

Fall Is Here ...



After a glorious summer, we now welcome October and another season. Do you ever think about which season you love the most? Living on the west coast we are lucky to experience all 4 seasons, each in its own glory, and I've always found it hard to choose my favorite when put on the spot. As the new season arrives, I'm always sure to say *But This Is My Most Favorite, I'm Sure!* At this time of the year, while it is sad to see the long evenings and warm days of summer leave us, we can also look forward to those crisp colorful days of Fall. It's time to clean up our gardens and plant our spring bulbs, put away the furniture and ornaments that won't withstand the rain and cold, straighten up the tools and enjoy raking the leaves as they fall! But just think, soon it will be Winter! But then, that's another story...

~ Cheryl



My Favorite Garden Tool...

In a recent email we once again asked our members to respond to "Tell us what your favorite garden tool, gadget or item" is, when working in your garden. And once again, the response was great and here we share those responses. Thank you to all who contributed!



My favorite is the 'claw'. This tool measures about 3 feet long, is painted bright yellow and blue, has 4 prong type of teeth that dig in the garden earth and then you turn the handle to the left and to the right as many times as needed and it digs deep into the dirt like a dream! I love to turn over my garden soil first thing in the spring to help pull out the weeds and

make the soil look real dark and healthy. The earth worms like it too when the soil has been aerated by using the claw.

My second most favorite is my grandsons' little plastic rake that I bought for them (but I tend to use it more!). This little rake helps me to rake up dead leaves and other debris in the smallest of areas. Way better than trying to use a regular size rake!

~ Linda Cholette

My favorite is my folding/kneeling stool/bench that allows me to get down to the ground level after my hip operation. I couldn't do half of what I need without it.

My second favorite is my electric blower; - I'd be raking and sweeping for hours without using that noisy old Toro blower when there are lots of bits in the yard. I've had it for years and it still keeps on doing a great and quick cleanup.

~ Louise Meville

My favorite tool is a very ancient meat-fork from a rather elegant set that must have once graced a carving board. It's the best plunger/twister for removing weeds, especially from narrow cracks. The steel tines are much stronger than any recently purchased weeding tool I've found.

~Sheila Chowdhury

I can't garden without a short D-handle spade. It's easier for me to dig with than a big shovel, cuts edges, slices weeds, draws furrows, divides perennials – you name it. I'll also use a metal rake to get out deep weeds, but the spade is the only essential tool.

~Susan Brandl

My favorite 'tool' has to be a pair of scissors! I am never out in the yard without them, - so handy to do small daily trimmings, edge the grass along the bricks that line one side in my front yard, snip off dead blooms on flowering plants, nip stragglers and neaten up almost any bush, cut lettuce and kale, and even uproot a weed. Oh and also perfect for trimming the ivy wherever it may climb!

Secondly, where would my nails be without my favorite pair of gloves? My favorite ones have the fabric on the backside, but rubber on the fingers and palms...perfect for wet soil or scrubbing the bird baths!

~ Cheryl Fiddis

I could, but wouldn't want to, live without the timer of my irrigation system. It is so nice to have the water turn on and off by itself.

~Wendy Thompson

My favorite tool is a small hand rake that I have had for about 20 years. It is just the handiest thing for raking up in the flower beds, around shrubs etc. It is about 4 inches wide and a foot long. It was made by Gardena and has a long removable handle to use while standing in addition to the small handle for getting down on your knees. I also have a cultivator that connects to the long handle.

According to the Gardena website there are dozens of small tools that work with this system and they still seem to be available in Canada although I haven't seen them in the shops for some time.

~ Anne Forsyth

My favorite tool is a Silky Pocketboy 170 pruning saw that I bought this spring. It is a Japanese style saw that cuts on the pull stroke instead of the usual push stroke. It is razor sharp so some care has to be taken in using it to prevent personal injury. The advantage is that it cuts through branches amazingly easy and fast – far better than anything else I have used. The 6.7 inch saw blade folds into its handle and comes with a carrying case so that it can be safely put in a back pocket or garden tool box. I bought mine from the distributor at the Master Gardener spring event but a limited range of Silky saws are available at a few retailers such as Windsor Plywood, Summit Tools, KMS Tools, Lee Valley Tools. If you can't find a dealer nearby that carries what you want, contact the distributor, Big Bear Tools, in Aldergrove at 604-626-4994. Silky makes a huge range of saws for gardening, construction, woodworking, etc. This tool has become indispensable.

~David Forsyth

(David, I think you need to bring this tool to a meeting for show and tell!! This could be a topic for a future BRAGS meeting perhaps!) ~CF

This summer, my friend and gardener of a nearby church, asked me to help water a garden plot there while she was recuperating from surgery. I naively said 'yes', thinking that watering the garden would be as simple as opening the tap, using the existing hose, and spraying with the nozzle. According to her, it turned out that I need a key to access the water tap. I did not understand what she was talking about until I saw the water tap. Yes, it is a smart but a simple design to limit access of the outdoor water tap to only those with a key. Other alternatives were to connect the hose to the tap at the other side of the building or to make 'frequent' trips using a watering can. For convenience, I decided to buy the key but no one knew what the key was called. It looks like the female version of the square head Allen key. I google searched with keywords "square water tap key" for a start. To make the story short, after the hassle of searching and a bit of persistence, I finally found out the proper name "sill cock key" and that Home Depot called it "silcock key". Yes, the sill cock key became my essential gardening tool during the summer.

~Lanny Hui



Send us your secrets!

We love to have 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!

Send to Cheryl Fiddis @ ecfiddis@telus.net

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, 2nd floor. It's centrally located and there is ample parking. Refreshments are served. All are welcome. Bring your own mug to be eco-friendly! Bring a friend next time!

On this note, does anyone have any suggestions as to how we might be able to co-ordinate our refreshments? We often seem to be scrambling at the final hour to find someone to take on this fairly easy task. Perhaps we could make up a sign up calendar for future meetings, a few members for each meeting, and go from there? Other ideas? Talk to your BRAGS executive!

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OTHER COMMITTEES

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Vacant

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Refreshments

VACANT

Speakers

Bev Glover
604-540-2883

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David Forsyth
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Upcoming Meetings



October 2, 2013 Meeting

This month we welcome Dianne Gaines:

“Bulbs - Spring to Fall”.



Dianne is a lifelong gardener with a major in Microbiology, a minor in Botany, and currently employed as the Marketing & Packaging Manager for Van Noort Bulb Company. Come and get your bulb ideas for Spring 2014!



November 6, 2013 Meeting

Laurelle Olford-Down shares her extensive gardening knowledge at our meeting tonight. She has been involved in horticulture for 17 years, has run her own landscape design business, and currently works as a horticulturalist, designer and garden writer at Art's nursery in Port Kells. She also grafts heritage apple trees for UBC and VanDusen events and is passionate about 4 season garden design as well as Edible design. Sounds like an interesting way to spend a wintery November evening!



December 4, 2013 Meeting

Mark down the date! Our December meeting will start with our AGM and then move on to our pot luck Christmas party. Plan to attend to enjoy the companionship of your fellow members and their significant others and at the same time, welcome the Christmas season!



Out & About

Customer Appreciation Day at GardenWorks: October 17, 2013

Be sure to mark the dates for GardenWorks 15% savings all day.

Stoney Creek School Help Request

~ Do you have gardening knowledge you would like to share?
~ Do you have 1 – 2 hours mid-day, mid-week, that you could commit to a community project?
~ Do you enjoy ‘kid-energy’ from enthusiastic 9 – 11 year olds?
~ Are you comfortable being in charge of a small group of children?
Then read on! Stoney Creek School has a plot in the adjacent Community Garden and also has the beginnings of an indoor grow-light garden. The teachers and children have been working on both and there is much interest in continuing and improving both projects. Your help would be appreciated! Please contact Sheila Chowdhury for more information at 604-298-1196 or email her at sheila.chowdhury@shaw.ca.