

RICHMOND GARDEN CLUB

Happy Valentine's Day | Preparing for Annual Plant Sale

Mark your calendars!

February 14, 2019:
Happy Valentine's Day

February 20-24, 2019:
Northwest Garden Show,
Seattle Washington. For
more information
www.gardenshow.com

Wednesday, February 27,
2019: RGC monthly
meeting, Richmond
Cultural Centre, 7700
Minoru Gate, 7pm-9pm;
Mike Nugent, Bartlett
Tree Experts, Fruit
Growing and Care.

Saturday, March 2, 2019:
Heronswood Gardens,
Hellebores & More: Plant
Sale & Lectures,
10am-3pm, Kingston
Washington. For more
information
www.heronswoodgarden.org



Valentine's Day Wishes

While you are reading our February missive, hubby and I will be exploring flora and fauna in the bucolic country of Costa Rica.

Costa Rica's environmental commitment to protecting biodiversity keeps calling us back each winter. Costa Rica channels funds from a fuel tax, car stamp duty and energy fees to pay for nature reserve management and environmental services like clean air and fresh water.

Landowners are paid to preserve old-growth forests and to plant new trees. Forest cover has increased from 24% in 1985 to over 46% today! (BC has almost 64% forest cover in the province!)

It has established a national commission on biodiversity



Garden jobs in February

Fingers crossed our mild weather continues in February.

February is a great month to start preparing your garden beds. Plan a crop rotation system for your vegetables..

- Rake in lime if you have acid soil.
- Prepare new asparagus beds.
- Cover outdoor, soil-grown strawberries with cloches for an earlier crop.
- Tip back summer-fruiting raspberry canes to 15cm (6in) above their top support wire.
- Dig over new beds but avoid digging in wet weather.
- Check protection against peach leaf curl.
- Clear the ground under trees and bushes of weeds.
- From mid-February onwards sow tomato and cucumber seed for greenhouse growing.

consisting of scientists, civil servants and indigenous representatives who make recommendations to government and promote green education among the public.

This incredible mind-set is carried right to the local people on the street. This is why our **heart** calls us back year after year.

BEAUTIFUL TREES MAKE A HOUSE A HOME.

We're Bartlett Tree Experts, a 100+ year old tree and shrub company with global reach and local roots. Our services include:

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- Cabling & Bracing
- Fertilization & Soil Care
- Insect & Disease Management

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Grab a buddy!

We need a couple of people to help organize the Mother's Day Plant Sale this year. Dorothy Dawson and Ruth Mukai coordinated this event for the last two years and have accumulated expertise, signage and all that is needed to have a successful day. They are happy to share this information.

You will be following a "to do" list that is taken care of by many different folks so the coordinators just need to remind everyone when tasks need to be completed.

Put your hands up and volunteer for this fun event. You will

have lots of support along the way! **Send an email to richmondgardenclub@gmail.com ASAP to volunteer!**

Preparing for annual Mother's Day plant sale

At this time of year we begin to prepare for our major fundraising sale that is held on Saturday before Mother's Day. Our members collectively supply plants they have grown from seed or from plant propagation to sell to the general public. The sale is held outside at the South Arm Church parking lot. We set up lots of tables and members drop off their plants that they have grown themselves.



The money raised from the sale goes to choosing high quality speakers for our monthly meetings. High quality speakers = more informed gardeners!

How do we prepare for our annual plant sale?

Let's take the huge elephant in the room - how to get a few hundred plants ready for a plant sale by May 12 (day before Mother's Day)?

1. Start **collecting pots**. Any plants you purchase now and any pots you have stored from last season, keep them. Wash them up and store them, ready for planting.
2. **Seed germination** For those of us that have seed starter kits like the West Coast Seeds "Sunblaster Growlight Garden", a greenhouse or a great sunny location in your home, you could start growing asparagus, fennel, leeks, parsley, herbs such as bergamot, caraway, chives, cumin, horseradish, lavender, lemongrass, liquorice, lovage, marjoram, oregano, Mexican tarragon, rosemary, sage, thyme and flowers seeds such as agastache, alyssum, asclepias, aurinia, columbine, cosmos, dianthus, digitalis, eryngium, eutrochium, gaillardia, guara (my favourite!), helenium, hollyhock and lupin.
3. **Plant propagation** involves starting new plants from existing plants through methods such as stem, root and leaf cuttings, layering and dividing plants, bulbs and corms. We will provide instructions through our newsletter and at our meetings to provide "how to" information for our members who need some assistance.

4. Focus on types of plants we will sell at the plant sale Avoid growing plants that will be invasive in people's gardens (list to follow). We are looking for perennial plants, vegetables, herbs, dwarf shrubs and trees, dwarf fruit trees, flowering vines such as clematis, and houseplants such as african violets and succulents. Let's add more **houseplants** to our inventory this year!

5. Children's table! We want to keep our customers coming back year and after year to see what the Richmond Garden Club is up to now. We had a **children's table** at the event last year where the little ones made flower containers for their Mother's, or purchased a small little succulent plant. It was a hit.

List of invasive plants not to bring to the plant sale!

We must make sure that we are not selling plants to our customers that will take over their gardens and at times, become very difficult for them to eradicate them. We will certainly hear back from these folks or they tell their friends who will tell their friends that Richmond Garden Club is selling plants that take over their gardens!

Some plants we will not take at our plant sale:

- * any types of ground covers such as lamium, ivy, periwinkle, creeping jenny
- * English holly, butterfly bush, brooms, bamboo
- * Common St John's Wort
- * climbing vines such as honeysuckle, trumpet vine, wisteria
- * Leafy spurge, common mallow, Himalayan balsam
- * Yellow flag iris
- * Use caution with some types of sunflowers such as Black-eyed Susans - they will spread in a garden.



Bird boxes in Paulik

We met with the City of Richmond recently to look at adding bird boxes and bat houses in the garden area of Paulik Park. Richard Kenny, Community Facilities Coordinator, Richmond Nature Park and bird expert, visited Paulik to research the viability of installing the bird/bat boxes.

He was thrilled with the rich variety of birds he spotted during the visit. He saw varied thrush, woodpeckers, towhees, nuthatches, flickers and many other varieties during our 20 minute walk.

In one section of the gardens, the trees were full to the brim with robins. He said that they are on their way through to fly south for the winter.

We have two types of owls in the park -Great Horned and Barred Owls. He said that they are located way up in the trees close to the compost area and are almost impossible to see. Photographers visiting the park have spotted them.

Rich Kenny will be holding a workshop, **Sunday, March 17th at 10am in Paulik Park** (by the picnic tables) to build the bird boxes (for chickadees and woodpeckers) and bat houses. He will assist us in placing the bird boxes in the right locations in the garden area. The bat houses have to go up really high so will be done by the City of Richmond parks staff. The program involves us placing the bird boxes and monitoring who calls the box "home". In the fall we will visit each box and clean out the debris.

This is an awesome opportunity for us to learn more about the winged wildlife we have in Paulik Park and be part of educating the visitors to the Park on the value of protecting our wildlife. I am sure we will have an opportunity to share the project with the community through Richmond News!

To volunteer to be part of the "bird box/bat house" project and attend the March 17th workshop, send an email to me at lyndap@shaw.ca.

Follow us on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter.

Visit www.richmondgardenclub.ca often to keep in touch with us and stay informed.