



Fraxinus latifolia  
Photo by Plant Oregon.com

# Native Plant Study Group

February 2011

## Restoring a Douglas Fir Forest

By: Judy Nault

Hoke Holcomb came to speak to the Native Plant Study Group about his experience restoring a coastal Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*) forest in a seriously degraded habitat. The site encompasses a variety of ecosystems from the Viaduct Flats wetlands to dry Gary oak (*Quercus garryana*) meadows and is located on the 42 hectares of the Horticulture Centre of the Pacific Conservation Park. The current land use plan calls for the restoration of a contiguous Douglas fir forest ecosystem with fragmented bits of land to be used for recreational and commercial purposes.

Before beginning actual restoration, it is important to know the history of the site. Hoke explained that there is evidence of First Nations use of the area, but the exact nature of activity is unknown. He then explained that the area was logged at some point and then used for agriculture purposes. Three trenches were also put in for rapid drainage. Finally, he noted that repeated ploughing has severely degraded the soil.

The variety of the terrain has given opportunity for the creation of a number of different ecosystems. At about the same time as the agricultural lease expired, a beaver dammed up the lower end of the Viaduct Flats which flooded the area and created an instant waterfowl habitat. The beaver dam has since been replaced with an artificial dam. Once Hoke was aware of the history of the land, he was able to begin plans for restoration. To create the forested areas, several trees were planted over the next three years. Unfortunately, many of the trees were planted in inappropriate sites. However, more recent plantings have had a 90% survival rate. Lessons learned:

- Take as much time as needed to learn your site's history;
- Appropriately and accurately prepare the site for planting;
- Use large plants in large planting holes and tend to the plants for the first 2-3 years; and
- Keep seedlings protected for 6-10 years, if necessary.

Besides learning the history of the land, it is also necessary to plan for what the forest will look like in the future. Forests naturally have open areas due to fire or avalanche. In urban restoration sites, open areas need to be maintained artificially by mowing or brush cutting. On these 42 hectares, these techniques will create high density habitat for voles, which in turn will attract avian predators.



*Pseudotsuga menziesii*  
Photo by Vancouver.ca



Polystichum munitum  
Photo from RoyalBCMuseum.ca



As part of the restoration work, Hoke described the process for creating a swale to drain an area infested with reed canary grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*) to provide a transition zone between the mowed area and the forested area. In the higher areas, where the conditions are much drier, open spaces are maintained with periodic brush cutting to control invasive blackberry (*Rubus*). These spaces become prime habitat for populations of small birds.

At the end of his presentation, Hoke encouraged the group to become involved in projects like these. On Wednesdays, there are volunteers involved in the Harvest Woods and the Native Plant Demonstration Garden. On Saturdays, there is a group working in the Conservation Park as well. Hoke also explained that the Garry oak savannah and the Oregon ash (*Fraxinus latifolia*), among others, are in great need of volunteers to take on restoration projects like Hoke's.

I would like to add that working with Hoke on these projects has been an invaluable learning experience and a lot of fun. I would certainly recommend it to anyone who can take advantage of it.

## Native Plant Nurseries in Victoria

<p>Cannor Nurseries 4660 Elk Lake Drive 250-658-5415 <a href="http://www.cannor.com">www.cannor.com</a></p>	<p>GardenWorks- Colwood 1859 Island Highway 250-478-2078 <a href="http://www.gardenworks.ca">www.gardenworks.ca</a></p>
<p>GardenWorks- Saanich 4290 Blenkinsop Rd 250-721-2140 <a href="http://www.gardenworks.ca">www.gardenworks.ca</a></p>	<p>Island View Nursery (wholesale) 2933 McIntyre Road 250-544-4802</p>
<p>Lochside Nursery Lochside Drive 250-544-3100 <a href="http://www.csl.ca/lochside.html">www.csl.ca/lochside.html</a></p>	<p>Marigold Nurseries 7874 Lochside Drive 250-652-2342 <a href="http://www.marigoldnurseries.com">www.marigoldnurseries.com</a></p>
<p>Thousand Summers Environmental Design 250-727-0229 <a href="mailto:thousandsummers@shaw.ca">thousandsummers@shaw.ca</a></p>	<p>Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary 250-479-0211 <a href="http://www.swanlake.bc.ca">www.swanlake.bc.ca</a></p>
<p>Nature's Garden Seed Co. Victoria, BC V8P 5S2 250-595-2062 <a href="http://www.naturesgardenseed.com">www.naturesgardenseed.com</a></p>	<p>Russell Nursery 1370 Wain Road 250-656-0384 <a href="http://www.russellnursery.com">www.russellnursery.com</a></p>

Nursery information found at:  
<http://www.goert.ca>



Trillium ovatum  
Photo from RoyalBCMuseum.ca





## Volunteer Opportunities

### Brodick/Bow Park

West of Univ. Heights shopping centre  
off of Cedar Hill Rd

Invasive species removal and site  
restoration. Training and tools provided.

Location & Time:

Schedule and location may vary every  
Mon. 10-12pm

Contact Judy Spearing | T: 250-472-0515 |  
jandd\_spearing(at)shaw.ca |  
[www.mountdouglaspark.ca/calendar.do](http://www.mountdouglaspark.ca/calendar.do)

### Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary:

3873 Swan Lake Road, Victoria

Swan Lake has a wide range of volunteer  
opportunities involving plants: nature

interpretation, gardening with native  
plants, and removal of invasive plants.

Contact Robyn Burton | T: 250-479-0211  
| volunteer(at)swanlake.bc.ca

### Glendale Gardens Native Plant Demonstration Garden:

505 Quayle Road, Saanich  
Snow, rain or shine! Before coffee we  
work in the Western Woods restoration  
project and after coffee we work in the  
native garden. Volunteers welcome.

Time:  
Every Wednesday morning

Contact | T: 250-658-5740

### World Fisheries Trust

How to conduct a plant survey and  
establish a monitoring program  
I am looking for people who could lead a  
group of volunteers through a training  
session on how to conduct a plant survey  
and establishing a monitoring program of  
the fairly recently (2007) daylighted Gorge  
Creek in Esquimalt Gorge Park  
This is part of a larger community  
monitoring effort that we are trying to build  
around the Gorge Waterway.

Contact Alicia Donaldson | |T: 250.380.7585  
| Alicia[at]worldfish.org

The Native Plant Study Group meets on  
the third Thursday of the month from  
September through May at the  
MacLaurin  
Building, UVic.

Please join us!

The NPSG gratefully acknowledges the  
support of the Restoration of Natural  
Systems (RNS) program at UVic in  
securing the use of the rooms and  
facilities.

UVic parking policy--pay parking is in  
effect

24 hours a day. You must purchase a \$2  
parking permit for the evening.

Save yourself the trouble by riding your  
bike or taking the bus!

[\(http://www.bctransit.com/regions/vic/\)](http://www.bctransit.com/regions/vic/)



Garry oak meadow and savannah  
Photo by Tim Ennis



Heracleum mantegazzianum  
Photo by Robsplants.com  
and listed as one of GVIPC's  
most (Un)Wanted Plants

## E vents and Outings

### Friends of Uplands Park

Sunday, February 20  
Carpet Burweed Patrol  
We will be learning how to distinguish this invasive winter annual from pineapple weed and the rare meadowfoam and then removing it with our fingers. Please let Margaret know before if you can come.

#### Location & Time:

Cattle Point between the boat ramps, where the burweed corral is @ 1pm

Contact Margaret Lidkea | T:  
250.595.8084 |  
mlidkea[at]shaw.ca  
Or  
Kathleen Matthews | T:  
250.598.7995 |  
kathleenmatt[at]gmail.com

### Public Meeting

Thursday, February 24  
"First Nations Burial Cairns in Uplands Park"  
Presented by enthusiastic and knowledgeable UVic graduate student Darcy Matthews.

#### Location & Time:

Windsor Park Pavilion from 7pm-9

Contact Margaret Lidkea | T:  
250.595.8084 |  
mlidkea[at]shaw.ca  
Or  
Kathleen Matthews | T:  
250.598.7995 |  
kathleenmatt[at]gmail.com

### Western Society of Weed Science Symposium

Thursday, March 10  
Ecological Effects of Invasive Plants  
One-day symposium held in conjunction with the annual meeting of the Western Society of Weed Science. This symposium will feature invited speakers who address the effects and interactions of invasive plants on forest, rangeland, riparian and coastal ecosystems, soils, and wildlife. Registration fee: \$75

#### Location:

DoubleTree City Center Hotel,  
Spokane, WA

Contact: Phil Banks | T:  
575.527.1888 |  
wsws[at]marathonag.com

### Central Vancouver Island Botanical Society

Friday-Sunday, March 11-13  
Central Vancouver Island Botanical Society's 16th Annual Spring Garden Festival  
Celebration of Island Growing Show

There are over 50 exhibitors and vendors along with thousands of show participants yearly. Come out and participate in how-to workshops or listen in on topics of the day when the experts come to share their experiences and knowledge. There are always many new creative.



ideas, display gardens, products, educational tools, gardening advice, as well as dining, live music, art, and children's care and activities. This Festival is for all who share in the love of gardens, personally or professionally.

Admission is \$6 per day or \$15 for all three days.

#### Location

Beban Park Social Centre, 2300 Bowen Road,  
Nanaimo

Contact: <http://cvibgs.org/annual-spring-garden-festival>

### City of Burnaby

Saturdays, April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, and 16<sup>th</sup>  
'Cut It Out' Invasive Plant Workshop Series in Burnaby  
The City of Burnaby is having a three part Invasive Plant Workshop series, featuring presenters from the Greater Vancouver Invasive Plant Council



(GVIPC), as well as Evergreen and The Land Conservancy of BC. Learn how to ID Burnaby's top invaders, how to get rid of them and how to create an urban garden that won't "leak" into our surrounding natural areas. Space is limited, so please register early.

Registration opened Feb. 7, 2011 and these workshops do fill up so sign up soon!

Cost: \$5 per person, per workshop.  
Register using WebReg at:  
[www.burnaby.ca/webreg](http://www.burnaby.ca/webreg)

Location & Time:  
Burnaby Village Museum & Carousel in the Discovery Room | 6501 Deer Lake Avenue from 10am-12noon

Contact: T: 604.294.7690 | [invasiveplants\[at\]burnaby.ca](mailto:invasiveplants[at]burnaby.ca)

Reoccurring Events

Victoria Natural History Society

**Botany Night**

3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month  
Go to [www.vicnhs.bc.ca](http://www.vicnhs.bc.ca) to become a member and support our local Natural History Society!

Location & Time  
Swan Lake Nature Centre at 7:30pm

Contact| Adolf Ceska | [aceska\(at\)telus.net](mailto:aceska(at)telus.net) | <http://www.vicnhs.bc.ca>

Rithet's Bog Conservation Society

Work Parties  
1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of each month  
Everyone is welcome at our monthly work parties as described on our website.

The Rithets Bog Conservation Society is asking the nature loving public to show their tangible support for the bog by purchasing a \$10 tax deductible annual membership.

Location & Time  
Work parties are between 1pm-3pm, but meeting site varies, depending on the work we are undertaking.

Contact Karen Towne | [ktowne\[at\]telus.net](mailto:ktowne[at]telus.net)

Or

Russ Pym | [rpym\[at\]shaw.ca](mailto:rpym[at]shaw.ca) | [www.rithetsbog.org](http://www.rithetsbog.org)

For all VNHS events:  
No pets please.  
Bring a lunch and drinks for the all-day outings.  
Wear appropriate attire and footwear.  
  
Contact Agnes | 250-721-0634 | [thelynnns\(at\)shaw.ca](mailto:thelynnns(at)shaw.ca) | [www.vicnhs.bc.ca](http://www.vicnhs.bc.ca)



Castilleja  
Photo from [bcadventure.com](http://bcadventure.com)





**Do you have something you would like to see in the NPSG Newsletter?**

Please send submissions to Ilana Kronick at [ilanakronick@yahoo.com](mailto:ilanakronick@yahoo.com) no later than the second Thursday of each month.

## What's going on next month?

Come hear John-Bradley William share his stories about the ethnobotany of the Saanich and Ahoosat people. John-Bradley is Saanich and Ahoosat and has been working with SeaChange Marine Conservation where he takes local school groups out to learn about environmental issues. He also works with Feasting for Change where he is working to re-introduce traditional methods of preparing food as well as promoting traditional foods.



### NATIVE PLANT STUDY GROUP (NPSG)

(Sub-group of the registered non-profit Native Plant Society of British Columbia and is guided by a steering committee)

The NPSG is a non-political group dedicated to learning about B.C. native plants as wild populations and in garden settings, and to supporting conservation of native plants and their habitats. Participation in outside events, by the group, or by individual members, using the NPSG name is dependent on approval of the steering committee or, where indicated, by the at-large membership. Activities requiring funding must receive approval by the general membership.

Co-Chair	Valerie Elliott  T: 519-0404  <a href="mailto:co-chair@npsg.ca">co-chair@npsg.ca</a>
Co-Chair:	Nathalie Dechaine
Speakers:	Hilary Stead
Treasurer:	Joan Varley
Newsletter:	Ilana Kronick Hilary Stead
Plant Salvage Coordinator:	Todd Doherty
Membership:	Agnes Lynn
Publicity:	Valerie Elliott
Room Set-up:	Pat & Wayne Robertson
Plant Draw:	Heather Pass
List-serve:	Linda Beare & John Olafson
Refreshments:	Pat McMahon  T: 381-3544
Archivist:	Brenda Pilon  T: 380-6845
Sustain Supporters Liaise:	Christine Nykiforuk
NPSBC Liaise:	Moralea Milne

Native Plant Study Group members are members of the Native Plant Society of BC.