

Sechelt Garden Club Newsletter

www.secheltgardenclub.com

FEBRUARY 2012

President:	Charmaine Harris
Past President:	June Meyer
Vice President:	Mardie Campbell
Secretary/Webmaster:	Lilli McGinn
Treasurer:	Lorraine Blakeman
Newsletter:	Sandra Friedman
Membership:	Mary Rowles
Speakers :	Sandra Markley
Tours:	Moira Leishman
Directors at Large:	Christi Blackman, Carol Steedman, Larry Musser

Next Meeting: Monday, February 27th at 7:30pm in the Seaside Centre

Randy Shore, Roberts Creek resident and author of the *Green Man* blog in the Vancouver Sun will share his tricks and mistakes in growing food and his retooled recipes as well as his experiences in fulfilling his pledge last year to eat one thing every day that he had grown in his garden.

REMINDER: PLEASE BRING YOUR OWN COFFEE/TEA CUP TO THE MEETING!

Membership: 76 members have renewed for the 2012 calendar year, and as yet 81 still have to renew. Please make your cheques out to the Sechelt Garden Club for \$15 for individual or \$20 for family membership. If you renewed your membership in September, 2011 or any time after that, it's good through 2012 but make sure that your card is dated 2012.

Rental of Equipment: For information about our rental policy and fees for our slide projector and digital Power Point projector, contact Larry Musser at 885-3403.

Become a 'Foster Gardener'

The Sechelt Garden Club would like to increase the number of vegetables and exotic plants sold at the plant sale. We'll supply the seeds and the 'foster gardeners' will germinate them and care for the seedlings in return for half of the yield. You can also purchase seedlings from Linda Fogarty at the Green Room Organics and Sunshine Seedlings and nurse them along until the plant sale where half goes to the SGC and you keep the other half. We'll reimburse the cost.

Contact Sandy Friedman

We Want Your Feedback!

A suggestion has been received from a member of the Sechelt Garden Club that we publish a directory for our members' use. We would like to receive feedback from the membership before making a decision about this and would welcome any comments that you would like to make.

Do you agree with this idea?

Would you want your name/address/telephone number and/or email address published for use in a Garden Club directory? What are your thoughts?

Please email any comments to Mary Rowles, our Membership Secretary. We will also talk about this at our February meeting so please come prepared to speak about it.

Reminder: Please complete and return the Volunteer Form that was emailed to you. In order for our club to be successful, it needs a lot of people to help out.

2012 Tours and Workshop Plans:

To sign up for any activity or if you have questions or suggestions, please contact **Moira Leishman**. It's important that you sign up for activities that are being held now and are also in the works so that we know how many people are interested.

Upcoming Events

May 6 - Caron Gardens tour with hydrangea workshop, no cost, just bring your lunch. We have been asked to limit the tour to 25 people this year so reserve your spot early.

May 23 - an exploration of lesser known nurseries on the Coast and a visit to Salish Soils and the garden development presented at our Jan 2012 meeting.

In the Works

Early June - A hypertufa workshop at Caron Gardens at a subsidized cost. Actual price to be determined.

June 10: Strawberry Tea

June 24 - Squamish Gardens Tour —will depend in the interest shown

mid July - Gardens tour hosted by Gibsons Garden Club

July 31 - Gardens tour hosted by Pender Harbour Garden Club

Oct. 14 - UBC Apple Festival. Depending on success of Plant Sale, this would be a subsidized bus trip.

Tours of our Members' Gardens will be determined according to who will show their garden and when.

Happy 90th Birthday, Bobbi Kelly!

*Thank you for all the years you have helped make
the Sechelt Garden Club a success.*

February 'TO DO' List

(thanks to Bob Tuckey from *The Natural Gardener*)

- Order seeds and start seed flats. Water sparingly.
- Cultivate the soil and weed thoroughly.
- Lift and divide perennials, taking care not to damage new shoots (save some for the Plant Sale).
- Deadhead early flowering bulbs after bloom.
- Prune summer-flowering shrubs that flower on this year's wood. E.g. hardy fuchsia (*Fuchsia magellanica*) and butterfly bush (*Buddleia davidii*).
- Prune summer-flowering clematis.
- Feed hydrangeas with well-rotted compost or manure.
- Complete pruning of fruit trees and spray with dormant oil and lime sulphur if not done already.
- Plant new bush and cane fruits and prune existing ones. Feed with well-rotted compost or manure.
- Sow annual herbs in seed flats and sow parsley outdoors.
- Prepare vegetable beds by working in plenty of compost or manure. Lime two weeks later if needed.



Tips From the Garden Shed...

Meet Randy Shore, the *Green Man*

Why You Should Weed Your Garden In Winter

Vancouver Sun, February 12, 2012

Creeping buttercup is my arch enemy...

Wily, invasive and very tough to kill, *Ranunculus repens* is a perennial. It will outlive you unless you kill it. There are plenty of other weeds common in the vegetable gardens of southwestern BC, but you have a unique opportunity now to get the jump on this one.

Creeping buttercup can pop up wherever land is cleared and it particularly enjoys soils that stay wet most of the year. In dry conditions, it will set seed from bright yellow flowers. If the earth is waterlogged it sends out above ground runners like a strawberry. When the soil is warm and loose, it spreads along the surface with startling speed, especially after the soil is worked up. With long fibrous roots, creeping buttercup can also survive being chopped up. If you cut it in half, you'll only have twice as many in a few weeks.

If you are lucky enough to have sandy soil you can get the jump on this pernicious monster now. A few hours of sunshine will warm and loosen the soil enough to remove the entire plant. Use a spade or trowel to loosen the soil about a foot deep around the plant with about eight inches of clearance. Gently shake the plant to get all the roots.

Use the same method to remove chickweed, another ground creeping denizen of disturbed soil, which your garden is. Taking chickweed out now will save you a lot of trouble later in the season. Each plant can set 15,000 seeds, according to the provincial government's pest management website. Seeds in the soil can survive for 60 years.

If you have morning glory anywhere in your yard, I feel your pain. If it is mixed with sod, you have a big problem. If it's in your garden, just as bad. Morning glory has roots that can run for 20 feet or more and even half an inch of root left in the soil will produce a new plant within weeks. I have covered morning glory with black plastic for two years without completely eradicating it. But all the sod died and that helped in my mission. Dig widely around the plant and follow every root as far as you can. They are long, slender and white. If you have a sieve, sift the soil as you go. Bag up the vines and roots and send them away with the trash. Do not risk your compost by adding morning glory.

There dozens of other common weeds that find their way into the garden and quite a few of them will set seed in March and April, so remove them now if you can. A few days without rain and a few hours of sunshine is all you need to get started. If you have clay soil it might take longer before your soil softens, or it may never soften without help. You can use an old trick.

Cultivate your garden soil as soon as it is warm and dry enough, especially if the weather is expected to be warm for the week to come. Use a tiller or a hoe, whatever your preference. Some people never till and that's their right.

Unless I have a heavy cover crop I tend to stick with the hoe. If you have an aversion to tilling, you'll need to dig down more than four inches to remove perennial roots.

Head out a week after you cultivate — preferably on a warm, dry day — and dig out everything that is sprouting from the loosened soil.

I have a rolling plastic barrel composter that gets very hot inside that I use to destroy weeds before adding them to my compost. I have also been known to spread them on black plastic in the sun for a few weeks, until they are completely brown. Just make sure they are dead.

Summer weeding is a whole different ball game. More on that later.