



THE YAK

Volume 35, Number 3

March 2021



r. argipeplum

Fraser South Rhododendron Society
is a chapter of the
American Rhododendron Society

<http://frasersoutherhododendron.ca>

Map : <https://goo.gl/maps/ZB1m1jnF9DP2>

Meetings are held at 7:30 p.m. on the third
Wednesday of each month (except June,
July, August).

In person meetings are not being held at this
time.

Cover:



r. argioplum

Rhododendron subsection: Barbata

Height: 2-7.5m, a generally upright shrub or small tree. Branchlets bristly or glandular-bristly; bark reddish to brown, flaking and smooth.

Leaves: 8-16 x 2.8-6cm, oblong-lanceolate to elliptic-lanceolate, base sometimes cordulate, convex, rugulose, retained 1-2 years; upper surface glabrous, lower surface with a thin, continuous, loose indumentum, white at first, turning to buff to rufous or greyish-shite,

Inflorescence: 10-19 flowered, compact

Corolla: tubular campanulate, 2.8 – 4.5cm long, scarlet to crimson; calyx variable, 2-10cm, often fleshy, sometimes granular, ovary dense rufous tomentose and glandular; style glabrous.

Bloom: February - April

Distribution: Sikkim to Bhutan, 8,000 – 12,000 feet, fir and rhododendron forest.

Introduced pre-1859, reintroduced 1980, mostly from Bhutan

Source:
- *The Encyclopedia of Rhododendron Species* by Peter A. Cox and Kenneth N.E. Cox

This Month

Date: Wednesday, March 17, 2021 at 7:30 pm.

Place: Zoom meeting from the comfort of your own home

TITLE: 'A Hop, Skip, and Jump in Eastern Australia'
- Ginny Fearing



Join us as our own Ginny Fearing takes us on a tour of Eastern Australia.

Next Month

Date: Wednesday, April 21, 2021 at 7:30 pm.

Place: Zoom meeting from the comfort of your own home

TITLE: Supporting Nature: Gardening with Native Plants – Tamsin Baker (Fraser Valley Conservancy)

Want to have a thriving garden that helps local wildlife? This presentation will discuss reasons for gardening with native plants, native plant recommendations, where to find them, and other tips on how you can be a nature steward in your backyard.

Tamsin Baker, MSc, is a nature stewardship specialist with over 20 years of nature conservation experience in the Lower Mainland and Fraser Valley. She currently works with the Fraser Valley Conservancy and South Coast Conservation Program coordinating various land and species at risk conservation initiatives, and is the co-author of the booklet *Gardening with Native Plants in the Lower Mainland and Fraser Valley*.

2021 OFFICERS

President:	Colleen Bojczuk	604-826-4221
Past Pres:	Evelyn Jensen	604-857-5663
Vice Pres:	Jim Worden	604-541-4754
Secretary:	Barbara Mathias	778-580-6404
Treasurer:	Harold Fearing	604-857-4136
Directors:	Gerry Nemanishen	604-826-0166
	Robert Talbot	604-720-0134
	Nancy Moore	604-859-3690
Programme:	Jim Worden	604-541-4754
Membership:	Evelyn Jensen	604-857-5663
Newsletter:	Maureen Worden	604-541-4754
Librarian:	Gerald Nemanishen	604-826-0166
Website:	Maureen Worden	604-541-4754
Hospitality:	Jim & Margaret Cadwaladr	604-427-1685
BCCGC Liaison:	Vacant	

Reminders

Feel free to suggest program topics and/or speakers to any member of the executive.

Submit articles, photos, or suggestions for the newsletter or else you will be stuck with the editors choices.

Speaker reviews are always welcome!

Members are **Encouraged** to send their own "In the Garden" photos to the editor for inclusion in the YAK.

From the President

Do you ever stop and marvel at the absolute wonder of Nature? When I was working in the garden the other day, cleaning up perennial stems and fallen leaves, what do I find in the grass outside of the brick edging of the bed but some tiny Cyclamen seedlings – a single round silvery leaf and 1 exquisite pink bloom on each! The ants must carry the seeds away from the mother bulb, and they survive the mowing, raking, weeding and moss there under "Ilam Violet".

What a fantastic presentation by Mike Stewart last month. I learned so much about the culture and needs of the higher elevation species – alpine conditions rather than our preconceived ideas that all Rhodos prefer woodland conditions and acidic humus soil. If you missed it, I hope it can still be viewed.

Spring seems truly upon us, but we still need to respect the patience of Mother Nature, not to hurry things along out of their natural progression. We have so much brilliant color about us at the garden center, but we need to caution the impatient people that these are all greenhouse grown so far, and not acclimatized for open growing. My snowdrops didn't even blink during the cold snowy bout we had a few weeks back, but lots of other bulbs are up now, and the Bellarina primulas are showing color too. No Rhodos popping at home yet, but at work, under cover, we have Cilpinense, Seta, and the early PJM types in color. Hellebores, especially the "Ice & Roses" and the "Frostkiss" series have been glorious for the last 2 months, and both seem more cold tolerant than the older types, especially in pots. New stock is really starting to pile in now and we'll be up to our eyeballs in fresh items, so I guess it's back to "Eat-Sleep-Work, repeat" for the next few months. Hopefully my own garden will get a bit of attention before June! I hope everyone can join in this month to see Ginny's presentation on the trip to Australia – I know it will be wonderful to see. Have fun with the new Brain Teaser, and see you all soon.

Respectfully, *Colleen B*

From the Editor

Welcome to Spring! (I know it's not technically spring, but its close enough). The freezing arctic winds and snow have departed allowing the work crew to resume cleanup activities in the yard. Underneath the winter debris (and hardy weeds) there are signs of spring everywhere (including lots of hellebores). I love this time of year.

This month we have something for a variety of gardening interests from rhododendrons, to scent-sational plants for late spring, summer, and fall, to backyard birds thanks to John Lapins. I hope you enjoy!



I have yet to see the return of the Rufous male hummingbirds, but am expecting to see them shortly at the feeders. The females will follow once the weather warms up a bit. There is an abundance of Annas male hummingbirds at the feeders this year. Sometimes they share the feeders with each other (which seems out of character) but if the supply is running low, one male will take up residence and protect it from all the others. (This is my cue to replenish the supply). The female Annas seem to be welcome at any time and they appear quite comfortable in each other's presence.



The tete-a-tete daffodils have opened and the King Alfred daffodils are up and should be opening soon. The tulip bulbs in the patio planters have broken through the soil adding to the ever increasing signs of life. With activities still limited these are welcome reminders of that there is some continuity one can count on. The first rhododendrons are in bloom (*r.pravernum* and *r.argipeplum*) with many others showing the swelling buds that indicate their blooms will be arriving shortly.

I decided to get aggressive this year with my pruning. I've always been a "light" pruner but based on the size (hydrangeas) and the abundance of stems (the roses) both have experienced a severe pruning that will hopefully encourage more growth from the ground. Only time will tell. I would like to do a light bottom branch prune on a few rhodies to make it easier to access underneath them, but I value my serenity too much to attempt that one.

Like last year, this years May edition of the YAK will feature a "YAK Truss Show" in place of our annual in person truss show. Hopefully this will be the last one. So this is your cue, that as your gardens start to bloom, snap those pictures and in next month's YAK I'll provide the final details for submission. We had a great response last year so let's make this year's even bigger!

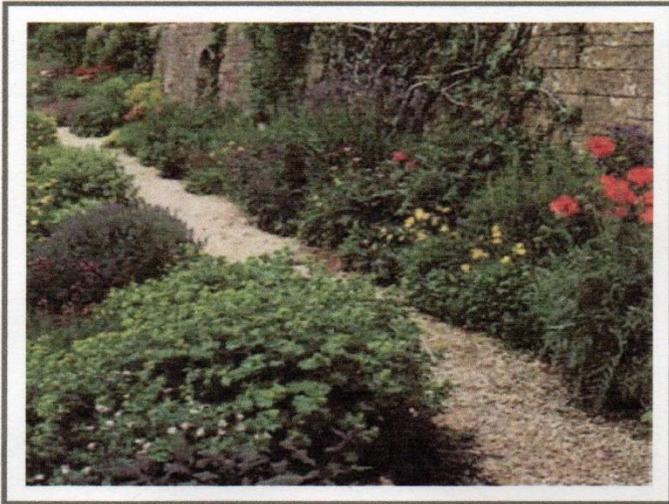
After two educational presentations focussing on rhododendrons, this month we're going travelling to Australia with Ginny Fearing's "Hop, Skip, and Jump through Eastern Australia". I know it will be very entertaining and informative and probably stir up the travel bug in all of us.

Keep well and enjoy your garden as it "Springs" to life in the coming days.

Maureen Worden

From the Archives

The following articles originally appeared in the Fraser South Newsletter, March 2010 by Norma Senn



Up the Garden Path More Scent-sational Plants

The amount of scent given off by daffs varies from intense, in the case of the small flowered Jonquilla and Tazetta types, to hardly any for the larger floral types. So, if you want scented daffs, check for fragrance at time of purchase.

Hyacinths, of course, are known for their “knock em dead” fragrance. Many of us force them as pot plants but they can be bedded out. The first spring after planting, good hyacinth bulbs will produce large flower heads. If left in place and allowed to continue growing, they won't have the great big heads of flowers after their first year, but they can go on for many years in a garden bed, and the smaller, more delicate flower stalks are charming and not so stiff. As with many bulbs, daffs and hyacinths need good drainage. As long as they receive full sun during the early spring when they are in leaf, they will continue to perform well for many years in the garden.

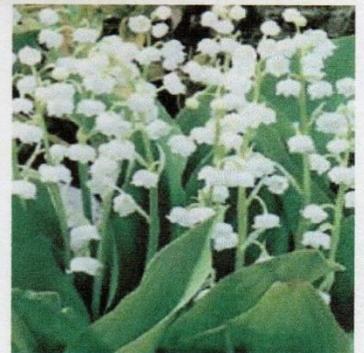
A word about *Fritillaria imperialis*, Crown Imperial: this is a magnificent flower, but the plants and bulbs stink! Here's an example of something best planted at the back of the flower border.

Lily of the Valley, *Convallaria majalis*, can be something of a mixed blessing. Personally, while I like this small plant and encourage it as a ground cover in selected areas, I've heard others complain that it becomes invasive over time. I think it forms a nice, low herbaceous ground cover, and the stalks of very fragrant white flowers in May are wonderful. For any of the women reading this who were Brownies or Guides, you will, no doubt, remember the camp song about the Lily of the Valley “bells” ringing when the fairies sing. Because of that song, whenever I smell these sweet flowers, I

In my last article, I wrote about fragrant plants for the winter and early spring garden. That's just the starting point, as there are many plant choices that offer scent through the late spring, summer and early fall. Since it's the time of year when we start looking through seed catalogues and planning our summer gardens, here are some herbaceous plant choices to consider adding for fragrance.

Bulbs: At this time of the year, the spring bulbs are popping up everywhere, and for anyone wanting fragrance in the garden, two good bulb choices are Narcissus and Hyacinths. If you didn't get around to planting them last fall, there are lots of potted bulbs available and these can be popped into the garden this spring or enjoyed as house plants. Both daffs and hyacinths can stand alone as featured plants in the spring garden, or they are good accent plants in our shrub borders. The

daffodils, in particular, are wonderful for naturalizing, and in time can form large patches.



still conjure up images of the wee folk dancing around the garden, waving flower stalks of Lily of the Valley in the moonlight. Like many of the small bulbs, Lily of the Valley can be planted 'in the green' successfully, so if you want to encourage their spread, you can lift and move these easily in the early summer.

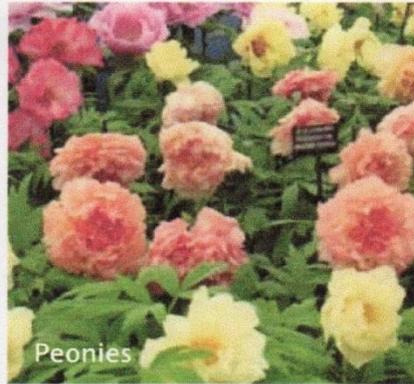
Herbaceous Perennials: Good fragrant herbaceous perennials for early summer on into the fall include German Bearded Iris, Peonies, Oriental Lilies, Perennial Phlox and some of the Salvias. All can be successfully mixed into shrub borders or grown as part of the quintessential herbaceous border. By including at least some of these



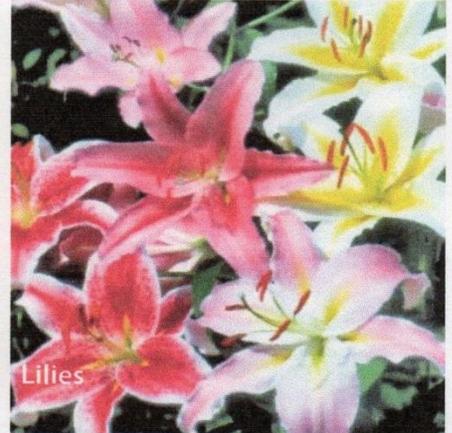
German Bearded Iris



Phlox



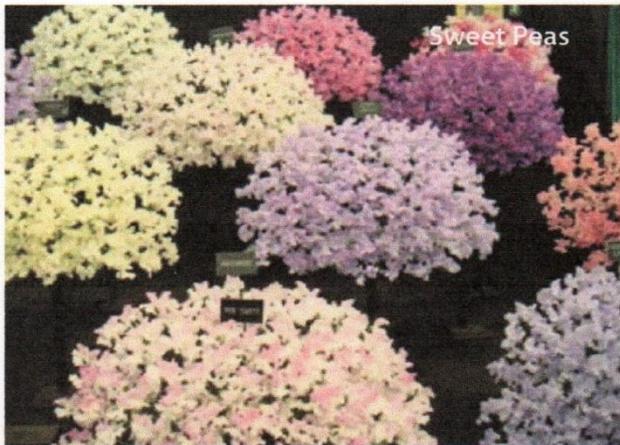
Peonies



Lilies

herbaceous plants, you get the double advantage of extending blooming interest throughout the growing season as well as fragrance. Lilies of all types are well-behaved companion plants for Rhodies, and even one Oriental Lily can scent an entire backyard. For fragrance and colour a bit later in the summer, many perennial Salvias and Summer Phlox are good as they come into their own in August and early September. I am especially fond of the fragrance given off by Summer phlox (*Phlox paniculata*) on warm, still nights in August.

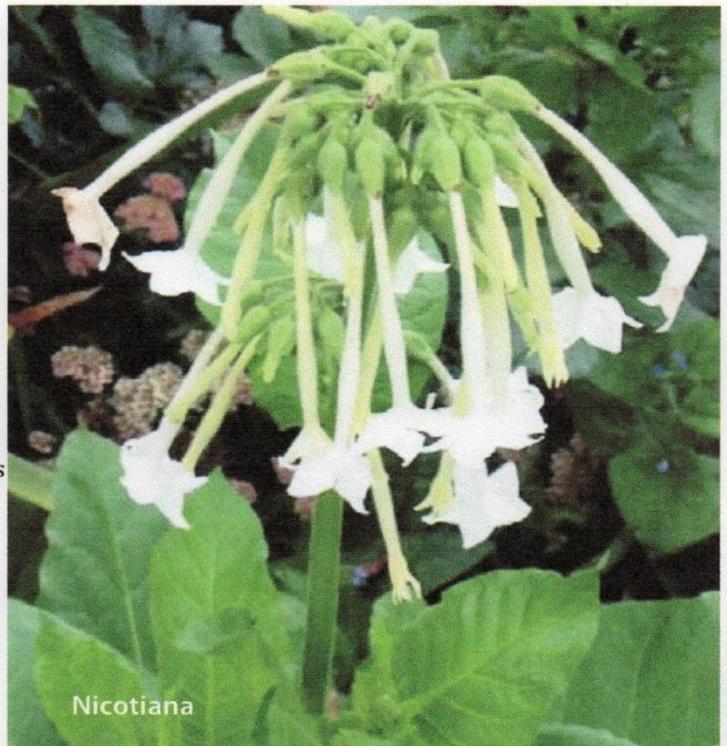
Annuals: Lots of annuals offer fragrance, and because they continue to bloom throughout the growing season, they add colour to our gardens all summer long. Among my favourites are the sweet peas which are so useful to train up fences and trellises. The floral colours come in gorgeous shades of white, pink, red and purple. There are now a number of dwarf selections available which are useful in large containers although I personally prefer the taller, older



Sweet Peas

varieties like the Spencer types. Keep cutting the flowers to encourage bloom throughout the summer. They need full sun and even moisture for best growth.

The Nicotianas and Petunias are also fragrant, particularly the older varieties. Like Summer Phlox, these come into their own on warm, still summer evenings. Sweet Alyssum and Heliotrope are also sweetly scented, and again, it's the older varieties that are the most fragrant. Both plants are useful additions



Nicotiana

to baskets and containers, and both will lure in butterflies. Sweet Alyssum may over-winter in mild years and also has a tendency to self-sow. I've not had any success in keeping Chocolate Cosmos going beyond one year so I consider this to be an annual plant. Others have told me that it should over-winter and behave as a short-lived perennial as long as it's planted in a sunny location with good drainage. However, as far as I'm concerned, any plant that smells like chocolate is worth re-planting every year.



Heliotrope

Depending on your tastes, marigolds are either fragrant or incredibly smelly. If you're in the latter group, but like their ease of growing and bright colours, odourless varieties are available from the seed catalogues. I wouldn't want marigolds in a bouquet on my dining room table, but I do like their scent outside.

Nowadays, Stock, *Matthiola incana*, is considered an old-fashioned plant, but it is still valued for its sweet fragrance. Stock needs cool growing conditions and is easy to grow here at the coast as long as good drainage is provided. The flowers are borne in spikes and may be single or double. Colours come in shades of white, pink, red and purple. The



Stock

evening scented stock, *M. longipetala bicornis* bears small purplish flowers that open in the evening to perfume the entire garden. Here's another example of a plant that puts its energy into scent rather than showy flowers.

So, get out your seed and garden catalogues and put that order together... there are lots of "sensational" plants to grow. Next time, fragrant woody plants for the summer garden.

Norma Senn

From the Garden



r. praevernum





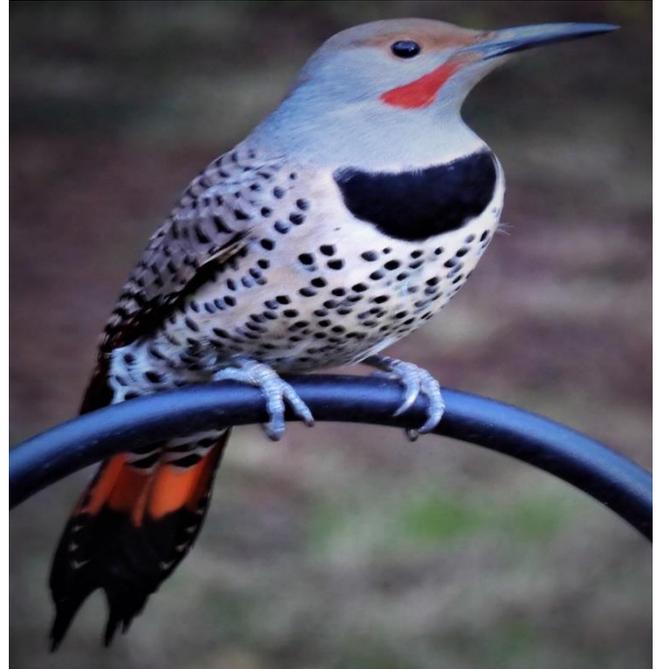
Backyard Sightings

I remember the talk that we had from the Wild Birds Unlimited lady when we were able to meet in person. I hope that you enjoy seeing them as much as I do when I am doing the washing up and looking out of our kitchen window.

John Lapins



Ruby Crowned Kinglet



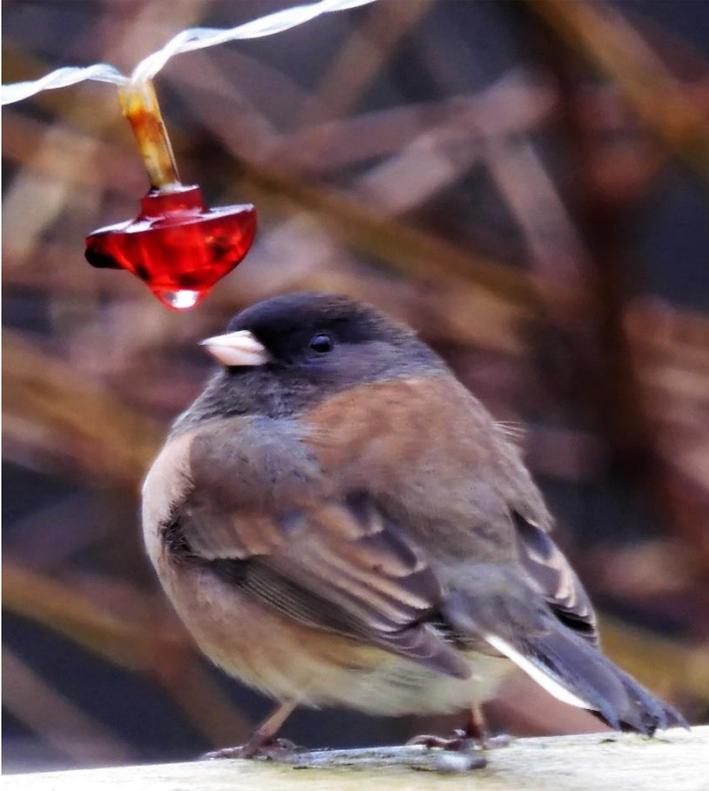
Northern Flicker



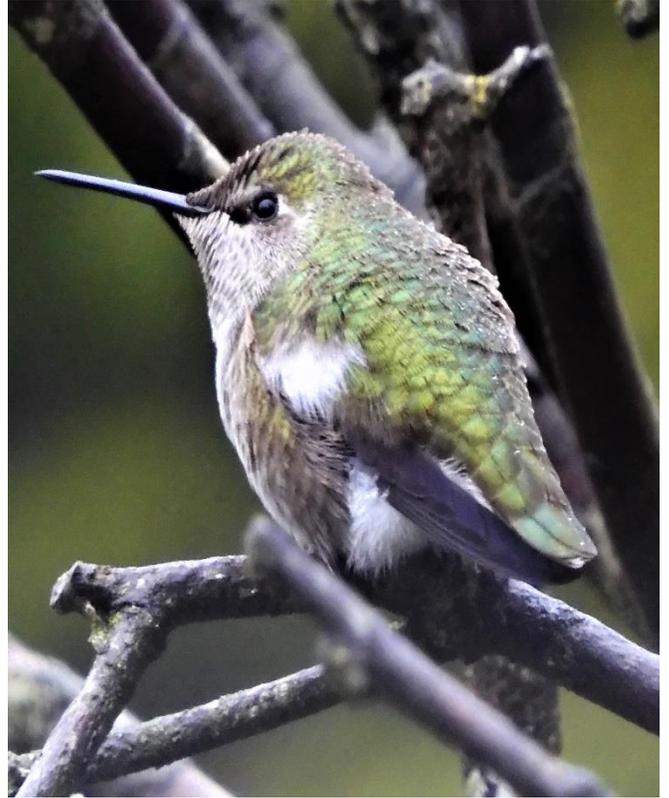
Song Sparrow



Red Breasted Nuthatch



Dark eyed Junco



Annas Hummingbird



Varied Thrush



Downy Woodpecker

Jim Barlup Hybrids

Picture credit : Jim Barlup



Command Performance (Hachmanns Charmant x Snow Candle)



Copper Canyon (Amber Sun x Jalisco x Joanita x r. yakushimanum x Goldfort x Odee Wright)



Copper Dust (Cimarron Sun x Casanova)



Coral Blossom (King of Shrubs x unknown x Lems Cameo x Jingle Bells)



Coral Dancer (Coral Blossom x Casanova)



Coral Dawn (Wild ginger x Bambi x r. proteoides x Yellow Saucer x Annas Riplet)



Coral Mist (Nancy Evans x Mrs. Furnivall)



Dancing Embers (Lems Tangerine x Fiery Orange)



Deep Clover (Fancy x r.yakushimanum x Frank Galsworth)



Desert Sunrise (Whitney Hybrid x Pierces Apricot)



Dorothy Bishop (Hachmanns Charmant x Lems Cameo)



Dreamweaver (Nancy Evans x Pink Petticoats)

Remember our first zoom presentation by Danielle Dagenais in November, 2020? I found the following in the local paper which I assume is applicable throughout the Lower Mainland.

Researchers keeping eye on spread of white-nose syndrome

Peninsula residents asked to monitor bat activity

Aaron Hinks
Staff reporter

Bat researchers in B.C. say public help is essential for monitoring the spread of the deadly white-nose syndrome.

It's the second time this year the BC Community Bat Program has reached out to media, asking the public to report bat sightings, regardless if the animal is dead or alive.

White-nose syndrome (WNS) is a fungus that's "very worrisome" for the health of B.C. bats. The disease, which has nearly 100 per cent mortality rate for some species of bats, has been confirmed east and west of the Cascade Mountains in Washington State, about 150 kilometres south of White Rock.

Detection of WNS in the province is challenging because local bats hibernate alone or in small groups across the province, a news release said.

"To monitor the spread of the disease, we need more eyes on the ground. Outdoor enthu-



B.C. researchers are asking for the public's help in monitoring the bat population. (Cathy Koot photo)

siasts and homeowners with roosts on their property may be the first to find evidence of trouble," said BC Community Bat Program regional co-ordinator Danielle Dagenais.

Signs of the disease include unusual bat activity in winter and the appearance of dead bats outdoors.

"We are encouraging the public to report dead bats or any sightings of winter bat activity to the BC Community Bat Program toll-free phone number, website, or email... Bat carcasses must be retained so that they can be collected and submitted for testing for white-nose syndrome. This would pro-

vide the earliest indication of the presence of the disease in BC," Dagenais said.

Local bats often hibernate by themselves in a woodpile or basement entry. If possible, the release said, sleeping bats should be left alone - "Keep your distance, snap a photo, and report to the BC Community Bat Program."

Information on how to safely move a bat can be found at www.bcbats.ca.

Bats coming out of hibernation before spring can be a sign of trouble, but that's not always the case, the release noted.

"Bats are also occasionally spotted flying on relatively warm winter days or evenings. Healthy bats may wake up to drink or even eat, if insects are active. Enjoy these sightings and remember to let us know when and where winter bat activity was observed."

Residents can report bat sightings to vancouver@bcbats.ca, www.bcbats.ca, or 1-855-922-2287 ext. 11.

Published March 4th, in the "Peace Arch News".