



# THE LEAF

THE LYNN VALLEY GARDEN CLUB

Established 1943

December 2024

## President's Message - Donna Wasylik

Hello Everyone,

In the flurry of Christmas preparations I forgot to prepare the President's message for the LEAF until I received a not-so-gentle nudge from our newsletter editor to 'get something in fast'!! So here are my wishes to you for a very Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays - whatever you may celebrate - and all the best for 2025.

I think the Lynn Valley Garden Club has had a successful year in that we've made an attempt to return to a format of 'less meeting and more fun'. I can tell by the din in the foyer during coffee break that our members are enjoying the social time. Next year will bring more social activities, with a field trip and garden tour in the works and perhaps another 'table talks' event in April. And of course, our popular plant sale in May.

My wish for 2025 is that we get more members volunteering for executive positions. Our numbers may decline in 2025 and personally I think that's alright. We need to keep the keeners: the members who genuinely want to keep the Club going. We have a great executive right now and you will notice that we've played a bit of musical chairs for next year, with executive members changing roles, rather than retiring. With many willing hands to handle the workload, no one is overwhelmed with their executive duties. When one is travelling, others pitch in to help during their absence. Please consider helping out: being a member does mean volunteering; the Lynn Valley Garden Club cannot continue to exist without member participation.



I hope to see all of you at the upcoming Christmas party on December 19. We will have our traditional mulled apple cider and lots of goodies (so bring a plate of sweet or savoury finger food!) to share... and don't forget your plate and mug. If you want to try making a table centrepiece there will be chicken wire 'tortellini puffs' to use in your container to hold the stems and you can use them again in vases. If you don't want to make a centrepiece, come anyway to eat, drink and be merry! *Don't forget to bring donations for the Harvest Project and Sage House.*

Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays to everyone!



**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 7:00 PM*

**NO SPEAKER THIS MONTH!!**  
**WE WILL HAVE A PARTY ON THURSDAY DECEMBER 19**

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)



"All good work is done the way ants do things, little by little." *Lafcadio Hearn, 19th century journalist in Japan*

## Executive 2024

### President

Donna Wasylik .

### Co-Vice Presidents

Penny LeCouteur .

Daphne Page .

### Secretary

Marilyn Bullock .

### Treasurer

Jennifer Sydenham .

### Membership Co-Chairs

Ann McKinnon .

Krystina Madej .

### Members at Large (MALs)

Jacquie D'Auria .

Sarah-Jane Gray .

Miriam Scott .

Tom Davis .

## Committees

### Plant Table

?????

### Hospitality

Sharon Carabetta .

Bev Fraine .

Brenda Reid .

### Sunshine / Door Prizes

Hiromi Matsui .

### Website

Aline Burlone .

### Newsletter Editors

Maria Issa .

Margaret Campbell .

### Executive Meeting

No Exec meeting in December.

The January meeting will be chez Donna, on January 8.

Newsletter items to [LVGCnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:LVGCnewsletter@gmail.com)



Thanks to this month's LEAF contributors: Judith Brook, Aline Burlone, Penny leCouteur, Rita Marshall, Hiromi Matsui, Wayne Smith, Taylor Hewstan



## Holiday Party Info

The THIRD Thursday, Dec 19, 7 PM

**nug and a plate** – and maybe a napkin or two.  
**late of finger food to share** (sweet or savoury – but **not sticky, drippy or slippery!**)

**ONLY OR STAY LATE TO HELP SET-UP OR CLEAN UP, OUR Y ELVES WILL BE VERY, VERY, VERY HAPPY!!**



## CHRISTMAS CRAFT

(If you scamper, there is still time to stock up on the 'bear necessities'!!)

This year, our craft project will be a table centerpiece!! The fun will start at 7 pm so be prepared!



### Gather and bring with you:

Some sort of contraption to hold stems – this can be a bit of chicken wire; classical "flower frogs" with holes in them; flexible branches that can bent inside your vase/water container; rocks; shells; a fat branch with smaller branches; marbles; those fake flower arranging beads [*that I detest!*];- basically anything that can look 'artistic' and go inside the container to hold your arrangement. Please DON'T use the plastic foam oasis stuff – it's nasty for the environment.

An elegant (or tacky!) container that doesn't leak

Pruners to tame the greenery

Light wire or twist ties, in case you need to cheat

Greenery from your garden (this could be fir branches, cedar, hemlock, holly, sage, heather, skimmia, pinecones of all sizes; cool seed-heads... use your imagination. With all the wind and rain there is enough green lying around on the ground – and it's free!

Christmas baubles - small and sparkly – or ribbon or tinsel or other festive stuff.

Maybe a candle or two? And something to secure them with...



*While getting the bits and bobs ready for your centerpiece – let's think of others as well:*

PLEASE LOAD YOUR SHOPPING BAGS WITH

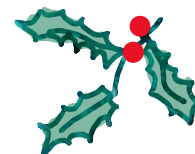
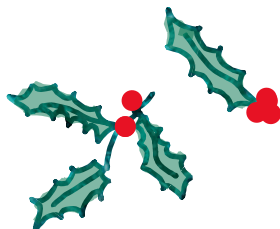


a) The 'bear necessities' that we can donate to Sage House: imagine the holiday pressure and the frustration if life is difficult. Then there is the need to flee a dangerous or unhealthy situation - you grab the kids, and RUN. You arrive at Sage House with the clothes on your back. You need the 'bear necessities' – everything from a toothbrush or shampoo to underwear and socks... and oh my! a little chocolate would sure help – or a nice cup of tea. Something to make you feel human again.... GO AND SHOP WITH YOUR HEART.

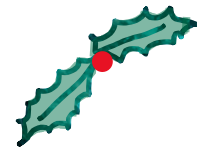


b) Food for the HARVEST PROJECT. They support people who need a little help to keep their heads above water. Grab a few cans of yummy stuff, or non-perishable food that would make the holidays less of a worry as to where the next meal is coming from... Be that helping hand. May you never know what it's like to be in that situation: Remember, "There, but for the grace of God, go I".

c) If you have any boxes (a few, not zillions!) they may be handy to hold the Sage House and Harvest Project goodies; and to carry your centerpiece home without it rolling in the bottom of your car like mine always does.



# Membership Report - Ann McKinnon & Krystina Madej



**Congratulations to the 103 members who have already renewed** and are eligible for the early bird prize draw, to be held at our Christmas party on December 19. The other third of the members have until December 31, 2024 to renew your membership for 2025. After that date, you will be considered a lapsed member and will be accepted on an equal basis with new members until the member limit of 175 is reached.

We will send one reminder in late December to the people who have not renewed before removing you from our mailing list. If you know already that you are not planning to renew, we would appreciate having an email sent to [lvgc.membership@gmail.com](mailto:lvgc.membership@gmail.com). If possible, would you also tell us why you are not renewing. Last year, we made valiant efforts to contact every lapsed member and concluded that post-Covid, people had gone back to their often overly busy lives. There is currently no waiting list, so lapsed members will be able to rejoin in the future.

The renewal form is included at the back of this LEAF and as a separate attachment. PLEASE email the form to Membership ([lvgc.membership@gmail.com](mailto:lvgc.membership@gmail.com)) and send the payment via e-transfer to Treasurer ([LVGC.Treasurer@gmail.com](mailto:LVGC.Treasurer@gmail.com)) - that speeds up the renewal process. If you are renewing in person, it would be helpful if you would fill out the form online and bring the printed version, as that makes it easier to read.

Pro tips for filling out the membership form and making the fee payment:

1. The Membership form emailed with the Leaf is a fillable PDF. Open the file, save it with a meaningful name such as "your-name LVGC membership 2025", and then fill it out. IT IS IMPORTANT to save the file first - some of our testers had an empty file when they filled out the form first and then saved it. If you need more than two lines for speakers, feel free to include them in the email when you send us the form.
2. Note that if you are using an iPad, open the copied form and then select Open in Acrobat. This ensures that all the check boxes work correctly. If you are using an iPhone, save the file to Google Drive, OR first open Acrobat Reader and then open the file from within Acrobat.
3. Send an email to [lvgc.membership@gmail.com](mailto:lvgc.membership@gmail.com) with the subject line "your-name 2025 Membership Form". Remember to attach the membership file using the paperclip icon. If that proves too difficult, people have in the past taken a picture of the printed form and emailed that to us. It is not as tidy but works in a pinch.
4. Remember to send the payment by doing the following:
  - Make an E-transfer of the \$20 membership fee to [LVGC.Treasurer@gmail.com](mailto:LVGC.Treasurer@gmail.com) and add the note "2025 Membership Fee." Do not send the fee to the membership email address as we then have no way of depositing it. 65% of you successfully e-transferred last year so there are lots of members who can help you learn how to do this.
  - OR bring a \$20 cheque made out to Lynn Valley Garden Club to the December 19 meeting.
  - OR bring \$20 in cash [least preferred].
5. If doing your renewal online or at a meeting does not work for you, please see the membership form for instructions as to where the form and payment can be posted through Canada Post, if they return from strike.

Feel free to contact us at [lvgc.membership@gmail.com](mailto:lvgc.membership@gmail.com) if you need help completing your renewal.

## Christmas Card Donations - Courtney Mitchell

### IT'S NOT TOO LATE!!!

This year we hope to drop off cards again at WISH Drop-In Centre Christmas party. As always, we are looking for bright sparkly cards with animals or cute pictures. (Not so keen on calm countryside scenes or trees with extravagant presents!) The Centre looks forward to receiving these Christmas cards and they will distribute them so that the women can send notes to friends and relatives.

If you have collected cards during this year, or if you have extra ones, we would be happy to collect them. Please call Courtney Mitchell to make arrangements for her to pick them up. [Note to self: remember to drop off those cards!!!]

## BRIGHT SPOTS

**Found by Judith Brook:** Now this is a Bright Spot if there ever was one! That's our own Jennifer Sydenham on the left! YAY Jennifer!!





Miriam Scott writes: "It is called *Forever Yours* and is the last rose this season from my garden."

Wayne Smith has been creating a range of magical miniature gardens and writes:

"I drilled a large hole in a piece of wood and stapled mesh top and bottom to hold the flowers. It works great for displaying in water."



The outdoor fish tank is now covered with driftwood and bamboo cuttings.

Moss planted in low flats makes an easy-care winter-greenery display.



A river scene created using sand on a sheet of tempered glass.

A forest scene planted on a floor tile.



Succulents are doing well growing in low flats. I keep them dry in the winter and move them inside when there's a hard frost.



Holes drilled in a log to hold flowers, moss and in water



## Protecting Overwintering Beneficial Insects -

October 1, 2010 - <https://s3.wp.wsu.edu/uploads/sites/2073/2014/03/100110.pdf>

By Virgene Link

### Protect Beneficial Insects - or You Inherit Their Work!

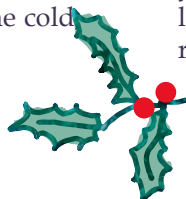
Falling leaves and falling temperatures - no wonder this time of year is so appropriately named! It is time to prepare your garden/yard for winter. Does this mean cleaning it up entirely? No, please don't!

As you prepare your garden for fall and winter, remember to leave some plant material to feed and shelter beneficial insects. Even small amounts of seeds and brush will help beneficial insects survive the cold

wet months. The beneficial insects will thank you - and so will your garden.

### Leaves:

Rake and dispose of leaves from fruit trees, especially if they have scab or other fungus as on apple. Rarely does home compost get hot enough to kill the fungus spores, so burn diseased leaves (if it is legal in your area) or send them to a yard waste facility. The large commercial compost piles are managed so they reach optimal temperatures for killing spores.



Rake and compost other leaves, as those from maple trees. They make good cover on flowerbeds to suppress winter annuals like shot weed (*aka bittercress!!!*) Leaf litter is mulch that provides hiding places and food for your beneficial insects including ground beetles, centipedes, millipedes, pill bugs and spiders. These helpful creatures will break down and add organics to your soil.

#### **Plants and Seeds:**

Leave healthy standing plants with their seeds to provide birds with winter foraging. Have too many? Make a pile of brush or two for hiding places. Your overwintering queen bumblebees and wasps need a warmer place to get out of the coming winter weather. Wait until spring to trim those ornamental grasses. That little haystack may be just the place she has chosen to burrow.

#### **Bare Area:**

Your lot should have a relatively undisturbed place with food, water and shelter for our wildlife. A few rocks, pieces of wood and even some bare soil in protected areas provide hiding places. The queens of some of our native bees nest underground in abandoned holes – the worker bees die off and so do not overwinter.

#### **Lawn:**

Dried mown grass from your lawn clippings also makes a great hiding place for beneficial insects. Pile it in your waste area or at the back of a garden bed. The grass will compost over the winter to be mixed with other “leavings” for your beds in the spring. However, DON'T keep it if you have used Weed and Feed on your lawn. The herbicide (*aka weed killer*) portion may take a while to break down. One by-product of 2,4-D production (the herbicide in Weed and Feed) is dioxin. It may only be a small amount, but with our rainy climate, it can easily end up in the sea. It is toxic to fish and mildly toxic to Dungeness crab. Dioxin has been found in ground water and in surface water. Your best lawn fertilizer is a mulching lawn mower, which chops up grass clippings and returns it to feed and mulch your lawn. Before heading into winter, set your blade a little higher for your last mowing. Tolerate a few dandelions or some clover. Bees and parasitic wasps love the nectar. After building a nest and raising a family, a wasp needs a brush or grass pile for winter shelter. Garden spiders catch mosquitoes and other harmful insects. Keep them around by providing safe hiding places for their egg sacks



#### **No Wasp Traps:**

Sparkling, colorful traps lure wasps and other beneficial insects in from your garden, depriving of the benefits of their labors. Wasps are beneficial insects. They prey on insect larvae and adults, and they pollinate flowers. If you watch, you can see wasps landing on leaves, then searching under them, looking for insect eggs, aphids, spiders or caterpillars to ambush. If you miss having a colorful wasp trap in your yard, buy a glass ball or other ornament. When you kill a beneficial insect, you inherit its work!

If wasps are by your door, and you are highly allergic to their sting, you have cause for concern. You may need to take selective action by removing them from your personal space, or use another door until they are gone for the winter. After frost is also a good time to remove those empty wasp or hornet nests. Most times you don't even know the nests are there, until the leaves fall or the wind blows them down. The queen is hiding somewhere else waiting for spring. Take care of them – we want them back!

#### **No 'Bug Zappers':**

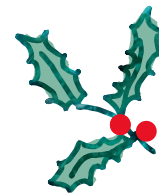
Don't use those bug “zappers”. They lure night flying insects to their light and incinerate them. The zappers are indiscriminate killers, depleting our precious pollinator population. They also deprive our birds and bats of an important food source.

#### **Winter Greenery and Nectar:**

Enhance your garden with native plants for winter greenery, fall colors and early spring flowers. Salal, Oregon grape and vine maple are popular additions. Bellebores like Lenten Rose, and heathers also stay green all winter. They provide late winter flowers for your garden's beauty, and nectar for birds and insects. Try to have a variety of plants that sequentially flower over many months, so our bumblebees, wasps and Anna's hummingbirds can find some “real” nectar if they come out on a warm winter's day.

And planting cover crops, like Crimson Clover or Austrian Field Peas, provides insect habitat while protecting and feeding your garden soil.

Don't do too good of a job cleaning your garden or yard this fall. Leave plant material and grass piles for good insects to hide in.



### **More from Elizabeth Hudgins – transmitted by Aline Burlone**

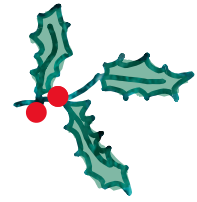
Elizabeth Hudgins spoke about fertilisers during her presentation on rhododendrons on November 21. She has sent the following information to clarify what she talked about when she was not recommending the use of fertilisers.



When she talked about fertilisers, she was really referring to *synthetic fertilisers*, which have higher levels of nutrients and salt content and are often without micronutrients [*they are highly concentrated*]. Organic fertilisers (and compost) are a different thing altogether and tend to be less harmful to stressed plants because they are in different nutrient forms, have lower macronutrient percentages, need microbes to help break them down (encouraging soil health), and provide a more balanced nutrition with micronutrients.

There are situations where fertilisers could make sense:

- 1) nutrient poor soils
- 2) disturbed soils
- 3) spaces where you remove plant matter (leaves, pruning, vegetables)
- 4) when you observe nutrient deficiency symptoms in the plant
- 5) where you want to push growth or selectively encourage the growth of certain plants
- 6) confined spaces (*ie* containers)
- 7) agricultural production



## Single-use Plastics

While strictly speaking, this is not a direct “plant and garden club issue”, we are all acutely aware that biodiversity is decreasing and food-webs are interconnected: what affects one, affects all. Think of it as a spider-web: get caught in one silk and pull on the whole web till the spider threatens. The top end of the food chain {me and thee} depends on the lower links – and if we destroy the little critters that feed the bigger critters or pollinate our food sources, then we suffer as a result. The spider is close. The following short notice – here comes the editorial comment – shows that people are mostly concerned about themselves – “le nombril du monde” – but are willing to worry a bit about ‘lesser creatures’... so it’s sinking in, but very gradually.

“This week, world leaders and stakeholders are meeting in Busan, South Korea for the fifth session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC-5). Their goal is to advance efforts toward an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution. This initiative, which is part of the UN Plastics Treaty, is a critical step in tackling the escalating global plastic crisis and its far-reaching impacts on public health and the environment.

GlobeScan’s latest global public opinion research reveals that human health impacts is the leading concern for those who view single-use plastic waste as a very serious issue. When asked to select their top concern from a range of negative impacts, 35 percent chose the risks posed by microplastics and harmful chemicals entering our bodies.

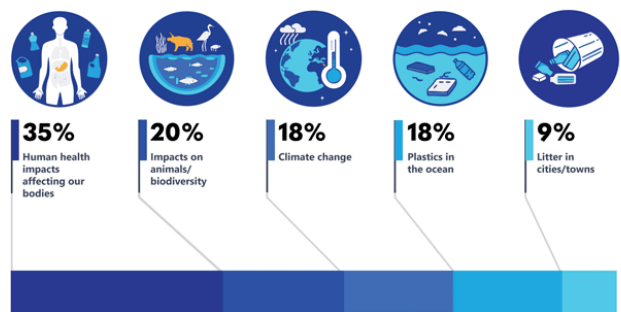
Other major concerns include the effects of single-use plastic on animals and biodiversity which is of particular concern in Latin America. In the Global North, people are more focused on the impact of plastics in the ocean, while concerns about climate change are shared evenly across regions. Overall, more than half of those alarmed by single-use plastics associate them most strongly with broader threats to climate and nature.

What does this mean?

GlobeScan’s findings underscore how deeply the public connects single-use plastic with health risks alongside its environmental toll. NGOs might look to broaden their advocacy efforts by framing plastic pollution as both an environmental crisis and a direct threat to human well-being to make the issue feel more personal and urgent, foster stronger public engagement, and spur policy action.



### Health Concerns Dominate Global Alarm about Single-use Plastic



Greatest Concern about Single-use Plastic Waste, Subsample: Those Who Say Plastic Waste Is a Serious Issue, Average of 31 Countries and Territories, 2024

Source: GlobeScan *Radar Trends Report* (survey of 30,216 people in the general public in July – August 2024)



This analysis is based on a representative online survey of over 30,000 people across 31 countries and territories. It draws upon GlobeScan’s extensive Radar global research program which spans more than two decades of public opinion insights on societal challenges and perceptions of key actors.



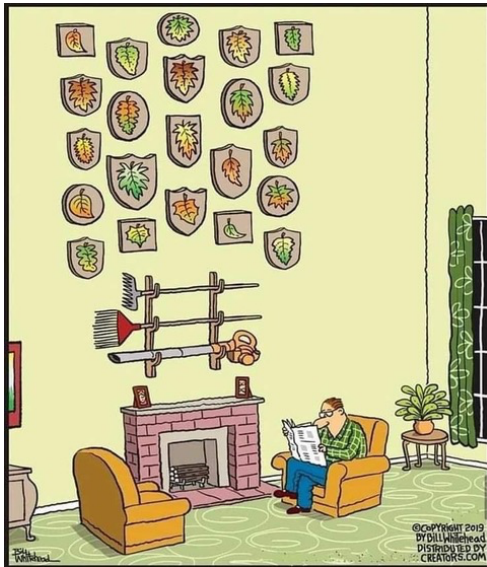
## Assorted



**MEETING MINUTES:** There are important links to meeting and AGM Minutes available in the "December 2024 links" file that came with this Leaf. Please note that the AGM Minutes are 'not formally approved' as approval will happen at next year's AGM.



## Book Recommendation from Hiromi Matsui

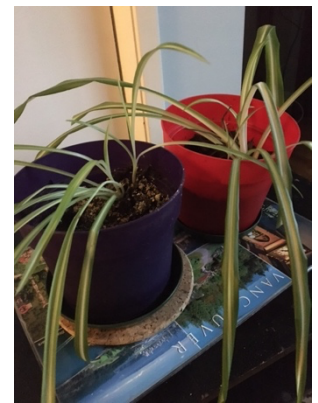


"Sometimes I get lucky at the Library. Browsing through the gardening books, I saw "A New Leaf - growing with my garden" by Marilyn Simonds. I started reading it on a cold, rainy afternoon, and felt like I had put on a warm, comfortable old sweater. It traces a year of growing at her acreage in eastern Ontario, the Leaf, with a 200-year stone house with 26 flower beds. I've long been a fan of Wayne Grady, her partner and 'beloved', who loves grass while she loves flowers and vegetables. The motto that guides her hand: *never work harder than you have to; live as gloriously as you can.* A marvellous read for a winter afternoon."



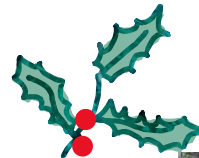
## Spider Plants Available

Contact **Judith Brook** if you want one of these healthy specimens! They are easy to grow and thrive in bright, moist locations like kitchen and bathroom windows, but keep them away

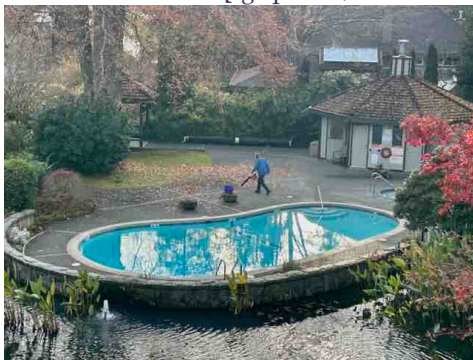


from direct sunlight: remember they originate from tropical rainforests.

## Plant Blankets for Winter?



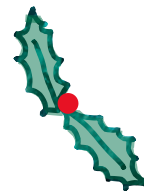
A bubble-wrap pool-cover [huge!] is available for plant wrapping. If you have plants that are not North Van hardy and don't do well in zones 7b-8a and need a cover [eg. palms, *Tibouchina*, figs etc] then this is for you! Don't spend money on commercial plant covers. Yes, you can chop it to size! Or if it's all too big - maybe several people can share it. In its previous life, the bubble wrap covered a large swimming pool in a strata in Horseshoe Bay. If you are interested in FREE - yes, FREE!! - plant blankies, please contact the newsletter at [lygcnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:lygcnewsletter@gmail.com) and you will be magically put in contact with the wonderful person who offered this to the garden club.



## Important Garden Thoughts to Ponder



"If you have a garden and a library. You have everything you need." - Cicero



- Penny LeCouteur

"You can cut all the flowers, but you cannot keep spring from coming." - Pablo Neruda

"Flowers always make people better, happier, and more helpful; they are sunshine, food and medicine for the soul." - Luther Burbank

"In the spring, at the end of the day, you should smell like dirt." - Margaret Atwood

"Weeds are flowers too, once you get to know them." - A.A. Milne

"Isn't it enough to see that a garden is beautiful without having to believe that there are fairies at the bottom of it too?" - Douglas Adams

"What is a weed? A plant whose virtues have never been discovered." - Ralph Waldo Emerson

"A lawn is nature under totalitarian rule." Michael Pollan

"I like gardening - it's a place where I find myself when I need to loose myself." - Alice Sebold

"Plant and your spouse plants with you; weed and you weed alone." - Jean-Jaques Rousseau

"Gardening is learning, learning, learning. That's the fun of it. You're always learning." - Helen Mirren

"My neighbour asked if he could use my lawnmower. I told him of course he could, so long as he didn't take it out of my garden." - Eric Morecambie

"If a tree dies, plant another in its place." - Carolus Linnaeus

"I love things that are indescribable, like the taste of an avocado or the smell of a garden." - Barbara Streisand

"The love of gardening is a seed once sown that never dies." - Gertrude Jekyll

"Cultivate the garden for the nose and the eyes will take care of themselves." - Robert Louis Stevenson

"Having a garden is like having a good and loyal friend." - C.Z. Guest

"Gardening is not a rational act." - Margaret Atwood

"Gardening is probably what I enjoy doing more than anything else." - Viggo Mortenson

"There is no gardening without humility. Nature is constantly sending its oldest scholars to the bottom of the class for some egregious blunder." - Alfred Austin

"All gardeners know better than other gardeners." - Chinese proverb

"If you want happiness for a day, get a man; if you want happiness for a year, get a dog; if you want happiness forever, get a garden." - Advice for women (Anon).

## THE COMPOST BIN

This Holly-day Leaf is prickly 'cause I'm feeling discomfited: instead of lots of good cheer, great info and photos, and mugs of mulled wine - I'm staring at a blank screen, with a cold cup of tea, hoping that somebody would send me something to fill the Leaf's glaring, white pages. Nothing. No email dings to be heard - let alone jingle bells. You are a lazy lot. [After brow-beating certain people, a little fodder did show up].

Never you mind. You will get what you deserve - I'll provide some minor entertainment, but in the "Bah, Humbug!" category, to wit:

Did you know - (but, of course you did, you are a gardener!) that the holly (*Ilex* sp.) - no matter how cute and Christmasy - is in fact an invasive species? My beautiful-but-nasty holly seeds itself all over the garden and evil little pricklies sprout everywhere. I haul them out. They grow back. They have tough roots. If you cut them, they re-sprout and re-sprout, the horrid things. Even though they look lovely in wreaths and centerpieces, make sure the berries go in the garbage not into the compost.

The Invasive Species Council of BC says the following "English holly (European holly, common holly) is known for its shiny red berries and dark green, spiny evergreen leaves. It is commonly used landscape ornamental often used for holiday decorations and floral arrangements and intentionally introduced from its native range of Europe. English holly has become a serious invasive because of its adaptability to grow in shade or sun, and how easy its seeds are spread by birds. It will crowd out native species as well as monopolize groundwater." Now, to add insult to injury - the damnèd berries are TOXIC to people and pets. Keep them away from babies and fur babies.

Mistletoe (*Viscum album*), is hung in doorways, and couples (or wannabe couples) must kiss under it - well, it's another nasty beast. First of all, it's a parasite - or a hemi-parasite, as it does photosynthesize on its own. Then, it does

- Maria Issa





eventually kill the tree it lives on; and finally, just to add to the pile, it is, of course TOXIC. Don't eat this either, as it contains pharatoxin, and exposure is difficult to treat, and you feel bloody awful until you get fixed up. Mistletoe berries typically land on a host thanks to a bird that has eaten a sticky mistletoe seed, then either poops it or rubs it onto a tree or shrub: another example of megafauna dispersal (see links). Mistletoe has a rich history of myth and tradition that dates back to ancient times:

*Ancient Greece:* The Greeks considered mistletoe a symbol of male fertility and called its white berries "oak sperm". [*in Hungarian, "tree pearls"*]

*Roman mythology:* In *The Aeneid*, Aeneas used a golden bough of mistletoe to speak to his father's ghost in the underworld.

*Celtic Druids:* The Druids considered mistletoe a sacred plant with medicinal and mythical powers. They believed it could restore fertility, protect against evil, and ward off poisons.



*Norse mythology:* In Norse mythology, mistletoe was a plant of peace that could not be reached by a spell because it grew from a tree's branches, not the earth. The god of peace, Balder, was killed by an arrow made of mistletoe, but his parents restored his life and gave mistletoe to the goddess of love.

*Christmas:* Mistletoe, associated with Christmas in the 18th century, was hung in homes to bring good luck and peace.

*Kissing under the mistletoe:* The tradition of kissing under the mistletoe is believed to have originated with servants in England and spread to the middle class.

This brings us to poinsettias (*Euphorbia pulcherrima*). The lovely flowers - now available in a range of natural and artificial colours (yuck), - appear in the shops and in our Christmas home-décor. While not as nasty as the other Christmas plants, or the rest of the *Euphorbias*, they can cause irritation and allergic responses. For once, this is not a "European" tradition - but was picked up in the 16th century, apparently by a Franciscan friar - probably due to its



vibrant red colour, from southwestern Mexico and Guatemala where it grows in rocky canyons. The plant was cultivated and valued by the Aztecs and Mayans well before the arrival of Europeans. The Aztecs called poinsettia *cuetlaxochitl* (brilliant flower) and the Mayans referred to it as *k'alul wits* (ember flower). These indigenous peoples had a variety of aesthetic, practical, and medicinal uses, as well as magical beliefs for poinsettia.



OK, so let's move to the conifers - we are so fond of - for decorating the house. Yes, some of the cedars are certainly toxic - luckily, those are the *Eastern Red Cedars* - the *Westerns* (ours) are OK - to eat... but not to inhale their sawdust which causes long-term lung issues and asthma (according to WorkSafe BC).

Let's get to the classic pines - our Christmas trees: yup, you guessed it! They too can have a lovely irritant effect on your digestive system: "Pine needles can contain toxic PFAS (*per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances*) compounds, which are known as "forever chemicals" because they can persist in the environment for decades. Pine needles can also irritate the stomach lining or mucous membranes of pets and cause gastrointestinal upset in humans." Ponderosa pines are also problematic as their bark and needles contain isocupressic acid, which can be toxic to sheep, goats, and bison. Cattle that eat pine needles in the last trimester of pregnancy may abort up to two weeks later. Luckily, we are not cows - but don't plan on a "live' nativity scene and then festoon the place with ponderosa pines.



I think I'll stick to my Christmas baking and my dried seedhead arrangements. Unfortunately, since I introduced Cat#3 into the feline family mix, their midnight zoomies and galloping upended my lovely dried seedhead arrangement. They have no shame. Like I said, "Bah, Humbug!"

Wishing you a happy and peaceful holiday season!

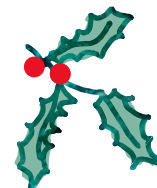
A New Year's resolution, if you need one:



Eat half,  
Walk double,  
Laugh triple,  
Love without measure!



- Tibetan proverb





# Lynn Valley Garden Club Membership Form

*Entered in Prize  
Draw if completed  
and paid by Nov. 24*

January 1, 2025 - December 31, 2025

Membership for 2025 Renew  New

## Member Information

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

First Name \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_  
*(to receive newsletter and club communications)*

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Fee For 2025: **\$20**

E-transfer	Cheque	Cash
_____	_____	_____

- Fill out and email completed membership form to [lvgc.membership@gmail.com](mailto:lvgc.membership@gmail.com)
- **PREFERRED: E-transfer to [LVGC.Treasurer@gmail.com](mailto:LVGC.Treasurer@gmail.com). Add note: 2025 Membership Fee**
- **OR bring membership form and cheque to first club meeting OR mail to:  
LVGC Membership c/o Ann McKinnon, 979 Shavington St, North Vancouver, BC V7L 1K6**
- **Make cheque out to Lynn Valley Garden Club. Cash is accepted but least preferred.**
- **Deadline: Must be received by Dec. 31, 2024 in order to maintain your membership status.**

## Member Directory *(distributed to and for use by members only for club communication)*

Permission to use phone number in Club Directory	Yes	No
Permission to use email in Club Directory	Yes	No
Permission to share home address with Plant Sale Committee	Yes	No

### Can you:

**Help with a committee** Yes    *Committee* \_\_\_\_\_ No

**Serve on the executive** Yes    *Position* \_\_\_\_\_ No

**Committees:** Plant Table, Hospitality, Sunshine (Door Prizes), Website, Newsletter, Donations  
**Executive Positions:** President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer\*\*, Membership\*\*, MALS\*\* Members-at-Large (MALS run the Plant Sale). **Actively recruiting now to \*\*.**

**I'd like to suggest speakers and garden topics** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_