

# New Westminster Horticultural Society Newsletter



www.newwesthortsociety.org

February 2008

## Snow Doesn't Stop NWHS



Club members (left to right) Joan Miller, Claude LeDoux, Carole Forsythe and Audrey Barnes pose after participating in the WinterFest parade. Photo: Adrian

On Saturday, February 9, the foot of the toboggan run in Queens Park was again the site of New Westminster's outdoor WinterFest 2008. Part of the Spirit of BC Week celebrations, this annual event jointly promotes community spirit and marks the countdown to the Winter Olympics. As with last year, NWHS was there.

The snow on the ground and the rain coming down resulted in a smaller turnout than the organizers anticipated. But freezing feet didn't deter the enthusiasm of our contingent. They chatted up a number of movers and shakers in New Westminster about the club's upcoming 75th anniversary and plant sale. As well, they discussed the city's support for community gardens with Bill Harper and Jonathan Cote, city councillors. Besides talking to officials our hardy volunteers handed out seeds, seed catalogues and club information to the keeners who braved the weather to have a good time. Club president, Carole Forsythe said, "Best of all, we gave seeds away to a young girls' ringette team, the next generation of gardeners."

## Tonight's Meeting

Tuesday, February 12, 7:30 p.m.  
**Paul Buikema**  
"Pruning"

At this time of year many of us are thinking about trimming the trees and shrubs in our gardens, so we have invited Paul Buikema, a certified arborist, to talk about pruning. Paul will be demonstrating practical pruning techniques, bringing his tools for show-and-tell and sample branches from his work that week. He will also have a handout to share.

## Future Meetings

Tuesday, March 11, 7:30 p.m.  
**Brian Minter**, who needs no introduction, will present a talk called "Today's Lifestyle Gardening". The owner of Country Gardens and Minter Gardens in the Fraser Valley will bring plants to sell, so bring some cash to this month's meeting.

Anna Camporese is the Newsletter's new editor. Please contact her at [Anna\\_Camporese@telus.net](mailto:Anna_Camporese@telus.net) if you have comments, suggestions or would like to contribute.

## Carole's Compost (formerly President's Corner)

Every so often, especially when there's a deadline looming, I wonder why I volunteer. Why do I get myself involved in this and that when I could be doing a myriad of other things.

For instance, I could be sitting by the window with my cats watching the snowflakes cover my garden. Better yet, I could be flipping through the gardening magazines that arrived in today's mail, oohing and awing over the pictures of other people's gardens, sipping tea with a cat or two on my lap. Or, I could be shovelling the snow off the sidewalk.

And then I remember why I let my name stand as president of the NWHS. Volunteering is satisfying. I learn and develop skills, make new friends and contribute to making a difference in causes I believe in. So, although I may occasionally grumble while trying to meet a deadline, I know why I volunteer. It's in my blood. (It's my parents' fault.) Maybe volunteering with the NWHS could satisfy your professional, personal or community-minded needs.

### Carole's Crusade: Tips for Volunteering

*Start Small*— Bring a goody for the Tea Break

Every month, we are fortunate to sample a treat or two along with a cup of tea. Do you have a favourite goody you'd like to share? Contact Dawn Dutrizac-Larose at 604-522-5907.

## Mark Your Calendar

Club and Other Events for Garden Lovers

Feb 17, Sun  
**NWHS Plant Sale  
Planning Committee Meeting,**  
Carole's Home, 10:00 a.m.  
Please RSVP

Feb 19, Tues  
**NWHS Executive Meeting**  
Audrey's Home, 7:30 p.m.  
Please RSVP

Feb 20–24, Wed to Sun,  
**Northwest Flower & Garden  
Show,**  
Wash. State Convention Centre,  
Seattle, Wash  
[www.gardenshow.com](http://www.gardenshow.com)

Feb 20–24, Wed to Sun,  
**BC Home and Garden Show,**  
BC Place Stadium  
It's not on the same scale, but if you don't have the time or inclination to travel to Seattle for the Northwest Flower & Garden Show, take in The Vancouver Sun Gardener's School at the BC Home and Garden Show. Discounted tickets are available to garden clubs for \$9 each, a savings of \$7. Provide a cheque or cash to Carole tonight and she'll send the tickets to you.  
[www.vancouverhideshow.com](http://www.vancouverhideshow.com)

Feb 22–24, Fri to Sun,  
**The Hellebore Hurrah**  
Phoenix Perennials, Richmond  
[www.phoenixperennials.com](http://www.phoenixperennials.com)

Feb 23, Sat  
**Seedy Saturday**  
VanDusen Botanical Garden  
<http://vancouver.ca/parks/parks/vandusen/website/index.htm>

Mar 1, Sat  
**Annual Manure Sale,**  
VanDusen Botanical Garden  
<http://vancouver.ca/parks/parks/vandusen/website/index.htm>  
Mar 27, Thurs, 6:00-9:00 p.m.

**Plant a Row Grow a Row**  
Gardeners Party event at  
St. Aidan's Church  
14th St. & 7th Ave., New West  
All welcome.

Mar 29, Sat, 9:30 – 2:30  
**BC Council of Garden Clubs  
Annual General Meeting**  
St. Helen's Catholic Church  
3871 Pandora Street Burnaby  
Doors open at 8:30 for registration. Speakers include Rolf Matthew on Plants of the Queen Charlottes and Heather Roberts on Eco-Sculptures.  
Bring cash for plant and raffle sales. Registration includes lunch. Further details available at the March meeting.

Look for the Feb 29 issue of *The Vancouver Sun*. Steve Wysall will be publishing a list of all the upcoming garden club plant sales.

### Oops, She Did It Again!

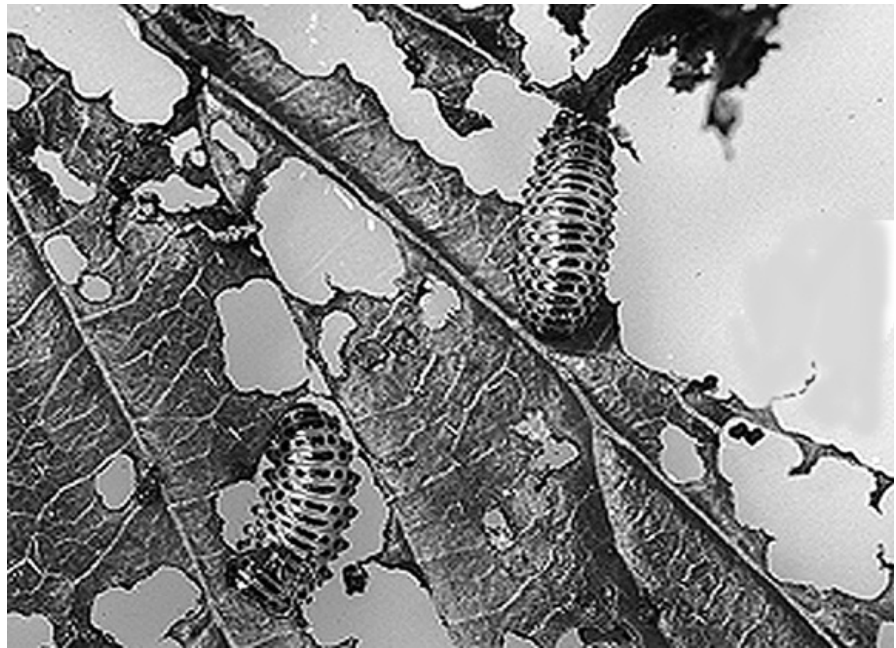
Apologies to executive member, Silina Nakatsu. Her name was missing from the list of 2008 Executive in the February mailout. Silina is a valued member of the executive, so I very much regret the omission.

Carole

## *Pest of the Month: Viburnum Leaf Beetle*

by Karen Low

This time of year you can start checking for and controlling the viburnum leaf beetle. A European native, the viburnum leaf beetle was first identified in BC in 2001. Thankfully or unfortunately, depending on your point of view, this foreign pest feeds only on some species of viburnums: the most susceptible species are viburnum dentatum, v. nudum, and v. opulus (cranberrybush), and somewhat susceptible are v. acerifolium (mapleleaf) and v. lantana (wayfaringtree).



### *Identifying*

During winter the eggs look like a row of dark scabs, 1-2 mm in diameter, on the underside of the viburnum branches. These eggs were deposited by the female in a line of holes she chewed in the previous season's new growth.

In early May greenish-yellow larvae, 1 to 2 mm long hatch from the eggs. The larvae feed on the underside of the viburnum leaves around the veins, leaving just the skeletonized leaves. The mature larvae are covered in dark spots and grow to 10 mm long.

The larvae then travel to the ground to pupate, and the adult beetles emerge weeks later and begin feeding on viburnums leaves. The adults are brown with segmented antennae and are about 4.5 to 6.5 mm in length.

Since both the larvae and the adults feed on the viburnum leaves, a severe infestation can completely defoliate a large shrub.

### *Controlling*

Prune out and destroy infected twigs before the eggs hatch in late spring, and preferably before the shrub starts to leaf out and makes the task more challenging. I recently pruned out about 80 twigs from my medium-sized snowball viburnum. Hopefully, this will be enough control, as I only had a few skeletonized leaves last summer. It was easy to check all the new growth, a satisfying task at a time when there is not many other gardening chores to be done.

If you have a larger shrub, you may have to resort to spraying with insecticidal soap or horticultural oil. Check with your local garden centre for appropriate controls.

After the eggs hatch, you should continue to monitor and handpick larvae and adult beetles. Tanglefoot can be applied to the stems to catch larvae as they crawl down to the soil to pupate.

If all else fails, consider planting a resistant species such as v. carlesii (Koreanspice), v. plicatum (doublefile), v. rhytidophyllum (leatherleaf), or v. sieboldii viburnums.

Further information:

Viburnum Leaf Beetle <http://whatcom.wsu.edu/ag/homehort/pest/VLB.htm>



## In Your Vege Patch

By Roy Pegler

Happy New Year to you all and hope this year will be a super growing season in everyway.

As this winter has been so wet it would be a good idea to apply a dressing of quick-acting lime, now.

If the soil is workable get the green peas and broad beans sown and the Spanish onions seeded. Sowing lettuce, broccoli, chard and spinach seed inside will get you a good start for spring.

### ***Planning Your Vegetable Garden***

In the December newsletter I wrote about planning your garden. Here are more things to consider before you order seeds and turn the soil.

Well drained soil is important. Gardening in places where water stands for several days after it rains or after watering, invites problems. Generally the best garden soil contains ample organic matter and is a mixture of sand, clay and silt. If the soil is poor in organic matter, or is predominately clay or sand, be prepared to add large amounts of organic amendments to improve the soil. It's a good idea to have the soil tested.

How big you make your garden can depend as much on the amount of time and experience you have as on the amount of space that is available. Determining what kinds of vegetables and berries you want to grow and how much of each you want will also help you decide what size garden is best.

Usually it's better to start with a small garden—a plot 10 feet by 10 feet for example—the first year and enlarge it as you become more adept at gardening. Of course, you can garden in a space smaller than 100 square feet or even in a few containers.

Next consider these questions: What vegetables and berries do you like to eat? How do you want to use your crops? Fresh or canned? What can you grow that is ordinarily too expensive to buy? These questions can help you choose what to plant.

Then consider: What crops will grow in your climate? How much room individual vegetables and berries will need to grow? How productive are the plants and how long they bear a crop? A good idea is to decide what vegetables to grow and then learn how much space they'll need. Read seed catalogues and the backs of seed packets to decide which varieties to try in your garden.

Draw your garden to scale on graph paper. For each row of vegetables and berries you want to plant trace a line. Rows running north to south, on a slope or along the contour of a hill are generally best.

### *A Recap of Roy's Key Points from the December Newsletter*

When considering a site for a vegetable garden ask yourself "Is my site

- getting six hours of full sun
- away from shrubs and trees
- convenient to the house
- near available water or reached by hose
- on level land or a south-facing slope
- not in a low-lying areas where cold air is trapped
- sheltered from cold winds in spring and hot, drying winds in summer
- getting enough air movement to prevent fungus and molds?"



*Audrey Barnes received two squirrel-themed quilts (one pictured) at the Christmas party, adding to her already impressive collection of all things squirrel. Photo: Candice McGuire*