



MILL BAY GARDEN CLUB NEWSLETTER

Website: www.millbaygardenclub.com

Email: mbgcnewsletter@gmail.com

Next Meeting:

Date: **Tues, February 25th, 2020**

Time: **7pm (Doors open 6:30pm)**

Place: **Mill Bay Community League Hall
(1001 Shawnigan Mill Bay Rd)**

Activities:

**Business Meeting; Members'
Forum; Gardening Q&A; Library;
Raffle; Plant Sales; Guest Speaker;
Socializing!**



February Speaker: Connie Kuramoto

The World Beneath Our Feet

See page 3 for details



February Brag Table Theme:

Leap Into Spring!

With plant and flower identification and commentary provided by Barb Kohlman, the Brag Table is a great part of our monthly meetings. It's a fun and interactive way to share what's going on in your garden. The bonus is a prize awarded randomly to one of the monthly participants. If you've never participated, give it a fling, be it flower, vegetable or fungus!

Meeting Helpers:

Break Time Treats: You know who you are!

Kitchen Helpers: See Break Time Treats above.

Set-up/clean up*: See Break Time Treats above.

** please arrive by 6:30.*

** and you know who you are*

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***DON'T FORGET!
bring your mug
for coffee/tea!***

President's Report

Donna Kaiser

"Leap into Spring" is the brag table theme this month. After spending the last two days in the garden, what an appropriate choice it is! My front garden is currently a purple wave of species crocus that have naturalized, to my delight. I always smile when the red buds of awakening peonies start to show, which mine are now doing since I removed their mulch blanket. The compost bin is happy to help with the mulch....

March is shaping up to be a busy month for learning and participating in Club events. Seedy Saturday on March 14, trip to Russell Nursery on March 15 and the Heather Sale on March 28. Looking forward to them all.

It is also a time for us to ask others to step up for executive positions. We have added one new executive committee position for Bursaries.

Executive positions include:

- President (one volunteer identified)
- Vice President (open)
- Treasurer (one volunteer identified)
- Secretary (open)
- Membership (open)
- Bursary (open)

Please give it some thought. The executive meets monthly, two weeks before the general club meeting. I have found it to be a rewarding and fun time spent with like-minded gardeners.

Finally, I would like to thank Dorothy Kennedy for volunteering to manage the kitchen during club meetings. I think we can all agree that the opportunity that the refreshment break provides adds to everyone's enjoyment of the evening.

Happy gardening and see you on February 25th!

Cheers, Donna

"Sunshine Mary"

Our esteemed Life Member Mary Gale, has for very many years, been sending cards and kind words to those members who are experiencing illness or loss. She does this on behalf of the Mill Bay Garden Club, bringing a spot of sunshine into what is often a stressful time for a club member.

If you know of someone in the club who is sick, in hospital, or has lost a loved one, please let Mary know and she will send a card on our behalf.



February's Speaker:

Connie Kuramoto on The World Beneath Our Feet

Connie Kuramoto has been teaching horticulture for over 30 years at the post-secondary level. Connie is currently operating a Horticultural Training and Services Company called Gardens on the Go, teaching courses on contract for North Island College in their Horticulture Apprenticeship Program as well as their Market Gardener Training Program. She also teaches courses for Gaia College's Organic Land Care Diploma Program on a regular basis. She offers workshops, garden club talks, as well as consulting and gardening services throughout the Vancouver Island area and beyond.

Abstract:

In this talk Connie will introduce you to some of the creatures that live in your soil, what they can do for your garden, and how you can best take care of them, nurture them, and encourage them to thrive. Connie has a wealth of knowledge in many areas of horticulture but feels that the very most important thing to do for your garden is to nurture soil creatures who have performed soil building tasks from the early days of the planet. Paying attention to the microbial populations reduces the need for fertilizer and water in your garden, and will provide your garden with a vibrancy that you will notice.

Committee Reports

Notes from the Library

Spring cleaning? Weeding out gardening books? The Garden Club is hoping you may donate your best books for either our collection or to sell at the Flower and Garden Show on May 30. Last year we made over \$200.00 in book sales! It's a perfect cycle.....old books for new books!

Remember to return ALL books that have been borrowed to our February meeting so other may have an opportunity to browse through them.

*Your friendly librarian,
Janice Rose*

Committee Reports (cont.)

Plant Sales

Leap into spring with buckets of alpaca manure. Needs no aging time. Great for veggie or flower gardens. Get a bucket for \$5. & help build up our charity donation fund. Should be lots available at the next garden club meeting.

And if you have some new starter plants to share for the plant table, we would welcome your donations.

See you all then

Your friendly plant sales team,

Monika Morgan & Sharon Martin

From the Raffle Table

The grand prize this month is a bucket of alpaca gold....and as usual, donations are welcome. The Raffle Table is always looking for garden related items in good condition. Don't forget your change for the Raffle Table!

Thank you and see you at the next meeting.

Katherine and Stephanie



2020 Flower and Garden Show!

Mark your calendars already! This month's Community Flower and Garden Show will be held on Saturday 30 May.

And there are still opportunities for volunteers. If you haven't volunteered yet—or even before— call Gill Keir (contact details in the sidebar to the right).

Gardening Tips for February 2020 by Barb Kohlman

- Start seeds of greens indoors.
- Plant peas at the end of the month.
- Deadhead early bloomers regularly e.g. primulas to avoid disease on old flowers.
- Mulching can be done as soon as the ground warms.
- Be diligent about hunting slugs; I have found a few already.
- Check out Bob Duncan's video on you tube on how to prune fig trees if you have one.
- Check for eggs laid by the Viburnum Leaf Beetle on the small terminal twigs, last fall. You can try to limit the damage that the larvae will do as soon as leaves form on the deciduous shrubs. Damage will occur as soon as it warms on evergreen plants. Not only the larvae attack the leaves, but so do the adults.
- Protect your crocus and tulips from those darn bunnies. Also, fawn lilies---they will nip off every flower. Upturned wire baskets work well.



Cheers — barb k





**Cobble Hill
Seedy
Saturday**

March 14th from 10 am - 2 pm
Cobble Hill & Stu Armour Hall;
In the Heart of the Cobble Hill Village

2 venues with over 45 vendors
featuring Lee Valley Tools, Perennial Ridge
Nurseries, Saltspring Seeds, Full Circle Seeds,
Seeds of Diversity, Brother Nature Organic Seeds,
Denman Island Heritage Apples and a
wide variety other excellent suppliers to meet
your every gardening need!

FREE ENTRY

presented by the Cobble Hill Farmers Institute
wheelchair accessible, lots of free parking and great food

 www.facebook.com/cobblehillseedysaturday

For more information contact:
cobblehillseeds@gmail.com

Vancouver Island's best Seedy Saturday

Weird and Wonderful by Fran Benton

When I travel I always look for weird and wonderful plants to entertain you. This year has produced two stars. Number one weirdo is the Brazilian Grape Tree Jaboticaba. This tree has really tasty purple fruit that it produces *on its trunk*. Yes, this is one weird tree. I met my first one in the town of Holuloa on the big island of Hawaii. This is an artist's town with tons of little galleries. While chatting with one gallery owner I asked about an odd plant he had outside. "Weird?" He said, "I'll show you weird. This is the Jaboticaba. It grows its fruit on its trunk- taste it! And they taste like Concord grapes. It's a great favourite in the tropics for making jams and jellies."



With a bit of research I found out something entirely new to me. The ability to produce fruit on your trunk is known as being califlorous. Think stalks of Brussels sprouts. Why would any plant be califlorous? Incidentally, cauliflower is not califlorous. What? Don't you love botany? One plant we all know and love is the fig.

Figs are califlorous as they produce their flowers and fruit on their stems. Some gourds like the famed calabash produce fruit on their trunk. But why do they do this? It turns out that mammals, insects, bats, and some birds that crawl up trees are great pollinators if the fruit and flowers are on the stem or trunk of a tree.

I bought some jaboticaba fruit at our local fruit stand. It was too pricy to make jam but I thought it would be excellent in fruit salad. It was and there was a bit left over for the next day. Hmmm, would I be over sharing if I mentioned that day old Jaboticaba was a *gastronomical* experience? Note to self. Fresh only, tasty but dangerous!

My other weird plant is called Cup of Gold (*Solandra maxima*). It has the biggest flower I have ever seen. It's a huge thing rivaling the blooms on *Magnolia grandiflora*. I found some on the highway and decided to take a closer look. They truly are monsters but like so many glorious



yellow things (think Scotch broom) they are invasive in the tropics. They are also a vine and tend to climb over plants that you'd rather they leave alone. And to add to the downside they are quite toxic, belonging to the family of poisons that includes *Datura* and *Brugmansia*. Why are pretty things in the plant world so often toxic?

Well, back to raiding the

neighbour's papaya tree. That's one tasty fruit!

Upcoming Plant Sales

VANCOUVER HEATHER SOCIETY ANNUAL PLANT SALE

SATURDAY, MARCH 28, 2020

So, mark the Annual Vancouver Island Heather Society sale on your calendar now. It will take place on **Saturday, March 28** at the Stu Armour Building, Cobble Hill Fairgrounds (Fisher Road). This is the same venue as last year. The sale will begin at 10:00 and last until noon or until sold out. Experienced buyers will advise you that it is essential to get to the hall prior to the sale starting in order to get the best selection. Members of the Society will be on hand to help you make your choices and members of the Victoria Master Gardener Association will be there to answer general gardening questions. As well there will be opportunity to take out a membership in the Society should you so wish. Detailed information on the growing of heathers will be available.

A list of plants that will be offered for sale will be available on the Vancouver Island Heather Society website at www.bcheathersociety.org. Visiting the website will provide you the opportunity to check what you would like to buy prior to the sale.

CHARITY PLANT SALE

MILL BAY PLANTAHOLICS PLANT SALE

SATURDAY, APRIL 11, 2020

Saturday, April 11, 2020 from 9am to 2pm at 2836 Oceanside Lane Mill Bay (east off Trans Canada Highway at Kilmalu, south on Church Way, east on Welch Road, and south on Oceanside Lane). Proceeds from the sale will be divided between the Malawi Girls on the Move program (where the money will provide a scholarship for a young Malawian woman to complete her secondary school education) and Somenos Transition House – a program of the Cowichan Women Against Violence Society. A great selection of healthy plants will be available for purchase. Members of the Victoria Master Gardener Association will be on hand to answer general gardening questions. Cash or cheque only.

CAIRNSMORE PLACE VOLUNTEER GARDENERS ANNUAL PLANT SALE

250 CAIRNSMORE STREET, DUNCAN,
SATURDAY, APRIL 18 FROM 9:00 TO NOON

There will be over 500 plants, featuring peonies, hostas and collector plants. Wooden garden ornaments and structures, hand made by our volunteers are also part of the sale. Master Gardeners will be there to answer any of your questions.

Every Wednesday morning 18 volunteer gardeners arrive at Cairnsmore Place to work their magic. Residents wave hello from the windows, some even sit and watch or provide advice. Weeding, mulching, planting and pruning are part of the weekly routine that is now in its 12th year.

Cairnsmore Place is home to 100 residents. Over the years local residents have made significant financial contributions to help beautify large areas. However, funds for the regular work, including the installation of a drip watering system, building of three large compost bins and purchase of trees and garden maintenance equipment come from the Annual Plant Sale. The Cowichan Valley gardening community has been generous in its support of this event.

Upcoming Events

- **Seedy Saturdays (and Sunday)!**
 - Sooke: 29 February, 10am - 3pm, Sooke Community Hall, 2037 Shields Rd, opposite the Legion on Eustace Rd. Presented by Sooke Region Food CHI Society. Visit sookefoodchi.ca/events/seedysaturday/ for more.
 - Comox Valley: 7 March, 10am - 3pm, Florence Filberg Centre, Courtenay. Doors open at 10:00. Admission is \$5 and free after 2:00 Doors close at 3:00. 10:30 Speaker Fiona Chambers - A plethora of Perfect potatoes. Learn about breeding new varieties of potatoes. 12.30 Speaker Arzeena Hamir. How to keep fresh green veggies on your table year round. Vegetarian lunch and home made baked goods at the Seedy Café. For more info, see <https://cvgss.org/events/seedy-saturday/>
 - **Cobble Hill: 20th Annual Seedy Saturday: March 14, 9am - 2pm, Cobble Hill Hall, Watson Ave, Cobble Hill. See the notice on page 5 for details.**
 - Campbell River: 21 March, 10am - 1pm, Campbell River Community Centre, 401-11th Avenue, Campbell River. Seed swap, vendors, demos, plant sales. L'il Sprouts corner and much more. Limited space available for vendors. If you are interested in participating, contact Karen Chappell (250-286-5306) or karen.chappell@campbellriver.ca
 - Duncan: 12th Annual Seedy Sunday: Sunday 22 March, 10am - 2pm, Si'em Lelum Gym, 5574 River Road, Duncan. An event for local gardeners to source locally grown and ecologically sound seeds, garden starts, and perennials, activities for children and a series of gardening workshops. More info at Cowichan Green Community - 250-748-8506 or kat@cowichangreencommunity.org.
- **Invasive Plants in Your Garden.** Thursday, February 27th, 7pm. Paige Erickson-McGee will speak about invasive plants in your garden and how to conquer them. Part of the Metchosin Challenge taking place at St Mary's Church, 4125 Metchosin Road, Victoria. Admission is free, and light refreshments will be served.
- **250 Years of Trees at Kew.** Sunday March 1st, 3pm. Victoria Horticultural Society & Victoria Hardy Plant Group present the 2020 Elizabeth England Memorial Lecture with Tony Kirkham MBE, Head of the Arboretum, Gardens and Horticultural Services, Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew, London, U.K. Salvation Army Victoria Citadel, 4030 Douglas Street, Victoria. \$10 cash at the door (free to VHS members).

More Upcoming Events

- **Hellebore Sunday at Horticulture Centre of the Pacific (HCP).** Sunday March 8th, starting at noon. Hellebores provide winter color to the garden and, best of all, *the deer won't eat them!* The sale starts at noon, so get in line early as we sell out quickly. Admission to the gardens is free during plant sales so be sure to make time for a walk through the Doris Page Winter Garden currently showcasing winter beauty. HCP is located at 505 Quayle Road, Victoria.
- **Wild About Gardening– Preserving Native Insects.** Thursday, February 27th, 7pm. Panel discussion. Part of the Metchosin Challenge taking place at St Mary's Church, 4125 Metchosin Road, Victoria. Admission is free, and light refreshments will be served.
- **Russell Nursery (Backstage) Tour—for MBGC members only!** Sunday March 15, 10am. Donna has organized a fun and very interesting look at the back side of Russell Nursery (<http://russellnursery.com>) - especially for members of the Mill Bay Garden Club! Russell Nursery is located on Wain Road in North Saanich, approximately halfway between Deep Cove and the ferry terminal at Swartz Bay. As of February 12th, there were already 23 people planning on coming. Travel by car pool will probably be addressed at the general meeting on February 25th.
- **Grafting Fruit Trees.** Thursday March 19th, 7pm. Derek Wulff will speak on grafting fruit trees to preserve historic genetic stock and citrus farming. Part of the Metchosin Challenge taking place at St Mary's Church, 4125 Metchosin Road, Victoria. Admission is free, and light refreshments will be served.
- **Preserving Seeds.** Thursday April 2nd, 7pm. Fiona Hammersley Chambers will speak on preserving our genetic heritage by preserving seeds. Part of the Metchosin Challenge taking place at St Mary's Church, 4125 Metchosin Road, Victoria. Admission is free, and light refreshments will be served.



Minutes

MBGC General Mtg.

January 28 2020

Just so you know: *You may have been wondering what all this italics stuff is about. Since it is likely my last report to you I have some things I must pass on. First, who am I? I am a doppelgänger, of sorts, of the current MBGC acting Secretary. I am the one who watches and listens to the meetings and then reports to you, in italics, what I observe. I have learned that the MBGC Executive and a few of the members constitute a secret society with big plans. They call themselves Mitochons (short I believe for Mitochondria - underground dwellers). They seem to have some sort of extra sensory communication with actual Mitochondria, thus Garden Clubs are a natural place for them to hide and observe. They are seen, frequently, digging in the ground, no doubt communicating directly with their namesakes. They look upon the regular members and the particularly dull current Secretary as lesser beings, as sources of information about popular thinking and beliefs. I have been able to watch and report on them for two reasons. First they cannot see italics print. Second they cannot detect non thinkers, and since I have not had a thought in over 2 decades and report in italics, I am invisible to them. It seems the Secretary has not had a thought either in nearly 2 decades or perhaps longer. There have been recent attempts by the Mitochons to coordinate with other Mitochon cells, particularly with the Victoria Garden Club. There is also talk about reaching out to other Island Garden clubs whose executives are dominated by Mitochons as well. It is worth noting that at least 2 or 3 of the Mitochons on our Executive have eagerly endorsed this idea. I do not know the extent of the plans of this expanding underground network, but my sense is it is nefarious. I can't work it out because I don't think. I simply observe and relate - in italics. So as I exit I simply warn all members to be watchful, be careful to whom you talk because there are Mitochons in the membership who report what they hear and see to those on the Executive.*

I exhort you - be wary.

Call to order:

7:01 pm

I have observed, and you may have as well, that all our meetings start at around 7:0. Is there some mysterious significance to the number 7?

Reports

President

- **Minutes:**

- M/S/C unanimously to adopt the previous minutes,

- *unanimity amongst ordinary members is important to the Mitochons as it indicates the extent of their control.*
- **Kitchen Coordinator**
 - Dorothy ?? has agreed to become the coordinator
 - *is she a Mitochon?*
- **Seedy Saturday**
 - March 14
 - seeking volunteers
 - *events like this are a tried and true method for the Mitochons to assess the gardening class*
- **Russell Nursery**
 - a tour of Russell Nursery is being organized so that we can see the behind the scenes operations - sometime near the end of March
 - *this is a key venue where Island Mitochons meet and plan*

Vice President

- no report; Absolutely Nothing
- *very secretive, talks a lot at the Executive Mtgs, what is going on? I don't know because I don't think.*

Treasurer

- we have \$2887.73 in our Account
- and \$500 in a GIC for the bursary
- *these are large sums of money, what is really going on?*
- **Mary Gale** could not make the meeting so Marie Cooke reported on her behalf
 - Mary is not feeling well and Pip will send her a card on our behalf
 - thanks to Pip

Membership

- we have 126 members
- & 3 new members this meeting
- *hmmnn*

CF&GS

- the fair is May 30
 - setup is May 29
- need volunteers and organizers
 - for setup
 - publicity and promotions - this is particularly urgent
 - for organizing brochures, tablecloths, liaisons with judges, and ribbons and rosettes
- *the major reconnoitering event of the year for the Mitochons,, a significant error may have been made as Mitochons are known to have a fetish for weird hats, but it is also true that not all people who wear weird hats are Mitochons, I simply suggest being careful. Festive occasions may be the undoing of the Mitochons as at our Xmas party there was, also, a certain member in a funny hat. This member often behaves strangely.*
- *Mitochons believe ordinary citizens are easily diverted by being presented with ribbons and awards, so understand the motivation here*

Website:

- no report

Raffle

- once again great prizes
- *trinkets instead of ribbons?*

Library

- 3 new books
 - 2 on pruning and 1 on Permaculture
 - *note: the Librarian made sure these books contain no italics, making sure nothing gets by the Mitochons?*

Bursary

- the Bursary Committee will meet to refine the Bursary Program
- *Mitochons put great effort into controlling budgets; when it comes to grasping for money they are almost human*

Members' Forum

- Sally - requested pruning help
- Guy is selling Wild Rice from Saskatchewan

Adjournment

- yes, once again we did
- *but did we all really adjourn?*