

# VBGA CLIPPINGS

Photo: Tania Alexis Clarke

## 2017 PLANT SALE – CELEBRATING CANADA’S 150TH ANNIVERSARY

April 30th at VanDusen Botanical Garden, from 10am to 4pm, will be our 29th Annual Plant Sale. This year, our theme is *Celebrating Canada’s 150th Anniversary!* Wherever possible, all of our various plant sections will highlight red and white plant options in addition to our usual vast array of perennials, shrubs, trees, succulents and so much more.

All proceeds from the sale go to support the work of the Vancouver Botanical Gardens Association (VBGA). The VBGA is the joint operating partner of the Garden and the Bloedel Conservatory with the City of Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation. The association’s primary mandate is education – helping connect the young and the young at heart to the importance of the natural world through plants.

So if you’re 150 years old, an avid gardener, a long-time patron of the sale or have never been, we hope to see you at one of VanDusen Garden’s greatest gatherings of the gardening like-minded!

### DID YOU KNOW?

By the time the sale is done more than 460 volunteers will have contributed almost 9,000 hours of their time to make the Plant Sale a success.

## PLANT DONATIONS WELCOME!

Another way to support this event is to donate plants that we are then able to sell. Contact any of the following volunteers for information on where to drop off your plants:

- Margie Knox: mwknox@shaw.ca / 604.261.1868
- Jean McComb: jmccomb@telus.net / 604.261.4556



Visitors enjoy a bustling plant sale

## MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The VBGA is heading into 2017 with a number of new projects underway. First and foremost, we have changed the name of the Bulletin to VBGA Clippings (this name received the greatest amount of support from members). Thank you to all who shared your thoughts on this. In addition to the name change, we will be expanding the amount of content that we include in each issue and shift from two issues a year to three. You will see more articles about new initiatives in the Garden and the Conservatory, the impact of our various programs, and profiles of volunteers and supporters.

Second, starting in April you will see many of our volunteers – Information and Membership Desk team, VanDusen Guides, Bloedel Docents and our School Program volunteers to start – wearing uniforms. This is a new program that we are very excited about. It will raise the profile of the VBGA in the Garden and the Conservatory, make those volunteers more recognizable to the public, and give volunteers a professional look to match their already professional demeanor and skills that they share with the public.

### INSIDE:

VBGA Staff news  
Bloedel Conservatory  
Children and Nature  
...and more

Continued inside...



...Message from the Executive Director, cont'd

Third, we will be developing a series of short videos about the work of the VBGA in the Garden and the Conservatory that are intended for display on our website, on social media, in the Visitor Centre and in our presentations to the public. If you see a camera crew at either site, that's what we are working on. We plan to unveil these videos in the early fall. Stay tuned!

Fourth, we intend to streamline our Membership categories from 15 (yes, that's right, we currently have 15 categories) down to a more manageable five. No matter what type of membership you have now, we will continue to be able to meet your needs. More to come on this item in the coming months.

Finally, from all of us at the VBGA – board, volunteers and staff – we hope to see you in VanDusen and Bloedel over the coming months, enjoying everything that these sites have to offer. 🍃

## VBGA STAFF NEWS

After almost 16 years at the VBGA, our Volunteer Services Director, Judy Aird, has decided it is time to retire. Her last day in the Garden/Conservatory will be June 30, 2017.

We are extremely grateful to Judy who was willing to time her departure in a way that enabled her complete key parts of the 2017 volunteer program, namely guide and docent recruitment and training. More specifically, Judy wanted to “go out on a high note” – a final round of docent recruitment that would see us providing coverage at the Conservatory seven days/per week. Judy started this program from scratch in 2014. To get us this far in three short years is a significant achievement.

This kind of approach from Judy reflects the dedication and loyalty she has demonstrated to the Garden and Conservatory and our volunteers over the course of her tenure. The coordination of approximately 1,400 volunteers every year (who contribute in excess of 55,000 hours of time to virtually all aspects of the visitor experience in the Garden and the Conservatory) is no small thing. She has done all of this with an eye to balancing the needs of the VBGA with the needs of the individual volunteer, striving for a partnership between the two that is mutually beneficial.

But in her own words, “I don't want to stay in a role past my ‘expiry date’, and it is time for new blood in the program.”

The Garden community owes her a great deal. 🍃



## BLOEDEL CONSERVATORY AND THE SISTERS OF SALT SPRING ISLAND

By Vicky Earle, VBGA Director and Chair of the Bloedel Committee

Carmen and Maria are sisters that were bred on Salt Spring Island and donated to the Conservatory nearly 25 years ago. They are Green Winged Macaws and are the second largest parrots in the world! The stunning Hyacinth Macaws are the largest. The native habitat of Green Winged Macaws are the rainforests of Panama, southward down to Brazil and Argentina in South America.

Macaws almost always form bonded pairs and can live between 50-60 years. All parrots are zygodactyl, meaning they have four toes on each foot – with the first and fourth toes pointing backward while the second and third point forward. This allows these birds to grasp and manipulate all kinds of food and materials. They can even peel off tiny pieces of wood to use like tooth picks.

People frequently confuse the Green Winged Macaws with Scarlet Macaws. The main differences are the green bars or patches on wings of Green Winged Macaws (hence the name) and the red lines around their eyes, which are actually made up of tiny feathers. Scarlet Macaws have a yellow bar on each wing and no facial feathers.

Other than their bright colouring, the large “decurved” bill is the macaw's most recognizable feature. Their bills are incredibly strong, being able to exert 350 lbs. of pressure per square inch, which means they can easily snap a broom handle in half. This strength allows macaws to crack open extremely hard nuts and seeds, as well as to climb, hang and scramble through the tree forest canopies looking for food.

Green Winged Macaws are considered the most intelligent of all macaws with an ability to learn quickly. Because all parrots are quite social and engaging, they have been highly prized as pets throughout the centuries. This popularity, as well as rainforest destruction, has caused most wild macaw species to be placed on the endangered list. In fact, given species of macaws are already extinct. There is good news, however. Environment Canada and The Wild Bird Conservation Act in the United States forbids the commercial import of any bird listed by CITES which includes most parrots and macaws – endangered or threatened. 🍃

For more information about Carmen and Maria or other great articles about the Conservatory, go to:  
<https://bloedel.wordpress.com>

## IN THE GARDEN: JAPANESE CAMELLIA (*Camellia japonica* 'Lady Mackinnon')

By Samantha Sivertz,  
Plant Documentation Technician, Park Board

*Camellia japonica* 'Lady Mackinnon' is a prolific, late-winter bloomer with semi-double red flowers with white blotches – the perfect colour scheme for Valentine's Day! It has glossy deep green, serrated evergreen leaves, which contrast with its bright red flowers. Like other Japanese camellias, this cultivar can vary in size from a 2-meter shrub to a 6-meter tree, and can live to 400 years old.

Japanese camellias are native to China, Taiwan, South Korea and southern Japan. They have been cultivated in China since at least the 11th Century and thousands of cultivars have been developed. The flowers of Japanese camellia cultivars can be single, semi-double or double, can vary in colour from white to pink or red, and their petal arrangement can resemble other flowers, such as roses, peonies or anemones. The specific epithet *japonica* was chosen because Japan is where the species was first encountered by Europeans. Carl Linnaeus named the genus *Camellia* after Georg Kamel (1661-1706), a Moravian Jesuit missionary who studied the flora of the Philippines.

'Lady Mackinnon' is a sport of another Japanese camellia cultivar, 'Tricolor,' meaning it began as a branch of red and white flowers growing on a tree that normally has white and pink flowers. This mutated branch was taken as a cutting and propagated into a new cultivar. 'Lady Mackinnon' originated in Japan and was introduced to western horticulture in 1891. It is quite similar to 'Lady de Saumarez', another sport of 'Tricolor', which has all-red flowers. 'Lady Mackinnon' and 'Lady de Saumarez' are often mixed-up in the nursery trade due to their similar appearance and parentage, but are easy to tell apart because the former has white blotches on its petals, and the latter does not.

Camellias are often included in artwork and floral arrangements for Chinese New Year because they are symbols of luck, long life and good fortune. *Camellia japonica* has been the state flower of Alabama since 1959, chosen for its popularity among gardeners in that part of the United States.

At VanDusen, 'Lady Mackinnon' can be found near the Korean Pavilion in the *Camellia* Collection. 🌿

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## GIVING WITH PURPOSE AND INTELLIGENCE – YOSEF WOSK

By Wendy Turnbull, Communications Volunteer

For Yosef Wosk, philanthropy is not just a simple matter of donating money to a good cause. Noted philanthropist Andrew Carnegie underscored the complexity of generosity: "It is more difficult to give money away intelligently than to earn it in the first place." Parallels exist between these men, including valuing knowledge and the need for libraries. At a time when there was little aid for the poor, Carnegie stepped in. Similarly, Yosef's generosity is rooted in family and cultural values. His father Morris, exemplified generosity and community leadership. As Yosef explains, it was "part of the Jewish tradition to help others long before there were governments or social services to help the community. It was expected that we help one another." Yosef gives with purpose and creativity fuelled by his family traditions, spirituality and deep intellectual curiosity.

*Continued next page...*



*Camellia japonica*

Photo: Samantha Sivertz

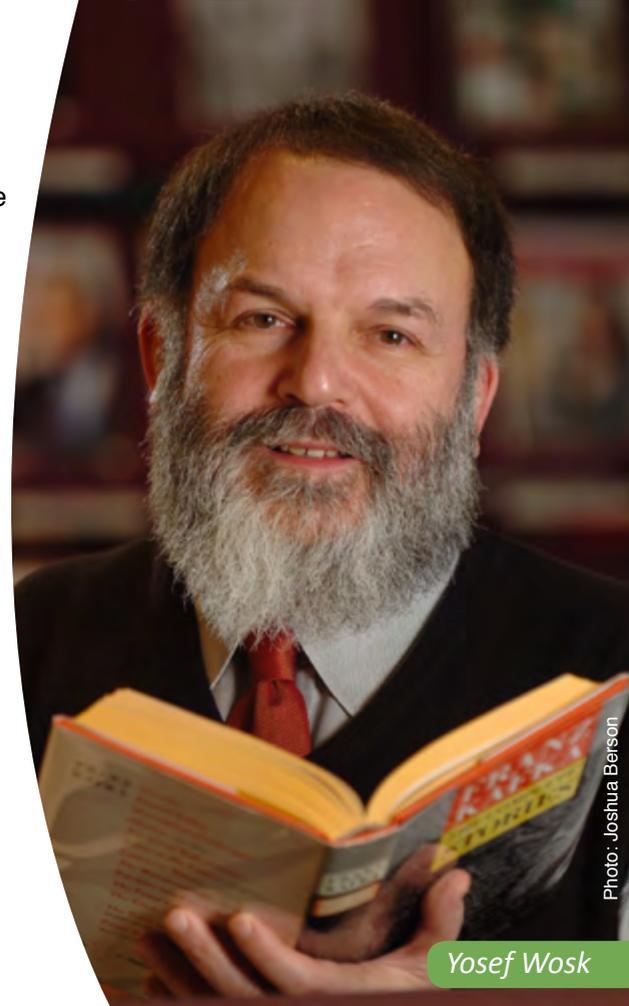


Photo: Joshua Berson

Yosef Wosk

*...Giving with Purpose and Intelligence, cont'd*

An integral part of VanDusen Garden's Visitor Centre, which opened in 2011, the Yosef Wosk Library and Resource Centre was funded by Yosef. In addition to providing important resources for the botanical and gardening communities, the Library is also home to the Roberta Mickelson Gallery. Opened in 2016, the gallery was gifted by Yosef in honour of his friend who was a noted architect, athlete and artist. The uniqueness of the space is described by Yosef as an "art gallery in a library in the midst of a garden." The Library's ever-growing collection and programming draws people from Master Gardeners to backyard gardeners. Embracing a myriad of subjects the Library is considered to be the largest botanical and horticultural library open to the public in Western Canada.

Mr. Wosk's commitment to libraries is undeniable. A major donor to the Vancouver Public Library, Yosef has also supported more than 400 smaller libraries worldwide for over a decade. For example, through the Trans-Himalayan Aid Society he has helped libraries in almost inaccessible areas of Northern India and Nepal where they have fostered a sense of community. Through the Chabad organization, Yosef has helped libraries in many countries including Cuba. Books are bought in their home languages be it Spanish, French or Italian, and in consultation so the people get what they truly want. In addition, he has funded 200 libraries at Israeli Defense Force bases so that soldiers can study.

One of Yosef's strongest influences is his family history. Generations of Wosks suffered persecution in the Ukraine, which was under Russian influence. After a particularly close call for his grandfather, Yosef's grandparents immigrated to Canada via Halifax in 1928, in a flight of survival sponsored by family members already in Canada. Other than a diamond that Yosef's grandmother had sewn into Yosef's father's jacket lining, the Wosk family came to their new country with no funds or possessions to speak of. In Halifax, the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society greeted the

Wosks with a salami, a loaf of bread and train tickets to Vancouver.

Ultimately, the Wosks became successful in many fields, including business and academia. Both Morris, Yosef's father, and Yosef have exemplified community leadership and have been recipients of the Order of BC in recognition of their many contributions to BC. This immigrant success story does bring its challenges, however. Being born into wealth can be a double-edged sword as Yosef reflected, "It was difficult at times to have the funds and embarrassing at times. That was something I had to learn to handle. I could have either rejected it or embraced it and used it in a responsible way." He explained further:

*With any item or quality, if it's outstanding or in excess how you deal with it is difficult. It's both like a blessing and a curse. Even having strength, or beauty or being smart, not everyone can use it in the best way, in a responsible way.*

Philanthropy was informed by Yosef's thirst for knowledge. An ordained Rabbi, he holds PhDs and taught comparative religion at SFU. After graduating with a BA in comparative religion, Yosef embarked on what became a 20 year journey of study in five different cities – Jerusalem, New York, Philadelphia, Boston and Toronto. Focusing on Judaism, comparative religion, psychology and healing, a highlight of his quest was spending a year studying theology at Harvard.

Later, Yosef wrote a dissertation on sacred geography. As he states, "I came to appreciate the garden both as the physical garden and also as metaphor." His relationship with VanDusen Garden has grown along with his connection to the natural environment, "the idea of creation, the responsibility to preserve both nature and the perspective of the place of human beings as one species among many." In fact, he thinks of "the whole earth as a garden." Yosef views librarian Marina Princz as not just a custodian of books and materials but "like one of the spirits that walks in the Garden" and who "knows and loves

her subject." From Yosef's perspective, this spiritual connection gives the Library a special quality.

Through creative programming for children Yosef feels we can create the Garden as a lifetime memory for them. Yosef enthusiastically encapsulated the magic of VanDusen Garden:

HOW FORTUNATE  
*we are in the extended  
Vancouver area to have  
a place like the Garden for  
study, for art, for two fine  
restaurants, for cultural  
gathering, rentals for  
life cycle events, holiday  
celebrations, most  
important the outdoor  
sculpture garden, getting  
lost in the woods, being  
surprised by seasonal  
offerings and offering a  
green lung for the air and  
emotional quality.*

Yosef describes philanthropy as two-fold: "giving of your resources" and "giving of your time." He has been guided by the feeling of "wanting to assist" and speaks of the root words of philanthropy, "Philo" and "Anthropos" as the "love of people." Yosef's contributions to VanDusen Botanical Garden are true expressions of this. 



# STRENGTHENING CHILDREN'S CONNECTIONS WITH NATURE

By Gillian Drake, Education Director

Helping children connect with nature is one of the most important functions of VanDusen Botanical Garden, and the Vancouver Botanical Gardens Association (VBGA) in particular. Across much of the world, parents, teachers, doctors and more lament the fact that kids today tend to spend far more time in front of a screen than they do outside. At VanDusen Garden, we strongly believe in the importance of time in nature – for everyone, but especially for youth. Striving to foster deep connections to nature, the VBGA offers many programs designed to get people outside and exploring, gardening, understanding and appreciating the complexity of nature. The benefits of a strong connection with the natural world go far beyond the individual, and are essential for the development of society's environmental literacy, ethics, and action.

Last fall, the VBGA launched the new *Ecosystem Explorers* field trip for students in Grades 3 & 4, with a focus on understanding how plant, animal, and non-living components of ecosystems interact. Students were deeply engrossed in hands-on discovery throughout the Garden, teachers were thrilled with program content and instructional style, and the feedback we received from kids was a solid confirmation of why we do what we do.

After the field trip we asked students:  
“Do you like being outside in nature?”

*Yes because it is beautiful and calming*  
(Gr. 4, Betty Huff Elementary)

*Because nature is so pretty in any weather*  
(Gr. 3, Carnarvon Elementary)

*Yes. It's fun to explore the world and find new creatures*  
(Gr. 4, G.T. Cunningham Elementary)



*Ecosystem Explorers*

When we asked:

“Do you want to come back to VanDusen Botanical Garden with your family?”

*I want to come back 1,000 times because I didn't see everything. I would love to teach my family about VanDusen Garden. I love nature!* (Gr. 4, Cougar Creek Elementary)

*Yes, because I really want to see more nature*  
(Gr. 3, Sikh Academy)

*Yes, because then I can show them in real life, and not just in words* (Gr. 4, G.T. Cunningham Elementary)

This spring, we are launching the *Connecting Disadvantaged Urban Youth with Nature* program, which provides free, self-guided field trips to students from inner-city schools. We have been creating a menu of lessons and activities in alignment with BC's new education curriculum so that teachers can tailor their students' experience in the Garden. As activities are developed, they will be posted to our website, available for anyone to download and use. Thanks to funding from the Diamond Foundation, TD Friends of the Environment, World Wildlife Fund Canada/Telus, and Hamber Foundation, we look forward to welcoming at least 500 more children to the Garden, most of whom have likely never been here before.

Another way we aim to build community's connection to plants is by enhancing teachers' skills and knowledge in gardening and ecology. We are pleased to offer K-12 teachers FREE admission to classes and workshops, if they will use the information in the classroom or school garden. The VBGA and Master Gardeners Association of BC share common goals of providing quality education for the public on environmentally-responsible gardening practices, and as a result, the Vancouver Master Gardeners have sponsored this opportunity for teachers since 2013.

We are very grateful to the many donors that make our education programs possible, and accessible to everyone, regardless of financial restraints. Together, we are assisting children and their teachers and families in spending more time outdoors exploring gardens, forests, and other natural areas. Ultimately, thanks to your support, the VBGA is empowering them to make positive choices for the environment.



*A student's food web*

## MARCH - JUNE 2017 EVENTS

*Some events charge admission.*

*Check [vandusengarden.org](http://vandusengarden.org) for details and event updates!*

### Medicine Wheel Ceremony

Sunday, March 19, 12 - 3 pm

### Preschool Storytime: Nature's Stories for Young Children

Wednesdays, March 22, April 26, May 24 & June 28

10 - 10:30 am, Yosef Wosk Library & Resource Centre

### Bird Walks

Saturdays, March 25, April 29, May 6, May 13 & June 24

10 am, meet in the Visitor Centre Atrium

### Vancouver Orchid Society Annual Show & Sale

Saturday, March 25, 9 am - 5 pm

Sunday, March 26, 10 am - 4 pm

### Alpine Garden Club of BC Spring Show and Sale

Saturday, April 1, 12 - 4 pm

### Sakura Days Japan Fair

Saturday, April 8, 11 am - 7 pm

Sunday, April 9, 11 am - 5 pm

### Tuber Sale

Presented by the Vancouver Dahlia Society

Saturday, April 8, 10 am - 4:30 pm

### Spring Bonsai & Flower Exhibition

Saturday, April 15, 10 am - 5 pm

Sunday, April 16, 10 am - 4 pm

### Rooted Cuttings Sale

Presented by the Point Grey Chrysanthemum Association

Saturday, April 15, 9 am - 12 pm

### Plant, Bake & Craft Sale

BC Fuchsia & Begonia Society

Saturday, April 22, 9 am - 3 pm

### VanDusen Plant Sale

Sunday, April 30, 10 am - 4 pm

### Vancouver African Violet & Gesneriad Society Show and Sale

Saturday, May 6, 1 - 4 pm

### Chinese Penjing Society of Canada Exhibition & Sale

Saturday, May 13, 10 am - 5 pm

Sunday, May 14, 10 am - 4:30 pm

### VJGA Sumi Bonsai Club Show

Saturday, May 20 & Sunday, May 21, 10 am - 4:30 pm

### Desert Plant Society of Vancouver Show & Sale

Saturday, June 10, 10 am - 5 pm

Sunday, June 11, 10 am - 4 pm



Festival of Lights

## WINTER EVENTS WRAP-UP

By Ema Tanaka, Business Team Lead, Park Board

It may have been the unexpected snowfall on the treetops, the innovative lighting additions, or a carousel that attracted visitors of all generations, but the combination of all elements made Festival of Lights 2016 the most well attended year to date, with 116,635 attendees throughout the course of the month. Although the 32rd annual light show was touted as one of the best, the Creative Team is already working on new ideas and displays for an even more exciting 2017.

Bloedel Conservatory raised the holiday spirit to new levels this winter with Holiday Heights. A Ferris wheel at the top of the Queen Elizabeth plaza brought crowds in droves to experience breathtaking views from the highest point in the city. The dome, lit up beautifully with effects by MK Illumination, had just over 18,000 visitors pass through to enjoy the lights and holiday music against the backdrop of the tropics.

Thank you to all the volunteers for their continuous support with events in the Garden and the Conservatory - your efforts are greatly appreciated in making visitors' experience truly memorable.

### NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Board of Directors of the Vancouver Botanical Gardens Association (formerly the VanDusen Botanical Gardens Association) has set the date for its Annual General Meeting.

MOVED by Tony DuMoulin and SECONDED by Angela White that:

1. The annual general meeting of the Association be held in the Visitor Centre at VanDusen Botanical Garden, 5151 Oak Street, Vancouver, British Columbia, on April 24, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. for the purpose of:

- (a) presenting Volunteer Recognition Awards,
- (b) considering the financial statements of the Association for the year ended December 31, 2016,
- (c) considering the report of the Board of Governors to the Association,
- (d) electing Governors,
- (e) appointing an auditor,
- (f) authorizing the Board of Governors to fix the remuneration of the auditor,
- (g) considering and, if thought fit, passing special resolutions for which proper notice has been given, and
- (h) transacting such other business as may properly be brought before the meeting; and

2. The Secretary be instructed to give notice of the annual general meeting to the members of the Association.