



# THE BULLETIN

BRITISH COLUMBIA COUNCIL  
OF GARDEN CLUBS

JANUARY 2025

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

## LYNDA PASACRETA

### PLEASE FORWARD TO ALL OF YOUR CLUB MEMBERS

As mentioned in the December 2024 issue of *The Bulletin*, Communities in Bloom's theme of the year for 2025 is edible gardens.

We left behind the colour of peach fuzz for the theme of 2024.

In the December issue, I asked for photos of your edible gardens in the winter so please keep sending them in and we will feature some of them in the February *Bulletin* and on the website.

It is thought-provoking because when I was growing up we had to be mindful of what vegetables and fruit we would have available during the winter months. We were a family of six living on one income.

I grew up in northern Ontario and the West Kootenay region so certainly had extremely cold winters at that time.

I remember when we lived in northern Ontario we actually had a root cellar built right into a hill on our property. The root cellar contained produce that could make it through the cold months in storage like apples, carrots, potatoes, cabbages, squash, and even some types of pears.

So we were well-fed with our own produce during that time. There weren't any bananas, or oranges, or other imported produce on our table.

That was the economical situation at the time and to me it seems a much healthier option and had very little impact on the environment.

Many folks today have made changes in their lives to focus on shopping local and growing their own food, thus resulting on a softer impact on our environment.

I look forward to focusing on the CIB theme of the year — edible gardens — as we look for creative ways to increase growing our own food no matter what size garden space we have.

We have some expert gardeners in the BC Council of Garden Clubs that can share their expertise on best practices and tried-and-true methods to increase the amount of food we enjoy in our meals right from our own gardens — farm to table!

Send your ideas, photos, and articles to [communications@bcgardenclubs.com](mailto:communications@bcgardenclubs.com)



Sheltering of apples trees, 1950. Wikimedia Commons.

## SCHOLARSHIP FUND NEWS

**BETTY GIRARD, SCHOLARSHIP FUND COMMITTEE**

Congratulations to everyone in the BC Council of Garden Clubs, including individual donors, garden clubs, community gardens, and all others who are committed to the supporting the scholarship fund.

We are wrapping up the most successful year of fundraising in at least the last twelve years. Final numbers will be available later in January, but as of this writing the scholarship fund has received **\$18,282.81** in donations in 2024. This is the largest annual fundraising total since at least 2012!

The scholarship committee introduced you to the Richmond KPU Farm School at the October meeting, and we are putting the final touches on our pledge to support the program with an annual scholarship of \$500 for the next three years due to your generosity. This will be the 13th program that we support at 10 different academic institutions in British Columbia.

Our goal for 2025 is \$10,000! Watch the thermometer rise at [bcgardenclubs.com](http://bcgardenclubs.com) and in this newsletter to see how we do!





## HOW TO DONATE TO THE BCCGC SCHOLARSHIP FUND

If you wish to make a donation by cheque please send it to:

BC Council of Garden Clubs  
Scholarship Fund, c/o: BC Council of  
Garden Clubs

10952 McAdam Road

North Delta, BC, V4C 3E8

Please ensure that the cheques are made out to the "Vancity Community Foundation" and the memo field shows "BC Council of Garden Clubs." If the person or organization that the donation is from does not clearly show on the cheque, please include a brief note with the cheque indicating who the donation is from and a return address (so that an income tax receipt can be issued).

If you wish to donate online with a credit card:

Go to  
[www.vancitycommunityfoundation.ca](http://www.vancitycommunityfoundation.ca).

Click the "Funds" button on the top right side of the home page.

Locate the BC Council of Garden Clubs Scholarship Fund, either by scrolling through the list or searching "garden clubs" in the search bar.

Once on the BCCGC Scholarship Fund page, click "Give to this Fund" and complete the form.

OR

Go to [www.bcgardenclubs.com](http://www.bcgardenclubs.com).

Go to the "Scholarship Fund" on the top bar and click on the "Donate" page below.

Scroll down to the link to Vancity Community Foundation and click on it. This will take you to the BCCGC Scholarship Fund page.

Click on "Give to this Fund" and complete the form.

Thank You!

**CONTINUE TO SUPPORT HORTICULTURAL  
STUDENTS WHO ARE LEARNING NEW  
METHODS TO BRING FOOD TO OUR  
TABLE.**

**DONATE TODAY!**



Carrying potatoes from the root cellar  
January 1962. Wikimedia Commons.

# FOOD STORAGE WITH ROOT CELLARS

## LYNDA PASACRETA, RICHMOND GARDEN CLUB

My twin sister is a farm girl and I am the city girl. Both of us hail from country living where food storage was as important as growing your own food.

My sister has about one acre of land in Castlegar with over half of it in vegetable and fruit gardens. She stores her bounty in a root cellar in their basement.

A root cellar is a great way to keep food cool — not just root vegetables but other fresh produce too. Sister's root cellar includes storage for their canned goods.

Sister and her husband have ensured that their root cellar includes some of the major elements for a proper functioning root cellar:

1. **Ventilation:** Some fruits and vegetables give off ethylene gas, which can cause other produce to spoil. A tightly sealed space will increase the risk of mould. Sister's root cellar has good air circulation with fresh air coming in and stale air going out!
2. **Darkness:** Light can trigger sprouting. If you have a window in your root cellar keep it covered. And don't leave the lights on.
3. **Humidity:** Humidity levels of 80-95% keep produce from drying out. Too high of humidity can cause canning jar lids to rust. Be sure to check lids and rotate canning jars if you keep them in your root cellar.

4. **Shelving/Storage Bins:** Wood shelving and bins are naturally antibacterial. Wood also conducts heat more slowly than metal, and does not rust. Avoid treated wood, and stick to the types of wood that are naturally rot resistant (black locust, Pacific yew, western red cedar, junipers, for example).

If you are a proud owner of a outdoor or indoor root cellar, send us some photos for our February newsletter. Remember to tell us who took the photo, and the club or community garden you belong to.

Send your photos to:

[communications@bcgardenclubs.com](mailto:communications@bcgardenclubs.com) .



Photo: Wikimedia Commons.

## ROOT CELLARS IN THE NORTH!

DAVE REMPEL, DAVID DOUGLAS BOTANICAL SOCIETY, PRINCE GEORGE

When we tore down our old house and had a new one built on our 1-hectare property, my wife and I definitely agreed — we should have a cold room in the basement for storing fruits and vegetables. The northwest corner had a small deck, and the basement portion underneath was at least 6 feet below ground level. The sump pump for perimeter water was also in that corner. Perfect. We had the carpenter use 2x6's for the two inner walls, which I insulated. I also built an insulated door, and insulated the ceiling, but left the outer cement walls bare. Shelving was built on all four sides.

Screened vents (to keep out rodents) were installed on the north side, with one pipe open at the ceiling near the southeast corner, and the other directed down to waist level near the northwest corner. This arrangement provides for the passive circulation of fresh air, as the cold air sinks at one end, and rises to exit at the other. The air outlets are stuffed with rags when outside temperatures fall below minus 10, and the door to the basement is cracked open when it gets really cold outside. We could easily automate that with a thermostat and heat source, but this method has allowed us to keep the cold room between 0 and 5 degrees Celsius for about 8 months of the year, or sometimes more.

Besides housing our homemade juices, jams, and canned fruits and vegetables, we store our potatoes, carrots, beets, rutabagas, and apples in the cold room, and sometimes leeks and cabbages for a month or two. Canning supplies and miscellaneous containers find their way in as well. The apples can be a problem for the vegetables, so I try to store them above the potatoes and carrots, as the ethylene gas is lighter than air and so rises to the ceiling. The potatoes are stored on the slatted shelving, covered by burlap sacks, while the carrots are in bags with holes. The

beets and rutabagas are in 5-gallon buckets, also covered with burlap. By springtime, produce that is starting to go soft is transferred to our spare fridge in the basement. The carrots are usually done by March, but we can eat our own potatoes year-round. Improvements could be made no doubt, but this has worked well enough for us for the past 28 years.

It is important check the raw fruits and vegetables every so often. Apples with rot spots starting should be sorted and removed. Carrots may sweat and/or want to sprout, so I turn the bags inside out, and nip off the regrowth, including a bit of the shoulder, before re-bagging. The same goes for the beets in the bucket. Anything starting to get wimpy is put on the next supper menu.

A proper root cellar built into a hill is no doubt better than a cold room. However, I like the idea of keeping my slippers on when procuring veggies for supper during a winter snowstorm! Every new build should have the option of adding a cold room. Even apartment buildings could offer cold storage space in their underground parkades.



## ROOT CELLARS IN THE NORTH, CONT'D



Dave's own carrots stored in supermarket bags.

All photos by Dave Rempel, David Douglas Botanical Society.

Growers Delight is now a member of COTA, the Canada Organic Trade Association. Check us out: <https://organicdirtsupplements.ca/>. Use code BCCG12 for special discounts.

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## QUESTION ABOUT BC COUNCIL OF GARDEN CLUBS DAY OF EVENT INSURANCE RON OUWERKERK, 2ND VICE PRESIDENT, INSURANCE COORDINATOR

The BC Council of Garden Clubs (BCCGC) has been asked by several clubs about insurance coverage for guests at club functions.

Our insurance agent has arranged with the underwriter (Markel) to provide Day of Event (DOE) insurance that can be purchased for guests at club functions. The cost will be \$0.50 per guest attending the function. However, please note that this coverage is a one-time purchase only and is for a maximum of three continuous days. If there are two or more functions that a guest wishes to attend, then they should be added to the club's insurance coverage of \$2.00 per person. Each club would need to report the number of DOE attendees and remit payment to the BCCGC after each function.

Each club will be required to record full name, date of birth, date of DOE, phone number, and email address of each attendee, but are not required to submit this information to the BCCGC. This information is only needed if the event with the DOE coverage is sued or in a liability lawsuit. DOE Information must be recorded and kept on file/record in case of an audit by the insurance company or in the unlikely event of a claim or lawsuit against that individual.

Any other questions about BC Council of Garden Clubs group insurance, or any other service we offer, please contact us at [questions@bcgardenclubs.com](mailto:questions@bcgardenclubs.com) and we will be happy to help you!



# WEST COAST LADY BUTTERFLY

CINDY TATARYN, VANCOUVER MASTER GARDENERS

## West Coast Lady (*Vanessa annabella*)

**Range:** The West Coast lady is migratory. After the adults emerge they fly up to the subalpine and mountain meadows. The males 'hilltop' and chase each other. They are widespread and fairly common in some years, and rare in others.

They prefer creeks, open hillsides, fields, and suburbs from the coast to high into the mountains and can be found on the Pacific Coast east to the Rocky Mountains and north into southwestern BC.

West Coast ladies occur across southern BC and on the coast to the Nass River in open areas at all elevations.

**Larval Food Plants:** The West Coast lady larvae can be found on stinging nettles (*Urtica dioica*), mallow (*Malva* species *Sidalcea*), and hollyhock (*Alcea rosea*).

**Adult Food Source:** The adults can be seen nectaring at flowers such as mallow (*Malva* species), mints, Compositae families, marigold (*Tagetes* hybrids), zinnia (*Zinnia* hybrids), verbena, and sunflower (*Helianthus*).

**Time of Flight:** The West Coast lady can be seen in flight from April to October.

**Life Cycle:** The West Coast lady migrates south as they cannot tolerate our cold winters. There is only a single brood per year and the numbers seen vary from year to year.

The first instar makes a web shelter on the top of the leaf. By the fourth instar the leaf is rolled upward and tied together with silk. The fifth instar may wrap several leaves together in a nest.

Pupation occurs within a folded leaf or leaves of the larval food plant or other plants or the pupa may be exposed on twigs or branches.

## Description:

**Larvae:** The eggs are light green and barrel shaped with vertical ribs. The eggs are laid singly on the upper side of leaves from April to June.

The first instar has a shiny black head and grey-brown body. There are three pairs of light yellow spots on the back.

Mature larvae have brownish-black heads with bronze highlights and sometimes vertical white tan stripes. The bodies vary from black to greenish white or greyish white, including brown and tan shades. There are various colour markings, ranging from dark rusty reds and oranges to yellow or various browns and tans. There are black to whitish spines over the body.

Pupae are roughly cylindrical, with a row of raised points down the midline of the abdomen, and two more rows on each side of the midline. There is a raised point in the middle of the thorax. The colour ranges from tan to mottled dark brown, sometimes with a greenish gold cast.

There is a pair of large white spots on the top of the back of the thorax, and a pair of small white spots on the back of the front of the abdomen.

**Adult:** The West Coast lady is similar to the painted lady, but much less common — has more orange on the wings. Males are very similar to females in appearance. They are smaller than other ladies, with a 40-55 mm wingspan.

Adults are strong, fast, erratic flyers and are most easily approached when they are nectaring.



## WEST COAST LADY BUTTERFLY, CONT'D

### Native Plant:

Henderson's checker-mallow (*Sidalcea hendersonii*)

Henderson's checker-mallow is a native plant species found in wet meadows, estuaries, and tidal flats in southwestern BC.

It is a perennial herb growing from a strong taproot and short spreading rhizomes. It has hollow stems.

The basal leaves are round or heart-shaped with shallow lobes, toothed with long stalks. The leaves on the stems grow alternately, and are palmated with 5 lobes that grow into oblong segments. The stipules are tinged purple.

The flowers grow on inflorescence of numerous flowers in congested, compound spike-like terminal clusters on stalks 1-3 mm long. The flower has five petals, which are deep pink and fringed at the margins.

### Sources:

*Garden Bugs of British Columbia: Gardening to Attract, Repel and Control*, by Janice Elmhirst, Ken Fry & Doug Macaulay (2008, Lone Pine Publishing).

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*Plants of Coastal British Columbia including Washington, Oregon & Alaska*, by Jim Pojar & Andy Mackinnon (2014, BC Ministry of Forests, Partners Publishing and Lone Pine Publishing).

*E-Fauna BC: Electronic Atlas of the Fauna of British Columbia* [efauna.bc.ca]. Lab for Advanced Spatial Analysis, Department of Geography, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, by Brian Klinkenberg, 2020/2021.

*E-Flora BC: Electronic Atlas of the Plants of British Columbia* [eflora.bc.ca]. Lab for Advanced Spatial Analysis, Department of Geography, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, by Brian Klinkenberg, 2020/2021.



Photos: Wikimedia Commons.

After completing 24 articles about butterflies in British Columbia, Cindy Tataryn is taking a much-deserved break from *Lepidoptera* learning! Thank you so much Cindy!



## UPCOMING FEBRUARY ISSUE OF *THE BULLETIN*

LYNDA PASACRETA, COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR

📌 Many garden clubs, community gardens, and specialty gardens are beginning to plan upcoming plant sales for 2025.

We know that there are some very successful plant sales in our membership and would love to hear from you about how you plan for your sales. Send us your ideas (and photos) to [newsletter@bcgardenclubs.com](mailto:newsletter@bcgardenclubs.com).

📌 We would love to have presentations offered to BC Council of Garden Clubs members via Zoom through 2025. Richmond Garden Club will arrange to have a presentation on Paulik Neighbourhood Park in Richmond — a heritage garden developed in the 1930s by the Paulik family in the Arts and Crafts style. The gardens (over 40 garden beds) were adopted by Richmond Garden Club in 2008.

Our members would love to hear about special projects in your area of BC. Send me a message at [communications@bcgardenclubs.com](mailto:communications@bcgardenclubs.com).

📌 The BC Council of Garden Clubs Spring Meeting will be held Saturday, April 5, 2025. There will be an election of officers at the meeting — president, secretary, and 2nd vice president. If you are interested in joining a very dynamic team with a goal to ensure the organization continues to offer resources, information sharing, and group insurance contact us at [communications@bcgardenclubs.com](mailto:communications@bcgardenclubs.com). As most meetings are held via Zoom it would be wonderful to have representation from outside of the Lower Mainland!



South Surrey Garden Club 2024 Plant Sale volunteers. Photo: Phil Knight.



## NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS

We would love to feature your club or community garden in the newsletter.

Tell us about some of the projects your club or community garden is involved in.

You are invited to submit an article at any time (please include photos and name of author). Photos should be high resolution and you should include the name of the photographer if possible. Articles should be in the range of 300–500 words. If you have an idea for a

longer piece, connect with the newsletter editor in advance to discuss your idea.

Articles are due on the 15th of the month preceding publication. If they are submitted after that date, they will be held for the next issue.

The **next due date is January 15 for February 1**. Submissions/ inquiries:

[newsletter@bcgardenclubs.com](mailto:newsletter@bcgardenclubs.com)

Lynda Pasacreta, Editor

Pam Robertson, Copy Editor

### BRITISH COLUMBIA COUNCIL OF GARDEN CLUBS

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