



LSGC Snippets

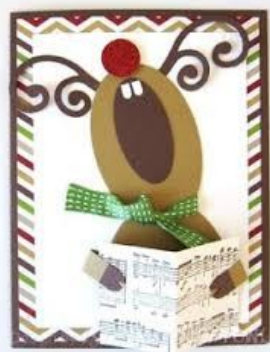
December 2023
Volume 12 No. 7

NEXT MEETING:

December 19th
in the Eagles Hall

Things to Remember

1. Your mug, plate and cutlery for the Pot Luck Dinner.
2. Food item to share, with serving utensils.
3. A Gift for the Gift Exchange (if you wish).
4. Materials to make one or two Centrepieces (optional)
5. Your Christmas sweater, and Good Cheer !



From Our President . . .

The overriding theme for this note is one of thanksgiving for all the blessings that are evident in the friendships, support and willingness to share within our club. Ideas, knowledge and talent abound in the membership. The opportunities to mix and mingle and broaden our horizons are pleasurable because the common thread is gardening. Our gardens are resting now and revealing potential spaces for Spring plantings, trimming or even major renovations. Winter weather patterns will dictate the timing and intensity of our outdoor gardening over the coming months.

A quotable quote states:

‘The gardening season officially begins on the 1st January and ends on the 31st December’. (Marie Huston)

For the LS Garden Club, our December Pot Luck Christmas Party wraps up 2023. On January 18, 2024 our regular meetings will resume.

Best wishes to all for a fulfilling, healthy and happy festive season and hopes that many more people around the world are able to experience the privileges and peace that we enjoy.

Carol



Our Executive:

*President – Carol Henderson
Treasurer – Starla Arkin
Membership – Bennye Miller*

*Vice-president – April Johnston
Secretary – Trixie Neufel
Speakers – Gail Wiseman-Reed*

MINUTES

Ladysmith Saltair Garden Club Club Meeting Minutes Held Thursday November 16, 2023

April Johnston, vice-president, opened the meeting at 6:55.p.m. President Carol Henderson is recovering from knee surgery and doing well.

- one new member, Christine VanderRee
- Two members Isabella and Francois Grenon have paid their due but we need more information from them.
- thanks to Betsy and Chris who brought goodies and to Barb and Mya who brought teas and coffee
- thanks to Sandra Lee for welcoming and handing out door prize tickets
- reminder to sign up for various tasks as organized by Gail
- reminder to save seeds for seed exchange as organized by Marianne

Old Business

- Treasurer Starla Parken reported that the October plant auction raised over \$400. Current balance is \$7450
- Sunflower Competition judging.

April Johnson and Pam Fraser agreed to be judges for the Lions Sunflower completion for children. We met at the Kin shelter at Transfer Beach at 11:30 on Oct. 28. There were actually three judges as Trudy from the Community Gardens was also invited to judge due to a little communication mix-up. We did a very thorough job assessing the 6 entries. Some of the young winners were on hand and were excited to receive their prizes of birdhouses and terrariums.

Presentation on Bonsai - (notes later in minutes), followed by a break for coffee, tea, goodies, visiting and shopping at Little Sales Table run by Cyndy and Dave Power.

New Business

- Christmas party -

It was agreed to rent the Eagles Hall for the evening of Tuesday Dec. 19.

There will be a pot luck dinner, the assembly of Christmas centerpieces by all those interested, puzzles and other activities for those not enamoured with centerpiece making, followed by a gift exchange for those who wish to participate. Pam Fraser agreed to chair the organization of the Christmas party, Christine VanderRee offered to assist.

Starla Parken's agreed to purchase the oasis (stuff used to secure branches in arrangements) for the centre pieces.

It is hoped that Gail Wiseman-Reed will take charge of the gift exchange.

- The raffle prize, a bonsai, was donated by Phil Crouch
- The meeting adjourned at 8:50 pm.

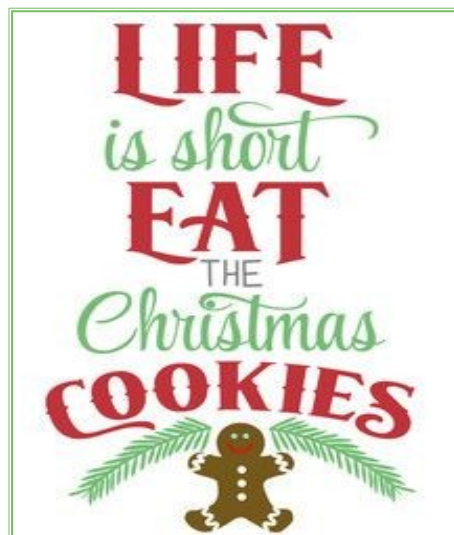
MINUTES

Bonsai - The Patient Art Highlights of the Presentation by Phil Crouch

- Phil has around 150 bonsai. He was inspired as a child by watching bonsai tending in the movie “Karate Kid”.
- Bonsai - means “planted in a tray”. It originated in China but was further developed and refined in Japan. Zen Buddhism had a significant influence on the art of bonsai. The presentation was illustrated with many excellent images.
- there are many styles and sizes of bonsai. They can range from 2” tall to 80” tall. They can live to be 100’s of year old. The world’s oldest bonsai is in Italy and around 1000 years old.
- to maintain their size bonsai trees must have both their branches and roots pruned. Bonsai trees can also be wired to create desired shapes. However only one of these operations should be done in a given year. To do more could over stress and kill the tree. Hence the need for patience. Great quote: “Bonsai is like painting - but you only get one brushstroke a year.”
- soil to be very porous, eg. ground pumice. Osmocote and Alaska fish fertilizer (5 -1 -1) works well
- goal is to create a plant that looks like a tree, only in miniature. Over time the size of the leaves can get smaller.
- Pots for Bonsai - should have feet for air flow and drainage. There should be holes both for drainage and for wiring the plant to the pot to hold the plant in place. The shape and finish of the pot should compliment the plant. Traditionally round, glazed pots were for deciduous trees and square, unglazed pots for conifers. The width of the tree truck at its base should be 2/3 the height of the pot.
- Displaying bonsai - the Japanese traditionally have a display alcove in their homes, the tokonoma. There the bonsai is displayed with two complimentary items, following the “rule of three”. Emphasis to be on the bonsai tree.



A winter project with plastic milk jugs, pipe cleaners, paper and mini-lights.



CLUB NEWS

Volunteers Needed

for Set Up & Clean Up
for our meetings.

- * Dec. 19th Social:
- * Doors open at 5:30 to set up,
- * Pot Luck Dinner will start at 6:30
- * Activities afterwards !



Ladysmith Saltair Garden Club

Upcoming Program & Events 23/24

January 18, 2024

Healthy Soils.
Tamara Dinter.

February 15, 2024

Growing Tomatoes.
Colen Henson.

March 20, 2024

Care of Rhodos.
Chris Southwick.

April 18, 2024

Hanging Baskets.
Alex Limberis.

May 16, 2024

My Favourite Vegetables & How to
Grow Them.
Dorothee Kieser.



The turkey dinner can be
hit or miss,
but the turkey soup
is forgiving!

Sporelections.wordpress.com

NOTICE BOARD

Buchart Gardens

December 1 to January 6 from 5:00 pm to 9:00pm
With traditional carollers and a festive brass band,
there's no shortage of seasonal sounds at The
Gardens. Step into the Piazza and sing along to
classic carols sure to put you in the Christmas
spirit. The sound of the festive brass instruments
and traditional carollers flows through the garden
path, greeting you at the beginning and end of
your visit.

Milner Gardens

Milner Christmas Magic

December 1 to 3, 8 to 10 and 15 to 20 from 5pm
to 8pm with viewing until 8:30 pm
Food & refreshments available.
Entry by suggested donation of \$8/Adult,
\$4/Child or \$20/Household

Seattle Home & Garden Show

Lumen Field Event Center, Seattle
Thursday, February 22nd to Sunday, Feb. 25th
Thursday & Friday from 11:00am to 6:00pm
Saturday & Sunday from 10:00am to 6:00pm
Everything for the home, indoors and out.
Admission - General: \$15.00
-Seniors (60+): \$10.00



*Then came the merry makers in,
And carols roar'd with blithesome din;
If unmelodious was the song,
It was a hearty note, and strong.
-Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832)*

INVITATION

LADY SMITH GARDEN CLUB

Christmas Party

Join in on the fun on **December 19th**, 2023

Eagles Hall, Ladysmith

5:00 pm

Doors open for SET UP
(help welcome)

5:30 pm

Bring in food for POT LUCK DINNER
to begin soon thereafter followed by your
preferred activities including :

- ◆ Garden related gift exchange
(in the \$15.00 range)
- ◆ centrepiece making
- ◆ Puzzles, cribbage, cards, chit chat
- ◆ Look for more detail in a
follow-up email on
December 14th

UPDATES FOR OUR CHRISTMAS SOCIAL

Ladysmith Saltair Garden Club Christmas Party 2023

Tuesday December 19th at Eagles Hall. Doors open at 5:30. If you want to help set up, come at 5:00

All members are welcome whether you signed up earlier or not. Guests welcome too.

Please bring a contribution to a **Food Bank Box** organized by Megan Whitelaw.

Potluck dinner to start about 6:00. Please bring:

- ➔ a main course, salad or dessert to share with serving utensils. We will not have the use of an oven so wrap up hot dishes.
 - ➔ any dishes, utensils and cups/glasses needed to enjoy the meal
 - ➔ your dirty dishes will need to go home with you so bring along appropriate bags
- The club will provide punch, decaf coffee, tea and festive napkins

Gift Exchange - to take place after dinner

- ★ if you wish to participate bring a wrapped garden related gift. If purchased to be in the \$15 range, one per person participating.
- ★ Carol Henderson will have an entertaining story to facilitate the transfer of gifts.

Centrepiece Making - to follow the gift exchange

- ◆ goal is to have each participating member create up to two centrepeices.
- Will see if there is enough material if folks want to make more.

Club will provide:

- ➔ oasis (the hard foam stuff you stick you your materials into)
- ➔ 20 or so containers and some liners
- ➔ Christmas “bling” to add to centerpieces.

People wishing to make centrepieces to bring:

- ➔ pruners/snips to cut greenery and serrated knife to cut oasis
- ➔ other tools you wish to bring, eg. scissors
- ➔ enough greenery for approximately 2 centrepieces to share (no need to bring a forest, don't want big amounts left over to haul away)
- ➔ if you have some, containers and liners for yourself and to share.
- ➔ If you have some, decorative elements (Christmas bling) to share.
- ➔ a box or two to take your creations home in

Other Fun Activities - will be available for those not wanting to make centrepieces.

Most importantly - **BRING YOUR FESTIVE SPIRIT!**

RECIPES

Thimble Cookies

- 1 cup butter
- 2 eggs, separated
- 1/2 cup brown sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 2 cups flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- chopped nuts, about 2 cups, any kind



1. Cream butter. Beat in egg yolks, (reserving whites for coating) sugar and salt.
2. Add combined dry ingredients. Add an extra egg to the mix if it seems rather crumbly.
3. Shape into ball. Divide into quarters. Roll each piece into log and cut into 12 pieces. Shape into small balls and dip into slightly beaten egg white, then into chopped nuts.
4. Place on parchment paper lined cookie sheet. Press a hole into the center of each ball, using a thimble. Repeat when half baked.
5. Bake at 350° F for about 12 - 14 min.
6. When baked, repeat the thimble press. Fill with jam or jelly, raspberry or apricot.

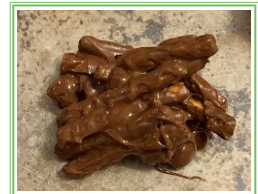
I remember my grandmother when I use her thimbles to bake cookies.



An Edible Christmas Wreath - made with biscuits, cream cheese and toppings.

Chow Mein Noodle Cookies *aka Spider Cookies*

- 2 cups of semi-sweet chocolate chips
- 2 cups of butterscotch chips
- 1 package of chow mein noodle cookies (170 g.)
- about 1 cup of salted peanuts



1. Melt the chips over a double boiler, or cautiously, in small increments in the microwave. Snap some of the noodles by hand so they are not all a long length.
 2. When chocolate and butterscotch chips are melted, add your dry noodles and peanuts.
 3. Stir the contents really well so that everything gets coated. Don't worry if you snap more noodles while you do it.
 4. Using two spoons, drop clumps onto waxed paper. Put them in the refrigerator to cool and set up and store in an airtight container
- coffeontheporchwithme.blogspot.com*

Gluten Free Cranberry Scones

- 2 rounded tbsp. cottage cheese
- 1 egg
- enough milk to make one cup
- 1/4 butter
- 1 tsp lemon juice
- 3/4 cup german pancake mix
- 1/4 Arrowroot starch
- 1 tbsp baking powder
- 1 tsp. xanthan gum
- 3/4 cup sweetened dried cranberries

1. Mix together dry ingredients and set aside.
2. Put egg and cottage cheese into measuring cup and fill with milk to measure 1 cup.
3. Put into blender and mix until smooth.
4. Cut butter into flour mix
5. Add liquid to flour and mix together lightly. Drop by tbsp onto baking sheet .
6. Bake for 20 minutes at 375°, or until golden

mennonitegirlscancook.ca

SOIL TESTING

How's Your Soil Structure?

It's always seemed to me like we have a water storage problem, rather than a drought problem, here on the island. Ask any permaculturalist or regenerative farmer the best way to store water and they will tell you, hands down, that it's in the soil.

Storing water this way requires good soil structure, and for that we rely on beneficial ("aerobic") soil organisms. Bacteria glue themselves to organic matter and other bits and pieces, forming micro aggregates. Along comes the fungi, weaving and gluing and pulling these microaggregates into larger aggregates. Pore spaces, airways and passageways are created, forming a sponge-like structure something akin to chocolate cake. Billions of microbes go about their daily business here, with roots easily accessing the water stored within this giant sponge.

Out at the Hope Farm corn experiment, we used water infiltration testing as one way to look at changes in soil structure with various management techniques. You can measure your own baseline too, and repeat periodically to see if water is sinking in faster over time. If so, congratulations, you are regenerating your soil and increasing your yields! If not, then you are likely short on beneficial microbes.

Here's how:

1. Take a tube 6 inches in diameter and 6 inches long, ideally a piece of metal pipe with one edge sharpened. But you could use PVC pipe, or even a 1 gallon pot if compaction isn't an issue.
2. Pop a piece of wood over top and use a mallet to drive it 4 inches deep into the soil
3. Lay some recycled plastic on the soil surface, edges coming up and out of the tube. Add 1 inch of water (or pour in 450ml), then gently pull out the plastic and start timing



4. Time until the last of the water disappears into the soil

SOIL TESTING

5. Repeat steps 3 and 4 twice more. The first inch is to wet your soil, the second inch is your likely measurement, and the third can be your reading if your soil is very dry. If infiltration takes longer than 12.5 minutes, call me... run-off problems and evaporation of precious rainfall is imminent!

Amy Luck-MacGregor

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With Thanks to Amy Luck-MacGregor for permission to share her article from the November 2023 edition of Cowichan Valley Voice.

IT'S TIME TO RENEW

Our Annual membership fees are valid from September to August.

Membership Fees:

Individuals - \$25.00

Family - \$40.00 includes 2 adults, children under the age of 19,
or students living in the same household

Payment Options:

1. Pay with Cash in person at a meeting.
Please fill out a printable membership form to bring with you.
2. Pay by cheque to Ladysmith Saltair Garden Club .
Please fill out a printable membership form, and bring with your cheque.
3. Pay online via E-transfer: LSGCmembership@gmail.com.
Please submit an online membership form. (*Clixk Here*)

We're looking forward to seeing you again !



A Must Have House Plant - Streptocarpus

by April Johnston

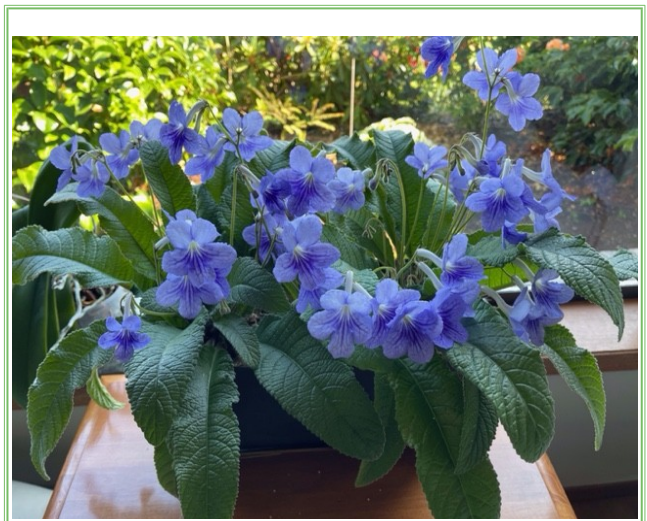
Streptocarpus, what is it, do I have it, can I get it, what do I do if I get it, should I be worried? No, it's not a printing mix up, the Gardening Hoe Down column has not suddenly become the Medical Advice column! Streptocarpaceae are my new indoor plant obsession and I'd like to share some info about them.

Preferring the outdoor environment, I'm not usually obsessed with indoor plant life so I've kept my collection quite limited: a few Phalaenopsis, a few Tillandsias, a few Sansevieria, and a very old long time friend, Ceropegia (Rosary vine). Then a friend and President of the local gardening club gifted me with some leaf cuttings of an unknown variety of Streptocarpus. I have to admit here that I had indicated during several visits to her home, that I adored these delightful, cheery little characters so happily blooming in one of her windows. No pressure!

What is it? Sometimes called the Cape Primrose, the Streptocarpus species is native to Africa and Madagascar and is closely related to African Violets and requires similar growing conditions. The plant has a tidy basal type of growth habit with flat textured leaves. The flowers are typically borne on upright stems, well above the leaves and are either single or multiple flowers per stalk. They can come in a huge variety of colours, bi-colours and petal variations, ranging from the newer red varieties to white, pink, purple and blue. They bloom from spring to autumn, offering a long-lasting display and some of the newer hybrids may even flower year-round.

Do you have it? If you do, I want to know you and find out what you have because I will want some! Seriously, they may be hard to source. I've checked with a few local nurseries and found them available in three different colours at only one nursery. They are not inexpensive but you need to consider them relatively rare and hard to find.

Can you get it? Yes as indicated above, plants are available locally and propagation is easy by leaf cuttings and can be accomplished by starting seeds.



I found 16 different seed varieties available on Amazon! To propagate seeds, spread the tiny seeds on top of moist, sterile seed-starting mix and place in a well-lit and warm area, 20°C to 25°C. The seeds will take 7 to 10 days to germinate and require light during this time so moisture retention is essential. Misting the soil surface and covering it with a sheet of clear plastic should accomplish this.

Streptocarpus leaf cuttings are easy to propagate and summer is the best time to do it for optimum results. Select a healthy looking, medium-sized leaf. Remove it from the crown of the plant with sharp scissors or a knife. Using a clean sharp knife, cut the leaf into three or four sections. Fill a pot or seed tray with seed-starting mix. Insert the leaf sections into the soil, making sure they are oriented the correct way up for growth and root production. Water well and cover with a plastic bag or other clear moisture retaining cover. Keep in a warm, light place. Baby plants will develop from the base of each leaf after 6 to 8 weeks.

Christmas in Iceland

Iceland has some unusual Christmas traditions, dating back centuries. One is an ogress named Grýla, first mentioned in 13th-century texts. Another tradition in Iceland are the Yuletide



Grýla at the Keflavík International Airport, Iceland

Lads. These are the thirteen sons of the ogress Grýla and they come down from the mountains, one per day until on the 25th of December, when all the boys are here. Then one by one they return to the mountains. Each of them has an attribute for creating havoc, with Anglicised names such as Pot Licker, Skyr Gobbler, Door Slammer, Sausage Stealer, and Window Peeper.

Icelandic children do not put out Christmas stockings on Christmas Eve. But for the 13 days before Christmas, when the Icelandic lads are coming down out of the mountains, they put a shoe by the door or the window sill and if they have been good children they get a treat in their shoe, but if they have been naughty, they receive a potato.

Over the years, the fear of Gryla and her sons has softened somewhat, but in centuries past it must have been a very frightening time for small children especially in the deep dark days of an Icelandic winter!

Another wonderful Christmas tradition in Iceland is the **Jólabókaflóðið**. It literally translates to flood of books. In the weeks coming up to Christmas, all authors release their new titles. Then, on Christmas Eve, the tradition is that the family gathers in the living room by the fireside and they all read their new books while eating chocolate.

What could be better: It is a tradition that would be worth observing!

a-garden-intheshire.blogspot.com

