

THE ORACLE

A Newsletter from the Darts Hill Garden
Conservancy Trust Society

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

DATE: FEBRUARY 25, 2023

Time: 10:00 a.m. to noon (doors open at 9:30 a.m.)

Place: Emmanuel Evangelical Covenant Church
17029 - 16th Avenue

Susan Murray is our guest speaker, presenting 'Marvelous Gardens of Ireland 2022' featuring 29 fabulous gardens. The city will provide highlights of 2022 accomplishments and you will enjoy the ever-wonderful Show & Tell by Douglas Justice. There will be door prizes followed by a light lunch. You can join a tour of the garden following the meeting. The garden will be open until 3:00 p.m.

Board positions are open for election. As well, the Society are looking for volunteers in key roles. As the Society continues to move forward helping with the development of an entrance building it is a great time to be part of this group. If you are interested in learning more, please contact the society at info@dartshill.ca.

Tables will be set up for membership renewals.

IN THIS ISSUE

- Notice of AGM 2023
- Volunteer Opportunities
- Saxifraga Blooming in Tufa Bed
- *Rhododendron ririei* is blooming
- Ephemeral Erythroniums
- Rhododendron Indumentum Part 1 of 5
- Rhodo Trivia – Fall Blooming Rhodos
- Tree and Shrub Winter Damage
- Beds 35e, 35c, 35w and Bed 24e, 24w Renovations
- 16th Ave and 168th Street Bed Update
- *Rhamnus frangula*

Darts Hill Garden Park

- one woman's vision
- a gift to the citizens of Surrey

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

Sharon Lawson, Member at Large

Happy New Year! 2023 has been designated 'The Year of the Garden' by the Canadian Garden Council and Communities in Bloom. This year **purple** has been chosen as the colour to focus on having in our gardens. Purple has a variety of effects on the mind and body, including uplifting spirits, calming the mind, enhanced feelings of spirituality, and encouraging imagination and creativity. Many purple flowers are great for attracting pollinators. Think ornamental onions, thyme, salvia, etc.

The Darts Hill Garden Conservancy Trust Society has received a grant from the City of Surrey to once again host the Artists in Residence program and to have the Temporary Art Installations program. The application form and policy for artists will be posted on our website in the upcoming weeks. Keep an eye on the website for times and dates for these events.

The Collections Committee has some projects planned for this year. One is to plant up the areas surrounding the alpine beds. Another is to do some renovation to Bed 50, which is the home of Rhododendron 'Francisca' and Rhododendron 'Ed Darts.'

They will also be adding some more summer bulbs to the garden. Beds 35e, 35c and 35w have been widened and trees and shrubs are to be planted there. Some plants will be moved from other parts of the garden and some new ones will be purchased. This is to help build a buffer from the noise that has increased with the upsurge in traffic along 16th Avenue over the years. There is a plan to eventually widen that street and it is not known if it will affect the plants growing against the fence.

This past Members' Day, February 12, saw 27 members visit. The first rhododendron to have blossoms, *Rhododendron ririei* was blooming!

Keep track of the Society's [events](#) page. As of April 1st, the Strolls begin most Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays from 10 am to 4 pm. The garden is open to the public on those days. But we still will have some members-only events, including a visit to the garden during a Summer Solstice event and a plant sale. Our next Members' Day is March 12 from 11 am to 3 pm, the garden will be beginning to burst with colour. Rain or shine, plan a walk! Bring your camera!

Have a wonderful gardening year and hope to see you at Darts Hill Garden Park.

Additional Membership Benefits

An advantage of becoming a member of the DHGCTS is that you save money when shopping for plants and garden supplies. Members receive a discount (usually 10%) on purchases upon showing their membership card at select garden centres. These are:

- 99 Nursery & Florist Inc. 9376 King George Boulevard
- Amsterdam Greenhouses & Garden Centre, 191 Old Dewdney Trunk Road, Pitt Meadows
- Art Knapp's. 4391 King George Boulevard
- Clearview Garden Shop. 26350 56 Avenue
- Port Kells Nurseries. 8739 88 Avenue
- Potters. 19158 48 Avenue
- WIG (Western Independent Greenhouse) 6151 Thorne Avenue, Burnaby (5% on plants only)

Note: Membership must be current, and card must be shown before purchase is rung up. Valid for regularly priced items and may not be valid for all purchases.

You can renew online (see below) or at the welcome table when you visit the garden. If you enjoy your volunteer work at Darts Hill Garden Park or you are thinking of joining a group, you are required to become a member of the Society to participate.

To learn about the benefits of membership and the ways you can submit your membership application use this [LINK](#).



Photo: Scarletblack.ca
New beech leaves

MEMBERSHIP CORNER

Joanne Senetza, Hospitality

UPCOMING SCHEDULE

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

SATURDAY, February 25, 10–noon.

MEMBERS' DAY

SUNDAY, March 12, 11–3 pm

STROLLS BEGIN FRIDAY, SATURDAY, SUNDAYS:

SATURDAY, April 1, 10-4 pm to
SATURDAY, September 30, 10-4 pm

SOCIETY PLANT SALE

SATURDAY, April 29, 10-4pm

The November 20th Members' Day was a cool 6 degrees and partly cloudy, but that did not deter volunteers and members from showing up and bringing guests as well. Attendance totaled 33, including our Welcome Table volunteers: Joanne Senetza, Marlene Gurvich, Jane Robinson, Susan Match, Arlene and Charles Miljure, and Sri Navuluri. The Volunteer Appreciation event at the Darts house was very well received.

Sunday, December 11th was our next Members' Day, and it was also 6^o, dry and a bit foggy. Attendance was low at only 15 members. The Welcome Table was staffed by veteran volunteers: Marlene Gurvich and Joanne Senetza.

The first Members' Day of 2023 on January 8th was rainy all day, overcast and six degrees. Total attendance was 23, including one guest who became a member and a couple who renewed their dual membership. Welcome Table volunteers included Marlene Gurvich, Jane Robinson, Kathleen Pictin, and Joanne Senetza, with special thanks to Susan Murray for her assistance in setting up the pop-up tent on arrival.



Photo taken by Joanne Senetza
November 2022

A little reminder to our volunteers, please log in your hours at:



<https://app.betterimpact.com/Login/Login>

WE NEED YOU!

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES WITH THE DARTS HILL GARDEN SOCIETY

Volunteering at Darts Hill Garden Park is a wonderful way to contribute to your community. Whether you have just a few hours per year or significantly more time to help, your contribution will be much appreciated. You'll receive training, and you'll be sure to enjoy your hours spent in the peaceful oasis of Darts Hill Garden Park amid a likeminded group of friendly, helpful volunteers. Our volunteer needs include:

Workshop Coordinating Group

The Society is looking for a person to organize workshops in the garden. This role would include creating ideas for workshops that would complement a garden visit (note: all events are organised for 2023), finding workshop facilitators, posting events on Eventbrite (or a similar registration platform), and monitoring the reservations to ensure enough interest to proceed or to cancel, if necessary. We just need someone to help with the admin work.

Ambassador Tour Guides

As an ambassador guide you are provided with the history of the garden to share with visitors as you wander around on Open Days. Volunteers can also 'shadow' current guides on their tours until they feel comfortable to provide a tour on their own. Guides are provided with a pink pashmina.

Hospitality Team

At this time, there is a need for additional Membership & Hospitality volunteers. If you would like to volunteer in the garden but have limited time available, this is a great opportunity to get involved and connect with other DHGCTS members. Regular volunteer shifts are short - no more than 2.5 hours - and are generally on weekends, making them well-suited to members with weekday employment or other commitments.

Membership Coordinator

The Society is looking for someone to manage our membership roster. This entails receiving applications, recording membership information, and sending out membership packages. You will be provided with membership materials such as forms, cards, stamps, as well you will work with the Society's treasurer on the management of funds received.

Labelling and Plant Inventory Group

This group meets April to September on Tuesday mornings at least twice a month, to replace broken and damaged labels and to place labels on newly acquired plants. If you enjoy spending time in the garden, working with other volunteers, and learning a bit about the plants, this is the volunteer job for you.

Newsletter Volunteer Team

Do you like to research? Or are you a photographer? The Oracle is a seasonal newsletter intended to track the activities at Darts Hill, for historical reference. We are always looking for photos (ideally with the name of the item photographed) or an article on an interesting plant within the garden. An [index of articles](#) is updated after each edition and posted on our website.

Ensuring that Darts Hill Garden Park continues as a venue for learning is the purpose and the primary responsibility of the Darts Hill Garden Conservancy Trust Society. It is in keeping with the Society's constitution that the garden is 'to be a place of horticultural learning.'

Our volunteers all play a significant role in helping Darts Hill Garden Park function smoothly. They enjoy educating the public about plants, horticulture, and Mr. and Mrs. Darts's legacy. Every volunteer group, from Ambassador Tour Guides to the Workshop Coordinating Group, assists in making Darts Hill Garden Park a place of horticultural learning. For insurance and liability purposes, all Darts Hill Garden Society volunteers need to be members of the Darts Hill Garden Conservancy Trust Society (DHGCTS).

Interested? More details can be found on our [website](#). Contact info@dartshill.ca to learn more.

Viburnum farreri

(Farrer viburnum) - Bed 24e below the house

Bed 24, east and west, has become overgrown. The City set aside funding to clean out invasives and overgrown plant material. The *Viburnum farreri*, a large upright deciduous shrub native to northern China, planted in the 1970's, is in bloom, February 2023. Check out the tiny clusters of fragrant white flowers. Note: yellow tape has been placed on this plant, hopefully it is being contained, not removed! Source: rhs.org.uk



Photo: Pam Yokome

Rhododendron ririei

Bed 15a, facing south

In the training package for new guides, we were told during a tour led by Graham Laine, that this rhododendron is the first to bloom each year. Sure enough, Cynthia was able to snap this great photo of the bright magenta blossoms at the February's Members' Day.

Mrs. Darts purchased this shrub in 1977 from Bovees Nursery, Portland, Oregon.



Photo: Cynthia Waiz



Photo: Kathy Piccott



PROPAGATION GROUP

The two alpine beds were developed in partnership with the Alpine Garden Club of BC. Mrs. Darts had a interest in alpine plants and she was a long-time member of the AGCBC. The first alpine bed was developed in 2012 (see photo), and completed in 2013 with help and guidance from the AGCBC.

The DHGCTS received a one-time funding award from the North American Rock Garden Society in 2014 to support the construction and planting of the alpine beds. The second alpine bed, the tufa bed, was completed early 2016, again in partnership with the AGCBC. The propagation team continues to water, monitor, and maintain these beds.

Pam Yokome took the photos below, this February.



Photo from Summer 2012 edition



Photo from Spring 2016 edition

Ephemeral Erythroniums

Scarlet Black, Artist Photographer
Artist in Residence Project 2022



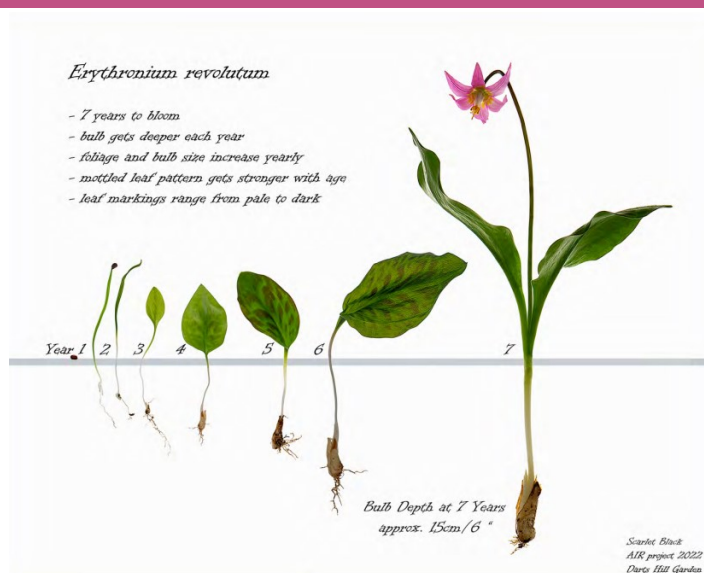
This project was made possible by the Darts Hill Artist in Residence program. Scarlet would like to acknowledge the much appreciated support from Pam Yokome and Ken Warren. This project compilation is a collection of photographs related to a study of naturalized *Erythronium revolutum* at Darts Hill Garden Park in the 2022 spring season.

The project is divided into five sets of pictures:

- i. *Erythronium revolutum* life cycle in the garden.
- ii. *Erythronium revolutum*, botanical details and life cycle study.
- iii. Flower photography – flower and leaf.
- iv. Rare and exotics founds in the naturalized Erythronium beds.
- v. *Erythronium revolutum* in the garden. A soft focus is used to emphasize the ethereal and airy quality of these plants.
- vi. End notes.

Stages of development from seed germination to flowering:

1. First year, a grass-like thin leaf, reaching approximately 12 cm during the spring growth season. The seed head is often retained at the end of the thin blade-like leaf. The second year seedlings develop one small leaf.
2. The leaf becomes larger as the *Erythronium revolutum* matures and leaf marking become more pronounced.
3. *Erythronium revolutum* leaves can have darker markings. The leaf patterns tend to face in the sunlight. There is a variety of leaf colouration. Some examples have paler, less pronounced markings.
4. An example of *Erythronium revolutum* with dramatic leaf markings. The largest leaves in the Erythronium population are the large single leaves that develop in year 4 or 5.
5. Two leaves always accompany a flower Erythronium.
6. The patterns of *Erythronium revolutum* tend to be more pronounced in a shady garden site.
7. Naturalized self-seeding *Erythronium revolutum*.
8. *Erythronium revolutum* naturalized at Darts Hill.
9. *Erythronium revolutum* starting to flower.



To view the entire project in its colourful booklet form, visit the library in the house at Darts Hill Garden.

RHODODENDRON INDUMENTUM IN DARTS HILL GARDEN PARK

A TREASURE HUNT FOR HIDDEN BEAUTY - A FIVE-PART SERIES

by Susan M. Murray

In Francisca Darts's own words, "... and there I fell in love with rhododendrons. Not because of their 'show', but because the UBC Botanical Gardens had put in a display of species rhododendrons, and there I saw the leaves - these gorgeous indumentum at the back, narrow leaves, curly leaves - you name it. I loved every one of them. You'd think I was nuts when I'm talking about leaves with such enthusiasm. You know, you have a flower for how long? You've got the rest of the bush for the rest of the time. Why not have something that interests both?"

Francisca Darts clearly loved rhododendrons with colourful indumentum. Darts Hill Garden Park has dozens of these special rhododendrons, some grown from seed and most planted by Francisca herself. These plants are now mature specimens, many of them are very rare and not readily available today. These plants are more than 50 years old now! In recent years, the DHGP Collection Committee has added to the rhododendron collection. These new additions are small plants but some have been included in this article series. A few very special rhododendrons are considered, in their native habitats, vulnerable (VU) or near threatened (NT) according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature's (IUCN's) Red List of Threatened Species.

What is indumentum, anyway? It is simply a covering, especially of hairs. It's not surprising that the degree of hairiness has its own botanical vocabulary. Pubescent is the general term often used to describe a hairy surface—but there are many kinds of hairiness! A pilose surface, for example, has sparse, soft, straight hairs while a tomentose leaf surface is covered with densely matted, short, woolly hairs. There are many examples of tomentose leaf indumentum in DHGP.

Indumentum is most often found on the underside of the leaves of plants. It can also be seen on the upper leaf surface, on the leaf veins, petioles, and buds. Its purpose is to insulate these tissues. Hairy surfaces may prevent water loss, which is due to transpiration, when dry winds pass under and over leaves. This hairy insulation also protects the plants from strong solar radiation and extreme cold temperatures. Dry and cold conditions are found in high alpine regions around the world (above 3,660 metres or 12,000 ft.). Very strong sunlight with ultraviolet radiation is especially severe in these alpine zones too, due to the reflective abilities of rock and snow. Most of the species rhododendrons with leaf indumentum are native to moderately high and high altitude landscapes.

This is the first article in a five-part series with a new group of rhododendron species described in subsequent editions of *The Oracle*. Take your time to explore the garden and admire these truly wonderful rhododendrons. Imagine Mrs. Darts's delight when she sourced these plants as seeds or small transplants and put them in her garden! It has taken decades for them to reach maturity.

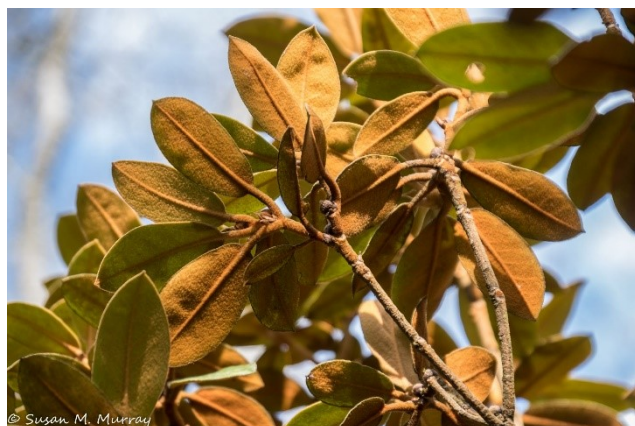


Susan Murray; *R. kesangiae* in Bed 4w

Leaf indumentum is visible and attractive all year round. It is a good excuse to wander the garden on a fall or winter Members' Day! Gently turn over a leaf and admire the lovely colours and textures. Indumentum may be white, greyish white, pale yellow, and various shades of tan, cinnamon brown, or rusty-orange red! Compare the softness of each by stroking the leaf underside carefully. Some indumentums are as soft as velvet, others feel more like felt!

Keep in mind that indumentum is most vibrant and plush on new or younger leaves at the beginning of the growing season. On some plants, as the year progresses, the indumentum may wear or slough off.

The Rhododendrons in this five-part series have been numbered as you would find them while walking around the beds. These walks have been designed to help you discover the beauty of indumentum! To see a wide variety of plants stroll along both sides of the Tractor Road, from Six Corners to 16th Avenue. Turn over a leaf or two as you go and admire the diversity of leaf colour and shape! This is the easiest walk to sample the colour range of indumentum in the garden.



R. bureavii – tan indumentum

This series, which locates and describes over 30 rhododendron species, hybrids, and two cultivated varieties, is not meant to be a complete listing of all the rhododendrons in DHGP with colourful indumentum. There are many more to discover. Have fun finding them!

Part 1- Beds 52, 53w, and 54w - 4 plants

Begin part 1 by making your way from the welcome table to Shady Lane, which bisects Beds 1 and 2e. Walk to the west end of Bed 54w, where it meets the Tractor Road. Your first plant is a rhododendron hybrid. It is on the right (east) side of the Tractor Road.

1. Rhododendron hybrid (*degronianum* subsp. *yakushmanum* x 'Noyo Chief') x (*degronianum* subsp. *yakushmanum* x *strigillosum*) - Bed 54w

This rhododendron hybrid has the longest name of any plant in the garden! It is a good size now, reaching 2.5 metres in height. The indumentum is a **pale tan**. The outstanding bright pink bell-shaped blooms have a dark crimson blotch in their throat.

Bloom time for this rhododendron hybrid in Darts Hill Garden Park (DHGP) is late April. You can find this plant at the southwest corner of Bed 54w, next to the Tractor Road.

Please turn the leaf over gently!

Continue north up the Tractor Road to locate the next plant in Bed 52. This rhododendron is on the right, just an arm's length from the chain-flowered red bud tree (*Cercis racemosa*).



2. *Rhododendron campanulatum* var. *aerginosum* - Bed 52 - Kashmir to Bhutan, India, 2,740 to 4,270 m. (9,000 to 14,000 ft.). (campanulatum or bell-shaped- refers to the flowers) (aerginosum refers to the blue-green colour of the leaves!)

The leaves of this small *Rhododendron campanulatum* var. *aerginosum* are quite attractive. The leaves first open a silver green, which deepens during summer to a soft blue green. The indumentum on the reverse is cinnamon coloured.



Flowers are variable and range from a very light lilac to rosy purple to white. The upper lobes of the bell-shaped flower are purple spotted. This rhododendron blooms in April. It is an easy rhododendron to find as it is growing in Bed 52 right on the edge of the Tractor Road.

Carry on a few more metres north or up the Tractor Road, then turn right at the bark mulch path to Bed 53w. There are two lovely rhododendrons with exquisite indumentum for you to discover in this garden bed. The first one is directly ahead.

3. Rhododendron hybrid, un-named, *Rhododendron degonianum* subsp. *yakushimanum* x *R.* 'Sir Charles Lemon' - Bed 53w

This large plant rises 4 metres over Bed 53w. It is a striking rhododendron hybrid with oblong, very dark green leaves. Its dark orange almost reddish felt indumentum on the underside of the leaves is very showy. The petioles of the plant are also covered in thick orangey-brown felt. The funnel-shaped flowers are a soft pink in bud, maturing to white. This unnamed hybrid blooms beautifully in DHGP in late April.



Continue to your left around Bed 53w to find the rare *Rhododendron clementinae*.

4. *Rhododendron clementinae*, Bed 53w - China (Yunnan, Sichuan,) Xizang (Tibet) 3,350 to 4,270 m. (11,000 to 14,000 ft.), (after Clementine, wife of George Forrest)

This *Rhododendron clementinae* is mature, measuring 4 metres high by 4 metres wide. The leaves of this wonderful plant are large and oblong/oval shaped. The thick indumentum on the reverse is white to pale fawn colour. It easily sloughs away when gently touched and becomes thinner by the end of the season.



The flowers are rose with a carmine speckled throat, fading to white. The flower truss holds 10-15 blooms. This beauty flowers prolifically in DHGP in mid-April.

Mrs. Darts purchased *Rhododendron clementinae* from Rainier Gardens in 1972.

RHODO TRIVIA - FALL BLOOMING RHODODENDRONS by Susan Burdak

Is that a rhododendron blooming in the garden? In the fall?

Yes, it is possible but no, we don't have fall blooming rhododendrons, just some misguided spring blooming rhododendrons that have spent their blooms earlier and may not bloom again in the spring. Sightings of fall blooming rhododendrons have been reported in and around Vancouver and UBC in 2022.

Usually occurring in late October or early November, some species of rhododendrons are more prone to break dormancy when the starch to sugar conversion occurs, acting as food for bud formation. Environmental stressors such as drought, root damage, or insect damage, along with auxins, influence "bud break". Auxins, which are a phyto hormones, are one of the five major plant hormones. These chemicals affect bud formation and subsequent transition into flowering. The stress of a dry drought in late summer (August-September) followed by a wet then warm fall can cause some species such as *Rhododendron* 'Scintillation' to think spring has come early. Another hypothesis is that some plants within a species are more prone to fall blooming and can respond to the disappearance of a deciduous canopy in the fall so that the increase in sunlight tricks the plants into thinking it is spring. It has been documented that some of the *Rhododendron hippophaeoides* var. *hippophaeoides* regularly produce fall blooms.

Sources

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Rhododendron hippophaeoides var. *hippophaeoides*

Photo: <https://landscapeplants.oregonstate.edu/plants/rhododendron-hippophaeoides-var-hippophaeoides>

LET'S CONTINUE TO RAISE THE ROOF!

The DHGCT Society has been investing funds since its inception. We sincerely wish to have an entrance that will have visitors anticipating their stroll through this incredible garden. The city of Surrey is putting aside capital funding and the DHGCTS is working in partnership with the city to raise the roof on the Darts Hill Garden Park Welcoming Centre!

[https:// dartshill.ca/support-the-garden/](https://dartshill.ca/support-the-garden/)



Thanks, the DHGCTS Fundraising Team

DECEMBER ICE, SNOW AND WIND STORMS TREE AND SHRUB DAMAGE IN DARTS HILL GARDEN PARK

REPORTED BY SUSAN MURRAY OF THE COLLECTIONS COMMITTEE JANUARY 2023

December 2022 was an ugly month with several severe weather events in Metro Vancouver. Significant snowfall arrived early in the month. A harsh rain, and in some areas, a freezing rain, pummelled trees, encasing their limbs with ½ cm and more of heavy ice. An atmospheric river and strong winds quickly melted the snow and ice but damage occurred to plants in everyone's garden, including DHGP.

A survey on January 1 was made by Collections Committee chair Susan Murray to determine the extent of snow and ice damage in DHGP.

Here is an inventory of the December 2022 damage.

1. Bed 20 – *Taxodium distichum*, swamp cypress, 5-6 wrist and arm sized branches plus the top of the magnolia in Bed 14 came down. The path to Darts House was obstructed.
2. Bed 7n - a mature *Acer circinatum*, vine maple, toppled over and obstructed the path to Bed 8.
3. Bed 30 - the signature *Paulownia tomentosa*, empress tree, had 5-6 arm sized and larger branches fail, blocking the path completely near its horticultural interpretive sign.
4. MMW - the evergreen *Magnolia virginiana* 'Jim Wilson' on the pasture side had a number of branches in its upper crown stripped out. The Magnolia hybrid, *M. virginiana* x *M. grandiflora* in Bed 9e also had one large branch knocked down. These two are rare magnolia cultivars in our area. Both have taken many years to produce blooms. The author waited several years for the hybrid magnolia to bloom, which it did in July of 2020 for the first time!
5. Bed 91 - the large *Quercus robur*, English oak, had one very large branch failure plus a few more branches hanging in the crown.
6. Bed 7s - the mature *Celtis sinensis*, (very rare), Japanese hackberry, at the east end has a very large horizontal branch crack. The cracked limb, which requires further inspection, overhangs the Augustinii Path.
7. Bed 33 - the *Franklinia alatamaha* has lost branches too, as has the *Cephalanthus occidentalis*, button bush, in this bed. These two are also rare shrubs for our area.
8. An apple in the lower orchard fell over and was removed.
9. Along the native loop, a number of arm-sized limbs from the Douglas-firs blocked the loop path.
10. Bed 38w - the beautiful *Ulmus parvifolia* 'Variegata,' variegated Chinese elm, had one limb on the east side fail. This tree is unique to DHGP!
11. Bed 53w - the crown of the *Cornus florida* 'Cherokee Chief,' Cherokee chief dogwood, split more or less in two. The tree is slated for removal.
12. Bed 47 - *Prunus itosakura* 'Whitcomb,' the Whitcomb spring flowering cherry, lost one large limb on the south side.



Branch failure is a normal occurrence during wind storms but the weight of both ice then rain with the heavy wet snow was probably the major cause of the tree damage in the garden. Thankfully, very few trees toppled over. We often forget that most of the trees and shrubs in the garden are rare and very difficult to replace. Next time you visit the garden, you may see some fresh scars but overall Darts Hill Garden Park escaped the vicious December storms with relatively minor damage. Ken and Alia were very busy, as was seen by the huge piles of debris waiting to be chipped in the volunteer parking lot at the end of the first week of January. All of the fallen branches and debris were very quickly removed from the heritage Garden. The paths were neatly raked and ready for the first Members' Day of 2023 on January 8. Thanks, Ken and Alia!

CITY OPERATIONS

by Maria Fish

Park Operations Coordinator – Feature Gardens

The snow and ice this December resulted in a few minor tree and shrub failures. No specimen trees were affected. The deep snow made it difficult for us to gain access into the garden once our obligations for snow clearing around public buildings were fulfilled.



GARDEN PROGRAMMING

The Garden Programming subcommittee finalized the 2023 schedule in December of 2022; representatives from the Society and the City attended. The schedule has been confirmed until the end of April and posted to the Society's website. Thank you to Karen Ewing for ensuring that a comprehensive description was available for each of the events.

As the Society's Workshop Coordinator has stepped down the City will be assisting with the onsite logistics of the spring workshops until a new coordinator steps forward. The subcommittee will continue to meet through out the year to refine events for the 2023 season and develop new programming opportunities for 2024.

MAPLE MEADOWS

The turf trials will continue this next year to see how the plants respond to the different maintenance regimes. As part of the vision for the masterplan, the area where the turf trials are located will be part of our trial gardens.

We are open to suggestions as to a new research topic for the 2024 season.

BEDS 35E, 35C, 35W, RENOVATION

Work is carrying on in Beds 35e 35c, 35w. The Collections Committee has taken on the task of identifying specimens in the garden that may be moved to this location.

Engraved stones will be placed in the bed to identify where East, Central and West (#e, #c, #w) begin and end. (This was requested by the Labeling Committee.)

BEDS 24E AND 24W

Contractors have come in for the initial clean up of this bed. The trees that have grown up will be cut down at the base, as the full removal of the roots would negatively impact the surrounding vegetation and retaining walls. We will be thickly mulching the area and selectively cardboarding where the stumps are. We would like to re-establish the staircase that goes from the house to the Upper Orchard. Once the initial clean up is done, we will have the cheat wall in front of this bed repointed in preparation for opening.

Moving forward the contractors will be returning prior to the April opening, after the azaleas have finished blooming, and again in the fall for a final cleanup. At this time we will evaluate if another visit is needed.

DRAINAGE

The drainage plan for the former C beds (currently Beds 51, 52, 53, and 54) has been drafted and distributed to the Collections Committee for review. Every effort is being made to ensure the viability of key specimens in this area.

A copy has been distributed to the DHGCTS Board for information purposes. Irrigation flags are in place at the preferred location of the proposed lawn basins. The plan will be sent out for quotes to select contractors. Staff will be pruning back this area in the beginning of February in advance of this work.

IRRIGATION

In December, work was completed on Bed 34. Updates to the irrigation in Bed 34, which is on zone 10, will continue this spring. The entirety of zone 10 will be part of a drip system before spring start-up.

A connection from the main line to the Native Loop was completed as well. This will assist the Native Plant group with watering during the summer months.

We received an initial quote for irrigation in the main parking lot at the top end of our budget. We reduced the scope of work in response. Once we have received confirmation that the reduced scope is viable, we will be going out for another two quotes.

ELEVATED ENTRANCE WALK

The design was field proofed by a biologist in December, who found that the stream bed was wider than initially thought. As such, the proposal was redesigned to accommodate this. The resulting design has a longer length of railing along the bridge deck, which will increase costs.

The subcommittee has reviewed the resulting design and has some suggestions for improvements which the architect is working through. We will be giving notice to the Ministry this February.

SIGNAGE

The initial drafts of the biodiversity signage are currently being developed by our marketing team.

REPLACEMENT OF PROPAGATION WALL

Work will start in the early spring on the removal and replacement of the retaining wall along the propagation area, as this is a quiet time for the propagation group.

NEW UPDATED BROCHURE AND MAP

Our survey team was delayed with the snow in December and are working to complete the survey of the garden by the second week in February. Our Parks Planning team does not have capacity to render the map in house, however they have recommended a few outside firms that may be able to assist.

16TH AVENUE AND 168TH STREET SIGN BED

Most of the work has been done on this project. Unfortunately, the as-built information which we had on hand was incomplete and the main water line for our irrigation system was hit. We shut off the water for a few days. As we are not currently irrigating the garden there were no further impacts. When repairing the break, we were able to lower the water kiosk and evenly grade out the surrounding garden bed, negating the need for boulders as noted in the previous design.

An update was sent out to the DHGCTS Board that we would be hydroseeding the area. However, with the snow cover that came, we were not able to hydroseed. Since we've had several heavy rain showers and the area has remained undisturbed, we will be opting for traditional seeding of this area.



Rhamnus frangula, Alder buckthorn - found on magnolia walk west

The alder buckthorn is native to Europe, northernmost parts of Africa and to western Asia. It is a deciduous shrub, growing to between 3 to 6 m, occasionally to 7 m tall.

Alder buckthorn grows in wet soils in open woods, scrub, hedgerows, and bogs, thriving well in sunlight and moderate shade, but less vigorously in dense shade. The flowers are small, 3 to 5 mm diameter and insect pollinated, appearing from May to June. The fruit is a small black berry 6 to 10 mm diameter, ripening from green through red in late summer to dark purple or black in early autumn.

Although this is not a 'shrub' of great ornamental value it has an important place in wildlife conservation, being one of just two food plants used by the common brimstone butterfly, plus the flowers are valuable for bees, and the fruit is an important food source for birds, particularly thrushes. It is also interesting to note that although it is called alder buckthorn it is neither a member of the alder family nor does it carry any thorns.



Provided by : K. Piccott
Source: www.treeseedonline.com

THE BC COUNCIL OF GARDEN CLUBS

Do you want to know what a woolly bear caterpillar is? After planting yellow for hope in 2021 and red for Year of the Garden in 2022, the Canadian Garden Council, and Communities in Bloom, invite you to plant purple in 2023.

Why purple? *"Purple has a variety of effects on the mind and body, including uplifting spirits, calming the mind, enhanced feelings of spirituality and encouraging imagination and creativity. From lilacs to coneflowers, from coast to coast, let's paint the country purple in 2023"*

Please click here to read the February 2023 edition of [The Bulletin](#).

The Darts Hill Garden Conservancy Trust Society (DHGCTS) is incorporated under the BC Societies Act and is a registered charity. Charitable No. 86285 7935 RR0001.

Please consider making a [donation](#).

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Darts Hill Garden Conservancy Trust Society is an organization working in partnership with the City of Surrey to ensure the preservation of Darts Hill Garden Park.

