



THE LEAF

THE LYNN VALLEY GARDEN CLUB *Established 1943* *March 2026*

President's Message – Hiromi Matsui

*But at my back I always hear
Time's winged chariot hurrying near
----- Andrew Marvell*

[The above, because I kept pressuring Hiromi to write this – my apologies to her. – m]

We appreciate the enthusiasm of members who come to our meetings. Can it be that it's only 2 short months before the Lynn Valley Garden Club Plant Sale takes place? Members have scooped up all the soil we ordered in February, and now we're almost down to the final stretch. Some diligent souls are already seeing seeds sprouting, while others are a bit behind. And that includes me!

It was gratifying to see the positive response from members to Gillian's suggestions about possible field trips. I wonder if this is a post-Covid reaction, or are we simply an enthusiastic bunch? Gillian is busy following up on the interest for visiting tulip fields and other delights, and details will be given soon.

A special thank you to Jane Sherrott for her excellent talk in February, and for sharing her slides and the text of her talk with us. It is truly an inspiration to see what she has created in her home gardens. Thank you, Tana Bullock, for making this happen and thank you Jane!



Climate change is making some strange things happen, but during this unusual winter, my hellebores have never been happier.

Thanks to swift action from super member, Cathy Brisebois, LVGC members were able to order Organic Compost in conjunction with the Upper Lonsdale Garden Club. Onward and upward!

A brief note about our general meetings. Because our contract with the Lawn Bowling Club covers our time from 6:30 – 9:30 PM, we are kindly asking members please do not arrive before 6:30. We do have a team of members responsible for setting up, and they want to be able to do that in an orderly way. So, thank you for your help, but please follow the lead of people who have volunteered to do the set up for the meetings. Thank you for your understanding!

---Hiromi

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

At

**North Vancouver Lawn
Bowling Club,
249 East 24th Street,
North Vancouver**
*Meetings start promptly at
7:00 PM*

**SPEAKER:
JACKIE MORRIS (&
MAYBE 'MYSTERY
SPEAKER' TOM DAVIS)**

"SEEDING FOR SUCCESS"

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

**PLEASE USE
ELECTRONIC ACCESS**

Your emails are welcome:
General:
lynnvalleygardenclub@gmail.com
THE LEAF
LVGCnewsletter@gmail.com

Executive 2026

CO-PRESIDENTS

Hiromi Matsui

Maria Issa

VICE PRESIDENT

Tana Bullock

SECRETARY

Judy Sullivan

TREASURER

Sarah-Jane Gray

MEMBERSHIP & MEMBER TABLE

Jennifer Sydenham

Nancy Behnsen

Karen O'Neill

MEMBERS AT LARGE (MALS)

Doreen Dew*

Daphne Page

Stefanie Rezanoff

Anonymous

Committees

PLANT TABLE

Maggie Davis

HOSPITALITY

Bev Fraine

Shelley Elgar

Diana Hanley

Leneen Webb

Rosamond Hughes

MaryAnn McKay

SUNSHINE/DOOR PRIZES

Jacque D'Auria

WEBSITE

Laurie Smith

NEWSLETTER

Maria Issa

Stefanie Rezanoff

Laurie Smith

SOCIAL COMMITTEE

Gillian Konst

SET-UP

Lynn Frith

Evelyn Davidson

DONATIONS

Fran Watters*

Carol Bell

Eddie Rustemeyer*

Courtney Mitchell

Executive Meetings

April Executive Meeting *chez*
Jennifer Sydenham

Newsletter items to
lvgcnewsletter@gmail.com by

April 9, 2026

Thanks to LEAF contributors,

Taylor Hewstan, Rosamond
Hughes, Rita Marshall



SPEAKER(S)

Jackie Morris & (maybe mystery speaker Tom Davis)

"SEEDING FOR SUCCESS".

Jackie Morris has been a member of the LVGC for some 20 years and has been growing veggies and assorted other plants from seed for 50 years, minus the 6 when she was getting more degrees at UBC and living in apartments. She has also been a Master Gardener for 21 years. Tom has a wealth of horticultural experience and will co-present the evening's topic, if he is available to participate.

If you want the joy of growing from seed exactly what you want, this presentation is for you! Learn how the tips from this talk will help you be successful. And don't forget to bring a seed packet of something you are thinking of growing.



REPORTS

Vice President - Tana Bullock

[...is working hard to find us some exciting speakers! If you know of a good speaker and can facilitate a contact - by making an introduction or a direct connection - people just don't respond to emails these days! - that would be greatly appreciated!!]

To look into the crystal ball of speakers, please check out the LVGC website to get a glimpse of your future edu-tainment.

Treasurer - Sarah-Jane Gray

The LVGC's finances are healthy - our bank balance was sitting at \$13,390 at the time of the Executive meeting.

MALS - Doreen Dew, Daphne Page and Stefanie Rezanoff and Anonymous

- The push is on to get the word out about the sale:
 - Some posters available at the general meeting
 - New **sign-up sheets** will be available at the general meeting
- The MAL Team would like to have some idea of *how many members are growing veggies???*
- We would like to borrow.....**umbrella bases and tents for the cashiers.**
- We are working on a new plans for the set-up of the car park.

LAWN SIGNS will be available in April. You will need to sign them out and bring them back.

REMINDERS:

NO pre-buying/setting aside on the Friday - if you are lusting after a certain plant, and can't be at the sale, organize someone to buy it for you. So NO hiding the pots behind some bushes! Just don't.

NO 'half-price' after a certain time - the prices are low enough already/ priced to sell - so don't assume they will drop even more. They won't.

NO free plants for anyone. This is meant to be a SALE and a fund-raiser for the club. If you want free plants, chat up your fellow club-members to split theirs. They will.

Membership – Jennifer Sydenham

Thanks to all of you who told your friends, family, neighbours, and even total strangers (!) that the Lynn Valley Garden Club was an interesting and fun group of people – consequently we are currently at 134 members.

PLEASE MAKE THE NEW MEMBERS FEEL WELCOME!!!

If you haven't already done so - please pick up your membership card from the Membership Table as you come into the meeting. If you are unable to attend meetings, you may wish to ask a friend to collect it for you. This card is worth its weight in gold: you get 10% off at most (nice) nurseries if you show it at the cashier.

Webguru – Laurie Smith

The link to the minutes of February's general meeting is happily hidden on the website – but you can check up on it by checking the LINKS file and clicking on the appropriate spot. Though Luddites we be, we keep trying to go electronic.



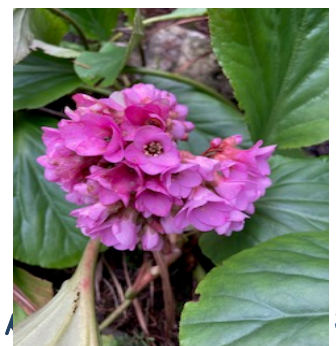
ROSEMARIE'S BRIGHT SPOTS

[Alias: what's blooming now. EVERYONE is requested to contribute to this column – please send 100KB (low res!!) photos of your 'find' with the name of the plant, some interesting facts about it, something about why you have it or how come it's blooming in your hands; or some other edifying anecdote to share. It doesn't have to be long – a few sentences. This section is named in memory of Rosemarie Adams who always had the most interesting plants to talk about – she was a walking encyclopaedia.]
Rosemarie wrote this a couple of years ago – and it is still a great idea!!

My garden, at 1100 feet, under the power towers on Mount Fromme, is usually 5°C lower than the rest of the world and is shaded by enormous trees (well minus ½ which fell on the house at Christmas – but I digress...) so everything is literally weeks behind the rest of you lucky gardeners... So when you have spring, I still have winter. Sort of. This is what was willing to bloom in the past weeks – I just had to hunt quite hard to find them.

Black and white hellebores – and all the other colours in between – but *I'm STILL hunting for yellow ones* so if you have any, I'd love to trade for them!! The little snowdrop, *Galanthus nivalis*, armies have finally decided that they will flower... but the big monster ones, the *Galanthus elwesii*, are still just leaves – but the leaves are huge. They don't spread as rapidly as the little ones, so when THE clump comes up, I'm ecstatic.

At about the same time the *Bergenia cordiflora* comes up, I think mine might be 'Morgenröte' – judging by reverse image search, PlantSanp and endless browsing. I also have a UFO version that hasn't bloomed yet. These plants a quasi unkillable, thrive in shady gardens, make great ground cover – you just have to keep picking off the tired leaves. Some people love them, some hate them – I'm on the fence – but I'm grateful that they fill in quickly and cover 'a multitude of sins'. When in doubt, just stuff them in and pull them out if you don't like 'em.



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The little woodland cyclamen is a particular joy as it's unpredictable – I planted it in one spot and it comes up in 2 new spots somewhere else. I got these little guys from Hiromi and look forward to them every spring. Note the cool-looking moss next to it -



another great find for a wet, shady spot: it's quite beautiful and spreads well. If you want some, let me know!!

The crocuses are a treat because they were part of a bag of Plant Sale leftover 'mystery bulbs' that nobody wanted. They looked shriveled and dried out, so I had no great expectations.... but Lo and Behold !- they like their new home. – Maria

What's growing in your gardens? Send a write-up and a photo!!



CATERPILLARS – sent in by Aline Burlone

Many of you may be subscribed to Linda Gilkeson's email newsletter. If you are not, Aline sent a link of a YouTube video that she sent around because, as she says, "It is a fabulous documentary about caterpillars and why they are so important". Please do watch it – it's worth every minute. The Link is in this month's LINKS file.

*"You know that little rush that you get when you go into a garden center?
That's your self-control leaving your body." >>>>>>*



AND DON'T FORGET THESE OTHER CRITTERS

In case you didn't know - these are dragonfly babies. Don't kill them, they eat thousands of mosquitoes when they mature. They don't stay creepy black bugs for long.



To help hydrate our pollinators, fill a bowl with marbles and add water. Marbles give the bees a safe place to land so they can drink without drowning. 🐝



BEE WATERER

NATURE'S PEST CONTROL

Spiders help control pesky insects like aphids, mosquitoes and flies.



Avoid pesticides and let spiders do their jobs.



Native Pollinators of BC – Nola Faubert

– sent in by Rita Marshall

The honeybee may be the poster bug for the plight of the pollinators, but let's not forget all the native species that help our gardens grow. BC is home to more than 500 bee species including bumblebees, honey and hairy-bely, mining and sweat bees. Not to mention non-bee pollinators such as flies, butterflies, wasps, beetles, bats and hummingbirds.

To support wild bees and persuade the less famous insects to stick around your garden and make quick work of all that pollen, consider planting their favourite native plants. The David Suzuki Foundations and Pollinator Partnerships Canada have created planting guides for every ecoregion in the province. The guides recommend growing flowers such as Milkweed, Common Yarrow, Fireweed, Woolly Sunflower, Douglas Aster and Goldenrod to attract a variety of pollen workers, depending on where you live and the climate and growing conditions. Please check out the link to the Suzuki Foundation in the Links file.

Did you Know? – sent in by Taylor Hewstan

- The smell of soil increases serotonin
- Dirt under your fingernails improves gut health
- Gardening reduces symptoms of ADHD
- Spending time in the garden reduces symptoms of anxiety and depression
- Growing plants increases self-esteem
- Gardening promotes happiness and increases quality of life

A Thank You to the MALS – from Rosamond Hughes



Thanks so much for helping a long lineup of keen gardeners receive some black earth! Maybe the 'miracle of spring' of its becoming transformed into whatever we might wish for could have something to do with the way it all came together in what seemed to me to be a really well-organised and cooperative event...thanks again!

THE MIRACLE OF SPRING

We glibly talk
of nature's laws
but do things have
a natural cause?
Black earth becoming
yellow crocus
is undiluted
hocus-pocus.

– Piet Hein



ANNOUNCEMENTS – OURS

[If you have something to share with the group – whether it be a 'good buy' or a good idea, or information, not necessarily plant-related – this is YOUR spot: the Club's in-house exchange of anything and everything.]

First – the usual reminders:

1. SIGN IN – pick up your name-tag – and if you haven't already, your membership card.
2. **Please help – and get your own chair ready – BUT DON'T START ANYTHING UNTIL THE SET-UP CREW ARRIVE – they photograph the room 'before' so we can return it to that state 'after' so please don't mess with their system. Once they have immortalized the situation, have at it!** So please let the Set-up team do their job before everyone starts coming in. Our club rents space from the Lawn Bowling Club from 6:30 to 9:30 pm. Arriving earlier or later is outside the limits of our rental agreement and we might have to pay more for the extra time. We don't want to wear out our welcome!
3. Don't forget your CUP if you want a hot (probably decaf) drink at the meeting.

4. PLEASE bring something for the Harvest Project. We have so much – so that a can or two won't make even a dint for us – but it could mean so much for someone else... so be generous.
5. Please send items for *THE LEAF*: this is YOUR newsletter – so everything is welcome. If you see a great article somewhere - please provide a SYNOPSIS or your recommendation as to why you think it's worth reading, and a hyperlink. Copyright being what it is, we can't reprint articles in their entirety without permission. You could always try requesting permission...
6. *THE LEAF* is looking for collaborators. You can do a little, or a lot. Up to you. The 'desiderata' descriptions are in a separate file in the cover letter to this month's newsletter.
7. Does anyone have *Mollie Nye Rhubarb*??? Doreen Dew would like some... (to grow – not cooked!) [I tried to look this up but couldn't find it. THIS IS POTENTIALLY COOL, HYPER-LOCAL INFO – so please let the *THE LEAF* know what is special about it, where to get it, what is the history.]
8. Artem Korniev of **Qfix** (our in-house techie) is available for cellphone/computer/tablet/internet repair. Guaranteed to get the gremlins out: "Ukrainians never give up". See **Links** file for Instagram site. We are famous! You can see the LVGC AGM on one of his posts!
9. This single glove was left behind after an Exec meeting at Maria's. Who wants it?



This is sort of a Public Service Announcement – from Barb Downman

This is not garden club related but I thought maybe this could be shared with our garden club members in light of the tragic events in Tumbler Ridge.

Many of our members have children and grandchildren who may be struggling with mental health issues (frankly we all likely are given the grim world events and the crazy orange beast to the south). I was vaguely aware of this phone number but I was reminded of it by a friend during a chat this week. She is trying to spread the word as widely as possible.

9-8-8 is a phone number in Canada to help people get help in a mental health crisis. Similar to 911, this line is dedicated for anyone in need of mental health assistance of any kind. There is also a hot link in this month's LINKS file.



We received another **lovely thank you letter** from Kalen Greenwood of the North Vancouver District Public Library: "Thank you for your very generous donation of \$200 this year to purchase gardening books for Lynn Valley Library. We are purchasing the following eight titles:

- Essential Guide to Ecological Gardening*, by American Horticultural Society
- Garden for Life: Strategies for Easier, Greener, More Joyful Gardening As We Age*, by Rhonda Fleming-Hayes
- Grow Great Vegetables in British Columbia*, by Lorene Edwards Forkner
- Low-Maintenance Eco Gardens*, by Fred Meyer
- Purposeful Gardener: Double Your Harvest and Create a Food Oasis with Raised Beds, Vertical Growing and Companion Planting*, by Tasha Medve
- Thrifty Gardener: Reduce Waste, Spend Wisely*, by Mark Lane
- Well Planned Vegetable Garden: A Grower's Guide*, by Jean-Martin Fortier

The titles will be added to the Lynn Valley Library and the Lynn Valley Garden Club will be credited with a donation label inside the front cover so that patrons will be aware of your generous gift."

These are well-chosen titles, and you can SPRINT to get them out as spring is coming!!

We can – and do! - so much good with the money we raise through the Plant Sale. Half of what we make is given to groups such as the North Shore Neighbourhood House. **Well done, LVGC!! Thank you for another good one!!**



"The coming era will do justice to ideas that do not fit into the present... The best way to apprehend the unseen in plants is to take off the blindfold and look." – Gustav Theodor Fechner

ANNOUNCEMENTS - THEIRS

[Please contribute to this section if you know of good lectures, courses, sales, information that you deem would be of interest to the Club.]

The BC Council of Garden Clubs' March newsletter - The Bulletin - is ready for your perusal. Look for the hot-link in this month's LINKS file.

LOUTET FARM UPDATES - Various tidbits of news may be of interest to some of our members in the following update from Loutet Farm:

- * No more Wednesday Markets; that produce will be donated to the North Shore Neighbourhood House food bank.
- * They are opening up applications for farm interns; details in their newsletter; first volunteer orientation & info session is March 11th from 9-10
- * Compost sales; April 15, 22 & 29
- * May 9: Seedling Sale & First Market

Also, please check out the Edible Garden Project Blog - the link is in this month's LINKS file.

MAR 28, 2026 9:00 AM - 3:30 PM \$65

Vancouver Master Gardeners - Spring Seminar 2026 - Cultivate Joy - <https://mgabc.org/vancouver/>

Speakers and Topics:

Gardening as a Practice of Belonging - **David Tracey**

Restoring and Sustaining Soil Health - **Jo Tobias**

Foodscaping: How to Grow More Food in Less Space - **Erin**

Berkyto

Cracks & Crevices: The Art of Rock and Crevice Gardening - **Paul**

Spriggs

PlantWise - Supporting Responsible Gardening - **Megan**

Blackmore

APR 10-12 The BRADNER FLOWER SHOW

The Bradner Flower Show will be taking place at Bradner Community Hall, 5305 Bradner Rd, Abbotsford. The show takes place April 10 -12 from 10 am to 4 pm daily. Admission is \$2.50. The theme for this year's show is "A Fairy Garden"

This will be our 96th show and is once again being coordinated by Pauline Isherwood, whose grandfather, Fenwick Fatkin, started the show in 1928. The show attracts attendees from all over the lower mainland. There will be many varieties of daffodils on display, most of them developed right here in Bradner. There will also be plants and shrubs for sale at wholesale prices from vendors who do not normally sell to the public. An array of crafts and art will also be on display and for sale.

Our Tea Room features soups, sandwiches and goodies all made fresh in our licensed kitchen. As always, all proceeds from cut flower sales will be donated to Abbotsford Regional Hospital and Cancer Centre where the Bradner Community Club is a Silver Level donor.

Opening ceremony takes place Friday, April 10th at 2 pm with special guest Alexis MacLeod. She is the owner at Simply Perfect Flowers in Abbotsford and a very creative floral designer. As the decorating coordinator for the Bradner Flower Show, her unique style will give you ideas for your own creations. Just for fun, Scruffles the Clown will be on site Saturday, April 11th from 11 - 1 pm. He is a Master of incredible balloon creations, fun for the kids and adults alike!

We hope you will take the time to come to our event, or at the very least tell your members and friends. Bradner Community Club is a registered non-profit society. Event info in the LINKS file [facebook.com/bradnerhall](https://www.facebook.com/bradnerhall) or <https://www.bradnerhall.ca/events.html>

APR 25, 2026 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM

The BC Council of Garden Clubs has its spring meeting and AGM Burnaby - usually at the Bonsor Community Centre 6550 Bonsor Ave. Registration is not open yet so price unavailable.

JUNE 13 & 14 The 2026 Denman Island Home & Garden Tour will take place Saturday, June 13, and Sunday, June 14

LVGC Tech Support proudly provided by Q Fix 778-866-8783 Artem Korniev



Get ready to spend a day or a weekend immersed in the beauty and creativity of Denman Island's unique homes and gardens. (Look in LINKS file)

What's new for 2026

Our team has selected 12 properties, each spectacular in its own way. Together, they showcase Islanders' creative vision, craftsmanship, and hard work.

Treat your eyes to the elegant lines and tranquility of a formal garden. Savour the abundance of a working farm, an award-winning vineyard, and a new cidery where 750 apple trees are setting down roots.

From mossy hollows to rocky ridgetops; from formal to funky, agricultural to artistic, and cozy to contemporary – the tour spans an astonishing range of moods and modes. 🐾



The Compost Bin – Maria Issa

[Everyone is invited to contribute to this column: it is meant to be an opinion, editorial, educational, observational, entertaining opportunity to connect dots, get a new perspective on plants, or have plants provide a new perspective on something familiar. Anything goes, as long as you wrote it and it can be fact-checked: references and links are appreciated.]

34°C in the shade. Floating in the dipping pool in Merida, Yucatan. Discussing plants – of course. My daughter's Mayan friend, Gloria, mentioned the Mayans' ancient knowledge of health uses of various plants, for example that mango and guava leaves boiled together apparently reduces diabetes. Cool!! I looked it up promptly. Yes – she is absolutely right – (the scientific references are in the LINKS file).

Then the conversation turned to “Mayan tree spinach” or Chaya – apparently a superfood – that originates in the Yucatan but has been naturalized to other tropical areas. The Mayans have a wide range of recipes that contain Chaya – soups, omelette, of course tacos – basically it goes into everything. Just had some today mixed with pineapple – YUMMY!! As there was a specimen in the garden, here's a photo. Looked that up too – and it was surprising – the Latin name, *Cnidoscolus aconitifolius*, promptly creeped me out as *aconitin* is seriously deadly. Several recent British murder mysteries had *aconitin* as the killer component. So what's the deal? Ecosia (the browser I use instead of Google because I refuse to give a single click to billionaires) explained that it's probably best to cook the leaves and not sniff the steam while cooking due to volatile cyanide compounds. There is some information that suggests that as Chaya has different cultivars – the relative toxicity may be clone-dependent. Some are edible raw, others not; some contain the cassava mosaic virus, which may contribute to the particular clone's toxicity, others not. The scientific jury is still out on that. A clone it is, as it rarely flowers, hardly ever makes seeds and is usually propagated by cuttings which is how my daughter obtained this specimen. Last year it was a twig – now it's 6 feet and heading upwards.



Local legend says that in order to reduce the toxicity of harvested leaves, one has to pinch the two sides together and say “please” – presumably in Mayan, then cut the leaf and also say “thank you”. Apparently, that changes everything. The holidaying scientist promptly goes into full skeptical mode – “Yeah, sure – but don't be ridiculous!”

Except, maybe, not so fast. Plants can hear, see, learn and communicate – so why not? Maybe they are listening and adapting. I'm sure you're thinking, “She's had too much sun – she's talking to plants (again). She's cooked.” Well, not really – there is serious scientific evidence of plant communication and even intelligence.

Most of us have heard of Dr. Suzanne Simard's ‘wood-wide-web’ and recognize that molecules – which are really just tangible bits of information – pass from one organism to the next to elicit a response. We have also heard of plants being attacked by a pest of some sort – and generating noxious pest-deterrents as a reaction – so that while the original victim may get chewed, the rest of the group near-by will survive. This puts a rather ‘sacrifice the unlucky’ spin on our cherished ‘survival of the fittest’... but Nature is pragmatic.

Even popularized science is now spreading information on plants not only being able to communicate and defend themselves – but being ‘sentient’. What exactly does that mean? MW defines ‘sentience’ as “capable of sensing or feeling: conscious of or responsive to the sensations of seeing, hearing, feeling, tasting, or smelling sentient beings.” This is more than just pushing chemicals to communicate. This means that plants may be able to hear, see, respond to touch – maybe smell, taste... [Imagine being a pitcher plant and thinking I'd much rather taste a fly than a stinkbug.] After all, taste and smell are chemical responses – so the plant probably can identify a useful *vs* a non-useful chemical. The hearing thing is not so far-fetched either – as we know that certain sounds (think wavelengths!!) stimulate plant growth, open stomata. How many of us have NOT done the growing-beans-with-music-experiment?

So, if plants – like animals – can ‘feel’ with a full range of senses, why not attribute intelligence to them? There are eminent scientists working on plant neurobiology – to assess the intelligence of plants. “But they don’t have a brain!” you may argue. However, since when is an anthropomorphic brain a structural necessity to contain that elusive ‘intelligence’? Intelligence can be distributed – we have already accepted that there is a such a thing as a ‘hive intelligence’ or the multi-brains of octopuses. They manage just fine without a humanoid brain, so why not plants? We are afraid of that concept.

The only real problem with attributing intelligence to plants is that we have to accept that there are different types of intelligence, with different mechanisms that bring them into being, and that therefore, they may function quite differently from what we are comfortable with. Yikes – we are no longer the peak of the evolutionary ladder. We are grudgingly accepting that animals can think, feel, remember, learn and have emotions – those of us with pets have long acknowledged that. So, again, why not plants?

In 1973, Peter Tompkins and Christopher Bird published “*The Secret Life of Plants*,” which expounded that plants are sentient and can communicate – this was promptly labelled as pseudoscience – until 50 years later, when it was found to be correct. Then came Prof. Stefano Mancuso, a leading authority on plant neurobiology, investigating signaling and communication across all levels of biological organization. Plant neurobiology demonstrates that plants possess nervous systems and consciousness comparable to those of animals. He is a professor at the University of Florence and has published numerous books and papers on plants including “*The Nation of Plants*”. Then came Peter Wohlleben and Suzanne Simard who illustrated that trees are social beings and that the forest operates as a social network. “*Thus Spoke the Plant*” by Dr. Monica Gagliano offers insights from her studies on plant communication and cognition. [Note the word ‘cognition’.] Her studies and now that of many others have shown that:

- Plants can hear
- Plants communicate through sound –they scream in high frequencies when in pain!
- Plants communicate through volatile chemicals
- Plants have vision – they have more light receptors than animals
- Plants can smell – they have more smell genes than animals
- Plants can make decisions
- Plants have memories and can learn
- Plants have social lives with many species
- Plants nurture their young and look after each other
- Plants feel stress and pain and fight to live!

So, how can plants be sentient, learn, have memories, communicate, and make decisions if they don’t have a brain? Actually, the reverse question should be asked – how could they survive if they had a brain?

Due to their stationary nature, plants cannot escape from predators. If plants had specialized organs for specific functions, such as hearts, kidneys, livers, and brains, they would not survive if these organs were attacked by insects or grazed by herbivores. Instead, plants possess numerous organelles that perform these functions and are distributed throughout their bodies, particularly in the leaves and stems. They can lose parts of their bodies by attrition, as all essential functions for life are replicated millions of times throughout their structures. The remaining tissues can still function and assist in recovery.

The implications of plant sentience raise numerous substantial and possibly ethical issues. The fact that plants are conscious, self-aware, and can feel stress and pain, valuing their lives like animals’, means that we need to treat plants in the same way we believe in humanely treating animals. Plants are not a lesser form of life – just different; in fact, they are fundamental to the existence of most life forms on this planet.

The next big question to answer then, is whether plants have ‘consciousness’ and if they do - how does that alter our perception of our identity? Ponder that for a bit.

The Ceiba tree, *Ceiba petandra* (*Yaxché*) is considered the sacred "Tree of Life" in Mayan mythology, acting as a cosmic axis connecting the Underworld (roots), Earth (trunk), and Heavens (branches). Often planted in the center of villages, it represents fertility, strength, and the four cardinal points of the universe.

