



Comox Valley Horticultural Society

February 2018

Welcome to the Comox Valley Horticultural Society update for members.

Please visit us on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/comoxvalleyhorticulturalsociety/>

Board News

We have made some changes to our website and added a Facebook link! Have a browse and catch up on reading past editions of our Newsletters and Email News to members. If anyone has garden stories or photos to share with our members, please contact us with the details (contact myself, our Web Master or our Newsletter Editor, see the Contact page on our website for contact emails).

This year we are pleased to be able to offer on-line membership payment with a credit card (<http://comoxvalleyhortsociety.ca/membership-info/membership-form/>), and credit and debit card payment options, along with cash, at our annual Plant Sale on April 28. However, the member's only

plant sale on April 16 will continue to be a cash only event.

Great news, we have a volunteer Chair for the Open Garden Tour Committee, Karen Cummins! She will be looking for folks willing to open their gardens for a “members only” tour this year, usually beginning in April (for the brave!) or a little later when the weather is better for the rest of us. If you are interested, please leave your contact information at the sign in table at our monthly meetings, or email Karen at gardentour@comoxvalleyhortsociety.ca

We have received some feedback regarding when the doors open for our General meetings. So, the Board has decided to have the doors open at 6:30 p.m. and the meeting commencing at 7:15 p.m., unless more time is required for a special event, in which case the meeting will commence at 7:30 p.m.

Committee News

Herb Garden (at the Filberg)

Ely Riddell and I will be meeting in February to discuss the coming season at the Filberg Herb Garden. We will also be seeking input from the working group of volunteers who look after the garden. We are hoping that the new bench will be installed sometime in the Spring. I'm sure that we'll have another very enjoyable year looking after this beautiful garden. Cathy Storey

Library

The Library has purchased one of Carolyn Herriot's books: *A Year on the Garden Path*. This book is available for members to borrow.

Membership

Reminder:

Memberships are now due and may be paid on-line (<http://comoxvalleyhortsociety.ca/membership-info/membership-form/>) with a credit card, or in person at the February 19 meeting.

Newsletter

The Newsletter has not gone away, we are just making some changes to how we communicate with our members. This *Email News for Members* is now the monthly update that will contain all of the administrative information. The *Newsletter* will be published several times a year with horticultural related information, gardening tips and news, and stories, with pictures, about members only events that have happened. So, look for a revamped *Newsletter* coming your way soon!

Opportunity Table

Yikes, spring seems to be coming way too soon here, with reports of blueberry and rose leaves already emerging. Let's hope a nasty frost doesn't suddenly knock everything back.

At the Opportunity Table, we have some useful items to tempt you with, such as a handy new tool belt, perfect for those small tools you're always misplacing while you work. There's also a soil test kit and some tall linking plant supports. If you're sorting out your garden equipment, please pass along anything you think might be useful for others.



We'd love it if you can donate some seeds when you're organizing what you've saved from last year. You never know what other people can use. Of course, we also have some inspiring garden books

and magazines, full of ideas for the coming season. Plants are always welcome!

Please drop off your donations of garden-related items to our table before the doors open at 6:30, and thanks so much for your support!

Elizabeth, Connie, Judith and Gaynor

Plant Sales

PLANT SALE - Saturday, April 28

Start thinking how you can help out your club. Darlene Berry will have a sign up sheet at the February meeting for members to volunteer their time during the annual Plant Sale. We need folks to help set out the plants, to assist the public with their purchases, and for the cashier tables. This year we will be offering electronic credit and debit card, and cash payment options. This is a major fund-raiser for the club, so please come out and help! As you grow seedlings for your garden, plant a few seeds for the club. Starting to clean up, dividing or renovating those flowerbeds? Please pot up some extra plants for the club. We want our plants to be strong, growing and healthy for the sale, be sure to label them as well.

Vesey's Spring 2018 Fundraiser



The Vesey's Spring catalogue is now available! Please see the Vesey's display at the February meeting. All orders MUST be into Sylvia Stone no later than March 31 as Vesey's will ship mid to late April.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Sylvia at slystone@telus.net or call 250.339.1020.

Program & Publicity



Ethnobotany of Tribal People in Southern India

At the southern tip of the Nilgiri Mountain range in Southern western India, where the states of Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka meet, where the misty mountains run down to the steamy jungle, there is a rich abundance of flora and fauna. Designated a UNESCO Biosphere Preserve, this area is home to numerous distinct tribal groups who still harvest wild herbs for medicine and who still practice some of the old ways of healing.

In 2011 Chanchal spent a month acting as staff botanist for a documentary film crew as they recorded these ancient ways and vanishing medicines. This illustrated talk will discuss 5 different tribal groups, their clothes, and customs, their traditional medicines and healing ways, and the challenges these people face in the modern world. Showcasing the beauty and the magic of India, temples and palaces, mountains and valleys, and highlighting unusual or useful plants, many of them unknown in western herbal medicinal practice.

Biographical:

Member of the National Institute of Medical Herbalists (UK) since 1987.

Awarded Fellowship 2009

MSc in herbal medicine at the University of Wales in 2003

Faculty chair in Botanical Medicine at the Boucher Institute of Naturopathic Medicine in New Westminster 2004 - 2016

Diplomas in Botanic Garden Management and in Botanic Garden Education from Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew.

Certified Shinrin Yoku (forest bathing) practitioner

Certified Master Gardener

Certified Horticulture Therapist

Chanchal lives on Vancouver Island, British Columbia where she and her husband run Innisfree Farm and Botanic Garden, a 7 acre registered botanic garden specializing in food and medicine plants, and run apprenticeships in organic gardening and herbal medicine. They also host Gardens without Borders, a federally registered not-for-profit society established to run therapy garden programs for people with disabilities.

Website:

ethnomedicinepreservationproject.com

January Speaker

For those who attended the January CVHS meeting, here are the references that Carolyn Herriot mentioned:

Mac's Field Guide to Bugs of the Pacific Northwest can be purchased on-line.

<https://www.amazon.ca/Macs-Field-Guides-Northwest-Garden/dp/089886531X>

ISBN 0-89886-531-X

The recommended reference book is The Organic Gardener's Handbook of Natural Insect and Disease Control. Edited by Barbara W. Ellis and Fern Marshall Bradley (Rodale Press)

Raffle Table

February's raffle prizes will be a unique Hellebore or a Mason Bee House with some cocoons. Raffle sales were slow at the January meeting - after expenses roughly \$50.00 made. No suggestions for raffle prizes have been forthcoming so will have a box for same at the next meeting.

The Raffle Table is another way we make money for the club, so please support your club by purchasing raffle tickets at the monthly meetings.



Linden Rose Hellebore A beautiful plant with early spring blooms when few other plants dare! Deer resistant and will tolerate shade very well.



STARTER PACKAGE MASON BEES

Enjoy a starter kit for adults and young alike
• Hen house with 16 mason bee cocoons. Increase pollination in your yard and as a bonus, no stings!

Workshop

2018 WINTER WORKSHOP

Fruit Tree Pruning (for structure, health and fruit production)

Workshop Leader: Linda Pritchard

Owner of Lavenders Blue Landscaping

(Winner 2016 & 2017 People's Choice Award – Comox Valley)

Date: Saturday, March 3, 2018 (rain or shine)

Time: 10:30am – 12:30am

Cost: \$10.00/person

Bring: A sharp pair of bypass pruners

Spaces Available: 15



Workshop Description

Learn the skills and tips you need to prune and maintain your young and mature fruit trees under the guidance of a 36 year landscaping veteran. Learn to avoid the spread of viruses and disease using proper tool sterilizing techniques.

This workshop emphasizes structural pruning and pruning for fruit production.

Participants will get an opportunity for hands-on training on plum, cherry, apple and pear trees.

Note: A handout will be provided

Brought to you by: Comox Valley Horticulture Society

See Workshop Coordinators Sonia Gonsalves and June Ballantyne at the next CVHS meeting (February 19th) to reserve and pay for your space. Additional information will be provided for those who sign-up.

Upcoming CVHS Events – Mark Your Calendars!

February 19, 2018	General Meeting, Florence Filberg Centre, 6:30 p.m. Guest Speaker: Chanchal Cabrera Ethnobotany of Tribal People in Southern India.
March 19, 2018	General Meeting, Florence Filberg Centre, 6:30 p.m. Guest Speaker: Zac Kregosky – Xeriscaping
April 16, 2018	General Meeting & Member Plant Sale, Florence Filberg Centre, 6:30 p.m. Guest Speaker: TBA
April 28, 2018	Annual Spring Plant Sale, Florence Filberg Centre, doors open at 8:00 a.m. to drop plants off. Doors open 9:30 – 11:30 am for the public

May 28, 2018	General Meeting, Florence Filberg Centre, 6:30 p.m. Guest Speaker: TBA
June 18, 2018	General Meeting, Florence Filberg Centre, 6:30 p.m. Guest Speaker: TBA
August 20, 2018	General Meeting, Florence Filberg Centre, 6:30 p.m. Guest Speaker: TBA
September 17, 2018	General Meeting, Florence Filberg Centre, 6:30 p.m. Guest Speaker: TBA
October 15, 2018	General Meeting, Florence Filberg Centre, 6:30 p.m. Guest Speaker: TBA

Please Note: we are no longer providing a Social Table at CVHS General Meetings. Please bring your own tea or coffee.

External Horticultural Events

Are you looking for a way to kick-start your gardening year? Here is an opportunity to do just that:

The Comox Valley Growers and Seed Savers (CVGSS) is having a Linda Gilkeson Gardening Workshop on Saturday, March 17 from 9:30 am to 3:30 pm at the Florence Filberg Centre in Courtenay. At the time of writing this email there were still some seats available, please visit the CVGSS website <http://cvgss.org/linda-gilkeson-workshop/> for more information.

Presidents Message

I do not know about you, but February seems like garden clean-up month! Those refreshing January winds – or gales perhaps, have done their job at pruning our larger trees, and thinning out the remnants of last year’s leaves on the Pin Oak. The snow coverings this season have nicely mushified (now isn’t that a great gardening term?) most of last year’s leaves and stocks we left on

plants for “winter interest”. Worst of all though, those hardy weeds that never seemed to get the message to leave are now leafing - perhaps I am having a communication issue with them! But, the surprise sunny days, which we seem to be getting more frequently, are all the incentive we need to get busy in the garden.

It was nice and sunny the other day so I turned over the compost pile to see how it had fared. The brown wrigglers were moving a little slower than normal but there were lots of them. To liven things up a bit I added three months worth of kitchen scraps – a little fresh food to give those wrigglers something to really wriggle about! In a couple of months this compost will be ready, and just in time for the planting season. One thing I have noticed is how the bulk of our compost has increased ever since we started adding shredded household products like old newspapers, cardboard tubes, and even the odd cotton shirt of mine that has finally worn out. By doing this it has cut down on the amount of waste we send to the dump or the recycler every month, and that is a good thing!

One of the big chores I have on my “To Do” list this year is to figure out how to properly drain a low spot in our front yard. When we get those torrential winter rains there is a lovely big lake that forms in the area, sending a new creek raging through our garden bed to drain into the adjacent drainage easement. It is a lovely water feature to be sure but not one we are interested in having! Several people have suggested a French Drain, which once I figure out what that is I will see if I can create one. Oh well, just some of the challenges that ensure there is never a dull moment in the garden!

Happy gardening!

Gordon Stewart

President

Comox Valley Horticultural Society