



# THE BULLETIN

BRITISH COLUMBIA COUNCIL OF  
GARDEN CLUBS

JANUARY 2023

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

## CINDY TATARYN, FIRST VICE PRESIDENT

PLEASE FORWARD TO ALL OF YOUR CLUB MEMBERS

### HAPPY NEW YEAR!

I hope you are enjoying this festive season and taking some time to relax.

As I mentioned last month, this year is our 80th anniversary. 🎉 We have some extra activities planned for this year.

We will start off the year with a Zoom presentation planned for **Wednesday, January 4 at 7:00 PM**. There is still space so come and join us. Please register by emailing me at [1vicepresident@bcgardenclubs.com](mailto:1vicepresident@bcgardenclubs.com) to receive your invitation and Zoom link.

The presentation will be of all the **purple** flower photographs that were sent to our communication coordinator, Lynda Pasacreta. There are over 200 photos so grab a glass of wine or cup of tea and come and enjoy the show! These photos came from your gardens throughout the province and it celebrates you, our gardening community. Well done to everyone who sent photographs! I hope to see you there!

Also in January, the club insurance is now due. This is for the year January 1, 2023, to January 1, 2024, and must be paid to the insurance company before

the end of January please so do not delay. Please get the forms and cheques in the mail ASAP. The forms are along with this newsletter as well as on our website [www.bcgardenclubs.com](http://www.bcgardenclubs.com).

Stay happy, healthy and enjoy the season!

Cindy Tataryn

First Vice President, BCCGC

[1vicepresident@bcgardenclubs.com](mailto:1vicepresident@bcgardenclubs.com)  
[www.bcgardenclubs.com](http://www.bcgardenclubs.com)



## INSURANCE RATES 2023

BY ANN PETERS, TREASURER

You will have noticed that the insurance rates for 2023 have increased. The BCCGC insurance broker has worked very hard in negotiating to keep these increases to a minimum and our rates are some of the lowest in the industry, given the overall general increase in insurance rates.

There are several factors to keep in mind for 2023. One is that these premiums are for a full year of coverage from January 1, 2023, to January 1, 2024. (Last year rates were for coverage from March 1, 2022, to January 1, 2023.) Secondly, there is no longer an option to choose between basic coverage of \$3 million, plus the possibility of taking an extra \$2 million coverage. The 2023 coverage is available for \$5 million only.

Your club's affiliation and insurance premiums should be paid in January. This will ensure that BCCGC can continue to offer the benefit of having low cost liability insurance in the future. Remember too that BCCGC does not make a profit on these premiums—all of the premiums are remitted on your club's behalf to the insurance company.

We hope that this information helps to clarify insurance premiums for your club members.

(BC Council of Garden Clubs 2023 affiliation fees and liability insurance rates and forms included along with the newsletter for your reference.)





## SCHOLARSHIP FUND NEWS

**BY SHONAGH MACRAE, SCHOLARSHIP FUND CHAIRPERSON**

Happy New Year from the Scholarship Fund Committee

While we wait on our fall scholarships to be awarded, I want to announce a special project the Scholarship Fund Committee will be launching this month.

**We are asking every member club to donate \$80 to the Scholarship Fund in 2023 to commemorate 80 years of supporting gardeners across the province.** 🎉

The goal of this project is to make a substantial contribution to the fund and raise awareness overall of the students and programs that we support. As gardeners, we understand the important role that both gardening and connection with nature can play as we face global issues like climate instability. The work our students do contributes to not only positive environmental practices, but also connecting people with plants.

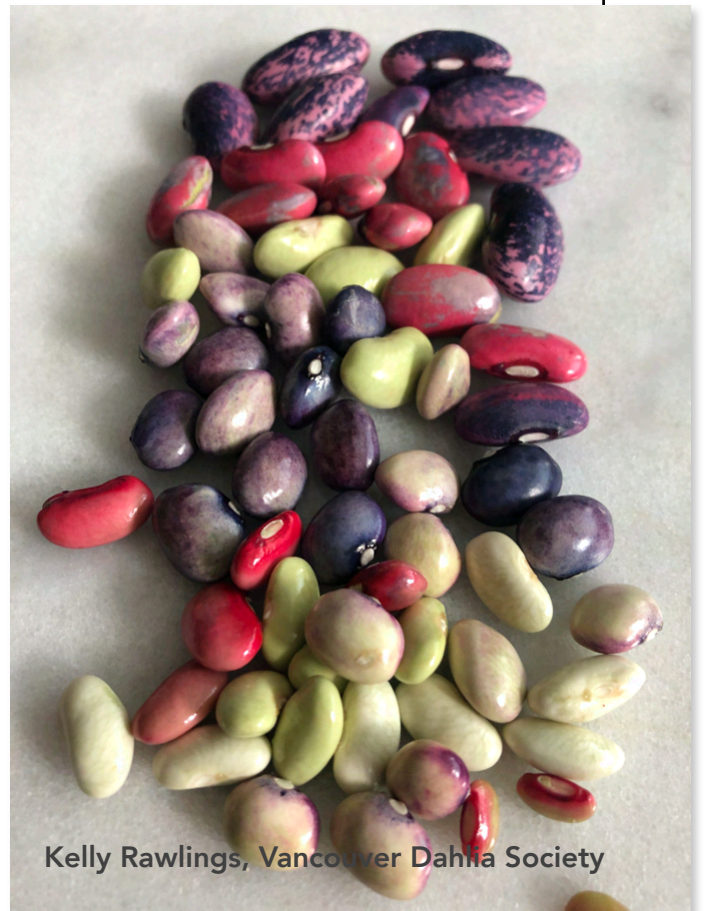
It is as easy as going to the Scholarship Fund "Donate" page on the BCCGC website and clicking the link.

**Thank you to all clubs who already support our student scholarships.**

And remember, we need another person to [join the committee in the spring when my term](#)

[ends](#). It is a rewarding experience, please reach out if you have any questions.

Shonagh MacRae



Kelly Rawlings, Vancouver Dahlia Society



## **Celebrating over 50 years of scholarship. Help BC horticultural students further their education by donating to the scholarship fund.**

### **How to Donate to the BCCGC Scholarship Fund**

If you wish to make a donation by cheque please send it to:

BC Council of Garden Clubs  
Scholarship Fund c/o: BC Council of  
Garden Clubs

10952 McAdam Road

North Delta, BC, V4C 3E8

Please ensure that the cheques are made out to the "Vancity Community Foundation" and the memo field shows "BC Council of Garden Clubs." If the person or organization that the donation is from does not clearly show on the cheque, please include a brief note with the cheque indicating who the donation is from and a return address (so that an income tax receipt can be issued).

If you wish to donate online with a credit card:

Go to

[www.vancitycommunityfoundation.ca](http://www.vancitycommunityfoundation.ca).

Click the "Funds" button on the top right side of the home page

Locate the BC Council of Garden Clubs Scholarship Fund, either by scrolling through the list or searching "garden clubs" in the search bar.

Once on the BCCGC Scholarship Fund page, click "Give to this Fund" and complete the form.

OR

Go to [www.bcgardenclubs.com](http://www.bcgardenclubs.com).

Go to the "Scholarship Fund" on the top bar and click on the "Donate" page below.

Scroll down to the link to Vancity Community Foundation and click on it. This will take you to the BCCGC Scholarship Fund page.

Click on "Give to this Fund" and complete the form.

Thank You!



"Congratulations to the BC Council of Garden Clubs for 80 years of dedication to inspiring a passion for gardening in BC. Your teaching, training, and sharing of knowledge has been invaluable for so many folks new to gardening. The garden events, especially the shows and plant sales, have become an important part of many communities. As we move into a new climate reality, we hope you will continue to be leaders in teaching folks about the importance of protecting the environment and wildlife habitats, as well as creating pollinator gardens, planting more sustainable gardens by using new heat and drought-resistant plants and showing how gardens can be part of the solution to reduce carbon emissions. Thank you for all the Council has done to make gardening relevant in our province!"

Brian Minter, Minter Nurseries



## RIGHT PLANT, RIGHT PLACE

BY ALLISON FORBES, SPIRITHOUSE GARDENS, GIBSONS GARDEN CLUB

Beth Chatto famously said, “right plant, right place.” Well, what happens if the “right place” is under threat due to climate change?

Depending on where you live in BC and what season you’re referencing—it’s getting wetter. It’s also getting drier. It’s not getting warmer but rather, it’s getting less cold, with annual minimum temperatures increasing more than maximum temperatures. And although averages are increasing, the number of days at the max/min temperatures are also increasing.

Adding to the temperature and precipitation challenges is the growing population, especially in smaller communities (as high as 9.8% year over year) that often don’t have flood mitigation strategies or infrastructure to meet increasing irrigation demands. Floods, drought, hurricanes—we are literally engaged in an “extreme sport.”

At this point, most articles veer into instructions for creating dry beds and xeriscape-friendly plants. Very good advice if you have the means and the will to redevelop your entire yard.

For someone like me who has invested 30 years in tending a clay-based garden—someone committed to the conservation of BC coastal forest plants, this doesn’t hold much appeal, especially in the short or near term. But doing nothing isn’t realistic. I live on the Sunshine Coast where a prolonged stage 4 watering restriction (no outdoor watering) is becoming an annual occurrence. I also live on the downside of a poorly sloped road that floods during every passing atmospheric river.

### Much To-Do About Mulch

A few years ago, I moved to a no-dig garden strategy. There are endless scientific articles on the merits of this approach so I will spare you the details. Basically, I avoid digging and have added four inches of mulch to protect the soil. It’s worked wonders. My need to water has been greatly reduced, especially in the veggie garden.

The type of mulch doesn’t really matter, so long as it’s organic; bark mulch and cardboard being notable exceptions. I highly encourage you to read Dr. Linda

Chalker-Scott’s science-based postings, especially on this matter. All I can offer is anecdotal evidence. I have used arborist chips as well as straw and hay on both my vegetable and flower beds. The only difference seems to be that chips decompose more slowly (> 3 years) while hay and straw take one season (which doesn’t appear to be rapid enough to cause nutrient toxicity in my soil given the health of my plants).

On a leap of faith, I followed Dr. Chalker-Scott’s research that the cedar chips wouldn’t acidify the soil, nor were they allelopathic (retarding the growth in other plants). Two years after spreading the cedar in my veggie garden, yields remain relatively the same without plants showing need for fertilizer. I do, however, make a concerted effort not to push chips into the soil when digging can’t be avoided. The threat of increased weeds from hay didn’t materialize.

Dr. Chalker-Scott was also correct that piling good arbour chips on plants doesn’t cause crown rot. Chips even protect plants from unseasonably low temperatures. I should mention that I’ve never tried this on plants prone to crown rot.

I also consider ground cover a form of living mulch that helps maintain soil temperature and preserves moisture. Although they consume water, they contribute more than they use, both aesthetically and functionally.

### Resources:

- [https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/environment/natural-resource-stewardship/nrs-climate-change/applied-science/2a\\_va\\_bc-climate-change-final-aug30.pdf](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/environment/natural-resource-stewardship/nrs-climate-change/applied-science/2a_va_bc-climate-change-final-aug30.pdf)
- [https://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfd/pubs/Docs/Lmh/Lmh66/Lmh66\\_ch03.pdf](https://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfd/pubs/Docs/Lmh/Lmh66/Lmh66_ch03.pdf)
- <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/data/statistics/people-population-community/population/population-estimates>
- <https://www.thenews-messenger.com/story/news/2021/09/06/master-gardener-whats-better-bark-mulch-wood-chips/5661930001/>
- <https://gardenprofessors.com/the-cardboard-controversy/>
- <https://gardenprofessors.com/plant-lists-that-shouldnt-exist/>
- <https://whyfarmit.com/shallow-root-trees/>
- <https://agrilifetoday.tamu.edu/2022/06/22/drought-and-trees-explained/>

## Putting On My Top Hat

Thrift stores are magical places with a little imagination. Anything can become a cloche to protect plants from winter-wet so long as it's relatively clear: mixing bowls, water bottles, brewing containers, or bottoms of clear totes. And given the cost, your little finds don't have to last a lifetime. As a bonus—less goes to landfill which in turn helps the environment and mitigates climate change.

For those plants that are worthy and too large for your average thrift store finds, I've built custom greenhouses for individual plants in winter. Ironically, I have two; one for an *Agave parryi* and the other for an *Agave americana* 'Variegata'—not exactly indigenous BC coastal treasures.

## Mind Over Matter (Conscious Gardening)

Plants growing in less than ideal conditions are more susceptible to the effects of climate change so knowing a plant's natural habitat is more important than ever. It's equally important to be conscious of the changing climate intricacies of your own garden to better put "the right plant in the right place."

So, what plants are increasingly difficult to situate? I will avoid reiterating lists of drought-sensitive plants because "taxonomy plays a minimal role in determining whether a plant will tolerate environmental extremes." But from experience, I watch for signs of leaf desiccation on my azaleas /rhododendrons, maples, hydrangeas, and a few choice moisture-loving perennials during extended droughts.

All things equal, shallow-rooted plants, and those that are young or newly planted, are more susceptible. What constitutes "shallow-rooted" is debatable, but vigilance is warranted towards plants labelled willow, beech, pin oak, Norway maple, sugar maple, silver maple, crab apple (and many other fruit trees), birch, blue spruce, serviceberry, and cottonwood. Know thy plant. And not all that appears dead is dead. Likewise, all that is dying doesn't necessarily appear so immediately. It can take years for a tree to succumb to one season of extreme drought.

Another one of my strategies: if in doubt about a plant's growing requirements, consider growing it in a decorative container so that you can more easily control its environment, and provide protection until it becomes established. Container gardens provide additional gardening opportunities on decks, or can provide height differential and visual interest in a herbaceous border.

## Managing Ebb and Flow on a String

Many municipalities and regional districts in BC offer grants to install rainwater harvesting systems. Terms and conditions differ between jurisdictions. In my case, I was able to install a 4,500-litre collection system for less than half cost due to a grant provided by the Sunshine Coast Regional District. My system enabled me to survive this year's stage 4 water restrictions, which began in July and continue still (December 2022) with the visible loss of only one 14' rhododendron (which was planted in a less than ideal location and without mulch).

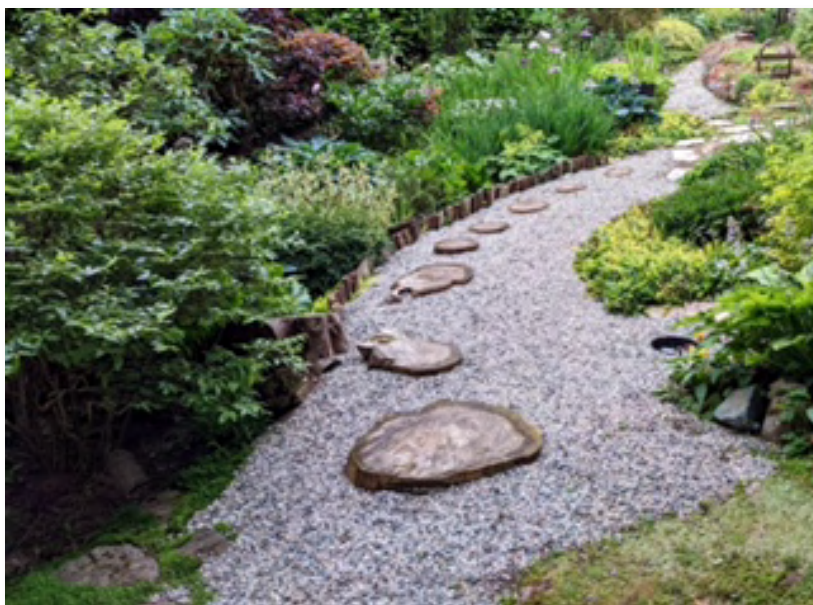
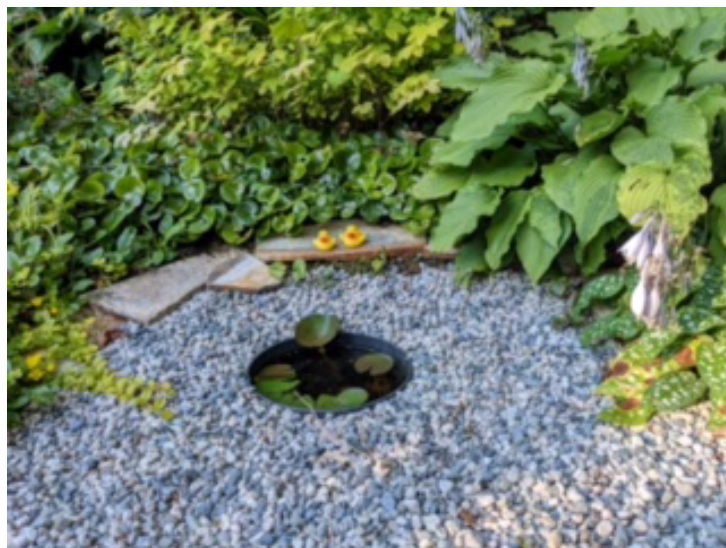
I also have a pond that holds approximately 6,000 litres of water. The total cost was the price of the pond liner since I was able to dig it by hand and reinforce it with rock from the property. It has worked flawlessly for the past 20 years with minimal effort. I encourage you to refer to one of the many books or videos on building natural ponds.

But water collection is only part of my story. I also suffer flooding during the winter. Ditches have been dug around flood-prone garden beds, then lined with sand and drainage rock before four-inch perforated piping was installed and topped with more drainage rock. Mulch was put as a final touch for aesthetic reasons so that the system would blend into the mulch of the garden beds.

Despite being on a hill, the amount of rainwater flowing through my yard during atmospheric river events meant I had standing water in some flower beds. That wasn't a problem since they were designed with rain garden-friendly plants. But it was a problem when I tried to walk on the adjacent lawn. The grass would inevitably peel off as I slid down the hill in the mud. After more than a few serious falls, I decided to build a catch basin. I removed the lawn, then dug a nine-cubic-foot hole on the downside of the wettest bed where the lawn used to be. This hole was filled with large rocks, then topped with #7 gravel. The flower bed no longer has standing water since it drains into my catch basin. And I can safely walk around the garden in winter. The system has also had two unexpected benefits. It collects water from summer rains, allowing it to slowly permeate the soil and hydrate the blueberry patch on the downside of the catchbasin. And between my walkways, mulching, and various catch-basin/piping, I have no lawn in my half-acre yard to mow.



There is no doubt that climate change will continue in the foreseeable future, and plants will die as a result. But for the purpose of conserving indigenous plants, I feel it is necessary to actively engage in extreme gardening. If we want to save our "right plants" we need to make the "right place" for them to survive.









# Ireland & Scotland 2023 TOUR



Dumont Tours is pleased to offer an exciting, safe, fun custom 15-day coach tour in May 2023 to beautiful Ireland and Scotland that includes many fantastic gardens, sights, castles and culture. Our tour begins in Dublin, Ireland on May 10 and concludes in Glasgow, Scotland on May 25. There is also an optional add-on visit to the world famous Chelsea Garden Show in London after the main tour.

One of the great glories of Ireland are her gardens. Due to climatic conditions Irish gardens are among the finest in the world with beautiful rhododendrons and other flowering plants which we expect in full bloom on our tour. Ireland gardens range from small, immaculately crafted and maintained to large country estates with exquisite parkland. Gardening in Scotland, the design of planned spaces set aside for the display, cultivation, and enjoyment of plants and other forms of nature began in the Middle Ages. Gardens, or yards, around medieval abbeys, castles and houses were formal and in the European tradition of herb garden, kitchen garden and orchard.

Further information and a detailed daily itinerary is available at [DumontEvents.com](http://DumontEvents.com). Deposits have been extended to mid-January 2023. Contact Bill Dumont - [bill@dumontevents.com](mailto:bill@dumontevents.com)



*Dumont*  
Events & Tours

## MARCESCENCE: WORD OF THE DAY

BY DAN PASACRETA, RICHMOND GARDEN CLUB



Sometimes all the leaves on deciduous trees and shrubs do not fall off. This is called marcescence. In Paulik Park it can be seen in witch hazel (*Hamamelis*), beech trees (*Fagus*), and some elms. It is hypothesized that the persistent leaves may have developed as an adaptation against browsing by large animals such as deer. For the deer the dead leaf is less tasty than a bare twig and tender buds. The leaves do fall off in the spring and new buds are formed.

Included is a photo of leaves on the lower branches of a beech tree in Paulik Park. The leaves are attached even though there has been a number of days with frost and wind.



## ENDERBY AND DISTRICT GARDEN CLUB

BY DI MACDONALD, PRESIDENT

The Enderby and District Garden Club was founded in 2001 by Mel and Nancy Bolton. They were active members of the club for many years until aging and health issues forced them to move away to be closer to their children.

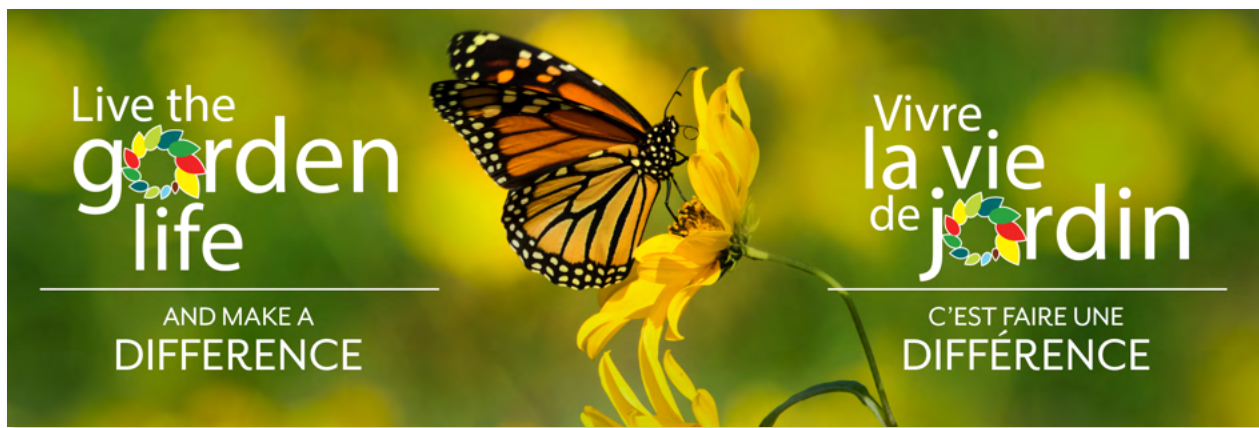
They were instrumental in helping to develop the Cornerstone Garden, which was opened in August 2005 by the local Communities in Bloom group with more than half being EDGC members. The following year volunteers from the garden club took over the maintenance of the garden—which is, even in winter, an amazing place of peace and tranquility in downtown Enderby.

Nancy and Mel have since both passed away and last year their daughter Linda wanted to donate a tree in their memory. We chose a Honey Sunburst locust and was subsequently planted in the Cornerstone Garden. A plaque has been placed on a rock at the base of the tree recognizing them for being founding members of our club.

The picture was taken in October after the installation of the plaque and shows the slow-growing tree flourishing in its new location.







## YEAR OF THE GARDEN 2023, LIVE THE GARDEN LIFE

### CELEBRATING CANADIAN GARDENING IN 2023



*Clematis florida 'sieboldii'*—photo by Joan Bentley,  
Vancouver Master Gardeners

The Canadian Garden Council congratulates the BC Council of Gardens Clubs for embracing the celebration of Canada's Year of the Garden 2022. Thank you for engaging your members and doing an outstanding job for the past 80 years of celebrating and growing our garden culture and all the benefits gardens and gardening provide to Canadians. We look forward to collaborating with you and your members to celebrate your 80th anniversary and invite BC residents to 'Live the Garden Life' in 2023.



# Growers Delight

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**Congratulations to BC Council of Garden Clubs members on their 80th anniversary! Dwight Young, Growers Delight**

Growers Delight is now a member of COTA, the Canada Organic Trade Association. **Check us out:** <https://organicdirtsupplements.ca/>. Use code BCCG12 for special discounts.





## **MOURNING CLOAK BUTTERFLY** *Nymphalis antiopa*

### **BY CINDY TATARYN, VANCOUVER MASTER GARDENERS**

**Range:** The mourning cloak butterfly is widespread and fairly common. It is normally found in deciduous and mixed woodlands, meadows, parks, and suburban gardens.

**Larval Food Plants:** The larvae eat the leaves of willow (all species), birch, ornamental elm, poplar, trembling aspen, black cottonwood, hackberry, ash, beech, maple, prunus species, wild rose, and Nootka rose.

**Adult Food Source:** The adult butterfly eats the sap from trees as well as decaying fruit, nectar, and scat. Lilac nectar, thistle nectar, butterfly bush, butterfly weed, pussy willow, *Viburnum x bodnantense* 'Dawn' (winter blooming nectar source), shasta daisy and other composite flowers, hollyhock, and thistle.

**Adult Nesting Sites:** The adult butterfly can be found in woodpiles and other spots in the garden.

**Time of Flight:** July to May

**Life Cycle:** Adults emerge from pupae in July. They can increase the amount of antifreeze chemicals in their bodies in the fall so they don't freeze during the winter. They overwinter in old woodpiles and can fly on warm days in winter. They can raise their body temperature through a shivering action. They lay clusters of about 100 eggs the following May on willow tree branches. Colonies of larvae feed communally and will often defoliate a branch before moving on. The mature larvae pupate around the end of June.

#### **Description:**

**Larva** – The mourning cloak larva is a black caterpillar covered in branchy spines and tiny white dots, with a distinct row of red spots along the back. 50 mm.

**Adult** – The adult is a large, dark brown butterfly with yellow to white banding on the rims of its wings. The

forewings have a row of blue spots along the inside of the band. They have a small lobe on the hindwing that resembles a small tail. 60–80 mm.

**Physical Control:** Colonies of larvae can be hand-picked or prune off and discard the infected branch.

#### **Native Plant: Willow (*Salix*)**

Willows in BC include Hooker's (*Salix hookeriana*), Pacific (*Salix lucida* ssp. *lasiandra*) and Scouler's (*Salix scouleriana*). Willows are the larval food source for the mourning cloak.

Willows are very fast growing deciduous shrubs or trees, mainly growing in wet areas. They grow white "pussies" which are anthers, in early spring. They are easy to propagate by pushing a slim pencil-size branch into damp soil. They are hardy in all zones and are shade-tolerant.

Hooker's willow is a large shrub or small tree growing to six metres tall. It has hairy, egg-shaped leaves which grow alternately along the branch. The catkins appear before the leaves in the spring, and are stout and very hairy. Male catkins grow to four centimetres and females to 12 centimetres.

#### **Sources:**

*Garden Bugs of British Columbia, Gardening to Attract, Repel and Control*, by Janice Elmhirst, Ken Fry, & Doug Macaulay (2008, Lone Pine Publishing)

*Butterflies and Butterfly Gardening in the Pacific Northwest* by Mary Kate Woodward (2005, Whitecap Books)

## MOURNING CLOAK BUTTERFLY, CONT'D

*Butterfly Gardening* by Thomas C. Emmel (Cavendish Books).

*Native Plants in the Coastal Garden* by April Pettinger with Brenda Costanzo (1996 & 2002, Whitecap Books).

*Plants of Coastal British Columbia Including Washington, Oregon & Alaska* by Jim Pojar & Andy Mackinnon (2014, BC Ministry of Forests, Partners Publishing and Lone Pine Publishing).

*E-Fauna BC: Electronic Atlas of the Wildlife in British Columbia*

<https://linnet.geog.ubc.ca/efauna/Atlas/Atlas.aspx?sciname=Nymphalis%20antiopa&lifeform=141>

Photo of mourning cloak butterfly by David Suzuki Foundation Butterflyway Project, [www.davidsuzuki.org](http://www.davidsuzuki.org).





Looking for speaker in 2023?

# Herbal Gardens with Ana



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**Instagram:** @ana\_herbal\_apothecary



Lynda Pasacreta. Richmond Garden Club





# NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS

We would love to feature your club or community garden in the newsletter.

Tell us about some of the projects your club or community garden is involved in.

You are invited to submit an article at any time (please include photos and name of author). Photos should be high resolution and you should include the name of the photographer if possible. Articles should be in the range of 300–500 words. If you have an idea for a

longer piece, connect with the newsletter editor in advance to discuss your idea.

Articles are due on the 15th of the month preceding publication. If they are submitted after that date, they will be held for the next issue.

The **next due date is January 15 for February 1**. Submissions/ inquiries:

[newsletter@bcgardenclubs.com](mailto:newsletter@bcgardenclubs.com)

Lynda Pasacreta, Editor

Pam Robertson, Copy Editor

## BRITISH COLUMBIA COUNCIL OF GARDEN CLUBS

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