

THE HOME GARDENING SERIES *presented by the VBGA & the Vancouver Master Gardeners*

2023 SPEAKER BIOS

Laura Caddy

Laura has been working in various aspects of horticulture and agriculture for two decades and is a graduate of the Niagara Parks Commission School of Horticulture. After completing internships at the Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University and Royal Botanic Gardens in Ontario, she joined the University of Alberta Devonian Botanic Garden, where she held the positions of Supervisor of Horticulture and Living Collections, Alpine and Native Plant collections curator and Plant Records Manager. Laura joined the UBC Botanical Garden team in July of 2016 as curator of the E.H. Lohnbrunner Alpine Garden.

Teresa Porter

Teresa has an MSc in Soil Science from UBC and is a soil science educator, an Articling Agrologist, and is the Farmland Ecosystem Services Project Coordinator for SPEC. Teresa has worked on organic vegetable farms in BC and runs a small urban flower farm in her neighbourhood. Teresa's philosophy is that soils are indisputably critical for ecosystem functioning and human existence. She sees soils as the liminal space between life and death; in soils life dies, and death turns to life. What could be more poetic and crucial?

Ben Stormes

Ben is the curator & horticulturist for The North American Gardens at UBC Botanical Garden where he oversees the development and management of four biogeographic collection spaces. He holds a Master's in Public Garden Leadership, a Bachelor's of Landscape Architecture, and a Diploma in Ornamental Horticulture. [More about Ben.](#)

Janis Matson

Janis Matson has been in the horticulture industry for over 30 years. Her Experience includes retail nursery, landscape design & installation, and arboriculture. She has owned and operated Shoreline Landscape Design in Burnaby for over 25 years. Janis is a Red Seal certified Landscape Horticulturist and an award-winning landscape designer and landscape contractor. Janis is a Science and Horticulture faculty instructor at Kwantlen Polytechnic University in Langley with the horticultural diploma and apprenticeship programs. She is also an instructor with Burnaby School District's Community & Continuing Education (CCE) Division in their apprenticeship and hardscape programs. Janis also developed the Burnaby CCE Hardscape Installer certificate program. Her academic accomplishments

include a Provincial Instructor Diploma, Landscape Design and Horticulture Diploma, ISA Certified Arborist, ISA Level 1 Certified Tree assessor, ICPI Certified Concrete Paver Installer, Level 1 Certified Irrigation Technician (CIT), and a Floral Design Certificate.

Laurelle Oldford-Down

Laurelle loved playing in the dirt and remembers watching her grandfather in his veggie garden. She completed a landscaping certificate from Kwantlen and has been a landscape designer for close to 30 years. Laurelle owned and operated her own design and install company. A decade ago, she got into grafting and selling heritage apple trees and buying and reselling berry bushes (blueberries, lingonberries, Goji berries, Tayberries, raspberries, huckleberries, sea buckthorn, grapes, sour bush cherries (U Sask), and cranberries) at Seedy Saturday, the VanDusen Plant Sale, etc. She works part-time in Art's Nursery in Port Kells and also writes garden articles, runs garden workshops, still dabbles in landscape design and delights in exciting people about gardening, especially growing edibles.

Linda Gilkeson

Linda earned a Ph.D. in Entomology from McGill University in 1986, then moved to British Columbia to work for Applied Bio-Nomics Ltd., producing biological controls. Throughout the '90's she worked for the provincial government, promoting programs to reduce and eliminate pesticide use. She was head of the provincial State of Environment Reporting Unit for six years, then the Executive Director of the Salt Spring Island Conservancy until the end of 2011. Linda recently retired from that position to devote more time to her writing, teaching and consulting.

Linda has co-authored pest management training manuals for the government and organic gardening books for Rodale Press. She self-published two books: "Year Around Harvest: Winter Gardening on the Coast" and "West Coast Gardening: Natural Insect, Weed and Disease Control". Her most recent book, "Backyard Bounty: The Complete Guide to year-Round Organic Gardening in the Pacific Northwest", has become a BC best seller. As a private consultant, Linda is a regular instructor in the Master Gardener programs in BC and is busy year-round giving workshops on pest management and organic gardening.

Linda has served as President of the Entomological Society of Canada, the Professional Pest Management Association of BC, the Entomological Society of BC and the Salt Spring Island Garden Club. She was awarded a Queen's Jubilee medal in 2003 and an outstanding achievement award from the Professional Pest Management Association of BC in 2005. She became an Honorary MG in 2000. [Linda's website](#).

Andrew McLellan

Andrew MacLellan is a professional plant health care practitioner and educator whose practice spans arboriculture, urban forest management, horticulture, plant pathology, and soil health. He is the Education and Plant Sciences manager at BC Plant Health Care, an ISA Certified Arborist, Tree Risk Assessor, Organic Master Gardener and practicing folk herbalist with a background in forestry. Working from the belief that healthy ecosystems support healthy plants, and healthy plants are healthier for both us and the environment, he takes a wholistic, soils-first approach to plant health care and low-intervention ecological plant management. As an educator and avid volunteer, Andrew works to connect people with plants, educating individuals and communities on the principles of plant care, soil health, organic practices for maintaining healthy ecosystems, climate adaptability, and diverse plant uses. Through his thoughtful and inclusive approach, he empowers people of all ages and skill levels to embrace the environmental, nutritional, medicinal, and spiritual gifts of plants on our landscape.

Maria Valana

Maria is a Horticulture Instructor at Kwantlen Polytechnic University (KPU). She holds a Bachelor of Applied Science Degree from Olds College and the Provincial Instructor Diploma from Vancouver Community College. Her education along with her lifelong experience in horticulture provide a solid foundation for training students in the Horticulture and Apprenticeship Program on a variety of horticulture topics. Maria has also owned her own landscape business since 2015.