



Vancouver

September 1, 2008

The Newsletter of SOUL Vancouver
www.organiclandcare.org/branches/Vancouver/

Volume 1, Number 2



Photo by Lee de Rosenroll

"More in a garden grows than what the gardener sows."

...Spanish Proverb

Message from the Chair

By Martin Harcourt



Hello to all from your Chairperson of SOUL Vancouver.

Well I must say most of you missed a tremendous margarita and nacho party but we did fine without you. Lots of food and great music, thank you to all who made this a great party. We will need to have another event soon. Several of the attendees said that I was the master of the margarita so I will now be adding that to my lengthy CV.

Well the weather has been great.....for turf and trees. They really look fantastic. This cool wet weather is just what plants love. It is a sign of global warming, and I guess every one of you already know this. I was listening to CBC after my dive today and the news anchor was saying that the select committee on climate change for the United Nations announced 20 years ago that climate change was upon us and we were supposed to start to do something about it.

I have been using fish fertilizer from Great Pacific Bioproducts (604-952-4333) for the turf at Commercial, home and strata's sites. We have had good, even growth and healthy turf this year. I added some activated EM to it to get the smell down and a few other secret ingredients for the soil. I have the statistics on Nitrogen fixing bacteria levels in the fish fertilizer and we have been using molasses to get them growing before we apply it. If anyone is interested get hold of me via e-mail or call me.

I will be at my annual diving holiday in Port McNiel on September 11, which is our next scheduled meeting, but Lee, our trusty Vice-Chair, will be in my stead. I will really miss seeing all your smiling faces whilst I dance under the waves with the stellar sea lions and dals porpoises, octopus and a myriad of wonderful animals too numerous to mention.

We need input from you and in order for that you need to come to the meetings. We have a great line-up of guest speakers who have volunteered their

time to educate us on their products and their particular areas of expertise.

The hardest thing for me in the 20 years I have been landscaping is finding and supporting conscientious suppliers of organic and non-toxic products. So show your support, come to the meetings and if you need advice that's what we do.

Hope to see you in October.

MARTAN!

The SOUL Vancouver Newsletter is published ten times per year by the Vancouver Branch of the Society for Organic Urban Landcare.

This newsletter is distributed free of charge to all SOUL Vancouver members. Please feel free to share this publication. Permission to reprint any materials originally published in this newsletter may be granted upon written request.

Our Mission:

"To support our communities in their transition to organic practices."

Our Goals:

- To foster and promote the practice of organic land care
- To provide opportunities for education in all aspects of organic land care.
- To establish and promote guidelines, standards and specifications for all aspects of organic land care.
- To establish procedures for certification of organic land care practitioners
- To establish and develop a means for the exchange of information and ideas between the public and the organic land care industry.

Editor's Note: Any information, articles or photos that you feel would be of interest to our members would be greatly appreciated. Please forward your submissions to OMGVolunteerHours@gmail.com by the 25th of each month to receive consideration for publication in a subsequent issue of the SOUL Vancouver Newsletter. Bylines and photo credits will be acknowledged wherever applicable.

Cover Photo: 'Bee on Aster' taken by Lee in her own front garden. Have a photo you'd like to see on the cover of the newsletter? Send it to the Editor!

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Rain Gardens and Library Books



The first official guest speaker in SOUL Vancouver's Speaker Series was Deborah Jones-Nielsen (pictured at center) whose July presentation on Rain Gardens proved to be just as memorable for the other 'first' it represented.

Jones-Nielsen, from Cougar Creek Streamkeepers in North Delta/Surrey, shared her insights on Rain Gardens which included their ecological benefits, recognizing and seizing opportunities to utilize them, and methods of implementation. Her presentation was punctuated with photos of several projects she has either been directly involved with or studied for their impacts on the neighborhoods where they are in use. Several photos were from local neighborhoods and sparked some lively discussion with SOULers who were personally familiar with them and the neighborhoods where they are located.

SOULers were in for another treat when Jones-Nielsen finished her talk by christening SOUL Vancouver's lending library with a copy of her book 'Lawrence and the Rain Garden'. Preceding her presentation, she had overheard the Executive discussing plans to start a lending library for our branch and decided to make the donation as a way of expressing her thanks for being asked to attend and speak at our meeting. It was a generous gesture that was greatly appreciated--and a fitting highlight to match what we all hope will be a long and lasting relationship as Jones-Nielsen also expressed her plans to become a SOULer herself in the very near future.

Organic Pig Manure will be the topic of September's guest speaker, Cors de Lint, who will bring along several bags of his product for sale at \$10 each. The pig manure, which is virtually odorless, has earned a strong reputation for its organic quality and de Lint is particularly keen to discuss the science behind its success.

SOUL Vancouver Executive Committee

Chair: Martin Harcourt
Vice Chair: Lee de Rosenroll
Treasurer: Barb Bancroft
Secretary: Miel Whipps
SOUL Board Liaison: Lisa Atkins
OMG Coordinator: J.R. Rendón
Event Coordinator: Open
Speaker Series Coordinator: J.R. Rendón

You can contact any or all of the Executive members using the listserver account at:

soul_vancouver@lists.onenw.org

Please note that replying to an email sent through the listserver will send your response to *all* SOUL Vancouver members. To reply to a specific member's email, use the 'Forward' command and then copy and paste that individual's email address into the 'TO' line.

Upcoming SOUL Vancouver Meetings

SOUL Vancouver monthly meetings are held on the 2nd Thursday of every month (except in August and December) at 7:30pm in the Canada Way Education Centre at 5310 Woodsworth St. in Burnaby, BC.

A special guest speaker is featured at each meeting and a social with tea, coffee and goodies follows at around 9:00pm.

Speakers Series Calendar:

September 11, 2008 - Unique Pig Manure and the Science behind its Success, presented by Cors de Lint, owner of Unique. A limited number of bags of composted pig manure will be available for purchase at the meeting on a first come-first served basis.

October 9, 2008 - "School Gardens: The Terra Nova Project", presented by founder and chef Ian Lai, MyTerranova.com

November 13, 2008 - "Growing Pains: Invasive Plants in Greater Vancouver", presented by Cindy Sayre, Curator of Special Collections at VanDusen Botanical Gardens and Board Member of the Greater Vancouver Invasive Plant Council.

December 2008 - Annual Christmas/Holiday Season Party. Date and details TBA. (No December meeting.)

Sheet Composting



Photo by Barb Bancroft

Taking it to the Streets of North Van

By Barb Bancroft

OMG/Fall 2007

Last year during the Organic Master Gardening course, our class made a garden bed by sheet composting over turf at the Eagles Estate with our teacher, Catherine Dale. I thought this was such a cool idea I wanted to try it somewhere else, in one of my own gardens.

Luckily for me, as a Parks gardener for the District of North Vancouver, I had plenty of sites to choose from. One in particular had been scheduled for a major renovation, but time and money ran out and it was put on the back burner. I asked my foreman if we could try sheet composting and got the go-ahead last spring.

The site is a 20 foot circle of “green” at the end of a cul-de-sac. I say “green” because it is a typical streetscape of the 1970s: *Acer circinatum*, *Pinus mugho*, *Potentilla fruticosa* and lots and lots of limestone gravel. (At least we were spared the creosoted log posts that were so favoured at that time.) Although it might have looked good when it was first planted, it was now impossible to keep up with the weeds in the limestone or to prune the mughos to size without exposing all the brown and slippy cups.

We removed the potentillas and mughos by digging them out by hand. Neither has a crazy root system, so it only took three of us a couple of hours. We saved the vine maples as they still looked all right.

Our sheet composting started with a small load, about
Continued on Page 5

Events and Announcements

SOUL will be hosting a booth at the 2008 CanWest Hort Show, September 17 - 18, at the Vancouver Convention Centre. This will be the second year that SOUL Vancouver will be in attendance at what is touted as ‘Western Canada’s premier horticultural trade show’. The theme of this year’s show is ‘Nursery Rhymes’. Exhibitors’ booth displays, seminars, workshops and tours will be featured.

Heide Hermary will be traveling from Victoria for the event and will be helping to man the SOUL booth on September 17. Additional volunteers are needed for the 17th as well as the 18th. Hours for the show are 11:30am to 6:00pm on both days. A minimum two-hour commitment is requested from those interested in helping out. To sign up, please email OMGVolunteerHours@gmail.com as soon as possible as we must make arrangements for the name badges that will ensure your free admission to the event.

Also this month, Grant Watson, of Grant’s Gourmet Gardens, will be on hand in the SOUL Vancouver Information Booth at the Trout Lake Farmers Market. Gail Szostek and OMGer Rochelle LaVieille will be joining him to spread the good word about organic gardening and food growing, SOUL, and the OMG program.

Information booths are also on tap for October at the Kits and West End Farmers Markets. Grant will be on hand for those events as well and will be helped out again by Gail and Rochelle, in addition to OMGers John Sandercock and Dan Paget.

Organic Master Gardeners should note that volunteering for these events qualifies toward fulfilling your Volunteer Hours commitment.

- **Sept 17 - 18, 2008**, 11:30am to 6:00pm, both days - **CanWest Hort Show**, Vancouver Convention Centre.
- **Sept 27, 2008** (Saturday), 9:00am to 2:00pm - **Trout Lake Farmers Market**, 15th Avenue and Victoria.
- **Oct 4, 2008** (Saturday), 9:00am to 2:00pm - **West End Farmers Market**, 1100 block of Comox.
- **Oct 19, 2008** (Sunday), 10:00am to 2:00pm - **Kitsilano Farmers Market**, 10th Avenue and Larch.

For those interested, a sign-up sheet will be available at the monthly meetings, or you can do so via email at: OMGVolunteerHours@gmail.com.

North Van Sheet Composting, continued from Page 4

3 yards, of leafmould spread over the whole area. The leafmould is full of bacteria, fungi and bugs that will start working on the poor undernourished soil and limestone of our base. Next came the arborists with 7 yards of chips. Let me tell you, that's way too much. We should only have used half that or even less.

Now we needed cardboard. We headed down to a street of businesses with cardboard recycling bins. The storeowners were glad to help and we quickly got a whole truckload of cardboard. When you're looking for cardboard, bigger is better, it's much easier to place with less gaps. After layering on the cardboard, we got another load of leafmould, another of chips (only 2 yards this time) and a final layer of leafmould.

At this point, our site was mounded up quite high with all those layers. We were a bit concerned that there would be a lot of spillover onto the road. The street is quite steep, the cardboard slippery and we had a really rainy spring. But we checked every couple of weeks and it really was not a problem.

For planting, we needed something bulletproof—it is an un-irrigated site about as high up in North Van as you can get. Our foreman had sourced a fern supplier who goes into the woods where a logging road is

coming and removes everything salvageable before it is destroyed. We used about 150 of these and some daylilies that were transplanted from another site. And that was that.

The site was now on its own to survive or not. Our irrigation truck came up once in August to water. Now, six months later, the daylilies survived beautifully, about half the ferns made it (some of them were already too dry and a bit iffy when planted), and the *Acers* look just fine.

Our costs for this renovation were pretty minimal, basically just labour. The leafmould was stockpiled from last spring. The woodchips came from our own arborists, and would have otherwise been taken to the transfer station greenwaste. The cardboard was free for the taking. The ferns were purchased but the foreman said they were very inexpensive and had the added bonus of being saved instead of bulldozed. The other plants were transplants.

All our gardens are works-in-progress, so we will keep monitoring this one and adding plants where necessary or removing what does not work. And, of course, we are looking at another tired old site that needs a makeover.

Hot Fun in the Summertime

The First Annual SOUL Vancouver Summer BBQ was hosted by Martin Harcourt at his Surrey estate and proved the opposite of the old adage 'You can't teach an old dog new tricks.' By the end of the night, Martin had had sufficient practice at margarita-making to establish himself as 'pretty good at it after all'. His guests were certainly appreciative of his efforts which also included a bounty of barbecued chicken -- plump, juicy and quickly consumed -- that was plenty tasty as well.



Aside from a few moments of 'work' indulged in by Catherine and Heide (who were made fun of for doing so), the evening was a memorable mix of laughter, train whistles, way too



much dessert, some weird-looking crickets, and a bit of badminton thrown in for good measure.



Photos courtesy Lisa Atkins

OMG News and Updates

A flurry of emails have been hitting OMGers' inboxes over the past few weeks as we've been scrambling to make as much information as possible available to all of you regarding the processes and opportunities that are being established as the foundation for our Volunteer Program.

Some basic forms for tracking your volunteer hours have now been distributed directly to you as well as being posted on the SOUL website (<http://www.organiclandcare.org/branches/Vancouver/master%20gardeners.php>) for download at your convenience should you need them. Likewise, deadlines and commitments have all been explained but, as always, any clarifications and/or concerns can always be brought to our attention, either in person or via our email address at OMGVolunteerHours@gmail.com.

In addition, we have been trying to keep you apprised of volunteer opportunities as they arise. Most recently we have informed you about the CanWest Hort Show which is coming up in the middle of September at the Vancouver Convention Centre. SOUL Vancouver will be hosting an information booth and volunteers for this event will be ensured free admission to see all of the exhibits plus the opportunity to take part in a range of workshops, seminars and tours revolving around this year's theme of "Nursery Rhymes."

As well, the Information Booths at local Farmers Markets have proven to be a popular venue with Trout Lake, Riley Park, Kits and the West End events now completely booked with volunteers through Fall.

We have already looked into continuing our association with the Vancouver Farmers Markets, not just for next year, but with the very next season. The Winter Farmers Market, which runs roughly from November through April, is held on Sundays at WISE Hall on Victoria Drive. We will be letting you know the exact dates as soon as they are finalized.

For those outside of the Vancouver area, we are very much aware that the distance into town can be a bit difficult to manage time-wise and otherwise, so we have done a bit of research and found that similar Farmers Markets are held in communities such as Abbotsford, Coquitlam, Mission, White Rock and others. If OMGers in any of these communities would prefer to volunteer at a Farmers Market nearer to you, please let us know and we will look into the possibility of establishing a relationship for SOUL and our volunteers in that venue. It's definitely not too soon to get started on plans for next year and, as our Vancouver Branch and its OMG program grows,

we'll be continuing to expand our horizons in a number of ways.

Speaking of which...some of you may have heard the early word on a new relationship we are in the process of establishing with the Wildlife Rescue Association in Burnaby. WRA has a Wildlife Garden which is currently overseen by one of its volunteers and her assistant who are understandably overwhelmed by the size and scope of the garden. As a result, they are very much interested in having SOUL Vancouver -- and its ever-eager OMGers -- pitch in to help reclaim the garden from its current state of overgrowth and neglect.

This opportunity has opened several potential avenues of involvement for all of us. The OMG Committee has already met with Paulette Tercier, WRA's volunteer coordinator for its Wildlife Garden, and we have visited the area for a preliminary tour. A 'wishlist' of projects has since been exchanged and discussions have also begun regarding the possibility of conducting workshops, seminars and classroom 'field trips' that could be integrated to benefit the garden.

The other side of this, of course, is that the organic practices that would be at work in the Wildlife Garden present a perfect match for our own desire to expand and become more involved in hands-on projects that will lead to greater understanding and knowledge in a number of areas. Native plants, invasive species, natural ponds, ornamental and fruit tree pruning, composting, and planting to attract butterflies and hummingbirds are just a few areas of interest that might be explored.

Because of the sensitivity of the animals being cared for at the WRA, an orientation would be required of anyone wishing to participate in any of the activities currently under discussion. Individual, group and class projects are all being considered, so if your own interest is peaked by this latest news, and you'd like to learn more, please be sure to attend upcoming monthly meetings and keep an eye on your inbox as we get closer to finalizing some of these plans. Your input, as always, is greatly appreciated.

-- **Barb Bancroft, Lee de Rosenroll, J.R. Rendón**
OMG Committee

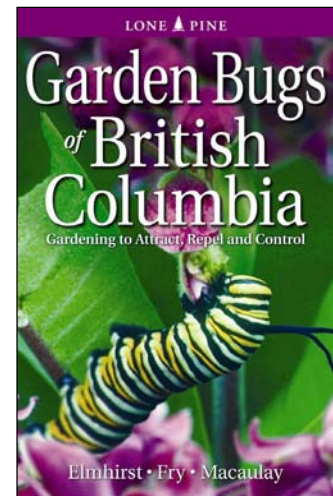
SOUL T-Shirts (\$20) and Stickers (Large Decal - \$8 / Small Decal - \$5) are available for purchase from Lisa Atkins at all SOUL Vancouver meetings.

Book Review

Garden Bugs of British Columbia

Gardening to Attract, Repel and Control

Authors: Elmhirst, Fry, Macaulay
ISBN 978-1-55105-591-6
Softcover, 224 pages, 8.5" x 5.5"
Lone Pine Publishing



Illustration/Photograph from "Garden Bugs of British Columbia", published by Lone Pine Publishing. Copyright 2008. Used with Permission.

Bugs may rule the world, but the full-color hand-painted illustrations depicting 126 species that are commonly found in British Columbia gardens are what rule 'Garden Bugs of British Columbia'.

And yet there is more to this book than just pretty pictures. Complementing the vivid imagery is a wealth of information that includes the natural history of

each species in addition to the basics essential to recognizing and evaluating their presence in BC gardens. Identification characteristics, scouting information, and habitat and range are provided for all in a Garden Bug Directory that is organized by species. Listings for beneficials also include specific tips on how to attract and encourage them into the garden; and for occupants that are potentially more harmful, cultural, physical, and biological controls are noted.

This surprisingly compact reference also includes an extensive Index, Glossary and References listing, plus a handy Quick Reference Guide at the front and a Garden Bug Scouting Chart at the back. With so much information made instantly accessible in a variety of ways, the result is a book well-suited for field work or desktop access.

Organic gardeners will also appreciate the authors' efforts to convey why proper identification of bugs is just the first step in acquiring real knowledge and respect for the significance of their roles in nature. Authors Dr. Janice Elmhirst (Plant Pathology), Dr. Ken Fry (Entomology) and biologist Douglas Macaulay, point out the intrinsic value of bugs to virtually every other living thing on the planet -- whether as food sources, pollinators, decomposers and/or predators. By examining the interdependence of these relationships within the food web, the authors explain why 'gardening to attract, repel and control' is more ecologically desirable than attempting to eradicate 'pests'. Integrated Pest Management is discussed, but emphasis is placed on a strategy that effectively limits the potential for outbreaks while simultaneously encouraging the balance and biodiversity that is essential for healthy plants and gardens.

-- J.R. Rendón



NOTICES...

GAIA COLLEGE FALL PROGRAMS

Organic Master Gardener Program
BURNABY - Starting September 30,
2008 - Information Session September
17.

**Certificate in Ecological Landscape
Design**
BURNABY - Starting September 29,
2008 - Information Session September
17.

For times, locations and more info:
<http://www.gaiacollege.ca/public/programs/gardener/index.php>

**The Wildlife Rescue Association of
BC, located in Burnaby, has an urgent
need for cut greenery** to use in their
aviaries. Stumps, branches of any size,
and evergreen prunings are appreciated.

The Care Centre is open from 8:00am to
5:00pm daily, but there is always
someone on hand until about 8:00pm to
accept your donations. The Centre is
located at 5216 Glencarin Drive in
Burnaby. Park in Visitors' Parking and
enter at the path on the left. Follow the
sign that reads "Injured Wildlife" and
someone there will direct you to where
the trimmings can be dropped off. There
is no need to call first, but if you have any
questions, you can contact the Care
Centre at 604.526.7275.

**Looking for the difficult to find organic
gardening products?** SOUL Certified
Professional Phil Nauta's 'The Organic
Gardener's Pantry' carries organic
products for organic gardeners. Check
the website for a full listing of products
and product information:

www.gardenerspantry.ca

Coming Up At Van Dusen Botanical Garden:

Sept 1-15
Green Words, Growing the Language:
eco-art installations throughout the
Garden by Nicole Dextras. Runs until
mid-September. Information on the artist
and her work: www.nicoledextras.com

Sept 13 Saturday
HSBC VanDusen Family Program,
Traveling Seeds for families with children
ages 4-11. How and why do seeds

travel? Investigate 'poppers,'
parachutes, "passengers" and more.
Two sessions: 10:30 a.m. to 12:30
p.m. or 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. Price:
Member Family \$15; Non- Member
Family \$25. Pre-registration required
by calling 604-718-5898 or
familyprograms@vandusen.org

Sept 13-14 Saturday & Sunday
Pt. Grey Chrysanthemum
Association Sale of Early Varieties,
Saturday: Noon to 4 p.m., Sunday:
10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission by
donation. Information: Marie Ogryzlo
604-261-9219
ogryzlo@chem.ubc.ca

Sept 15 Monday
Cedar Series Lecture, Tableland: A
showing of Craig Noble's inspiring
film on growing and eating locally
and seasonally. This is a 'must see'
for anyone interested in food
security, urban agriculture and
growing organically. In Floral Hall at
7:30 p.m. Tickets available in
advance from the Administration
Office as well as at the door.
Members \$10; non-members \$15.

Sept 21 Sunday
Alpine Garden Club of B.C. Fall
Plant Sale, Floral Hall, 1 to 4 p.m.
Information: Doug Smith 604-596-
8489 doug.smith@dccnet.com

Sept 21 Sunday
Plenty, A Local Harvest Celebration
on the Great Lawn from 10 a.m. to 4
p.m. Celebrates the bounty of the
harvest season with a Farmers'
Market, informative displays,
demonstrations and exhibitors, sale
of heritage fruit trees and berry
bushes, good food, entertainment
and old-fashioned fun. For more
information or to book a booth,
contact Kerry Burgi
kerry.burgi@vancouver.ca

Sept 21 Sunday
Medicine Wheel Ceremony from
noon to 3 p.m. at the First Nations'
Medicine Wheel in the Canadian
Heritage Garden. You are invited to
join elders from the First Nations
community in a spiritual ceremony to
mark the changing of the season.
Wear clothing appropriate for the
weather, bring a small stone to bless
and leave at the wheel as well as a
food item to share at the pot luck
meal at the conclusion of the
ceremony. Included with admission

to the Garden or free for Members.
Information: Contact VanDusen's
Librarian Marina Princz at
library@vandusen.org or 604-257-
8668

Sept 27 Saturday
VanDusen's Annual Compost and
Spring Bulb Sale, in the parking lot
from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. \$5 for a 20kg
bag of compost or bag your own for
the same price. Wide selection of
bulbs. Sorry, no pre-orders.

Oct 2 Thursday
Cedar Series Lecture, Painting our
Native Wildflowers with Michael
LeGeyt. Michael's art marries the
detail of the scientist's attention with
the beauty of the artist's eye and the
passion of the conservationist's
heart. In Floral Hall at 7:30 p.m.
Tickets available in advance from
the Administration Office as well as
at the door. Members \$10 and non-
members \$15.

Oct 4 Saturday
Bird Walk - 10 a.m. meet at the
Garden entrance. Join Jeremy
Gordon from Nature Vancouver for a
beginners' birding exploration in the
Garden. Rain or shine. Limited to
the first 20 people. Free for
Members or with Garden admission.
For more information on Nature
Vancouver, visit
www.naturevancouver.ca

*Have a Notice you'd like to have posted
in the Newsletter? Send it to:*

OMGVolunteerHours@gmail.com

*Notices must be received by the 25th of
each month to have it included in the
next month's issue. Just put the word
'Notices' in the subject line and indicate
somewhere within the body of your email
how many months you would like your
notice to run. (Example: Post from July
2008 through September 2008)*

*Notices are free for SOUL members,
Garden Societies/Clubs, Continuing
Education, and certain other charitable,
not-for-profit, or environmental concerns.
There is a nominal fee of 15 cents per
word, payable in advance and on a per
publication basis, for all others. For
more info on paid Notices, contact us at:*

OMGVolunteerHours@gmail.com

*We reserve the right to reject
submissions deemed not in keeping with
the stated mission and goals of SOUL.*