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Newsletter of the Sunshine Coast Botanical Garden Society



One of the greenhouses in the propagation nursery at UBC Botanical Garden.

Photo by Sean Harper

Plant Propagation at the Garden

On a beautiful sunny August morning, I set off with SCBG gardeners Sean Harper and Nola Honeywell for a visit to the UBC Botanical Garden. We were meeting with Kevin Kubeck, UBC's lead propagator, for a tour of the UBC facilities and advice on setting up our plant propagation program. Kevin has been propagating plants at UBC for more than 30 years. We were also joined by Douglas Justice, Acting Director of the UBC Garden, and one of our Garden's board members. What a great visit.

Both Kevin and Douglas shared so much knowledge and gave us advice on equipment, ventilation, watering, and more. While it's a slower time in their greenhouses and workshops, we were able to see different types of beds used for seed starting, a couple of different types of misting beds, and various systems for managing airflow. We learned that

ventilation will be one of our biggest challenges given our site and the size of our greenhouse. Maintaining consistent temperatures throughout the growing area is crucial. Hot or cold spots can quickly reduce healthy seedlings to compost material.

Because both Kevin and Douglas know our Garden, they were able to tailor their advice to what we need to consider, given that the scale of our enterprise will be much smaller than what UBC does. We had some great conversations about the pros and cons of purchasing versus mixing our own soils, what plants we might specialize in, and the importance of data collection, which we'll be able to do more effectively once we have the IrisBG plant database system in place.

When we were overloaded with information and ideas, Douglas took us on a tour of the nurseries in the worksyard



Photo by Nola Honeywell
Douglas Justice next to a misting tent in the nursery.

and then for a quick tour of the Gardens themselves. It was great to see what was blooming this time of year that might be valuable additions to our late summer collections.

Much for us to consider.

– Jean Bennett, Chair,
Plant Propagation Group

President's Report

Another summer comes to a close, and at this point, we have escaped any serious weather events. The drought situation has become more the new normal than an event. Thanks to our dedicated staff and their hard work, most of the Garden survived the lack of rain. And thankfully, we have experienced no fire this year. The Garden staff and board members are keenly aware of the need for climate adaptation and will work to provide as much information as we can about what plants can survive in the changing environment.

One tool to help us monitor plant adaptability will be a software database to track our myriad plants. Our newest project will be implementing IrisBG, a complete collection management system for living and preserved botanical collections. More than 250 botanical gardens, arboreta, herbaria, and private estates around the world are using IrisBG. Our information will be easily available to the public worldwide, perhaps drawing some visitors from abroad. This database system will make record-keeping a collaborative effort and increase the added value of our data. By being open to the public, we will be able to share information such as synonyms, common names, descriptions, etc. It will take some time to input all our data, so keep your eyes open for the big reveal.

The summer Gala Garden Party returned this year, and what a success it was! Heather Vince did a superb job managing the event, and with the help of a dedicated team of volunteers, created a beautiful evening. Many thanks to all involved for a wonderful event. For more on the Garden Party, please read Heather's article on page 4. The fundraising impetus of this year's Gala is to help cover expenses for the Plant Propagation Program, which is well underway. This program will allow the Garden to learn which plants do best, to share that information with others, and to offer the plants for sale to the public. See Jean Bennett's article on the previous page for more on this program.

There is so much to learn about the Garden: not just all the plants but about biodiversity, climate adaptation, and the different insects and birds that call this place home. It warms my heart to see the elementary teachers bring their students here to learn firsthand about this environment and its importance to all life. Learning is a lifetime activity, so coming to the Garden can be energizing as well as relaxing. And let's not forget fun! I look forward to seeing you at this Fall's Harvest Festival on Sunday, September 3.

— Sandra Cunningham, Botanical Garden President



Sunshine Coast Botanical Garden

Salal Newsletter

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The Garden acknowledges its responsibilities as an occupant of this land in the swiya of the shishálh people. We pledge to treat this land with respect and welcome all to share in our journey of learning and knowledge sharing.

Board of Directors

President: Sandra Cunningham

Vice-President: Jean Bennett

Treasurer: Nelson Alvarez

Directors-at-Large: Susan Chipman, Cathy Hallam, Douglas Justice, Rosemary Bates Terry, Paddy Wales

Contact any of the above by email:
info@coastbotanicalgarden.org

Thank You!

• **Gala Planning Committee:** Mary Blockberger, Rosemary Bates Terry, Paddy Wales, Susan Chipman, Heather Vince

• **Gala Décor Team:** Anne Marie Lasuta, Bev Nielsen, Esther Scmit, Joan Powell, Lynn Duncan, Margaret Boyd, Penny Dunford

• **Special Appreciation:** Auctioneer - Ed Hill; Emcee - Vicki Gabereau; Catering - Katija Dewar and Sonja Hausner (The Nomadic Kitchen);

Florals - Kori Hudrick, Melissa Tripp, Paddy Wales, Vicki Halldorson; Harpist - Maureen Bodie; Music - Kenneth Johnson and Nancy Pincombe (Soleil Duo); Photography - Heather Till, Jennifer Oke; Wine - Dan Schell, Karen Madsen, Chris Funnel

• **Volunteers:** Amanda Offers, Bill Lasuta, Katie MacKenzie, Jennifer McPherson, Kate Kraft, Leah McMullen, Mark and Maureen Ward, Mike Carson, Sandra Cunningham, Robin McQueen

Garden Goings On

What a summer it's been! First, the really big news. The Society is thrilled to let you know that as of July 1, we are mortgage free. We are extremely thankful for the support of our members and donors for making this milestone a reality. The funds previously spent on mortgage payments can now be directed towards programs and Garden development.

Our School Program wrapped up after a busy spring with over 200 elementary students visiting the Garden. We're very grateful to our incredible program volunteers for sharing their knowledge of pollinators, ponds, and plants with the kids. If this sounds like something you'd like to help out with next year, please contact us here in the office. We're always eager to add to our volunteer roster.

Our weekly plant sales continued throughout June, and many wonderful plants went to their new homes. The volunteers took a couple of weeks off but have been back at work preparing for our Harvest Festival, coming up September 3. The vegetable garden volunteers have cleaned and packaged up the garlic crop, and this will also be available at Harvest Festival. They grew a few new varieties this year, and we're all excited to try them.



It was wonderful to welcome back one of our youngest and most enthusiastic volunteers this summer. Will Eckford has pitched in for the past few summers while up from Vancouver visiting family. He's thinking about botany-related post-secondary studies, and we know he'd excel at that!

The Pavilion and surrounding areas were once again busy with weddings, meetings, and celebrations of all kinds. The rental business makes up an important part of our annual revenue, and we work hard to ensure the renter experience is top notch. Last year, we won the award for Favourite Event Space Rental in the Sunshine Coast People's Choice Awards. We're delighted to announce that this year we are among the top three finalists and eagerly await the final results this fall.

The last few days of August saw smoky skies and continued drought. While this has created challenges, we realize that many in our province and our country have experienced much worse. We extend our thoughts and best wishes to those impacted by wildfires in the Interior, the North, and on the island of Maui as they struggle through these unimaginable difficulties.

– *Mary Blockberger, Garden Manager*

Upcoming Events

HARVEST FESTIVAL

Sunday, September 3, 11 am - 3 pm

Join us for a day filled with family-friendly fun! We'll have a few new varieties available at our famous Garlic Sale, the Bake Sale table will be loaded with homemade treats, pick up some new treasures at our Plant Sale, and check in with the Master Gardeners for your plant-related questions. Drop by the Kids' Craft area, and be sure to visit the bee yard (honey will be available for purchase). We'll also be joined by Suncoast Woodcrafters Guild, the SC Astronomers Club, the Spinners and Weavers Guild, Worm & Co., and Elder Dog SC. The Lions Club will have the barbecue going, and DJ little d will be spinning the tunes. Well-behaved leashed dogs are welcome to come along. Admission by donation.



WREATH MAKING

Saturday, November 25, 10 am - 1 pm

Registration is now open for this seasonal favourite. Create a wreath from carefully collected and unique natural materials. Please bring gloves and hand pruners; all other supplies provided. Space is limited and this workshop typically sells out, so early registration is recommended. Call the Garden office (604-740-3969) to secure your spot. Members \$75, non-members \$85.

Garden Party Kicks off Fundraising for New Plant Propagation Program

The Garden was all aglow for the return of the gala fundraiser on August 9 – that is, after a dramatic parting of the rain clouds let the sun in! Finally, after a long spell of warm and sunny weather, the skies above made good on a promise to provide the rain the plants and trees so desperately needed. As Murphy’s Law goes, and to our dismay, this would take place in the days leading up to our anticipated event! But as long-time Garden member and gala harpist Maureen Bodie said, “The weather goddess was grinning down on us.”

The evening was a celebratory kick-off to raise funds for what will be one of the Garden’s most important initiatives: the Plant Propagation Program, which will enable us to grow endangered plant species, to create fully supported ecosystems, produce plants for the Garden’s annual plant sale, and grow tree species for our future arboretum.

A phenomenal team of committed and talented volunteers created the incredible, white-themed décor and flower arrangements that greeted our guests. The Birch Allée, decked in white parasols, guided our attendees to Karen Madsen, Dan Schell, and Chris Funnel, who welcomed them with flutes of sparkling wine from wine sponsor Hester Creek Estate Winery. Nancy Pincombe and Kenneth Johnson,

the couple behind Soleil Duo, set the tone with their classy-jazz sounds.

Native plants such as huckleberry, salal, Oregon grape, and sword fern were on display and used to adorn the tables and tents. The Nomadic Kitchen prepared canapes, dinner, and dessert, for which praise is still pouring in; Jean Bennett, the Garden’s Board Vice-President, spoke to the reasons for and the multitude of benefits that will be drawn from the Plant Propagation Program; and Board Director Rosemary Bates Terry followed by dedicating a legacy gift in support of this new initiative commemorating her late husband, Bill Terry, a respected plant propagator and one of the Garden’s founders. The evening’s emcee Vicki Gabereau and auctioneer Ed Hill provided an entertaining and profitable live auction. Thanks to the generous bidding of Garden supporters and gala guests in the live and silent auctions, the Garden raised \$31,000.

The event was made possible by our generous event sponsors O’Reilly Real Estate, Crowe MacKay, Hear on the Coast, and Sunshine Coast Community Forest. And we are most grateful to all the guests, donors, bidders, volunteers, staff, in-kind sponsors, and community partners who made this evening such a success!

– Heather Vince, Development Officer

For more photos from the Gala Garden Party, see coastbotanicalgarden.org/gala



Thank you to auctioneer Ed Hill and emcee Vicki Gabereau for their contributions to the event.



The Garden – and the guests – were all looking their best for the gala fundraiser on August 9.

Photos by Jennifer Oke and Heather Till



Garden Party

THANK YOU

FOR HELPING US TO
MAKE THIS EVENT &
FUNDRAISER POSSIBLE!

OUR DONORS

- Burrowing Owl Estate Winery & The Wyse Family
- Cactus Flower Fashions
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- Sharkey's Fish Locker
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- Sunshine Coast Festival of the Written Arts
- Sunshine Coast Nursery
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- Swish Fashions
- Talewind Books
- Trish Whetstone (Trish Talks Fish)
- True Course Solutions
- VG Shoes
- Wild Goose Winery & The Wyse Family
- Wylde Brigade
- Zócalo

OUR FRIENDS

- Ed Hill & Vicki Gabereau
- Maureen Bodie & Soleil Duo
- The Nomadic Kitchen
- Dan Schell & Karen Madsen
- Garden Party Gala Planning Committees & Volunteers

OUR WONDERFUL SPONSORS



coastbotanicalgarden.org/gala



What's in a Name? Labels at the Garden

When the Botanical Garden was first established on its current site, I volunteered to make a rough inventory of the existing trees. Then, as different beds were developed, I added the new plants to the records. More recently a group of labelling volunteers travelled along the cleared paths through the woods with a measuring device to define the positions of these trees more closely.

Lacking a smart phone at that time, we ignored GPS, using a grid system and sketch maps. Now we are working on making a list of labelled trees with their GPS locations. Until then, look for conifer identifications near the gate into the volunteer area from Mason Road, and large native trees along the edge of the ravine and around the native habitat gardens.

I have recorded all the data on a spreadsheet with about 2,000 entries comprising 1,000 different species and cultivars. In future this will be replaced with IrisBG, a database specifically designed for botanic gardens, which will provide much more information, be more efficient to use, and more available to the public. We will be able to add shisháhlh names and traditional uses for native plants.

At some point we started labelling some of the plants, especially as the native gardens were established. The Master Gardeners of Vancouver donated start-up money, and the technicians at UBC Botanical Garden print the metal labels for us. VanDusen Gardens are replacing their plastic stakes with metal ones, so we are reusing their castoffs.

If you are looking for a label, try searching at the left-hand end of a row, or look around for an identical plant nearby. A tree may have a hanging label at about eye level. We try to keep it all up to date, but plants grow to hide their labels, some get broken, sadly some just disappear. Many plants die away for a season, but the label stays in place. There are more than 800 metal labels in the garden, and many laminated paper ones on new plants.

– Sheila Watkins, Master Gardener

vancouver master
gardeners



Photo by Sheila Watkins

Many volunteer hours and much expert knowledge have gone into labelling some 1,000 species throughout the Garden.

Here is what to look for on our plant labels:

COMMON NAME

Some plants have several common names, and some names refer to several different plants.
(e.g. GRAND FIR, DWARF ALBERTA SPRUCE)

Botanical Name 'Cultivar'

Unique to the species found in the wild or the cultivar developed in horticulture by selection or hybridizing, not by genetic engineering. 'x' indicates a hybrid.
(e.g. *Abies grandis*, *Picea glauca* 'Conica')

Family

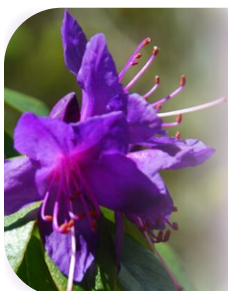
Plants are grouped into families with similar characteristics.
(e.g. *Pinaceae* for both the above examples)

Place of Origin

Where in the world this species originated. Cultivars are of garden origin.

Accession Number

As recorded on my spreadsheet. The first two digits indicate the year in which it was planted.
A small dogwood logo indicates a species native to the Pacific Northwest.



Opening Hours at the Garden

MAY TO SEPTEMBER

Friday - Tuesday, 11 am - 4 pm
Closed Wednesday and Thursday

OCTOBER TO APRIL

Friday - Monday, 11 am - 4 pm
Closed Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday



Looking Back at the Summer of '23

Now that we've had both hot and cool days, and the calendar is flipping toward fall, it's a great time to take stock of the plants that were brilliant, those that managed well, and those that were ugly, too much work watering, or, alas, dead. It always surprises me which plants can manage on very little summer water, and those that simply cannot. Here is my stock-taking.

My sunny garden in Roberts Creek consists mostly of perennials and shrubs, with a few annuals and vegetables. I also grow fruit trees, berries, and this year, after watching the ground hopefully for weeks, just one solitary sunflower, which has not yet opened.

How were your food plants? The apples are brilliant this year. After a dud year in '22, they have produced amply, including the largest Gravenstein apples ever. Spring pollination was excellent due both to a sunny May and a mason bee house. I didn't water the trees, but I believe there is water underground as the long grass is not completely brown at the base. Longer grass protects soil from surface evaporation.

Strawberries, raspberries, and tayberries were a medium sized crop. I hand-watered. I mulch everything deeply. Kale and lettuce were fair; herbs were excellent. They contain drought-defying oils.

Most shrubs were okay, but not at their best after two drought years. Some may yet die, but most seem to accept this low-water regime. By cutting



Silk tree (*Albizia julibrissis*) in full, glorious bloom.

Photo by Paddy Wales

out dead leaves or branches, they look quite acceptable. As I write, the August-blooming silk tree is utterly gorgeous. Clearly it is unaffected by drought.

Some rhododendrons are too far from the hose outlet. Anticipating drought, I filled a few ordinary garbage cans with water when that was allowed, and now I dip watering cans to carry water. I'm sure there is a better way.

Garden beds close to the house are easy to hand-water. I have a few pots of annuals, and the ones in glazed clay fared better. I reuse as much household water as I can, usually slopping half the water on myself. I'm sure you have a few tricks for this; I'd love to hear them. Some

plants are water wise and revived after wilting, others died. Yet others surprised me by appearing dead then reviving once watered.

Alas, some good plants died. I lost a dear cascara tree (*Rhamnus purshiana*) to lack of water for two summers. Cascara is a native tree, and we have several at the Botanical Garden. A mid-sized red cedar turned completely brown, surprising me. I suspect both trees had seeded themselves on rock, so their shallow roots were unable to find groundwater.

Why not take stock of your garden successes and failures over the season? Nature is such a good teacher!

— Paddy Wales

Legacy and Estate Planning Session

No matter what stage of life you are in, whether you're newly married, having children, starting a business, or enjoying retirement, there are measures you can put in place now to ensure your loved ones, and the charitable causes that are important to you, are looked after as part of your legacy.

Join us on October 25, 3pm to 4:30pm at the Pavilion, as we hear from Robert Flux of Crowe MacKay and Spencer Keys of Charthouse Lawyers, who will share their expertise on how to protect your assets, ways to incorporate charitable giving into your retirement and estate planning, and what issues they encounter when working with their clients.

Topics that will be covered:

- Creating your legacy today – understanding who and what is important to you
- Wills and probate
- Estate taxation and planning
- Incorporating charitable giving into your goals
- Next steps to take action – your legacy begins now!

Bring your questions for Rob and Spencer and a pen and paper to take notes.

Seating will be limited, so please RSVP by October 21 to reserve your spot: development@coastbotanicalgarden.org

— Heather Vince, Development Officer



Unique summer greens growing at the Veggie Garden this year, from left: strawberry spinach, Malabar spinach, ice plant.

Photos by Vanessa Choo

Here at the Veggie Garden, we're always on the look out for delicious greens you can grow over summer. Besides New Zealand spinach and tree spinach that we regularly plant for summer, this year we are also trying out two spinach substitutes: strawberry spinach and Malabar spinach, and a hot new item in the culinary world, the ice plant.

Strawberry spinach (*Chenopodium capitatum* syn. *Blitum capitatum*), not a strawberry nor a spinach, sometimes called beetberry (again, not a beet, nor a berry).

Strawberry spinach has been slowly appearing in farmers' markets, as the plants are easy to grow, self-seeding, and entirely edible – the leaves, the berries, and the roots. The plants get their strawberry name from their bright pink-red berries that look like strawberry but tastes more like mulberry. Worldwide, the species has acquired several names, including strawberry goosefoot, strawbini, blight goosefoot, beetberry, strawberry blite, and strawberry stick. Strawberry spinach leaves and berries are the most consumed portions of the plant and can be incorporated into fresh and cooked preparations, the leaves usable in a 1-for-1 replacement in recipes that calls for regular spinach, and the berries make for an excellent accent in salads, especially paired with their accompanying leaves.

Apart from regular watering, care of strawberry spinach plants is very minimal. It is self-seeding, however, and because of this, some people consider it a weed. Deadhead your plants if you don't want to see them in the same spot next year. Otherwise, leave them to drop their seeds and enjoy an unusual and nutritious addition to your garden and diet every year.

Malabar spinach (*Basella alba* or *Basella rubra*) is a heat-loving warm-weather vegetable that is native to southwestern India and tropical Asia. It is known by several names, such as vine spinach, creeping spinach, red vine spinach, Ceylon spinach, and Vietnamese spinach.

This beautiful plant has dark green succulent-like, oval-shaped leaves, white or purple flowers, vines that are either green or a deep reddish colour, and dark purple berries. All parts of the plants are edible. Malabar spinach grows vertically and needs a trellis to support its fast growth. In hot climates with frost-free winters, you

can grow it as a perennial, otherwise it's an annual vegetable just like spinach. It is not only an edible plant, but also an attractive addition to a garden bed, especially the red-leaf variety.

The edible leaves (and shoots) of *Basella alba* resemble spinach with a mild, slightly peppery flavour with a hint of citrus and are used in the same way. The young leaves can be eaten raw mixed in a green salad, and steamed or boiled to be used like cooked spinach. Because of the mucilaginous nature, it can also be used to thicken soups and stews. Although when cooked it tastes much like spinach, Malabar spinach raw is a revelation of juicy, crisp flavours of citrus and pepper. It is delicious mixed in with other greens in tossed salads.

The leaves of Malabar spinach are a rich source of vitamins A and C, folate, B vitamins, calcium, and antioxidants. Its nutritional value rivals that of true spinach.

Ice plant (*Mesembryanthemum crystallinum*) is a salty succulent native to Africa and southern Europe. The leaves and stems are covered in crystal-like pearls as if small drops of dew were frozen on them. This idiosyncratic feature has also earned the green plant the nickname ice flower. It's also known as salty ice plant and crystalline ice plant.

It grows in a prostrate manner, spreading its stems 60cm across. It can be grown in sandy soil and can tolerate nutrient poor soils, but it will die in light frost. Leaves and stems can be eaten raw or cooked; they are known to have a slight crunch, are juicy and have a marine-like salinity. When fully ripened, the ice plant becomes sweeter. The Japanese are known to make tempura out of ice plant leaves. Leaves and stems can be pickled or used as a garnish. Leaves contain isoflavones and vitamins A and C as well as many of the B vitamins.

Like many salt-tolerant plants, *M. crystallinum* accumulates salt throughout its life by drawing from the soil. This accounts for the light salty flavour; however, the salt is released when the plant dies. This puts the salt back into the soil, preventing the growth of non-salt-tolerant species while allowing *M. crystallinum* seeds to germinate. Therefore, it is important to harvest it before it wilts and dies, and disposed of rather than composted. The plant has been used for bioremediation and is useful for normalising salty coastal soil.

– Vanessa Choo, Veggie Garden Coordinator

The Buzz About Bees

Greetings from the Sunshine Coast Bee Club. 2023 has been one of the best honey production years anyone here can remember. I had no idea what to expect going into the main honeyflow, as we were so short on moisture.

The Himalayan blackberry is our main source of surplus honey; they had an extremely early and heavy bloom this summer. The two hives in the foreground belong to our club, the four on the stand behind them are mine. I two-queened these four hives, a procedure where the hive is divided by a double screen, and a new queen is introduced to the new divide. The goal is to develop an extra strong colony. When the main honeyflow is imminent, the two units are combined, and the colony usually chooses to keep the youngest queen. When it was harvest time, I went to the trouble to take off the supers from the tallest hive, the one second from the left. A good result here on the Coast is for a hive to produce 40 to 50 pounds of honey. I weighed the six boxes of honey from the tall hive separately – it produced an astonishing 259 pounds.

Our club holds regular meetings at



Photo by Steve Clifford

our apiary in the Botanical Garden, which we are so grateful to be able to use. For information on the Sunshine Coast Bee Club or upcoming beekeeping courses

at the Botanical Garden bee yard, email cliffordsteve5@gmail.com
– Steve Clifford, president
Sunshine Coast Beekeepers Association

Children's Corner

All About Shadows

When it is a bright sunny day, look carefully around you. Can you see any shadows? As you move, look and see what happens to your shadow. Run along a pathway and see if your shadow chases you. Try and catch your shadow as you run fast on a grassy field in a park.

What happens if you go on a swing and pump your legs to make yourself go higher? Maybe your shadow swings with you, too. If you have a pet dog, it might have a shadow when it walks with you. Perhaps it even barks at its shadow.

On a windy day, when the sun is high in the sky, trees will sway back and forth, creating lots of leafy shadows on the ground below them. Try jumping on the leafy shadows of the leaves and see what happens.

Find a wall in your house. If you have a light, put it behind you so you can see your shadow. With your hands and fingers, make some shadow pictures. Make them move so



Photo by Paul Meyer

"I have a little shadow that goes in and out with me."

you can tell a story about what your shadow is doing and where your shadow is going. Perhaps you can even put sounds to the shadows you make.

When you jump into your bed at night, does your shadow go with you? If you have a night light on, look up and see if there are shadows on the ceiling. Whisper to the shadow and sing a goodnight song to it.

There is a very special poem that was written all about shadows by a famous poet called Robert Louis Stevenson, on January 1, 1885, and here it is:

*I have a little shadow
That goes in and out with me
But what can be the use of him
Is more than I can see.
He is so very like me
From my head down to my toe
And everywhere I wander
My shadow likes to go.*

Can you make up a story or a poem about your shadow?

– June Meyer

☞ Horsetail: Beautiful but Annoying

One of the most annoying weeds in garden and landscape beds is horsetail (*Equisetum spp.*), a genus native throughout North America and most of the rest of the world. Such weeds have survived since prehistoric times because they are highly adaptable to their environments and are almost impossible to eradicate. There is great debate among gardeners on whether to pull or cut horsetail. Online you can find statements such as this: "...each time you break the stem, little portions under the soil regenerate new plants. Essentially, you will be creating more horsetail." This and many other websites recommend cutting instead.

Unfortunately, this is bad advice. The trick to eradicating any perennial weed without chemicals (or at least bringing them to manageable levels) is to starve them to death. Plants depend on their roots (and rhizomes in the case of horsetail) to survive, so anything that reduces root resources is going to eventually kill the plant. Obviously the more above-ground material you can remove, the

less photosynthesis occurs and fewer resources are transported to the roots. Pulling weeds, especially if done with a forked weeder, is going to remove far more material than simply cutting weeds off at the surface.

Once you start a weed removal project, you have to keep after it: once is not enough. There will be rhizomes or roots left underground to support new stem growth, and once they reach the soil surface, they will start producing resources to send to the roots. Constant vigilance is needed to keep these shoots in check. You can significantly reduce the repeated pulling by adding a thick layer of arbourist wood chips to the newly weeded site. This forces the roots to put even more resources into stem growth to reach sunlight, meaning fewer weeds and more successful, desirable plants.

There is one caveat for controlling any weed that spreads underground. If you can't control the spread from adjacent properties, you will not be able to eradicate the problem.

In such cases, you may want to install a root barrier along the edges of your gardens. You simply dig a trench and install the barrier of your choice, making sure there are no gaps between the sections. Treated timbers, concrete pavers, and other materials that are slow to degrade can be used. The depth is going to depend on your soil conditions and the depth where you find weedy rhizomes and roots.

If root barriers are not an option, you can try to densely plant low shrubs and perennials along the property line to create a competitive line of defense. The roots will compete for space, water, nutrients, and oxygen; the crowns will create a shaded environment where invading stems struggle for space and sunlight. You will still have to watch for invaders, but the amount of weeding needed will be far less than it was before. And don't forget the mulch, both for the benefit of your barrier plants and to force invaders to use more resources to get their stems to the surface.

– Linda Chalker-Scott



HARVEST FESTIVAL

Sunday, Sept. 3
11 am - 3 pm
5941 Mason Road, Sechelt

 **Sunshine Coast Botanical Garden**

- GARLIC SALE! • PLANT SALE!
- baking and preserves
- master gardeners
- Lions Club refreshments
- music by dj little d
- children's crafts
- Spinners and Weavers
- Suncoast Woodcrafters
- SC Astronomers Club
- Elder Dog • Worm & Co.
- honey sales at the bee yard



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The Garden is looking for an Historical Archivist

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Somewhere in a storage closet in the hamlet of Roberts Creek are several boxes of archival records from the Botanical Garden, dating back to its conception some 20 years ago. It would be wonderful to have these files sorted and some of the photos digitized for easier access. Further historical research into the Garden property and its previous owners/uses would also be welcome.

If this project interests you, please contact the Garden by email at info@coastbotanicalgarden.org or call 604-740-3969.



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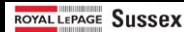
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