



### **May is Here!**

A few interesting May Facts:

- ~ The fifth month of the year was named after the Greek Goddess of Fertility, Maia.
- ~ No month other than May ever begins or ends on the same day of the week, in the same year. It may match with the months of the following year.
- ~ May is the month of Autumn in the Southern Hemisphere, and Spring in the Northern Hemisphere.
- ~ The birthstone is Emerald, which signifies love and success.
- ~ The birth flower is the Lily of the Valley.



### **Bringing Hummingbirds Into Your Garden**



I've written many times about hummingbirds, and here I am again, with more about these most amazing creatures. For most of you, Spring and Summer are the times when these wee birds will visit your garden, or at least, this is when you will notice them. Many

hummingbirds now remain all winter in the Lower Mainland, even during our past winter which was colder, snowier, and longer than usual. Named for the gentle hum of their wings, which move up to 70 times per second, hummingbirds are incredibly fast. Due to their fast metabolisms, they must keep on the move in order to consume at least half their body weight in nectar, pollen, sap, and insects, - *each day*. During extremely active periods, such as when building nests and feeding their young, this consumption increases to almost *four times* that amount. Amazing!

If you are looking to attract hummingbirds to your yard, it's not that difficult. Like any bird, they need food, water and shelter. By consistently providing these three staples, not only will they visit, but they will return year after year, increasing in numbers as their young follow the same path as their parents. Choosing a feeder is easy, with many available at garden centres and specialty stores. Hummers prefer feeders with a small perch to sit upon, plus this also encourages them to stay longer. Feeders should be easy to take apart to clean, which is a crucial step in maintaining a full and fresh source of food. Making your own sugar water is best, - one part sugar to four parts water. Red coloring or packaged mixes are not recommended nor necessary. Find the right place to hang your feeder, - safety and access are very important, plus make sure you are able to watch the feeder without startling your visitors. I hang mine off a second story balcony, close to hanging baskets and other plantings, which they will often visit. They also love the clothesline! Favorite flowers are Fuchsias, but I've seen them visit even flower-less shrubs, perhaps attracted by scent, or looking for small insects.

Water is also important, but you won't find hummers visiting your birdbath. Instead, they look for drops of water after a rain or watering, and love to dart through a mist if you are watering your garden. You can find a mister at most garden shops that would also be ideal for these special visitors. Shelter is available in most gardens, and if you are watching for them, you'll soon know their favorite places to perch inbetween visiting your feeder.

Favorite places in my yard are the clothesline (and the neighbours on each side as well), the stems of fuchsias in the balcony boxes (even the dead remnants over the winter), small branches in the pine tree, and any small elevated branches nearby. This winter when it was below zero, a dried stem in a planter inches from the feeder was the favorite spot for my hummers. When temperatures are very cool, their heart rates will drop while they rest between feedings, - a state called Torpor. I would watch them feed and then perch, often seeing the steam rising from their beak, - a wonderful sight! If only I had captured that photo!



*~ Hummer in the rain  
~ photo by Cheryl*

If you have anything to share, - stories or pictures, that you think our BRAGS members might enjoy, please send them on! We'd love to see them!

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



## ***Rhododendron Festival!***

Sunday, May 7, 2017 is the 29th annual Rhododendron Festival at the Shadbolt Centre in Deer Lake Park.

We can still use set-up volunteers for Saturday, May 6 and volunteers for all areas on Sunday, May 7 during the Festival. If you are able to volunteer a few hours, please contact Verna Adamson at 604-544-4006, by email at [v\\_adamson@shaw.ca](mailto:v_adamson@shaw.ca) or Bev Glover at [bglover@telus.net](mailto:bglover@telus.net).



*~ Rhodo photos by Keith Harris*

## **BRAGS EXECUTIVE**

### **President**

Wendy Thompson  
604-420-6513

### **Vice-President**

Bev Glover  
604-540-2883

### **Treasurer**

Susan Brandl  
604-433-4250

### **Secretary**

Linda Cholette  
604-298-9059

### **Past President**

Verna Adamson  
604-294-5550

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## **STANDING COMMITTEES**

### **Membership**

Anne Forsyth  
604-298-6350

### **Nominations**

Verna Adamson

### **Publicity**

Evelyn Crawford  
604-437-8395

## **Rhododendron Festival**

Verna Adamson  
604-294-5550

Bev Glover

604-540-2883

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## **OTHER COMMITTEES**

### **Plant Sale**

David & Anne Forsyth

### **Newsletter**

Cheryl Fiddis  
604-435-2801

Anne & David Forsyth

604-298-6350

### **Welcome Desk**

Janet Hayes  
604-420-5995

### **Refreshments**

Faye Kilpatrick  
604-434-5921

### **Speakers**

Beth MacLaren  
604-253-7036

### **Website**

David Forsyth  
604-298-6350

## **BRAGS Membership**

Still only \$12 per year, BRAGS members share various gardening interests and enjoy monthly guest speakers, plus are entitled to discounts of regularly priced items at GardenWorks and other garden centres, simply by presenting their membership cards. Monthly meetings (excepting July & August) start at 7 pm at the Burnaby Village Museum, - Main Building, up on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. Easy to get to with ample free parking and refreshments are served! Please join us if you are looking to join a local garden club. Why not gift a membership to a friend or neighbor?

## **Upcoming Meetings Events/Club News**

### **May 3, 2017**

Janice Bobic, our longtime BRAGS member will talk on "My Father's Garden" and Beekeeping.

### **May 7, 2017 – Rhodofest!**

We need all the volunteers we can get, so if you haven't yet signed up to help, it's not too late to do so. Otherwise, we hope to see you there!

### **June 7, 2017**

Deborah Jones, Rain Gardens

BRAGS will break over the summer.  
See you at the September 6<sup>th</sup> meeting!



## **Out & About Etc...**

*GW Customer Appreciation Day, May 18th, 2017*

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

## **BRAGS Members**

### **\*\* Special Nursery Tours \*\***

A tour is being organized for Saturday, May 20, 2017, to two nurseries in Langley. Free Spirit Nursery, [www.freespiritnursery.ca](http://www.freespiritnursery.ca) offers a garden tour from 9:00 - 10:00 am after which the nursery doors open and we would be free to browse. Bring your lunch to eat there. Select Roses, [www.selectroses.ca](http://www.selectroses.ca), has a 20 to 30 minute workshop on "The Parfuma Fragrant Rose Line Up" at 1:00 pm in their demo garden. You can still sign up at the May 3rd meeting. Friends of members are most welcome to join in. We will park near Deer Lake and carpool from there.