was an active member of our club until she and her husband Bob moved to the Sunshine Coast in 2015. She was also a Master Gardener, member of the Deep Cove Garden Club and was on the executive of the Vancouver Hardy Plant Group.  
*- may flowers grow in their footsteps -*



"Snow was falling,  
 so much like stars  
 filling the dark trees  
 that one could easily imagine  
 its reason for being was nothing more  
 than prettiness."

~Mary Oliver sent in by Barb Downman

A most impressive wreath - in England:  
 apparently it opens. - Photo by Gillian Konst.

**A (Hosta!) Garden for ~~all~~ 3 Seasons  
 - Penny LeCouteur**



Clockwise from left: Spring, Summer and ... ! Winter.

*At Christmas I no more desire a rose,  
 Than wish a snow in May's new-fangled mirth;  
 But like of each thing that in season grows.*

- William Shakespeare, 'Love's Labour's Lost' (1595)  
 sc. 1, l. 105 -

## What is a Native Plant?

Norma Ferguson



A native plant is a species that is naturally occurring in a given area and has many connections to other living things that co-evolved with them in the same area. Native plants are essential to biodiversity.

Thanks to the increasing interest in native plants, I decided to search for native plant nurseries. Quite unexpectedly, I came across *Plan Bee*, a nursery situated in Langley that grows their stock from seed or orders them from a wholesale supplier that also grows all stock from seed. I suspect many of our LVGC members might be interested as interested as I am in what they have to offer. This nursery is not always open, although they do promise “regular hours” in the Spring (without specifying when Spring starts and stops in their calendar). The best way to contact them is by email at [info@planbeenativeplants.com](mailto:info@planbeenativeplants.com). They promise an appointment if the nursery is not enjoying regular hours. I was interested to note that they also offer educational presentations regarding native plants.

[this brought up the question of “when does a non-native species become naturalized?”]

## Introduced Species - Wikipedia

An **introduced species**, **alien species**, **exotic species**, **adventive species**, **immigrant species**, **foreign species**, **non-indigenous species**, or **non-native species** is a species living outside its native distributional range but which has arrived there by human activity, directly or indirectly, and either deliberately or accidentally. Non-native species can have various effects on the local ecosystem. Introduced species that become established and spread beyond the place of introduction are considered naturalized. The process of human-caused introduction is distinguished from biological colonization, in which species spread to new areas through "natural" (non-human) means such as storms and rafting. An introduced species, alien species, exotic species, adventive species, immigrant species, foreign species, non-indigenous species, or non-native species is a species living outside its native distributional range, but which has arrived there by human activity, directly or indirectly, and either deliberately or accidentally.

Non-native species can have various effects on the local ecosystem. Introduced species that become established and spread beyond the place of introduction are considered naturalized. The process of human-caused introduction is distinguished from biological colonization, in which species spread to new areas through "natural" (non-human) means such as storms and rafting. The Latin expression *neobiota* captures the characteristic that these species are new biota to their environment in terms of established biological network (eg food web) relationships. Neobiota can further be divided into *neozoa* (also: neozoons, sing. neozoon, *ie* animals) and *neophyta* (plants).

The impact of introduced species is highly variable. Some have a substantial negative effect on a local

ecosystem (in which case they are also classified more specifically as an invasive species), while other introduced species may have little or no negative impact (no invasiveness). Some species have been introduced intentionally to combat pests. They are called biocontrols and may be regarded as beneficial as an alternative to pesticides in agriculture for example. In some instances the potential for being beneficial or detrimental in the long run remains unknown.

The effects of introduced species on natural environments have gained much scrutiny from scientists, governments, farmers and others. The Latin expression *neobiota* captures the characteristic that these species are *new* biota to their environment in terms of established biological network (eg food web) relationships. Neobiota can further be divided into *neozoa* (also: neozoons, sing. neozoon, *ie* animals) and *neophyta* (plants).

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*It is a golden maxim to cultivate the garden for the nose, and the eyes will take care of themselves.*

– Robert Louis Stevenson

## Agrotonomy

Here is a useful little Instagram clip on agrotonomy. And if you don't know what that is, it's time to read up about growing soilless lettuce! There are some really cool youtube videos – one of a guy just piling huge lettuces into a basket. I wonder what they feed their veggies at it's completely hydroponic?

Here is the Instagram link – and no, you don't need to sign up: <https://www.instagram.com/agrotonomy/?hl=en>



## Time to Start Those Seeds



So while you have your Instagram skills handy, here is a useful little Instagram clip to help you prepare paper pots for the great Spring plant. <https://www.instagram.com/reel/Cjx82miK9VZ/?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=> (just ignore the sign in /sign up please and click on the video)

I googled: “Can you plant newspaper pots?” and this was the answer: “Making your own paper pots is not only eco-friendly, but will save you money too. Ideal for half-hardy annuals like cosmos, zinnias and antirrhinum, the newspaper pots are completely biodegradable. When the plants are ready to go outdoors, the whole pot can be planted into the soil.”



## Bring Back the Butterflies

- Rita Marshall

Last April, Richard Beard presented a talk on this subject to considerable acclaim. The talk was available on Zoom and a recording was subsequently made available on West Van Library's YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GyVIFVBXKLE&amp;t=3s>  
I would like to suggest Richard Beard be invited to speak to our Garden Club on this topic.



## Tiny Warrior Hummingbirds

- sent in by Barb Downman

The Anna's Hummingbird is Vancouver's Official Bird, elected to the post in 2017.



The recent posting of an Urban Nature Enthusiast blog looks at the amazing survival of this tiny species in Vancouver. How does it cope with declining temperatures and uncertain food supplies in a northern winter? These resilient little birds have some amazing tricks up their sleeves, but our support is often key to helping them get through the toughest times. And the unexpected snowfall that hit Vancouver just before Christmas must have put them to the test in a particularly challenging way.

Thank goodness for hummingbird feeders and the caring souls who keep them well stocked. The blog offers a few tips on how to ensure your feeder continues to offer support, even in the most challenging weather.

*All gardeners know better than other gardeners. – Chinese proverb*

## *The Forgotten Container Mystery... can you solve it?*

The holiday party was not only a feast for the eyes, but for the tummies: we had tables and tables of deliciousnesses! These wonderful things appeared in a range of containers – some of which did not make it home with the owners. If you want this container back [empty, of course, as we ‘cleaned’ it for you] please ask Sarah where it can be found.



(and just before we leave Christmas for another year...)



## *Donna Wasylik sends the following:*

“I had wanted to send some sort of holiday greeting as I did in 2014 and 2018 but it is difficult in today's world to know exactly what to say without offending someone. So I met with my lawyer yesterday and on advice next year I will say the following:

“Please accept with no obligation, implied or implicit, my best wishes for an environmentally conscious, socially responsible, low stress, non-addictive, gender neutral celebration of the winter solstice holiday practiced with the most enjoyable traditions of religious persuasion or secular practices of your choice with respect for the religious/secular persuasions and/or traditions of others, or their choice not to practice religious or secular traditions at all.

I also wish you a fiscally successful, personally fulfilling and medically uncomplicated recognition of the onset of the generally accepted calendar year 2023. but not without due respect for the calendar of choice of other cultures whose contributions to society have helped make our country great and without regard to the race, creed, colour, age, physical ability, religious faith or sexual preference of the wishee.

By accepting this greeting, you are accepting these terms:

This greeting is subject to clarification or withdrawal. It is freely transferable with no alteration to the original greeting. It implies no promise by the wisher to actually implement any of the wishes for her/him, shim/sher or others and is void where prohibited by law, and is revocable at the sole discretion of the wisher. The wish is warranted to perform as expected within the usual application of good tidings for a period of one year or until the issuance of a new wish at the sole discretion of the wisher.

Best Regards (without prejudice)

Name withheld”



## *Free Compost Bins*

*- Maggie Davis*



I have been given two compost bins which I thought someone in the club could use. They are being dropped off at my house soon. Please get in touch if you think you could use them.

*Who loves a garden, still his Eden keeps, Perennial pleasures plants, and wholesome harvests reaps.*

Amos Bronson Alcott, the father of Louisa May Alcott

*Spring passes and one remembers one's innocence  
Summer passes and one remembers one's exuberance  
Autumn passes and one remembers one's reverence  
Winter passes and one remembers one's perseverance.*

- Yoko Ono, Season of Glass

*My whole life had been spent waiting for an epiphany, a manifestation of God's presence, the kind of transcendent, magical experience that lets you see your place in the big picture. And that is what I had with my first compost heap.*

--Bette Midler – found by Aline Burlone

*There are no gardening mistakes, only experiments.*

- Janet Kilburn Phillips

I totally agree with Bette Midler – which is why this entire section exists.

There is magic and wonder in the most mundane of gardening operations: our gardens are living laboratories where we ask questions of nature and our skills, and then do the experiment to test our hypotheses. Sometimes successfully. Sometimes not. [...and we will not discuss my last year's effort of starting seeds early outside under hoop-held, plastic garbage bag-covered cold frames. We will quietly file those under "negative results". It's sort of like "God always answers our prayers – but the answer is sometimes "no"."]

Starting seeds is one such wonder. For years, I had wondered why some seeds just basically 'refuse'. Why, dammit? I gave them soil, water, warmth, light: seriously, what else did they want? Then I heard about 'stratification'. Whazzat? It turns out that

"Stratification is a process of pre-treating seeds in order to simulate natural conditions that seeds would experience in the soil over-winter. Pre-treating seeds helps the seed "break dormancy" and initiate the germination process." [I am going to look up the chemical and biochemical mechanisms: I'm guessing that there are protein conformational changes involved ... there is an interesting abstract here: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/27927995/>]

Who knew? I certainly didn't. It also turns out that there are several different ways of breaking dormancy – and not all methods work with all seeds: there is 'dry' and also 'moist' stratification, as well as legume inoculation, scarification, and even hot water. Some seeds are particularly recalcitrant and are "double dormant" and need TWO 'winters' – alias sojourns in one's freezer – before they are willing to come out of their shells. There are actual tables and charts of what tortures to put the seeds through to make them talk. You can (free) download the "Seed stratification and propagation guide" from the Prairie Nursery website: the link is in the links file.

Now all that remains is to identify the many seeds I saved – and didn't label, because I figured I would remember. I think I'll bring my baggies to the January meeting in the hopes that maybe you can tell me what's what.

Then there is the magic and wonder of unusual plants. I just received a photo from my daughter, Antonia, who has an eye for strange flowers, especially those poking out of Mayan ruins at Toniná. (photo below By J. Antonio Cruz Coutiño - Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=72464346>)



Turns out, by google reverse image search, that this weird and wonderful thing is an invasive weed [sigh]:

"*Commelina communis*, used to be known as *Asiatic dayflower*, a weedy sprawling plant which often roots at the joints of stems. The flowers are blue/purple. It is considered invasive in

several States and resistant to herbicides. Nonetheless, some gardeners encourage its growth as a ground cover in moist, woody areas. This plant likes sun to partial shade."

Luckily Wikipedia has some positive things to say about this plant: "The Asiatic dayflower plant serves as the type species for its large genus. Linnaeus picked the name *Commelina* in honour of the two Dutch botanists of the Commelijn family, using the two large showy petals of *Commelina communis* to symbolise them. Linnaeus described the species in the first edition of his landmark work, *Species Plantarum*, in 1753.

Long before the plant was studied in Europe, however, it had been used for generations in traditional Chinese medicine. The flowers have also been used in Japan to produce a dye and a pigment that was used in many world-renowned Ukiyo-e woodcuts from the 18th and early 19th centuries. In the modern era the plant has found limited use as a model organism in the field of plant physiology due to its complex pigment chemistry and the ease of viewing its stomata.

The Asiatic dayflower is considered a weed both in areas where it was introduced and in certain parts of its native range. The flowers' interactions with pollinators have been well studied and have helped to support important hypotheses about pollination in the field of plant ecology. Recent research has also revealed that the Asiatic dayflower can bioaccumulate a number of metals, making it a candidate for revegetating and essentially cleaning spoiled copper mines.

This expands the discussion around the pros and cons of invasive, introduced or native species.



**Lynn Valley Garden Club**  
Presents



# **Brian Minter**

**Exciting Plants for a Changing Climate  
and What the Future Holds**

**February 16, 2023 at 7:30 pm**

**Parkgate area of North Vancouver**

**\$15.00 advance purchase only – no sales at the door**  
**Tickets available through Lynn Valley Garden Club**  
<https://lynnvalleygardenclub.org>

**Some plants will be available for purchase after the presentation – cash only**

**Masks encouraged and appreciated**