

CUTTINGS

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE BOWEN ISLAND GARDEN CLUB

February 2019

The Mission of the Bowen Island Garden Club is to promote the love of gardening, encourage sound horticultural practices through education, & enhance civic beautification.

Upcoming Schedule:

"Orchids for the Home" with Margaret Nakahara. Monday, Feb 18th at 1 pm at the Legion.



The Bowen Island Garden Club presents Margaret Nakahara who is a local orchid grower of considerable background and knowledge.

Margaret and her husband Koichi have been growing orchids since the 1974. Their orchid collection has grown from their first plant to plants to more over 2000 at one time. Their collection today is still over 300 plants. Margaret has earned gold and bronze medals for floral art in the World Orchid Show held in Vancouver in 1999. In

2017 one of her orchids received the Award of Merit from the American Orchid Society, and she was able to name that cultivar for registration with the AOS.

Margaret is a past-president of many floral art and horticultural clubs, including the BC Council of Garden Clubs. She is a founding member of the Horticultural and Floral Design Judges of BC, and a senior show judge of Horticulture and Floral Art.

Margaret will cover all the basics; which orchids to select for your home, choosing the right containers, understanding the different growing media and fertilizers; watering and light requirements; and other tips on general care for common varieties of both indoor and outdoor orchids. She'll discuss common orchid diseases and pests, and how to control them using organic means. Margaret will also demonstrate how to repot an orchid.

Please come with your questions and enjoy a slide show of exquisite beauty. A small selection of orchids will be available for sale.

All are welcome. Members free, guests \$3.00

Self Drive Tour to Linnaea Nursery, Langley on Saturday, April 13th

Please mark your calendars for our Linnaea Nursery visit on Saturday, April 13th. There will be a more detailed write up in the March edition of Cuttings as well as a sign up sheet circulated at our March meeting. However if you'd like to sign up ahead of time feel free to email Pam Miller:

pe7miller@gmail.com

BIGC AGM – January 21st

For those of you who weren't able to attend our Annual General Meeting last month, here are some of the highlights.

Here is **our 2019 Board of Directors**:

President:	Janis Treleaven
Vice President:	none yet
Secretary:	Isabel Otter
Treasurer:	Laura McGregor
Membership:	Holly Cleator
Communications:	Melissa Rahme & Jen Ritchie
Social (Meetings):	Dale Harding & Sue Jance
Speakers:	Lyn van Lidth de Jeude
Open Gardens:	Pam Miller & Anna-Marie Atherton
Publicity:	John Lawrence
Member at Large:	Su Rickett
Tours:	none yet
Technical:	John Hazell
Past President:	Lynn McArthur

We would like to thank all those new members who stepped forward to be on our board in 2019, as well as those members of the board continuing on from last year.

Special thanks also goes out to these volunteers for their **special contributions** in 2018:

Primrose Wreath Workshop: Sue Hoffer
Annual Plant Sale Quartet: Diana Kaile,
Pam Miller, Holly Cleator,
Jen Ritchie, & helpers
Annual Raffle: Holly Cleator & helpers

Gibsons Tour: Lyn van Lydth de Jeude
Summer Garden Party: Hosts John and Eileen Lord; Ann Ramsay, Kendra McEown & helpers

Fall Bulb Sale: Joyce Gagnon & helpers

Linnæa Trips: Pam Miller

Christmas Wreath Workshop: Laura Rahn

Christmas Party: Marilyn Anderson & helpers including Dale Harding & Jen Ritchie

Regular Cuttings Column: Su Rickett

Liaison with Legion and with BIM: David Wrinch

Tea, coffee, goodies at Meetings: Dale Harding, Sue Jance

Garden Star Initiative: Anna-Marie Atherton

...THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU

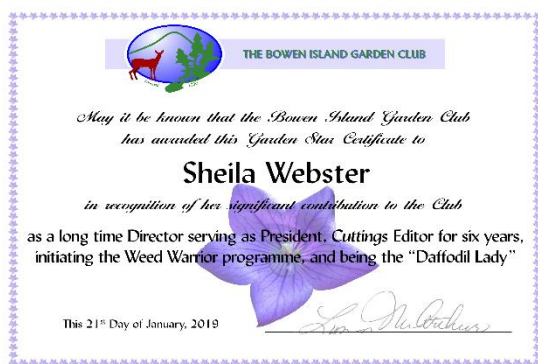
We rely on these folks to keep our club active and we are always on the look out for volunteers to help. Please take a look at the above list and see if there are any activities that you like to help out with in 2019.

Garden Star Award

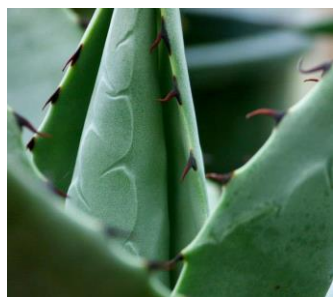
With all these dedicated volunteers, it is no wonder we had a number of worthy nominees for our Garden Star Award, including Anna-Marie Atherton, Linda Barrett, Holly Cleator, John Hazell, Pam Miller and Sheila Webster.

And the winner was.....

This year's Garden Star Award went to Sheila Webster, a long time Director serving as President, as the Editor of Cuttings for 6 years, who initiated the Weed Warrior program, and for being the Daffodil Lady. Congratulations Sheila and thank you for all your years of hard work and dedication to the Bowen Island Garden Club!



President's First Message



The first property I lived on when I moved to Bowen in 2002 was 2.5 acres mid island. It had belonged to two scientists whose botanical

passion was clear upon venturing into the orchard. Fruit trees and bushes galore packed the rear of the property. Golden raspberries, high-bush, low-bush and patriot blueberries heartily soaked up the near-full sun. The sheer variety of flowers and plants was overwhelming for a first time gardener but I embraced the challenge the best I could. I happily reaped their visual and fragrant offerings and the house held many a splendid fragrance and splash of colour

throughout the season. Lots of clean up in fall but I looked forward to the spring and doing it all over again. Identifying birds quickly and easily became a winter hobby while the frozen gardens slept. This kind of paradise was exactly the reason I moved my life to British Columbia from Ontario in 1997.

That was many years ago. Life has changed ten-fold and I haven't had the responsibility or enjoyment of a garden in some time. I now find myself in an apartment with a small balcony, quite opposite of my intention of living in a remote location. For what I am now lacking in a garden, I make up for the year round company provided by Anna (Calypste anna) and Rufous (Selasphorus rufous) hummingbirds, the same friends I made when I first arrived on Bowen. For now, a

camera replaces a trowel and hummingbirds are the perfect subject. A single bird can look strikingly different from several angles which is just one thing that makes them so fascinating. The addition of a hanging basket last summer drew more pinky-sized visitors while adding movement and colour to the small space. I'll be seeking out ways of keeping some of their favourite flowers on my balcony this spring and welcome suggestions.

I am excited to step into the role of President of the Bowen Island Garden Club, something fresh and new for me. I look forward to learning from all of you as we head towards another spring on Bowen. Like the aforementioned snowdrops, I too will push through into new and uncharted territory and embrace the challenges that lie ahead. This role brings a refreshing and welcome diversion from my emergency medicine work as well as the rewards of friends old and new. I am grateful to be flanked and supported by our experienced executives to help guide me through this learning curve and am excited about this opportunity.

I look forward to working with all of you as we continue to keep and care for our island. Bowen deserves to be flourishing with natural and enhanced beauty and adorned with the touches of those of us who literally care for Bowen Island from the roots up.

"The flowers of late winter and early spring occupy places in our hearts well out of proportion to their size." = Gertrude S. Wister.

Janis Treleaven
President

Su Rickett's Column

Are we there yet?

January was a tempting month to be outside and fuss about with winter chores, with plants budding ahead of season and bulbs pushing through, it was easy to be beguiled by opportunities to get the garden tidy.

Writing this, it's minus 5 outside with the promise of more snow in a few days. The ground is frozen and although it's sunny and bright, the garden is in the grip of winter. It is such an awkward time of year. Too early for lots of things and too late for a few. It's a study in being patient while still looking ahead.

If you haven't done already, there is still time to get out there and protect tender plants. Throw some burlap or sheeting, over plants that might succumb, if this cold snap takes its sweet time to go. Plants like rosemary and hebes would appreciate a little tucking in and, if they are in pot, move them closer in to the house.



February is usually a great month to cut back grasses. Wait until you can see some nice bits of green

shooting from the bottom, otherwise, leave them be. Once this cold snap is over, they will start some new growth. Make yourself acquainted with which are cool season, or warm season grasses and attack accordingly. Cool season grasses, mainly need a 'comb through' and minimal trimming, more of a

tidy loose ends approach. Warm season specimens are those that 'bloom' later in summer and now get cut back hard. Generally leave about a foot of growth showing on large miscanthus. They will also need a rake out once they are down. Shape smaller specimens, like pennisetums, into tidy little shaving brushes.

Once things warm up, there will be buds breaking on clematis vines and while it seems ruthless to start hacking all that lovely new growth off, it is a must if this a late blooming variety. Again, know what you are dealing with. What pruning group does it belong to? Group A, which includes the massive scramblers like Montanas and the nodding bells of Alpinas and Macropetalas – only need light pruning back when they are getting too big for their allotted space. In other words, put the pruners down now and go indoors.

Group B are the vines which include those enchanting ladies like Nellie Moser and bloom before the end of June. These you can leave, prune lightly and just shape up.

Those vines that bloom after June, varieties such as Jackmanii and Polish Spirit, bloom on new wood and require cutting right back to a couple of buds above ground, that's right, all that tangled mess with all those green shoots on has to go. Be brave.

It's very easy on late winter days to become a bit too ambitious with the pruners. Sadly, plants don't always like the 'while I was out there' style of pruning. Always consider why you are pruning. Is it to shape the plant, make

it fruit or flower more, or just because you saw your neighbour hacking away at something and you thought you'd better look lively and do the same?

Get familiar with your garden and the plants in it. If you have a shrub in the garden that never blooms, it could be that you are pruning at the wrong time. Investigate. When is it supposed to bloom? Does it bloom on new, or old wood? When is it making buds for next year?

Hydrangeas are a good case in point. The beautiful big mop head style, or lace-cap hydrangeas, bloom on old wood. The now browned out flower heads should be left on all winter until the danger of heavy frost is passed. These are your 'insurance' for this summers flowers as they are protecting the buds just underneath. In other words, these varieties are blooming on old wood developed over the late summer and fall.

On the other hand, the amazingly tough Pee Gee Hydrangeas, those with the huge cone shaped flowers, bloom on new wood. These can be cut back to a few buds from the main stem. If you don't cut this variety back hard each year, you will end up with a huge tangled mess of weak stems that crashes its blooms to the floor after a heavy summer rain.

With any kind of pruning or cutting back, be aware of the conditions and temperature. Do not be encouraged to give everything a short back and sides because a garden book cheerfully says 'cut back hard in February'. Be guided by what the weather is doing, not a date. There are also so many micro climates



on the island that what is good for one area, may have to wait a few weeks later in somewhere cooler.

So yes, February is an interesting month, one of chilly winds and days of sunshine, drifts of snow and bone numbing night temperatures. Be patient and enjoy the slower pace. March is just around the corner and then the 'to do' list gets longer, along with the hours of daylight.

Su

Member at Large

Membership



It is time to renew your membership for 2019 if you haven't done so already. The "Early Bird" price of \$15 only extends to the end of February; after that the regular

annual fee of \$20 applies.

You can renew in person at a monthly general meeting or by mail. To renew by mail, please complete the membership form available on the club website (www.bowenislandgardenclub.ca then follow the links) and include it with your cheque payable to the Bowen Island Garden Club. The club mailing address is P.O. Box 271, Bowen Island, V0N 1G0. Thanks to those members who have already renewed for 2019.

The garden club welcomes the following new members: Nancy and Ken Huntingford, Hailey and Connor Holloway, Nan and Bud Massender, Betty Morton, Ashleigh and Kane Murray, and Don Shafer.

*Holly Cleator,
Membership
Coordinator*

