

HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR 2016 SUMMER CAMP

Oh, the joys of summer in the Garden! As the veggies ripen, the bees fill their combs with honey, and our beautiful Garden is enjoyed by visitors from all over the world, a rumbling of excitement is never too far away. For the months of July and August, we welcome 40 children per week to explore, learn, play, and connect with nature through our summer camp programs. As the camps are so popular, this year we gave VanDusen Members priority registration for two days, and we are very pleased that as a result, 40 new families have joined the VanDusen membership.

The day camps at VanDusen foster the inner biologist in every child, infusing a greater understanding of our natural world into all lessons, games and crafts. After five days investigating the Garden, these kids feel they own the place, and excitedly show their families new areas they've found, and cool plants they've seen.

Every year, we ask the campers and their parents for feedback on the camp experience. Here is some of what they told us this year:

"I've said it before and I'll say it again: best camps in Vancouver!"

"They feel empowered when they get a chance to contribute to the scientific observation" - parent of a camper in the "Citizen Science" week.

"It tapped into her naturally inquisitive nature and fostered her learning about plants, animals and the world around her."

"Camp staff are friendly, caring, knowledgeable and playful."

Thank you to everyone who included VanDusen in their summer plans.

We hope to see you again next year!

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Digging for food like a towhee bird



Having fun in the Maze



Learning about ecosystems

A ROSE BY ANY OTHER NAME...

At the April Annual General Meeting of the VanDusen Botanical Garden Association, based on the recommendation from the Board of Governors, the members present voted virtually unanimously in favour of changing the VBGA's name from the VanDusen Botanical Garden Association to the **Vancouver Botanical Gardens Association**.

As was explained at the time, the new name better reflects our work at VanDusen Botanical Garden and Bloedel Conservatory. Please note: the names of the Garden and the Conservatory remain unchanged. Just the name of the association has been altered. The advantage of the change is twofold. First, the organization's acronym – **VBGA** – remains unchanged. And, second, the new name speaks to the organization's history. When first incorporated in the 1960's, the association's name was the Vancouver Botanical Gardens Association.

WHY IS "THE BULLETIN" STILL "THE BULLETIN"?

In the Spring issue of *The Bulletin* we invited readers to suggest a new name for the Association's newsletter. We have received so many excellent suggestions that we have decided to give readers one more chance for input.

Here are some examples of names we put in the "runners up" category:

- Abundance
- Bloom & Grow
- Sowing & Growing
- Flora & Fauna
- Garden Walks
- @Quercus37
- 'scripts'@Vandusen
- Hortus Happenings

What we are looking for is feedback on the three finalists. We feel that these three names are: a) more garden and member focused; b) encompass our mandate at both the Garden and the Conservatory; and, c) are still "newsie".

- VBGA Clippings
- VBGA News, Naturally
- VBGA Blossom and Leaf

A huge thank you to all who have submitted names. In one last step, please let us know which of these three names you think is best. You can contact me directly at smitchell@vandusen.org or by telephone at 604.257.8625.

– Shawn Mitchell, Executive Director, VBGA

GIVE ANY CHILD THE GARDEN

The VBGA strives to make VanDusen's education programs accessible to everyone, regardless of financial challenges. Through the summer camp bursary program, we are able to offer the full camp experience for free to many kids who may not otherwise be able to participate.

We asked these kids why they enjoy camp, and they said:

"There's tons of cool interesting things to learn and I want to be a scientist so I want to learn all things science." – camper, age 9

"So I can know more about different plants, trees and flowers." – camper, age 10

"I love the bees because the bees work together to do extraordinary things." – camper, age 9

VanDusen is the highlight of the summer - it is the "summer vacation". – parent

Please consider donating to the bursary program, and help a child have a beautiful, fun, and educational week in the Garden. Your donation will inspire a future biologist, facilitate meaningful connections to nature, create a future ambassador for the Garden, and empower a child to be a positive steward of our environment.



Photo: Tania Alexis Clarke

Campers enjoying some outdoor learning.

GARDEN FEATURE: DAWN REDWOOD (*Metasequoia glyptostroboides*)

In 1943 a Chinese forester named Wang Chan found an unusual tree at a shrine near the border of Hubei and Sichuan, China. The tree was called “the water fir” by locals, and Wang thought it might be a Chinese water cypress (*Glyptostrobus pensilis*). He collected specimens, which were analyzed by two botanists named Wu Chung-Lun and Cheng Wan-Chun, who could not match them to any known species.

In 1946 Professor Hu Xiansu of the Fan Memorial Institute of Biology in Beijing was looking at these specimens and noticed that they were very similar to some fossils that had been found in 1941 by a Japanese paleontologist named Miki Shigeru.

Professor Hu came to the conclusion that the living and fossil trees were the same genus, meaning that the samples were from a “living fossil”, a species that had remained largely unchanged for millions of years. It was a unique tree from the Cypress Family (*Cupressaceae*), so Miki, Hu and Cheng named the new species *Metasequoia glyptostroboides* after other similar members of that family: coast redwood (*Sequoia*) and Chinese water cypress (*Glyptostrobus*).

Metasequoia means “like *Sequoia*” and *glyptostroboides* means “resembling *Glyptostrobus*”.

This “redwood from the dawn of time”, or dawn redwood, has deciduous feathery green, needle-like foliage, bark in vertical strips and distinctive armpit-like depressions at the base of branches. Fast growing, it reaches 60 m tall at maturity and can survive in standing water. Other living specimens were eventually found in a few scattered groves in Central China, but only about 5000 trees remain in the wild today. The species is on the IUCN Red List of Endangered Species and wild trees in China are protected. Since their discovery, seeds have been collected and sent to botanical gardens and arboretums around the world for ex situ conservation in an effort to help protect the species from extinction.

At VanDusen, dawn redwood can be found on the North shore of the R. Roy Forster Cypress Pond.



Dawn redwood

Did you know?

At every meeting of the VBGA Board of Directors, one of the first items on the agenda is “Plant of the Month”? For some time a representative from the Master Gardeners of BC gave the 10 minute presentation on a particular species. Currently, different members of the board volunteer to bring in a favourite plant and give a short presentation. It’s one of the many ways that Directors stay connected to the common passion they share for plants and the natural world.

MONTHLY GIVING

By signing up for monthly donations, either by electronic transfer from your bank account or your credit card, you can provide more support to the Garden and the Conservatory and never have to fuss with stamps and envelopes again. And, you have the option of changing or cancelling your support at any time. I am proud to join our growing Monthly Giving program as I have utilized monthly donations for years to support my favorite charities as it is convenient, easy on the cash flow and allows me to provide more support than annual gifts.

Please contact me for more details on how to enroll in the Monthly Giving Program or if you have any questions: **Gordon White, Development Director at gwhite@vandusen.org, 604-257-8190.**

GARDEN EVENTS & MORE

For a complete listing of events in the Garden and the Conservatory, and for **more details or ticket information**, please see our comprehensive listings online at www.vandusengarden.org.

Photo: Shawn Mitchell



More than 400 volunteers gave 8,848 hours to make this year's Plant Sale happen.

GIFT OF TIME

The experience that members and visitors to the Garden and the Conservatory currently enjoy would be nothing without the dedication and contribution of the VBGA's volunteer community. From January 1st to June 30th, 2016, here's what our volunteers have achieved.

- 955 volunteers gave 27,235 hours of their time to 23 different activities in the Garden and the Conservatory.
- That's the equivalent of 30 full-time employees, and if they were all paid at the \$20/hr rate of entry-level city employees, the value of their time is \$544,700.

Some of the activities where volunteers give their time, include:

- guiding, seed collection, visitor services/membership, the Plant Sale, special events, summer camp, school tours, plant labelling, propagation, library operations, dried flower arranging, office administration, membership administration and maintaining the Today in the Garden display – to name a few

Volunteers are an integral part of operations at the Garden and the Conservatory, and in so many ways define the visitor and member experience by their passion, their expertise and their commitment. I am in awe of what they bring to both sites on a daily basis.

– Shawn Mitchell, Executive Director, VBGA

Annual Compost and Soil Sale

Saturday September 24th, 10am to 3pm

At the west end of VanDusen's main parking lot off 37th

Products:

- Red Label Topsoil from high grade organics
- Brown Label Manure
- Compost from Harvest Power

\$5 per bag (about 20 litres / 20 lbs.)

Place your **Pre-Order:** www.heavyethics.com/VanDusen

Dried Flower Arrangers' Show and Sale

HSBC Arrival Hall, VanDusen Visitor Centre

September 23, 1 pm to 4 pm

September 24 & 25, 10 am to 4 pm

Come and see the beautiful wreaths, bouquets, arrangements, centerpieces, and topiaries the Dried Flower Arrangers have created with plants they've grown in their garden at VanDusen.

The Signature of All Things

The Garden will host an exhibition of works by six emerging artists from the Open Book Art Collective who will share art inspired by Elizabeth Gilbert's new novel *The Signature of All Things*. The art exhibition will run from October 2 to October 31, 2016 and will feature the work of Katrina Stock, Andrea Armstrong, Bre McDaniel, Mahla Shapiro, Laura Auxier, Jenny Hawkinson and Kristin Voth.

Member News

VanDusen Garden Shop's Holiday Sale

25% off for VanDusen Members only.

Wednesday, Nov 16 & Thursday, Nov 17, 10 am to 7 pm

Present your valid Membership card to receive your discount on all regular-priced merchandise. Sorry, books and magazines are not included in the sale.



Photo credit: Raymond Chan, Photomedia

Festival of Lights

Our dedicated volunteers and gardeners have been busy testing lights and creating props gearing up for this year's Festival of Lights. This holiday tradition runs nightly from **December 1, 2016 to January 2, 2017 from 4:30pm to 9pm**, with late nights from December 18 to 23 when we keep the lights on until 10pm. **The garden is closed on December 25th, Christmas Day.**

Visitors can experience a magical winter wonderland with over 1 million lights decorating over 15 acres of VanDusen Garden. Children and adults of all ages can enjoy holiday entertainment, interactive light experiences, tasty treats from on-site food vendors and the enthralling Dancing Lights show on Livingstone Lake. **New this year**, visitors can **ride the carousel**, included with all Festival of Lights tickets!

Purchase tickets in advance to skip the line. VanDusen Garden members can take advantage of discounted tickets that go on sale November 1. We hope to see you there!