

JUNE 2025 | NEWSLETTER

Seeding Stewardship

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POLLINATOR
OF THE SEASON:

Mason Bee

Why they're great?

Mason Bees are known as a generalist bee, meaning they are attracted to almost any plant. They are very important for pollinator fruit crops.

Identifying features: They are about 10-15 mm long, with compact, round bodies. They have a metallic blue or green sheen.

How to make your space welcoming for

Mason Bees: Add some of their favourite plants, like lavender, woolly sunflower, and coneflowers. Stems from some of these plants can also provide winter nesting ground.



SITE SHOWCASE

China Creek North

Rebecca is our Stewardship Leader for China Creek North. Learn a little bit more about her journey!



POLLINATOR PLANTS IN CHINA CREEK NORTH

Tough and resilient plants:

- Big-leaved Lupines
- Yarrow
- Pearly Everlasting

Fall-friendly, late season food source for pollinators:

- Asters
- Sea Holly
- Goldenrods

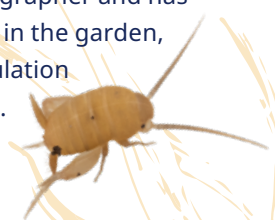
Details about the Stewardship team:

A dozen volunteers total in the group; 2-5 typically attend Tuesday evening stewardship weeding parties each

week. Together they have removed over 200 blackberries and a metric ton of reed canarygrass, allowing buried and suppressed plants the space and sun to thrive.

What plans are underway for China Creek North this summer?

The China Creek Park Pollinator Garden has been set up as an [iNaturalist project](#). Any observations made on the site will automatically be recorded and this will allow the biodiversity to be tracked from year to year. Rebecca's friend, Justin Chan, is an avid macro-photographer and has already discovered some rare little critters in the garden, like the West Coast Ant Cricket, who's population is listed as "vulnerable" in British Columbia.



China Creek has an interesting and colourful history that Rebecca would like to highlight this summer. She hopes to do a history talk-and-walk about China Creek. She also hopes to add more plants and shrubs to a section of the garden referred to as the “woodland” area, which would represent the plant communities common at the site pre-colonization.

Hear from Rebecca about why she became a Stewardship Leader!

“Like many Vancouverites I live in a small apartment, so having access to gardening space is such a privilege and hard to come by. A few years ago I was diagnosed with breast cancer, fortunately it was caught very early and my experience could have been so much worse. However this put a bur under my saddle and motivated me to try to find space to express my passion for plants. I managed to get a Green Street boulevard garden plot. It was pretty life changing, I had met more of my neighbours in two years than I had done in the previous twenty years.

“When the China Creek North site became available through Seeding Stewardship, I jumped at the chance to expand my gardening experience and express my dedication to urban biodiversity and to give something back to my beloved Mount Pleasant community. We need to rethink the notion that cities are the antithesis of the natural world, but are a part of it and we have to demonstrate how important these green spaces are. We had a colony of Orange-legged Furrow bees nesting at the site and it made everyone so happy to see pollinators living out their entire life cycle in the garden.”

Rebecca's advice for other Stewardship Leaders:

“Learn and adapt from every experience and let all of the troubles just roll off of you like water off a duck's back. Also to trust plants, they can surprise you with their will to live.”

Photo credits: Cover - Blue orchard mason bee by Jim Rivers - Public Domain

Can you change this to Save the Date! Metro Vancouver Invasive Species Council will be hosting a workshop for Seeding Stewardship Leaders on Tuesday September 16th 6 pm - 7:30 pm.



GARDENING TIPS

Managing Reed Canarygrass

Reed Canarygrass (*Phalaris arundinacea*) is a challenging invasive species that is spreading in Vancouver and impacting many of our meadow and rain garden sites. It is a rhizomatous bunchgrass that forms thick mats, making it hard for native vegetation to grow through it. Removal can be a very laborious task.

There are a few options to manage reed canarygrass:

- **Hand removal.** Remember to dig all the way down to the end of the rhizomes, and clean your tools afterwards to help prevent spread of the plant
- **Smothering.** Use tarps or cardboard to smother the plant. It can take up to a year for this to be effective.
- **Replanting.** Once removed, planting new native vegetation and adding mulch can help reduce the odds of the plant coming back again.

To learn more, check out the following resources:

1. Best Management Practices for Reed Canarygrass, <https://metrovancover.org/services/regional-planning/Documents/reed-canarygrass-best-management-practices.pdf>
2. From Forage to Foe – The Environmental Impact of Reed Canarygrass Invasion, <https://bcwfwatershedteam.ca/2024/10/22/from-forage-to-foe-the-environmental-impact-of-reed-canarygrass-invasion>

Stay tuned for an upcoming workshop hosted by the Seeding Stewardship Program this summer.



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Building Your Stewardship Network

Many hands make light work! But getting people out to your work parties isn't always easy. Here are some tips to help generate interest in your stewardship events.

1. Have an online presence.

This is a quick way for people to learn about your upcoming events. Some free options include creating a community Facebook page for your group or setting up an Instagram account. You can also create online events for your workdays using Meet Up, Facebook, or Eventbrite.



2. Create posters and put them up in your neighbourhood. Check community centres, grocery stores and apartment buildings for bulletin boards. Remember, we are always happy to print posters for you! **Contact Madeleine at raincity@vancouver.ca.**



3. Include a fun activity as part of your work party. Play an icebreaker game at the start, do a small bioblitz, give an award or certificate for the person who weeds the most, or encourage a potluck at the end of the event. And don't forget to give your volunteers Seeding Stewardship stickers!



Have you tried something with your group that has worked great? Share it with us and we'll include it in the next newsletter.

PROGRAM NEWS

- We have added 5 new sites to the program! Visit our website to learn more: vancouver.ca/seedingstewardship
- The Pine Street Pollinator Garden group will be moving to a new site at the Museum of Vancouver during winter 2025/26. The pollinator garden was designed as a "pop-up" park, and Parks Board is moving forward with plans for its redevelopment. You can learn more here: <https://vancouver.ca/parks-recreation-culture/burrard-slopes-park.aspx>

IN NATURE NEWS

- How 'parks for bugs' boost pollinators in Vancouver. A study found that reducing lawn mowing and creating pollinator meadows significantly boosts pollinator diversity, creating healthier and more resilient ecosystems. [Link to source article](#)
- How pretty, spongy public gardens make way for more housing. [Link to source article](#)
- The Buzz: Newsletter of the Native Bee Society of BC. [Link to newsletter](#)

Change to Park (instead of Parks)



This newsletter is published by the City of Vancouver and Vancouver Parks Board as part of the Seeding Stewardship Program.

Change great to well