



## *Notice of Motions*

### **The 2008 Budget**

After several hours of discussion by members of the executive, the budget for 2008 is ready for your approval at next month's meeting. Please study it beforehand so that precious time is not taken from the speaker. Refer to last month's newsletter on what factors were considered in putting the budget together. Pick up a copy tonight or contact Carole for one. Contact Mary or Carole with your questions or concerns.

### **Special Committee for 75th Anniversary Celebrations**

Next month, we will also approve the establishment of a special committee to plan and carry out the 75th anniversary celebrations. Our current core of volunteers is stretched to the limit so please consider giving your time, skills and energy.

## *Plants Wanted ... Alive* by Audrey Barnes

We need your plants. Please get out there and dig. Commonly heard comment: "You want that! I just threw it out!" Yikes! Throw it our way! Sure we like the unusual, but we also want the popular. Sunday, April 13th is the deadline for receiving plants and it's approaching fast. Dig up those unwanted plants and drop them off at Audrey's. Can't dig? Contact Carole and she and Ann Paisley will do it for you. No plants to dig? Sign-up tonight to help divide and the plants in the yard.

The top ten wanted plants are: bergenia, campanula, dahlias, ferns, grasses, ground covers, daylilies, hosta, peony, sedum and violets. (Oops! That's 11! Actually, the list is unending.) Unsure? Call Audrey (604-526-8284) or email at [sgbarnes@telus.net](mailto:sgbarnes@telus.net).

## Tonight's Meeting

### **Bud Black**

### **"Dahlias and Chrysanthemums"**

Bud Black's lifelong hobby and passion began as a young boy following his dad around the garden. Incredibly, Bud has been gardening for 75 of his 82 years! Tonight, as past president of both the Vancouver Dahlia Society and the Point Grey Chrysanthemum Club, Bud will speak on his area of expertise, dahlias and chrysanthemums.

## Future Meetings

Tuesday, May 13, 7:30 p.m.

### **Brenda Faulk**

### **"Drought Tolerant Plants and Xeriscaping"**

Brenda Faulk, owner of Tanglebank Country Gardens, [www.tanglebank.com](http://www.tanglebank.com), will have handouts for her talk and bring plants for sale.

## **Gardening for a Better World**

This Saturday, we'll celebrate Earth Day with the New Westminster Public Library. Spend an afternoon visiting exhibits and listening to speakers on sustainable gardening practices.

Vegetable Gardening in Containers 1 p.m. The Biggest Little Garden in Town

Composting: Giving Back to the Earth 2 p.m. New Westminster Environmental Partners

Get Your Lawn Off Grass 3 p.m. Alan Reid, GardenWorks



**EARTH DAY**

## Carole's Compost

By Carole Forsythe

Should I cut down my *Cornus nuttallii*, a.k.a Pacific Dogwood? Brian Minter says I should. He's probably right, but I'm reluctant to do so. Yes, I know the parasitic fungus *Driscula destructiva* which causes dogwood anthracnose might kill it. And, yes, more years than not, blotches appear on its leaves and bracts and the edges of its leaves turn brown and drop prematurely throughout the spring and summer. But, when the conditions are right, its spring flowers (bracts, technically) are simply stunning. In fall, its leaves turn red to burgundy and its red fruit clusters provide a feast for pileated woodpeckers and some other yet to be identified bird. On a practical level, it towers over my house and would take time and money to remove. A replacement tree would take years to reach its height. And, there's the fact that it is the emblem of both British Columbia and the New Westminster Horticultural Society. So, what to do? Citing the fungus, climate change and human development, as threats to its survival, UBC's Centre for Forest Conservation Genetics is working on a conservation strategy. Hopefully, it will save my tree. So, I guess it gets another year of reprieve. Happy Earth Day.

### Feedback

Questions, comments, ideas?

### Contacts for This Issue

Audrey Barnes 604-526-8284 [sgbarnes@telus.net](mailto:sgbarnes@telus.net)  
Carole Forsythe 604-515-1927 [carole.forsythe@shaw.ca](mailto:carole.forsythe@shaw.ca)  
Mary Barnard 604-525-5928 [barnyard@telus.net](mailto:barnyard@telus.net)  
Merril Hall 604-526-4324 [merrilh@shaw.ca](mailto:merrilh@shaw.ca)

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## Mark Your Calendar

Saturday, April 12

12:30 to 4:30 p.m.

### Gardening for a Better World

Auditorium, New Westminster

Public Library

See the article on page 1.

Tuesday, April 29

7:30 p.m.

### NWHS Executive Meeting

Home of Aldina Isbister

4237 Sardis Street, Burnaby

RSVP 604-434-9818

Saturday, May 3

5 to 9 p.m.

### NWHS Plant Sale Set-Up

Ecole Glenbrook Middle School

7th Avenue and Park Crescent

To volunteer, contact Carole.

Sunday, May 4

10 to 4 p.m.

### NWHS Plant Sale

Ecole Glenbrook Middle School

7th Avenue and Park Crescent

To volunteer for a shift, contact Carole.

## You Should Know That ...

### Sketching Club Revived

Add Merrill Hall's name to the list of Who Does What. Merrill is coordinating the sketching club. Contact her with your thoughts.

### Giving Away Our Money

Know of a worthy organization that needs seed money for a project that promotes one or more of the following:

- gardening or horticulture education
- horticulture research
- native plant habitat restoration
- community based garden projects?

The Donations Committee will adjudicate applications received by Friday, May 16th and award up to \$2000 in funding to one or more organizations. Pick up an application tonight or contact Carole and she'll send you one.

### Perfection Personified

The latest edition of *Judging Standards for Non-Specialized Shows: Flowers, Fruit and Vegetables* is a new addition to our library. For those interested in exhibiting the treasures in their gardens, it will come in handy for June's meeting.



### Frogs Wipe Out Sunflower Crop

Inexplicably, sunflowers are no longer the theme of the Queensborough Urban Farmers Fall Fair. If you've got a clever way of relating the new theme of frogs to gardening, frogmarch it to Audrey.

## Orchard Mason Bees by Karen Low

Have you noticed poor fruit production in your apple, cheery, pear or plum trees in the last few years? Perhaps climate or just an idiosyncrasy of each individual tree is to blame, but a more likely cause is a lack of natural pollinators.

While bumblebees and honey bees do a fine job of pollinating the flowers in our garden, many native bees are better pollinators because they fly and work at lower temperatures. Perhaps the most useful of the native bees is [Osmia lignaria](#), the orchard mason bee, sometimes called the blue orchard mason bee. Mason bees are so called because they construct their nests with bits of mud and stone. They are solitary bees, meaning they do not live in hives with a queen and worker bees—every female makes her own nest. Having no honey and no hive to defend, they are very docile, and sting only if squeezed.

### Appearance

The orchard mason bee appears black but is actually dark metallic green/blue in color. The female is approximately 14 mm in length and the male is about 11-12 mm in length. At rest, the bee has its wings flush with its body. The bees are hairy, making them very effective pollinators as the hair carries pollen grains from flower to flower.

### Life Cycle

Adults emerge from cocoons in early spring (usually around late March here). After mating, the female searches for a nest before gathering pollen. She nests in narrow holes or tubes—hollow

twigs, holes made in wood by boring insects, even empty snail shells. The female deposits a mass of nectar and pollen in the cavity, lays an egg on the mass, and creates a partition with a bit of mud for the next egg. She continues this way until the cavity is filled before plugging the entrance with one thick mud wall. She then seeks out another location for a new nest. A single female can complete an average of four 6-inch tubes, with about eight eggs per tube, in her lifetime over four to eight weeks. That's nearly 60,000 blossom visits per female, as she gathers pollen for her nests.

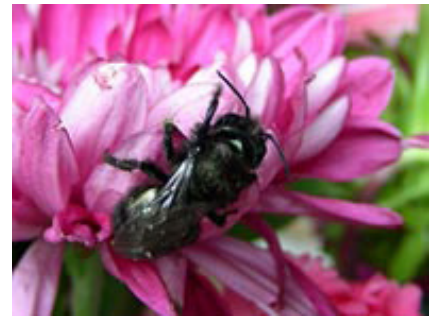
The larvae hatch in the summer and consume the provisions, spin their cocoons and pupate. Then the adult emerge in fall or winter and hibernates in cocoon until the spring when the cycle begins again.

### Attracting Orchard Mason Bees

Attract mason bees by providing nesting sites in your garden. These sites can be purchased or made. You can either drill holes (1/4–3/8 inches in diameter and 3–6 inches deep) in some scrap wood or place cardboard straws in a wooden box, coffee can or milk carton. The straws can be bought, or made by rolling strips of newspaper around a pencil and securing with a bit of tape.

In March, before the bees begin nesting, put the nests where they will receive morning sunlight, ideally a southeast exposure and under an eave to protect it from rain.

When nesting is completed in early to mid-summer, the nests



can be removed and stored over winter outdoors or in an unheated garage or shed, under cover to protect them from rain and snow, and replaced in the spring. Take some care into where you place or store the nest over the winter. If it is too cold, the bees will use up fat stores and die of starvation. If it warms too quickly, they will emerge too early, before pollen is available.

### References

“Orchard Mason Bees”  
<http://gardening.wsu.edu/library/inse006/inse006.htm>

This University of Western Washington website has photos of filled nests.

“Apiculture - Blue Orchard Mason Bee, *Osmia lignaria*”  
[http://www.agf.gov.bc.ca/apiculture/factsheets/506\\_osmia.htm](http://www.agf.gov.bc.ca/apiculture/factsheets/506_osmia.htm)

Government of BC, Ministry of Agriculture and Lands Apiculture fact sheet.

Contains instructions for creating and handling nests.

“Native Bees”  
<http://www.attra.org/attra-pub/nativebee.html>

Article on native bees by the National Sustainable Agriculture Information Service (US).

## In Your Veggie Patch

By Roy Pegler

### *Care and Feeding of Your Seedlings*

Hopefully, April will be kinder to the veggie grower. March being too cool to sow or plant, this month may be the busiest of the year as we catch-up. Once the soil is warm enough, sow and plant cool season veggies.

Indoors, start tomatoes, cucumbers, eggplants, melons and peppers for transplanting in May. Seedlings need 14 to 16 hours of light to grow. Florescent lighting or grow lights are recommended. Keep the lights two to four inches above the top of the seedlings. If all you've got is a windowsill, turn the container daily so that seedlings don't have to stretch towards the light. If seedlings look pale and weak, they're not getting sufficient light.

Thinning helps seedlings grow. As soon as their first *true* leaves appear, cut the weakest seedlings off at soil level. Use a fan to circulate the air around the seedlings. This both strengthens seedlings and keeps moulds and mildews at bay. Once seedlings have four *true* leaves, transplant them into four inch containers. This gives them room to grow, stimulates feeder roots

and improves ventilation. To transplant, hold the seedling by its leaves, carefully cut around its roots and gently lift it out. Plant it in moist soil slightly deeper than it was originally. Firm the soil around the seedling and water immediately.

For the next three weeks, fertilize with transplant fertilizer or a well balanced fertilizer at half strength. Thereafter, use full strength fertilizer weekly. Too much fertilizer will result in leggy seedlings. To promote bushy plants, pinch back growing tips every week or so.

One week before planting in the great outdoors, acclimatize seedlings in a cold frame. If you don't have one, place plants in a shaded and sheltered spot at first, gradually moving them into the sun. Don't forget to bring them indoors on nights that promise to be less than ten degrees Celsius.

Watch for spider mites, aphids and whiteflies. Spray them with insecticidal soap. Prevent fungal diseases by using clean pots, providing good air circulation and just enough water.



### **Farmers Market Returns to the Royal City**

After more than 25 years without one, a farmers market is returning to New Westminster and we're going to be a part of it. Every Thursday, starting on June 26th, the Royal City Farmers Market will bring food producers, local craftspersons, artists, musicians and non-profit organizations to Tipperary Park between 3:00 and 7:00 p.m. Once a month, we'll be there to spread the word on the joys of gardening. Families are encouraged to not only come down to shop but to stay and picnic in the park. If you'd like to know more about this non-profit organization, become a member, vendor or volunteer, go to

[www.rcfm.ca](http://www.rcfm.ca).

### From the Archives by Audrey Barnes

Tonight is our 74th birthday. Next year we will be celebrating our 75th anniversary. NWHS has the status of being the oldest general gardening club in BC in continuous existence. "Continuous" is the key word. Other clubs may have been founded before us but they have had years in which they were temporarily disbanded. There are specialty clubs much older than NWHS.

For the 50th anniversary, we provided funding for planters in front of the new courthouse in Begbie Square. A copy of the book, *New Westminster Horticultural Society 1934-1984*, celebrating the club's 50th year is on display tonight.

How will we recognize our 75th anniversary? A number of ideas were tossed around at the special meeting in January. At next month's meeting a special committee will be established to get the job done. Let's see some new faces volunteer!