

## feature plants

January & February don't have to be barren garden months. Here are some great plants that will keep your garden interesting through the winter and will set a beautiful backdrop for your flowers when they pop up in the spring.



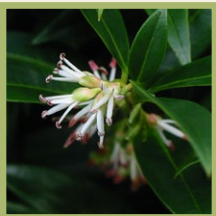
### **Erica carnea sp.**

Winter heaths provide a stunning blanket of colour among the greys and browns of winter. This low-growing shrub is typically drought tolerant, although its fine roots benefit from watering in the driest months. Once blossoms have faded, clip branches neatly across the tips to remove flowers and promote growth at the plant's center. Visit [www.greatplantpicks.org](http://www.greatplantpicks.org) for excellent cultivar suggestions.



### **Helleborus foetidus**

Stinking Hellebore has lovely lime green flowers in bloom for several months during the winter and has delicate, dark green foliage throughout the year. Growing approximately 18 inches tall, this is an easy-care perennial that will grow in sun or shade and can tolerate the dry conditions of a street garden (although some watering is needed if located in full sun). 'Wester Flisk' is a cultivar worth mention.



### **Sarcococca hookeriana var. humilis**

One of the most distinctive features of the Dwarf Sweet Box is its strong fragrance as it comes into bloom in late winter. Growing approximately 1 foot high, this evergreen shrub provides interest and structure throughout the seasons with its glossy dark green leaves and its blue-black berries on display in the summer. It will thrive in most soil conditions and loves a shady location.



## Name this plant and win!

Do you recognize this plant? Hint: It's green and gold year round. Send your answer to [greenstreets@vancouver.ca](mailto:greenstreets@vancouver.ca). The first 3 correct answers will win a pack of beautiful Green Streets note cards.

## gardening tasks

Winter is all about planning and preparing for the busy season ahead. Here are a few things to keep you busy before the colourful onset of spring.

- Remove heavy snow from the branches of woody plants to prevent damage.
- This is a great time to analyze your garden and plan for any changes you want to make in the upcoming year. If your garden looks empty at this time of year, consider adding more evergreen plants to ensure there is interest through all the seasons. Visit garden centers to see what looks good at this time of year or visit the botanical gardens at VanDusen or UBC for ideas and inspiration.
- Consider giving your tools some TLC. A good cleaning and sharpening and even an application of linseed oil to protect them from rust will have you well prepared for spring.
- This is the time of year to buy/exchange seeds. In January, start seeds for summer-flowering plants indoors. Toward the end of February, hardy annuals can be planted in the garden and tender or half-hardy annuals can be started indoors.
- Deciduous shrubs can be pruned as long as they are still dormant.
- Remove weeds while they are still clearly visible in the garden. You can also check for slugs and snails.
- As the weather starts to warm, you can begin cleaning up your perennial plants and deciduous grasses by cutting back old growth.
- If the weather allows, begin planting shrubs, hellebores and roses.
- Towards the end of February, visit the garden center to pick up summer-flowering bulbs.
- If your compost doesn't freeze over you can mix it a couple times during the winter. Remember to layer food waste with leaves to make healthy compost and to speed up decomposition.

## january events

**Guided walking tours of VanDusen Gardens every Sunday at 2pm**  
Free with garden admission. Meet at the information desk on the deck.



### **HSBC VanDusen Family Program at Bloedel**

**Sat Jan 22. 10:30am-12:30pm or 1:30pm-3:30pm**

For families with children 5 - 11. Discover diverse tropical plant life and learn about the amazing birds that call the Bloedel Conservatory home. Member Family \$10. Non-Member Family \$20. Includes admission to the conservatory. Pre-registration required: Call 604.718.5898 or [familyprograms@vandusen.org](mailto:familyprograms@vandusen.org).

### **Bird Walk through VanDusen Gardens**

**Sat Jan 22. 10am. VanDusen Garden Entrance**

Join Jeremy Gordon for a birding exploration. Free with garden admission.

### **Garden Planning and Preparation Workshop**

**Sun Jan 23. 1:30pm-4:30pm. Strathcona Community Centre**

Part of Village Vancouver's Cultivating Food, Cultivating Community series. Everything you need to know about starting a successful food garden. \$35. Info: [www.strathconacc.com](http://www.strathconacc.com)

### **Plants of Southern Interior British Columbia**

**Mon Jan 24. Noon-1pm. UBC Botanical Garden**

Join in a photographic tour of the plants of southern interior British Columbia. \$5. 6804 SW Marine Drive. Info: 604-822-3928 [botg@interchange.ubc.ca](mailto:botg@interchange.ubc.ca).

### **Jan Gehl: Cities for People**

**Mon Jan 24. 7pm. Vancouver PlayHouse Theatre**

Copenhagen architect and urban planner Jan Gehl is the guiding spirit of cycling and pedestrian friendly cities. Jan arrives at an important time, as Vancouver decides how to be a more livable city and how to reach the goal of becoming the world's greenest city. Free. Info: [www.sala.ubc.ca](http://www.sala.ubc.ca)

### **Metro Vancouver Gardening Society Spring Flower Exhibition**

**Sat & Sun Jan 29 & 30. 10am-5pm. VanDusen Floral Hall**

\$2 per person. \$5 per family. Info: Tony Wu 604.473.9837 [tonychwu@gmail.com](mailto:tonychwu@gmail.com).

## february events

### **What if Community Ended?**

**Wed Feb 2. Noon-1pm. Central Library**

A lecture by Colin Mills. Based on a paper by cultural geographer Yi-Fu Tuan entitled Community, Society and the Individual. Free.

### **Cedar Series Lecture: Recent Trends in Botanical Field Research in British Columbia.**

**Thu Feb 10. 7:30pm. VanDusen Floral Hall**

Dr. Terry McIntosh will discuss the newest trends in botanical exploration and some of the issues surrounding conservation of rare species. Members \$10. Non-members \$15. In advance at Admin Office (Mon-Fri) or at the door, subject to availability.

### **Vancouver Orchid Society Show and Sale**

**Sat Feb 12. 9am-5pm. Sun Feb 13. 9am-4pm**

**VanDusen Floral Hall**

Free. Info: Koichi at 604.261.0023 [knakatani247@yahoo.co.jp](mailto:knakatani247@yahoo.co.jp)

### **HSBC VanDusen Family Program at Bloedel**

**Sat Feb 19. 10:30am-12:30pm or 1:30pm-3:30pm**

See event details under HSBC VanDusen Family Program on Jan 22.

### **PINK MOUNTAIN in Northern BC: Conservation**

**Thu Feb 24. 7:30pm-9:15pm. Unity Church.**

Ron Long, photographer and plant enthusiast will give an illustrated talk on the rare and unique plants of Pink Mountain. Info: [www.naturevancouver.ca](http://www.naturevancouver.ca).

### **Seedy Saturday**

**Sat Feb 26. 10am-4pm. VanDusen Floral Hall**

Presented by the BC Master Gardeners. A celebration of heritage varieties and organic gardening. Family Time at Seedy Saturday will have a variety of seed inspired activities. Admission by donation.