

## Not-So-Secret Gardens!

As promised last month, we are pleased to introduce our new column...very special "Not-So-Secret" Gardens!

Thanks to Wendy Thompson who is the first to write an article!

### Location: *San Diego!*

"Last summer we visited the Botanical Building in San Diego's Balboa Park. Built for the 1915-16 Exposition, along with the adjacent Lily Pond, the historic building is one of the largest lath structures in the world. The Botanical Building plantings include more than 2,100 permanent plants, featuring fascinating collections of cycads, ferns, orchids, other tropical plants and palms. The Botanical Building also presents some of the Park's vibrant seasonal flower displays. I was most fascinated with the Tropical Pitcher Plant which is carnivorous. All carnivorous plants grow in SE Asia in areas where the bark/soil/leaf litter is so devoid of nutrients that the plants must supplement their diets with insects and animals. The pitchers have an intoxicating nectar around the edge to attract various small creatures who feast on nectar and fall inside where digestive acids and enzymes dissolve the soft body parts and the resulting nutrient soup is absorbed by the plant."

Thank you Wendy for sharing!

**Send me your secrets!**

Send to Cheryl Fiddis @ [ecfiddis@telus.net](mailto:ecfiddis@telus.net)!

## Thank You's...

BRAGS would like to thank our outgoing Executive team for the hard work they have done over the past 2 years. And a huge Thanks to the new Executive who have stepped up to fill their shoes and to the other members who have volunteered to fill the empty spaces on our committees. We would not have a BRAGS without all of you!

## RHODOFEST SUNDAY, MAY 1<sup>st</sup>!!

The 23rd annual Rhododendron Festival will be held on Sunday, May 1. Rhodofest is a fun, family-oriented event held annually at the Shadbolt Centre and Deer Lake Park in Burnaby. The Festival offers many information booths, vendors and entertainment for the enjoyment of the whole family. In return for being an organizing partner of Rhodofest, BRAGS receives free space for our monthly meetings. This year we are contributing a combined Silent Auction and Plant Sale. The proceeds of these two events, which have been held separately in the past, are awarded to worthy environmental and beautification projects in Burnaby. We need a lot of volunteers prior to the event, the day before the event and on the day of the Festival. The more volunteers we have, the less work there is for each of them to do. The tasks required are not difficult (i.e. phoning, distributing posters, making auction bid sheets, picking up and organizing plants, skirting tables, directing traffic, cashiering, answering questions, cleanup).

If you have not already signed up, and would like to donate an hour or two of your time, please contact one of the co-chairs, Wendy Thompson @ 604 420-6513 or [wwthompson@shaw.ca](mailto:wwthompson@shaw.ca), or June Dodson @ 604 939-2597 or [junedodson@shaw.ca](mailto:junedodson@shaw.ca).

# Just for the Birds !

by Cheryl Fiddis

While it is only just February, and there is snow in the forecast as I write this, it won't be long until the hummingbirds return to the west coast. It's time to think about finding that feeder and getting it ready. So when is a good time to put out your feeder? I usually put mine out around the first day of spring, but I find each year that within the hour of hanging it up, the hummers have arrived, so now I put it out a bit earlier. At first I don't fill it to the top, just in case their numbers are few and they are slow to arrive. A sugar water mix, ( $\frac{3}{4}$  water,  $\frac{1}{4}$  sugar), is all you need. Don't buy the colored water solutions, and don't use anything other than sugar, as it can harm them. As the weather warms up, be sure to refresh the feeder every few days, empty or not - giving it a good scrub in hot water. The hotter the weather, the more you need to watch that bacteria and mold don't develop. There are a few versions of feeders available... I once had a small decorative round glass feeder, but it dripped so much that ants became a problem. I find the most common one, shaped like a funnel with the red 'flowers, works just fine...when they finish feeding they perch nearby for a moment in the pine tree or on the clothesline, and then come back again. Be sure to hang the feeder in a safe location, and also one where you can watch them. You can buy feeders in most garden shops. Why not visit your local Gardenworks location or other favorite garden store, and check out the feeders available. The hummers will thank you and you will have many hours of enjoyment watching them. Remember to show your BRAGS membership card for your discount!

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## BRAGS Membership

Annual membership cost \$12. Members share various gardening interests and enjoy 10% discount of regularly priced items at Garden Works by presenting their membership cards.

# Upcoming Meetings

## March 2, 2011

Zamir Punja, Professor, Plant Pathology/Biotechnology, Department of Biological Sciences, SFU, will give an overview of the affect of moulds in "Moulds, Your Plants and You.

## April 6, 2011

Shirley Mackenzie, Associate Master Gardener will provide a light hearted talk on the growing conditions that various vegetables require and go through the A-Z's of vegetables.

## May 4, 2011

Gary Lewis of Phoenix Perennials will entertain us with:

"Weird & Wonderful Plants of the World: Botanically Intriguing Options for your garden".

All meetings start at 7 pm, at the Burnaby Village Museum, - Main Building, 2nd floor.

Refreshments are served. All are welcome.

Don't forget to bring your own mug to be eco-friendly and save a Styrofoam cup!

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## Out and About

### To March 31, 2011, Emotional Geometry

at VanDusen Botanical Garden. an exhibit of works by renowned Mexican sculptor SEBASTIAN, creator of VanDusen's Throne of Nezahuacoyotl, in honour of the bicentennial of the Republic of Mexico. Displayed on the Great Lawn and curated by noted SEBASTIAN expert Dr. George Drake. Presented in conjunction with the Consulate General of Mexico and the Vancouver Biennale.

### Spring Gardening Courses at VanDusen

Sharpen your gardening skills by taking in a course at VanDusen Botanical Garden. VanDusen is dedicated to increasing the awareness and appreciation of the Plant Kingdom through public education and training in botany, horticulture, ecology, garden design and related fields. Cont...

## **BRAGS 2011 EXECUTIVE**

### **President**

Verna Adamson  
604-294-5550

### **Vice-President**

Lanny Hui  
604-415-8287

### **Treasurer**

Kim Taylor  
60435-0728

### **Secretary**

Linda Cholette  
604-298-9059

### **Past President**

Judy Wellington  
604-434-8287

## **STANDING COMMITTEES**

### **Membership**

Anne Forsyth  
604-298-6350

### **Nominations**

Judy Wellington

### **Publicity**

Lanny Hui  
604-415-4564

### **Rhododendron Festival**

Wendy Thompson  
604-420-6513  
June Dodson  
604-939-2597

## **OTHER COMMITTEES**

### **Garden Tour**

Vacant

### **Plant Sale**

Lanny Hui

### **Newsletter**

Cheryl Fiddis  
604-435-2801

Anne & David Forsyth  
604-298-6350

### **Welcome**

Faye Kilpatrick  
604-434-5921

Sheila Chowdhury  
604-298-1196

### **Raffle**

Joy Makepeace-Smith  
604-433-5869

### **Refreshments**

Helen Vaughan  
604-299-2014

### **Speakers**

Rosemarie Daviduk  
604-431-6207

### **Website**

David Forsyth  
604-298-6350

Courses vary from a couple of hours to a few days spread out over several weeks. Courses are taught by staffers from VanDusen and experts from elsewhere in the community. Some specific examples coming up in the near future include Plant Propagation Workshop with Egan Davis (VBG), Spring Pruning with Gerry Gibbens (VBG retired), and Keep Good Lawns from Going Bad with Catherine Dale, well known as a Burnaby gardening educator and ex-Head Gardener at the Eagles Estate. For more information check out the VanDusen website at vandusengarden.org or phone 604.257.8666 for a brochure.

## **March 5, Saturday (\$30) “Mason Bee Workshop” at Eagles Estate.**

Learn how to have happy healthy mason bees in your garden with Brian Campbell. Brian has a certificate in Permaculture Design, is a Certified Bee Master, and is very active in food security and conservation issues. In this introduction to the native Blue Orchard Mason Bee you will learn about their life cycle and how to attract them to your garden. There will be a hands-on opportunity to wash cocoons and identify some common diseases and pests of these gentle beneficial insects. Mason Bee cocoons will be available for purchase at the workshop. Refreshments and snacks will be provided. Pre-registration required. Phone 604-733-2313.

## **March 19, Saturday (\$30) “Organic Vegetable Gardening” at Eagles Estate**

Would you like to grow a food garden, but don't know where to start? Arzeema Hamir will walk you through the process of assessing your garden or containers, planning what to grow and where to find resources. Come to the workshop.

## **March 1, Tuesday “Grapes & Winemaking” with Bert Garbuio**

South Burnaby Garden Club monthly meeting. Bonsor Rec Centre 7:30pm. Visitors welcome.

## **March 13, Sunday (\$50/\$60) “Master Gardener Spring Update”**

Special Guest Speaker Dan Hinkley and Christine Allen, Rosalind Creasy, Christine George, Linda Chalker-Scott. The 2011 Spring Seminar promises to be an invigorating day: a perfect way to head into a new gardening season. We can be sure to finish off with the newest information on ecologically sound gardening. This Master Gardener event is open to the public. More information at [www.bcmastergardeners.org](http://www.bcmastergardeners.org).