



THE LEAF

THE LYNN VALLEY GARDEN CLUB *Established 1943* *February 2023*

President’s Message – Lorraine Robson

Some years crocuses and snowdrops are blooming in my garden by early January, but this year it’s almost mid-February and none are even showing colour yet. Their slender leaves are poking up through the soil and leaf litter, but the flowers are still just a promise: soon, soon! The hellebores situated in the shade are still tight in bud, but they’ll be blooming soon, too.

Similarly, ideas planted early last year will “flower” as our special event with Brian Minter takes place at our meeting on February 16 at **7:30 pm**. Remember, this is a ticketed event, so you must pick up your ticket from our V-P Judith Brook **in advance**. If you have not collected your ticket, please email us at lynnvalleygardenclub@gmail.com with Minter Tickets in the subject line and include your name and phone number. No tickets will be sold at the door, so if you have friends who’d like to attend, please ask them to email us with the same details. We will be offering Zoom for members only. Tickets for non-members are \$15; cash only.



Many thanks to Judith for all the extra work of handling ticket sales and to Sarah Gray for her help in forwarding the ticket requests. We will not be holding our usual club business meeting, Plant Table, or the tea break that night, so you can forget your mug at home this one time. Thank you to volunteer ticket-takers Marilyn Bullock, Randy Cobbett, Jessica McCulloch, and Judy Sullivan, and to Catherine Rickey and Daphne Page for offering to help Brian Minter sell plants after his talk. Plant sales will be **cash only**. Despite whatever New Year’s resolutions you’ve made to cut back on plant purchases, after watching Brian’s photos and hearing him talk, you’ll wish you had stuffed your wallet with money, so be prepared. 😊

Sometimes we plant ideas, sometimes seeds, and sometimes both. In hopes of growing a fresh crop of seed-starters for the Plant Sale, we’re holding a seed-starting workshop on Sunday, March 12 from 11:00 – noon or so. Thank you to Jennie Nichol and Samantha Carey for agreeing to lead a hands-on workshop on what to do to get your seeds off to the best start and keep them growing. We are still looking for a volunteer with a flat driveway and an empty carport where we could hold the session under cover in case of rain. If you’re willing to share such a space, please let me know. We’ll provide the soil, seeds, and suitable containers for the first 20 participants who sign up. In return, you’ll provide half your seedlings to the Plant Sale. (If you use your new skills to grow lots more plants, those can all be yours or you can choose to donate some of them, too.) Please see details about the workshop in the notice below and **sign up by February 18**, so we can get the materials ready for you.

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:
BRIAN MINTER
FEB 16
EXCITING PLANTS FOR A CHANGING CLIMATE AND WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS

There will not be a business meeting in February

If you need to contact anyone at LVGC please use email or phone!

PLEASE USE ELECTRONIC ACCESS
Your emails are welcome!
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

Jacquie 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 Maria Issa

Newsletter items to



lynnvalleygardenclubnewsletter@gmail.com Feb 8, 2023

Thanks to LEAF contributors:

Rosemarie Adams, Judith Brook, Aline Burlone, Sharon Carabetta, Margaret Campbell, Gillian Konst, Jackie Morris, Catherine Rickey, Jane Sherrott, Diane Sekora

In our perennial quest for volunteers, we're seeking two people willing to train as Tech Support to help set up all the equipment (the church WIFI and computer to run Zoom, the projector, the speaker's computer to run PowerPoint, a third computer to monitor Zoom participants, and the sound system) which makes our presentations possible in case any of our current team are away. Some of our team use Apples, so it would be good to have someone who is familiar with PCs and the way they work. Please tell Aline, Maria, or Lorraine if you would be willing to help.

In other tech news, the church has bought a new projector as the old one kept quitting on them - and us. You may not have noticed during the tea break in January that I ran out to my car to bring in the club's projector as a replacement. Fortunately, we had practiced for just that eventuality a few days earlier, so we were able to set it up quickly and our speaker started on time. The problems with the sound system have not been so easily resolved, so we're hiring an audio specialist to troubleshoot. Finding a time when he, we, and the church are all available is another challenge, but that might be where I am at dinner time on Valentine's Day. And I can't believe that that's what I'm hoping for! (Here's where you say, "But that's why we pay you the big bucks!" and we all laugh.)

We are also seeking a couple of experienced club members to serve as a Search Committee to find members to fill the roles becoming vacant at the end of this year:

- President
- Vice-President
- Secretary
- 3 Members at Large (MALs).

Ideally, we'll know the names of those standing for election in time to be posted in the October *Leaf* in advance of voting at the November AGM. Please let me know if you'd like to be on the Search Committee, or even better, if you're interested in filling one of those positions starting in January 2024.

Our Constitution does not allow for any Executive officer to stay in one position for longer than two years or to serve on the Executive in different positions for more than four consecutive years. The rotation of different people through these roles is one of the strengths of LVGC as it minimizes stagnation and allows new ideas to come forward. I won't lie and claim it's not a lot of work, but when things are going well and people are participating happily, it definitely feels worthwhile. The good we have been able to achieve together through our considerable donations this past year is certainly worthwhile. And then there's the friendships we grow while working together to keep the club running. I may not have crocuses and snowdrops yet, but I see friendships blooming beautifully!



SPEAKER BRIAN MINTER

A recipient of the 'Order of Canada', the 'Order of British Columbia' and an 'Honorary Doctorate of Technology', Brian Minter, B.A., is a horticulturist, entrepreneur and co-founder, with his wife, Faye, of Minter Country Garden, an innovative destination garden center and greenhouse growing operation in Chilliwack, British Columbia, Canada. Highly experienced and knowledgeable, Brian has been involved in the horticultural industry for decades and is the recipient of many awards, including:

- ~ The Perennial Plant Association's highest honor, the 'Award of Merit' 2014
- ~ The Garden Writers Association's highest honor, the 'Hall of Fame Award' 2014
- ~ 'The Person of the Year 2015' - Canadian Garden Council

Well known from his magazine articles, syndicated newspaper columns and TV and radio programs (CBC and BBC), Brian is in demand internationally as a speaker by the horticultural industry and gardening groups.

Brian has sat on the boards of many community organizations and has served two terms as the first Chancellor of the University of the Fraser Valley.

Reminder – the Hospitality Committee will not be serving refreshments at this public event.

Vice President – Judith Brook

The following exciting speakers have been booked for the next few months:

March: **Gary Lewis**, from Phoenix Perennials will talk to us about “Ground Covers;

April: **Willoughby Arevalo** will be speaking on the topic of "Gardening with Mushrooms"

May: **Tasha Murray** do a presentation on "Invasive plants, and other pests that are relevant to gardens"

Treasurer – Jennifer Sydenham

Bank Balance as of January 1	\$16,332.08
In Petty Cash	<u>\$100.00</u>
Total	\$16,432.08



Bee in buckwheat crop - November 2022, Judith Brook
Listen to this:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M93qXQWaBdE>

Membership – Ann McKinnon & Alison Parkinson

Thanks to all of you who told your friends, family, neighbours, and total strangers that the Lynn Valley Garden Club was an interesting and fun group of people; we are now already full. We raised the constitutional limit to 175 members, lost 10 previous members, and therefore are welcoming 35 new people to our club. We look forward to meeting the new members at our regular monthly meetings, the Big Digs, and especially helping out at our annual plant sale. We will have a wait list for future members but expect that only about a dozen spaces will be available in 2024.

About half the 2023 membership cards were distributed either at the January meeting, or at the Lynn Valley Library the following Saturday to the people who picked up tickets to the Brian Minter event. We will be returning to our pre-Covid practice of distributing the membership cards at the monthly meetings, rather than mailing them. If you are unable to attend a meeting, you may wish to ask a friend to collect yours for you. Of course, some of you may be such regular shoppers at the Maple Leaf Garden centre that you no longer need to bother showing your membership card to get that 10% discount! We are all looking forward to some Spring weather and the start of gardening season.

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

While it seems like a long time until the May 13th plant sale, it’s not too soon to start thinking about which plants you can divide or dig up for the sale. We will be ordering soil for potting and will let you know when and where it will be delivered (we’re aiming for mid-March). Watch for an email with all the details and be prepared to bring your own soil container.

Pots & plant sticks (for labelling your plants!) will also be provided at the soil site. If anyone has lots of unwanted pots they want to donate to the club, please contact Brenda .And – start collecting beer flats and Costco boxes. We’ll need them for the sale to carry all those plants home.

Time to Start Those Seeds – Lorraine Robson

Sign up for Seed-Starting Workshop: March 12

Have you ever planted some seeds and then . . . nothing happened? Or your little seedlings poked their first pair of leaves above the soil, grew beautifully for a few weeks, and then collapsed? If you'd like to learn more about growing plants successfully from seed, sign up for our seed-starting workshop!

Jennie Nichol and Samantha Carey have cheerfully agreed to lead a hands-on workshop to teach best practices to avoid common problems to give your seeds the best chance of growing.

The workshop will be held on Sunday, March 12 from 11:00 – noon.

We are still looking for a volunteer with a flat driveway and an empty carport where we could hold the session under cover in case of rain. If you're willing to share such a space, please let Lorraine know.

The workshop will include:

- 15 minutes of instruction on key things like using suitable soil, temperature of soil for certain seeds, light levels, seed planting depth, watering, avoiding damping off/disease, fertilizing later, etc.
- a short seed planting demonstration
- a question-and-answer period
- a hands-on session for participants to fill pots with soil and plant seeds
- a wrap up to answer further questions and suggest next steps.

We'll provide the soil, seeds, and suitable containers for the first 20 participants to sign up.

You'll need to provide growing space in your brightest south-facing window (or buy grow lights for even better success) and a commitment to return half your seedlings to the Plant Sale.

Please send an email with Seeds in the subject line to sign up by February 18 to lynnvalleygardenclub@gmail.com

It's a great opportunity to get to know some of our members, especially if you're new to the club.



“Gardening in small spaces” (or no space at all) – Gillian Konst, Rosemarie Adams



This is such a good idea – as initially one can keep the lid on to have a mini-greenhouse.

Or you can try the recycled toilet roll/biodegradable seedling pot method in this link (*but turn off the sound – the presenter is a bit much*)

<https://www.instagram.com/reel/Cne4Meprf6e/?igshid=MDJmNzVkMjY=>

Or you can try to grow your own mushrooms in nylon stockings (*what will they think of next – but I'm going to try this!*)

<https://www.instagram.com/reel/CmtO9wIjy78/?igshid=MDJmNzVkMjY=>

Rosemarie says “Interesting, seems like a lot of work, but fun to watch how it's done.” :

Tomatoes grow fast and have many fruits...

Tomatoes grow fast and have many fruits if you grow this method | Growing tomatoes



from seeds - YouTube

Or try this for lettuce:

<https://www.instagram.com/reel/CkzP1IruqX5/?igshid=MDJmNzVkMjY=>

And do some companion planting to reduce pests:

<https://www.instagram.com/reel/Cm-UROHKLIA/?igshid=MDJmNzVkMjY=>

...and keep them well-watered using this system.

<https://www.instagram.com/reel/CnImnDhhiIR/?igshid=MDJmNzVkMjY=>



Tomato Cages

Those cages sold for tomatoes make excellent supports for many other plants. I buy the biggest I can find and cut them down into two, three or four different sizes to accommodate different heights and shapes of plants. I especially like to use them for "enclosing" clumps of bulbs, pushing them deep into the soil at first, and gradually pulling them up as the bulbs grow. Once the bulbs have finished blooming and dried out, I push the frames deep into the soil, exposing them only about two inches. This lets me know where I have bulbs planted, so I don't replant in that space. You can get cages in some lovely colours now, to complement your plants, and I have found that Walmart usually have a good selection at a reasonable price.

Pot Drainage

If you have plants growing in pots (I have a lot!) make sure you have good drainage. Pots placed on a flat deck or on soil or gravel often get the drainage holes blocked. For larger pots you can get "pot feet" (although I find these a bit of a pain if I want to turn or move the pot). Two small 2" blocks or strips of wood placed underneath the pot work well. (Obviously don't put them under the drainage hole!) I read about an experiment once where two large pots of same size were planted up with identical soil and plants. One was left directly on the ground and the other on 2 inch raised blocks. After three or four months the raised pot plants were much larger and healthier than those in the other pot, because a) they drained better, and b) air was able to circulate under and into the pot. Fun experiment.

As Seed Starting Time Nears

- Jane Sherrott

I love many of the small seed growers who have made a strong commitment to grow seeds in an ecologically sensitive manner. The seeds they sell differ markedly from the seeds we can buy in the nurseries so they are a way to try something new and they also perfectly match our home growing conditions.

Satinflower Nurseries, outside Victoria, <https://satinflower.ca/>



Satinflower sells seed for a wide range of PNW native plants. Many of their seeds are for annual and perennial plants that grow in our PNW Gary Oak Meadows which are excellent plants for a sunny garden spot. (If you haven't seen these plants, UBC Botanical Garden has a glorious Gary Oak Meadow planting). They grow seed with no synthetic fertilizers, no pesticides or herbicides and no supplementary watering. We enjoyed Kristen's talk on planting a meadow for us last year and the course the nursery offers on this topic is immensely popular. (We have a member taking it so stay tuned.)

We can sprinkle BC native annual or perennial seeds into our gardens in fall, winter into early February to get their needed chill to germinate. Here is a group of our annual PNW wildflowers for continuous bloom from March to September:



Northwest Meadowsapes, Port Townsend, <https://northwestmeadowsapes.com/>

Like other growers, NW Meadowsapes also grow their own seed or buy seed from small, local farms so we get perfect regionally-adapted seed. They excel at producing seed mixes for a wide range of different garden conditions so if you want a seed mix for a wet site, the shade, inhospitable conditions, that deer won't eat, for example, they have excellent ones.

POLLINATOR MIXES

A-Z



DEER DEFENSE SEED MIX



NATIVE POLLINATOR SEED MIX



NEARLY NATIVE BEE LAWN SEED MIX



NORTHWEST PRAIRIE MIX

Of note is their lawn alternatives mix - in my opinion, none of the others on the market match theirs - and when we read the glossy UK gardening

magazines and see mention of the addition of **rattle**^{1*} to control grass in meadows, NW Meadowsapes is the only seed supplier I know for this. They also work with and supply seed to groups like the Gates Foundations and local Indigenous communities to preserve and celebrate our native plant heritage. They are a woman- and minority-owned business.

PLANTS FOR TOUGH AND HARSH LOCATIONS

Popular



GLOBE GILIA SEEDS (GILIA CAPITATA)
\$6.50



WESTERN YARROW SEEDS (ACHILLEA MILLEFOLIUM)



ROEMER'S FESCUE SEEDS (FESTUCA IDAHOENSIS SSP.)



BICOLOR LUPINE SEEDS (LUPINUS BICOLOR)

Adaptive Seeds, Sweet Home, Oregon, <https://www.adaptiveseeds.com/seed-tag/new-returning/>

Like Linda Gilkeson, Sharon Hanna is one of Vancouver's most knowledgeable and progressive gardening voices so I always listen for her suggestions. Her favourite seed supplier for vegetables is **Adaptive Seeds** and one glance at their website will show us why - they sell seed grown by farmers across Oregon and Washington. These farmers are the new class of breeders who cross our best old varieties to find something exceptional - zucchini that is delicious when small or large, colorful vegetables with high phytochemical levels like pink popcorn or purple peas, winter vegetables that stand up to our more intense winter rains, and vegetable cultivars with unique flavour profiles. Click through their list of seed growers like *Wisper Hollow* and *Moon Dog* to learn about how much dedication goes into breeding these new cultivars the old-fashioned way.

Because we don't have the heat or long growing season of southern areas, Vancouver gardeners have been challenged to get some vegetables like large heirloom tomatoes, melons, and sweet potatoes to ripen and develop full flavours. **Adaptive Seeds'** breeders work to introduce quicker ripening (therefore also longer-yielding) so the new cultivars so on my list this year is a 'Farthest North Galia' melon that matures honey-sweet in 65 days. I've ordered lemon-flavoured bergamot and pink celosia for pink tea, 'Coral Fountain' amaranth that stays upright all winter to provide abundant seed for birds, and because my over-wintering kale is completely battered, Sharon's recommendation for kale, 'Southerland' is a perennial 3' kale with tender, tender leaves from Scotland where it "grows well in the worst maritime winter weather with

¹ Yellow Rattle or Hay Rattle (*rhinanthus minor*) is partly a parasitic species that draws some of its nutrients through the roots of grasses and is frequently used to increase biodiversity in wildflower meadows. Its parasitic nature suppresses the growth rate of grass, which in turn can make conditions more receptive for the establishment of other wildflower species. Used correctly it can reduce grass growth very successfully and once established can often spread to other areas within the meadow.

freezing sleet and 70 mph winds." Our summers are hotter and drier these days so **Adaptive Seeds** provides information on vegetable cultivars and methods for "dry farming". (I grow tomatoes dry farmed and they have astonishing flavour.)



pink popcorn 'Southerland' 'Coral Fountain' celosia black popcorn 'Golden Pippin' squash

Full Circle Seeds, Sooke



The pictures say it all! And they have four pages of tomato seed!

Row 7 Seeds, <https://www.row7seeds.com/>

Yes, "dedicated to deliciousness" was the chefs' and plant breeders' goal when they collaborated to set up **Row 7 Seeds**. They sell only a few varieties and some of their varieties have generated considerable excitement and even resulted



in a city-wide 'Badger Flame' week. 'Badger Flame' beets are (extremely) delicious raw and 'Midnight Roma' tomatoes burst with flavour and are fabulous in salads, cooked on flatbread and are good to dry or make into jam.



'Badger Flame'



'Midnight Roma'



Growth trial notes



Salt Spring Seeds is one of our oldest local seed growers and arguably the most progressive. Dan Jason grows and preserves seed from over 600 heirloom varieties. Always on to something new to regenerate soil and boost ecosystem vitality, many of us first heard about organic practices and concepts of regional adaptation of seeds, heirloom varieties, loss of genetic diversity, seed security, “power of pulses” (soybeans, lentils, chick peas favas), Monsanto concerns, low-input growing, and medicinal herbs from Dan. They sell seed for my favourite tomato ‘Pink Boar’. (My husband shouted “wow” when he first tried it!) Their farm is a glorious celebration of ecological health and biodiversity.



SEED STORIES



‘Purple Peacock’ Broccoli White Australian Wheat Amaranth Purple-podded Pea ‘Pink Boar’

For plant nerds like me, the stories behind some of the new vegetable cultivars are fun and fascinating. This is not the Monsanto and company seeds, but those that come from small, dedicated breeders who may spend more than ten years to bring a new tomato to market. And what a tomato it will be! The tomato that set off the tomato-breeding frenzy was ‘Green Zebra’ bred by Tom Wagner in Washington state. This green and yellow stripey tomato with lemon-flavours was popularized by Alice Waters at her Berkeley Chez Panisse restaurant. Stripey tomatoes like ‘Pink Boar’ and ‘Berkeley Tie Die’ followed with flavours described with adjectives that are usually reserved for wines. Black tomatoes had a judge at a Portland tomato expo stand up and shout “this is the best tomato I’ve ever eaten.”

Though there are GM tomatoes being bred by the ag chem industry (they are bred to be spurless so machines can pick them, to tolerate salt to expand growing regions, for example), these other new tomatoes are bred the old-fashioned way crossing and saving seeds for vegetables with new and unusual traits through multiple generations. The juicy black tomatoes we traditionally saw like ‘Black Krim’ are long season growers so we are challenged to get ripe fruit

“Rich, smooth and savory with earthy tones ”

‘Black Beauty’
“the best tomato I’ve ever eaten”

“rich, highly aromatic”

‘Brad's Atomic Grape’ *

“a burgundy wine finish”

‘Indigo Apple’

with full flavour development in our Vancouver gardens, but we can grow the newer, faster-ripening 'Indigo Rose' bred from the traditional Crimean black tomatoes.

If you haven't grown some of these new cultivars, you are in for a treat because they have distinctly different flavours. There are some new orange tomatoes that boast "superior to all" and offer juiciness and tropical fruit or peachy flavours. Perhaps consider a rainy-day Google search on the new plant breeders - you will come upon **Dirty Girl Farms**, **Wild Boar Farms**, tomato taste competitions, and a bit of a kooky, though serious, world with growers who are working to fight the dominance of the ag chem companies over the seed field to preserve old genes and to bring us fabulous new cultivars.

Black Tomatoes- the famous 'Indigo Rose'

Bred from



2 Delicious Russian heirloom varieties, 80-90 days,



2 Wild tomatoes from Andes and Galapagos Islands



'Indigo Rose'
"superb smoky sweetness"



Classic black tomato flavor- sweet, rich, smoky and complex. Juicy.
High in anthocyanins like blueberries.

Ease in Seed Choosing



BC Eco Seed Co-op

seeds. Their seed is sold through VanDusen Garden's Seedy Saturday, UBC Botanical Garden's shop, a few nurseries and can be ordered online.

If you are interested in finding other BC seed suppliers, Farm Folk City Folk has a list on their website <https://farmfolkcityfolk.ca/find-seeds/bc-seed-suppliers/>

BC Eco Seed Co-op Seeds goal is to provide "100% BC-grown, ecologically-grown, open-pollinated, regionally-selected, genetic engineering-free seed." A number of small farms grow seed for them that so they can sell a wide range of seeds. Their cultivars are all proven winners in our area which is helpful for new vegetable growers who face an almost overwhelming selection of



The secret lives of Vancouver's life-saving trees

- Allie Turner, Alanna Kelly

Why adding more trees to communities like the DTES is a matter of life and death.

"A total of 569 people died in the heat dome in 2021 and the coroner's inquest found there was a significant reduction in mortality of people that were in proximity to trees, says Morrison. Trees act as a beneficial cooling agent; mature trees reduce temperatures at a surface level by providing shade and blocking the sun from concrete structures that retain heat.

There [are] canopy deficiencies and it leads to some of the heat island effects and some of the extreme temperatures that we've seen. The heat dome that occurred in 2021 is a perfect example of some of the problematic situations that we've seen in the past." [Link here:](#)

"This is not our world with trees in it. It's a world of trees, where humans have just arrived"

Richard Powers in his novel **The Overstory**

How do I take a wisteria from this....

to this

or this?



It has everything to do with pruning. According to the January 2023 edition of the *Royal Horticultural Society Journal*, "Wisteria has a reputation for being difficult to prune but this isn't the case. Once you have established the routine of pruning your wisteria twice a year, you should be rewarded with a good display of flowers.

Regular pruning means shortening the excessive whippy growth in July/August to five to six leaves, about 30cm (1ft). This allows the wood to ripen and improves the chances of flower buds forming. Then, in February, further shorten these shoots to two to three buds, about 10cm (4in), to tidy the plant before the period of time when an individual plant is in active growth. This will depend on the local climate and light levels, and can vary between different plants, although it is broadly from spring to autumn.

How to prune wisteria

Wisterias can be left to ramble unchecked where space allows but will usually flower more freely and regularly if pruned twice a year. The removal of growth in summer allows better air circulation and more sunlight to reach the base of the young growths, encouraging better ripening of the wood and improving the chances of flower bud formation.

Restricting the amount of vegetative growth and encouraging short, flowering spurs will result in more flowers.

Summer pruning (July or August)

Cut back the whippy green shoots of the current year's growth to five or six leaves after flowering in July or August. This controls the size of the wisteria, preventing it getting into guttering and windows, and encourages it to form flower buds rather than green growth.

Winter pruning (January or February)

Then, cut back the same growths to two or three buds in January or February (when the plant is dormant and leafless) to tidy it up before the growing season starts and ensure the flowers will not be obscured by leaves. Cut them back to within 2.5-5 cm (1-2 in) of older wood, or 2 to 3 buds. Cut these back to five or six buds from the main branch, making the cut just above a bud.

The period of time when an individual plant is in active growth will depend on the local climate and light levels, and can vary between different plants, although it is broadly from spring to autumn.

Renovation or hard pruning

With older plants, severe pruning may be needed to remove old, worn-out growths, or branches growing over windows or protruding outwards from the face of the building. Likewise, hard pruning may be required where maintenance needs to be carried out on the structure supporting the plant.

Drastically shortening back long branches, removing sections of older stems to just above a strong young branch or growth shoot lower down, or cutting completely back to a main branch, or even to ground level may be necessary. A careful, unhurried approach is needed if larger, thicker branches are to be removed and where a branch is twining it may be necessary to trace back and mark it at intervals with string before removing it. The end result should be a skeleton framework of reasonably well-spaced branches.

Other points to consider when hard pruning:

- Hard pruning will stimulate strong, new growth so it is better to avoid feeding in the first spring after hard pruning
- If there are gaps in the framework suitably positioned new growths can be trained in to form replacement branches, with flowering usually resuming in two or three years' time. Often there is strong basal shoot growth.
- If new growths are unwanted for replacement branches they can be removed. Any such pruning can be done during the period from leaf fall to early February.
- Other new growths can be pruned back summer and winter as for normal routine pruning.



EVICTION NOTICE DELIVERED

Lord Winter has received the necessary notification that he is being evicted.

Lady Spring dispatched her courier, Witch Hazel, to deliver the notice with maximum yellow colour: short days, grey skies, and endless rain are to be sent away. Lord Winter may not leave politely, but at least he knows his days are numbered!

Meantime, Mother Nature is bustling around getting ready to step in. The bossy lady has ordered the garlic to stand straight, the rhodos to fatten their buds, and the snowdrops to stand to attention.

Gardeners, birds and bees are all jubilant.

Gardening for beginners.

Peas don't like too much water.
Potatoes do not like tomatoes.
Potatoes don't like cucumbers.
Potatoes and cabbage are friends.
Do not plant beans with onions or beets.
Beans love carrots.
Beets love onion, cabbage, potatoes.
Tomatoes love carrots, peas.
Cabbage does not like radishes.
Beans and cucumbers do not like each other.
Carrots and onions do well together.



"You know, son, this is the dawning of the Age of Asparagus, Age of Asparaguuuus, Asparaguuuuuuus, Aspa...ra...guuuus."

EVENTS AND OTHER GOINGS ON

Lynn Valley Library Book Sale.....Feb 17 to 19

The North Vancouver District Libraries are having a book sale at the Library in Lynn Valley in the activities room next to the Lynn Valley Library. The hours are **10:00 AM to 4:00 PM Friday and Saturday and 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM half price Sunday.**

All sorts of books will be for sale from 50 cents for children's books to \$2.00 for adult fiction and non-fiction, pocket books \$1.00. There will be audio books, CDs, movies, magazines, graphic novels, youth novels, cookbooks, travel books, reference books, etc.

CASH only!!

Cut Flower Garden Winter Mini Course

Register for a three-part video series on **Cut Flower Garden Winter Mini Course**, through Floret Farms, starts **Feb 14, 2023**. <https://shop.floretflowers.com/pages/availability>



MGABC

It's a new year with lots of fresh gardening ideas to be excited about!

Seven local experts will share their knowledge on *What's New in the Gardening world*. After 3 years, we are back in-person! It's a great opportunity to see old friends and make new ones.

DETAILS

Sunday March 26th, 2023, 9 AM to 4 PM, Michael J Fox Theatre, Burnaby

Tickets \$50 online, \$60 at the door

To Register [click here](#) or go to the website of Master Gardeners of BC –salad & sandwich options available to order up to March 12th

Here is our line-up!

Climate-Ready Plants and People: Approaches from UBC Botanical Garden – Dr. Tara Moreau

Feeding the Soil – Nature's Health Plan for Your Garden (and You) - Anne Biklé

The Complete Talk on Ground Covers – Gary Lewis

Gardening for Bees: An Ecosystem Approach – Tiia Haapalainen

Growing Up: Vertical Gardening Techniques and Tips – Dr. Yael Stav

Plant Wise: State of Invasive Species in the Horticulture Industry – Diane Watson & Allison McCabe

[Click here](#) for more information on our speakers & their presentations or go to the website of Master Gardeners of BC.

A message from the Organizing Committee: *Spring Forward 2023 is only be offered as an in-person event. Unfortunately, it was not possible to record the speaker's presentations.*

VARC



We are a local charity focused on bird conservation. We are holding an on-line presentation on **Feb 22** to help people understand how to make their **gardens more bird friendly**. The birds of the world are in real trouble – they need all the help they can get.

<https://www.birdvancouver.com/>

BC Council of Garden Clubs

The Bulletin is out for your reading pleasure!!

Find it on their website: <https://bcgardenclubs.com/>



A VARC ZOOM EVENT YOU DON'T WANT TO MISS!

BIRD FRIENDLY GARDEN PRESENTATION
ONLINE FEBRUARY 22ND, 2023
6:30 - 7:30 PM PST



Learn how to create sustainable habitat in your yard or garden that provides life-saving resources for birds throughout the year.

Our gardens, whether large or small, are a great opportunity to practice positive action for bird conservation.

This online presentation will be hosted via Zoom.

Please visit the VARC website to register:

WWW.BIRDVANCOUVER.COM/
[CALENDAR-OF-EVENTS/](#)





Those of you down in the lowlands probably have flowers blooming by now, but up here on the mountain, I'm happy just to see the tips of my snowdrops protruding from the mulchy mess that is my garden. I am trying to keep in mind that the bugs and critters of the undergrowth need a place to over-winter, so one must not clean up the garden until the weather warms. That's bloody annoying - as the neighbour's place looks pristine and cartesian while my garden is a bit more laissez-faire and all the past few months' tree-droppings lie thickly, wetly, brownly across the landscape. (OK - so she also has an army of robotic gardeners manicuring her side of my bushes into army buzz-cuts.) Pretty depressing.

All I really want is some warm weather, free time, and dirt under my fingernails... and maybe a garden or two to rescue. Last fall's mega rescues are still sleeping under a layer of pine-boughs, waiting for spring, and waiting to find out whether they will live long and prosper. I am curious as to what our survival "batting average" will be for the 300 or so plants queuing patiently for the plant sale. Now that we have the rescue operations down to a fine art, PLEASE KEEP YOUR EYES OPEN for new rescue opportunities - as I'm sure that the real estate people are winding up for spring and "For Sale" signs will be sprouting with the primulas.

Which reminds me - the annual temptations have arrived in my mailbox: garden catalogues... from all over. Any place I may have inadvertently stepped into to buy a few little green things, is now flaunting colourful, desirable, potentially delicious plant seeds. Who can resist purple beans or carrots, peppery arugulas, or perfect tomatoes? I find myself salivating and sucked into the siren song - only to fetch up on the rocks... literally. I only have rocks. My container veggie gardens are more aspirational than inspirational - more a dream than a reality. Still, undeterred, I place my orders without really considering the sequelae: I don't really have room for veggies, or indeed anything else.



Which reminds me: I have piles and piles and bags and baggies of seeds that I have collected from my flowers: I would be happy to share the contents of several shoe-boxes, with the caveat that you will have to figure what that seed is. Labelling is not my strong suit: I was pretty sure I would remember - and most of them I can probably identify, but as with much in my life, a lot remains a tantalizing mystery. I'll bring them to the March meeting for your sleuthing pleasure: don't want to up-stage Brian Minter in February.

In the separate "links" file there is a video of a nifty trick on how to fold a square piece of paper into a cute seed packet (suitable for labelling) - check it out. [It's do-able](#). (Too late for me now, but maybe next year). Actually, it's quite amazing what finds one on Instagram: many of the gardening-related links in this month's file are things that Instagram thought I needed or wanted. There are also 2 really cool videos - but you will have to download them - they don't open on click. Instagram keeps feeding me, sneaking into my subconscious, and then appearing with another green vision to ensnare me. I find I'm quite susceptible to this kind of seduction. I don't covet clothes, bangles and beads, spas, cars, etc. but oh, plants! They are definitely my downfall: did anyone mention the *primrose* path ...?

Why primrose? **"Shakespeare uses the concept of a 'primrose path' several times through his works.**

Shakespeare's audience would have been very familiar with the idea, drummed into them in most Sunday sermons, that if you want to go to heaven you will find the path a steep, narrow, thorny uphill climb, whereas the road to hell is, wide, pleasant and easy, and downhill all the way. The idea comes from the [Gospel of Matthew 7:13](#). "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat."

Shakespeare seems to have liked that idea very much as he uses it several times and creates the metaphor of a flowery road to bring it into focus[...]. On the surface of it the primrose path is simply a flowery path or road. In the plays it's a metaphor with a reference to the road to hell. In *Hamlet*, Ophelia is being lectured



by her brother, Laertes, as to how he expects her to behave while he is away at university in Paris. Knowing the reputation for drinking and womanising among students in Paris, she warns him to be careful of preaching to her about virtuous behaviour. "Do not as some ungracious pastors do," she says, "show me the steep and stormy way to heaven whiles like a puffed and reckless libertine himself the primrose path of dalliance treads and



recks not his own rede." Personally, I would be more likely to follow a "rhodo path" especially with blooms like Margret's.

DON'T FORGET YOUR HARVEST PROJECT DONATION!!!!!!



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