

## April Showers Bring May Flowers...



Most of us have heard this rhyme, but where did it come from? As we impatiently count the days until spring arrives here on the West Coast, - (often fondly known as the 'Wet Coast'), waiting out the rain can be depressing and frustrating for those of us gardeners anxious to get outside and transform our yards. (Some of us escape to warmer climates to hurry things up!). Curious, I searched to see where this little rhyme derived from...and here's what I found out.

This rhyme was a mid 16<sup>th</sup> century proverb written by Thomas Tusser, and compiled within his collection of writings he called "A Hundred Good Points of Husbandry".

"April Showers Bring May Flowers" is a reminder that even the most unpleasant things, in this case the non-stop rains of April, can bring about very enjoyable things indeed – such as an abundance of flowers in May. This proverb is a lesson in patience, and one that remains valid to this day.



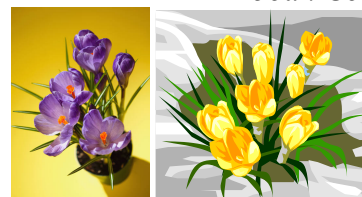
We recently asked our members to email us your favorite flower...or two...or flowering plant, and here's a selection of what you said. Hopefully this will help us all be a little more patient while we wait for spring!  
Thanks to everyone who responded and shared!

As one member said, "We always like to peek in someone else's garden!"



\*My favorite flowers are the early spring blooms (tulips, daffodils, crocuses, small iris's, snow drops and more). I planted over 100 bulbs (each of the last two years). I begin by planting them in every pot I can find. I usually mix them in the planters so that the planters will just keep having new blooms for a couple of months. I shelter them in my little courtyard close to the foundation of the house for the winter and then set them out as they begin to bud and bloom so I can see them from the windows or by the walkway. When they are finished blooming and the green leaves are at their end I tuck them back until I can plant them in the yard. This year I have areas of my garden with the bulbs from last year. Then, I take the same pots and fill them with summer arrangements. Thank goodness for the early spring because my crocuses were in bloom on Valentine's Day.

~ Joan Conklin



\*Sweetbox (sarcococca). Flowers during February and March with a fragrance that carries on air currents in the yard. Easy, low growing plant.

~ Bev Glover

\*The Rhododendron is my favorite. There are so many different gorgeous colours and varieties that bloom at different times of the year. One shrub produces dozens of spectacular blooms. Rhodos are evergreen and therefore look decent even when not in bloom. They are easy to grow in the right conditions and require little maintenance, although dead-heading is a bit of a pain when you have a lot of them.

Rhodos are quite hardy, withstanding fairly cold temperatures in winter and heat in summer as long as they are watered. Rhodo plants will live for decades, - when they get old and leggy, a hard pruning will bring them back to their old selves.

~Wendy Thompson



\*I have so many favorites that at the moment all I can think of are my winter favourites which are the hellebores, - reds, purples, yellows, pinks, whites that look so out of place at this time of year, but which are so welcome at this season. They seem a little slow this year but that's alright as no-one wants to be out in the cold at this time very much anyway. I see them as I go in and out via car and the neighbours stop and stare.

~ Louise Meville

Due to the great response, we will post more 'favorites' in the May newsletter!

**Send me your secrets!**

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

We would love to have more members share their 'secrets' and garden/nature thoughts. If you have something interesting to share, whether from a locale far away, or right here at home, please share with us! Articles are welcome as well!

## Rhodofest & Plant Sale 2013!

This year is the 25th annual Rhododendron Festival, an important milestone that will be celebrated accordingly on Sunday, May 5th. 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. This year we are once more contributing a combined Silent Auction and Plant Sale. The proceeds of these two events will be 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. distributing posters, picking up and organizing plants, skirting tables, directing traffic, cashiering, answering questions, cleanup). If you have not already signed up, and would like to volunteer an hour or two of your time, please contact Wendy Thompson at 604-420-6513 or email her at [wthompson868@gmail.com](mailto:wthompson868@gmail.com) or June Dodson 604-939-2597 or [junedodson@shaw.ca](mailto:junedodson@shaw.ca).

The BRAGS Plant Sale is a great way to share our passion and knowledge in gardening.

We are now accepting plant donations for the sale. If you (or your neighbours, or someone you know), are thinking of 'relocating' some plants, let us know! Any donation would be much appreciated, as long as they are healthy and non-invasive.

The wish list is available at:

[http://brags.ca/forms\\_files/plantsale2007a.pdf](http://brags.ca/forms_files/plantsale2007a.pdf) or contact me if you would prefer a copy by mail. In addition to the wish list, please consider donating indoor plants such as aloe vera, peace lily (*Spathiphyllum*), snake plants (*Sansevieria trifasciata* 'Laurentii'), golden pothos (*Scindapsus aures*), chrysanthemums, red-edged dracaena (*Dracaena marginata*), weeping fig (*Ficus benjamina*), indoor azalea (*Rhododendron simsii*), Warneck dracaena (*Dracaena deremensis* 'Warneckii'), Chinese evergreen (*Aglaonema Crispum* 'Deborah'), bamboo palm (*Chamaedorea sefritzii*), and heart leaf philodendron (*Philodendron oxycardium*). These indoor plants help with improving the indoor air quality. Please let me know as soon as you can:

- How many plants you are donating, so we can estimate how much space we need.
- Plant name (common or Latin names), to make sure that I have the picture of each plant during the sale.
- If you need help with digging plants, pots or soil, or help with transferring the plants.
- If you have any extra 1-gal or 2-gal pots and/or trays, please bring them with you to the April meeting to share with other members who may need them for their own donations.
- We want to avoid using plastic knives to avoid waste. Please write the plant name directly on the pot, or use masking tape, sticky labels (or any other way that would not create waste) just before you drop off the plants at Shadbolt.
- Labeling ahead of time will help reduce the amount of work to be done by volunteers the day before the festival.

## **BRAGS EXECUTIVE**

### **President**

Verna Adamson  
604-294-5550

### **Vice-President**

Wendy Thompson  
604-420-6513

### **Treasurer**

Susan Brandl  
604-433-4250

### **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**

VACANT

## **Rhododendron Festival**

Wendy Thompson  
604-420-6513

## **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**

Faye Kilpatrick  
604-434-5921

### **Refreshments**

VACANT

### **Speakers**

Bev Glover  
604-540-2883

### **Website**

David Forsyth  
604-298-6350

Also, it is difficult to sell "Unknown" plants.

It would be ideal if everyone can store their plants up until the day before the festival, - then deliver the plants to the Shadbolt Centre, room 103, on that day. Let me know if you need to make different arrangements.

Please sign-up with Wendy Thompson if you can help with sorting, placing, and pricing the plants the day before the plant sale. We are going to price the plants using the colour-coded popsicle sticks as in previous years. If you are volunteering, please bring gloves, plant shears, and rags.

If we have any leftover plants, we plan to donate them to Burnaby Village Museum. I will need help with transferring the plants from Shadbolt to the Museum. If you know any school or local community garden in Burnaby that could use some plants, please let me know in advance.

Thank you! Lanny Hui, 604-415-4564 [p\\_lanny@yahoo.com](mailto:p_lanny@yahoo.com)

## **BRAGS Membership:**

Annual membership cost \$12. Members share various gardening interests and enjoy monthly guest speakers, plus are entitled to a 10% discount of regularly priced items at Garden Works by presenting their membership cards. All meetings start at 7 pm at the Burnaby Village Museum, - Main Building, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. It's centrally located and there is ample parking. Refreshments are served. All are welcome. Bring your own mug to be eco-friendly!

## **Upcoming Meetings**



### **April 3, 2013 Meeting**

Conway Lum presents: Herbs!

Join us for what will no doubt be a very interesting talk by the famous Conway from GardenWorks Mandeville.

### **May 1, 2013 Meeting**

Norm Brown of Norburn Lighting gives a talk on "Garden Lighting". Norm is a Certified Lighting Consultant, currently the Marketing Manager of Norburn Lighting in Burnaby. Come prepared with your lighting questions concerning your own garden.

## **Out & About**

### **Customer Appreciation Day at GardenWorks - April 18, 2013**

Be sure to mark the date for GardenWorks 15% savings all day. Now is the time to plan your summer garden! Check out their website for extra savings!

### **Vancouver Dahlia Society Annual Tuber Sale April 13<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup>, 2013 1:00 – 4:00**

Takes place at the Floral Hall, VanDusen Botanical Gardens @ 37<sup>th</sup> & Oak.  
Info: Evelyn @ 604 – 437-8395 or [www.vancouverdahliasociety.com](http://www.vancouverdahliasociety.com)

INVITATION from Sheila Chowdhury BRAGS Member  
and Pat Sexsmith, Dianne Yard and Wilma Cook

to THE GAMMA GARAGE 10th Anniversary Show.

This Capitol Hill Art Group of neighbours and artists  
will host a bigger-than-ever show of works in  
watercolour, oils, acrylics, mixed media and prints.

Sat April 20th and Sun April 21st noon to 5:00 pm  
at 232 North Gamma Ave on Capitol Hill

COME and be SURPRISED!  
A great afternoon event to share with a friend.