

# Sustainable Home and Garden Series 2010



## At the Greater Victoria Compost Education Centre!

**February 13**      **Planning Your Year Round Veggie Garden**      **Geoff Johnson**

Here in Victoria, good planning makes it possible to harvest produce from our gardens during every month of the year. Knowing when to sow seeds is important. But it's just as crucial to know when and how to transition one crop to another. With good design and planning, you can have broccoli and onions by early spring, just as your leeks and winter carrots are running out. In addition to year-round production, this workshop will also provide easy-to-follow guidelines for other key aspects of garden planning such as: siting the garden, pest prevention, crop selection/rotation, bed design options, and companion planting. This presentation will show you how to make your garden more intensive by planning crop rotations.

**February 27**      **Mason Bees Part 1**      **Gord Hutching**

In this introductory workshop to mason bees, local expert Gord Hutchings will familiarize you with this amazing local pollinator. The orchard mason bee plays an integral role in the pollination of plants in North America. They emerge in early March as adults and live until early June. To encourage orchard mason bee females to lay eggs in human designed homes, orchard mason Beekeepers create residences with a variety of channelled orifices called 'condos'.\*

\*We will be selling Gord's bee condos on the day of the workshop

**March 6**      **Planning Your Year Round Veggie Garden**      **Geoff Johnson**

(As described for Feb 13<sup>th</sup>)

**March 13**      **Wriggling Worms for Kids** (age 5-10 yrs)      **Nashira Birch**  
*Children must be accompanied by an adult.*



Production, season extension and crop specific rotation and management.

- June 5**                      **Grow the Best Brassicas**                      **Kim Watt**  
(full description to follow soon)
- June 19**                      **Build the Best Soil**                      **Jackie Robson**
- Soil chemistry for the home gardener: Have you toiled away all summer and had poor results: tiny onions, bug infested lettuces, and bland tasting carrots? You can blame some of these problems on imbalances in soil chemistry. Just like you need a blood test to tell you what's wrong with your body, you need to get a soil test to tell you what is going on with your soil. Balanced pH and appropriate levels of nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium and micronutrients are essential for successful organic gardening. Learn about these elements, how to test your soil and how to make the best soil for your garden.
- June 26**                      **Gardening in Small Spaces**                      **Geoff Johnson**
- For many of us urbanites, space is the most limiting factor in our efforts to grow food at home. However, with a little knowledge and creativity it's easy to produce fruits and veggies in the spaces we have available. In this workshop we'll explore space utilisation, appropriate plants, potting mixes, and even micro-composting techniques.
- July 3**                      **Food Preservation**                      **Dayle Cosway (Terralicious)**  
(Full description to follow soon)
- July 24**                      **Chickens in the City**                      **Marilyn Soames**
- This workshop will cover:  
Lifecycle of chickens  
Raising and sourcing day old chicks  
Raising and sourcing point of lay hens (5 months old)  
Organic Standards and coop and run designs  
CRD bylaws  
Feed and water requirements  
Social behaviour and troubleshooting bad behaviour, sickness and injury  
Chicken tractors and permaculture integration techniques

**September 11**    **Basics of Honey Beekeeping**    **John Defayette**  
(Full description to follow soon)

**September 18**    **Chickens in the City**    **Marilyn Soames**  
So popular we're running it twice! (See above description)

**September 25**    **Seed Saving**    **Mary-Alice Johnson**

This is the time of year to be saving seeds from your favorite tomatoes, pepper and lettuce. You can even use the tomatoes you buy at the farmer's markets in town. In this practical workshop we will look at selection, harvesting, processing, cleaning and storing seed for next year's garden.

**October 16**    **Grow the Best Garlic**    **Robin Tunicliffe**

Garlic lovers unite! There are few garden crops more impressive than beautiful bulbs of garlic. Learn how to grow bountiful yields of delicious garlic. Topics covered include: an introduction to the many varieties, preparing the soil for planting, nurturing your crop, hanging and storage, and recipes to enjoy eating your harvest. Bring your favourite recipes to share with the group.

**October 23**    **Grow the Best Mushrooms**    **Justin Napier**

Although they may not know it, most gardeners are already mushroom growers! Find out just how easily delicious mushrooms can be grown by the home gardener. Techniques demonstrated will be the inoculation of straw or woodchip beds with grain and chip spawn. Also learn how to maximize your garden ecology by introducing fungi as mycorrhizae.

**November 13 Propagating Food Plants**

**Geoff Johnson**

Propagating your own food plants is a rewarding way to save money, increase self-reliance, and cultivate a deeper understanding of plants in general. Although more difficult techniques such as grafting are required to multiply some food plants, many more can easily be started from seed, cuttings, divisions, and layers. In this intro-level workshop we will explore the basics of plant propagation and look at which methods work best for different types of plant

**November 20 Mason Bees Part II**

**Gord Hutchings**

In this second part to march's introductory workshop, you will learn how to clean your orchard mason bee condos and cocoons. The best time for this to happen is after September with November being the most ideal month. Mites are the biggest pest in a bee condo and Gord will teach you the best methods for getting the mites off without harming the cocoons.

## Instructor Bios



### **Dayle Cosway**

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Bio coming soon!

### **Geoff Johnson**

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Geoff graduated from Linnaea Farm's permaculture design program in 1995, and has focused on studying, practicing, and teaching urban permaculture ever since. Over the past decade he has worked and volunteered with a variety of local organizations to develop several urban agriculture demonstration sites (including the area's first edible park, Spring Ridge Commons). As site educator at the Compost Education Centre (1999-2005) he launched his teaching career by developing and instructing a series of educational workshops on the practice of urban homesteading. Abroad, he has participated in several community agriculture projects in Australia and the Indian

Himalayas, and completed a six month internship at the Bullock's Permaculture Centre in the Washington state. Currently, Geoff is developing a demonstration urban homestead and bike-powered food nursery in Fernwood where he practices the methods on which his workshops are based.

### **Gord Hutchings**

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Gord Hutchings is a part-time instructing biologist teaching community courses regarding native bees, dragonflies and other insects. He has been involved in dragonfly and insect surveys in Saskatchewan, British Columbia and Yukon Territory for the Royal B.C. Museum, Saskatchewan Conservation Data Centres, Canadian Wildlife Service and Yukon Territory Government. He has taught Extension Program classes at University of Saskatchewan, University of Victoria and Camosun College and divides his time between Saskatchewan and B.C. His book on dragonflies of the boreal forest will be out in the spring of 2010.

### **Jackie Robson**

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Confessing herself to be a fascinated plant fool, Jackie Robson was first motivated to learn organic growing by the simple desire to feed herself. The core idea of food security hit her all at once when talking to a friend in the mid-80's. Her friend, Paul talked about city dwellers as sitting ducks with no ability to grow food and provide for themselves. At that moment, Jackie decided that she would learn everything she could about providing year-round organic produce. That decision has lead Jackie down some surprising, twisty turns. She was first hired as the horticulturist for the Sooke Garden Project in 1988, going on to become coordinator/instructor for the Colwood Garden Project. Jackie went on to learn about the politics of food security by working as the garden coordinator for the PATH Project, (Promoting Action Toward Health), helping to found the Wark St. Commons. Jackie continues to work for the commons with other dedicated volunteers. She also gardens and gives tours at The Sooke Harbour House and works as head gardener at Pt. Ellice House, while working with friends and neighbours to create as many beautiful and functional gardens as she can.

### **John Defayette**

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Bio coming soon!

### **Justin Napier**

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As an amateur mycologist, Justin is working hard at bringing mushrooms into the mainstream of ecology, gardening, and cuisine. With an extensive background in gardening, combined with a passion for mushroom foraging, Justin began growing his

first shiitake mushrooms eight years ago. Since then, he has grown his favourite varieties for pleasure and profit, both in the lab and at home

### **Kim Watt**

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Kim's path to managing an urban agriculture and education site has been a lifelong one. Kim grew up in a family of farmers, organic gardeners, permaculturists, and food-lovers, who nurtured her passion for green living from a young age. As a teenager, she began taking permaculture and organic gardening courses. After high school, she followed her passion down to Central America for an internship on a permaculture farm. In 2008, Kim completed the 9-month intensive Linnaea Ecological Gardening Program on Cortes Island and is now our centre's Site Manager. She is currently completing her degree in Child and Youth Care and Environmental Studies, and applying her passion for this work into developing a youth program (SLUGS – Sustainable Living and Urban Gardening Skills) at the Compost Education Centre.

### **Marilyn Soames**

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In 2001, Marilyn began keeping chickens with a couple of other people. They had only 12 hens and a rooster but were completely smitten with these marvelous creatures. She decided to get an additional flock of her own and this time chose heritage birds in order to be part of the conservancy movement. She has been gifted with the friendship of some elderly poultry men and women who have generously passed on their knowledge to her as so much about chicken husbandry is near to being lost. She wishes to pay it forward. Marilyn has a background in art and education, with a Bachelor of Education and Masters Degree courses in art therapy techniques. She has been an avid organic gardener for over 35 years, has worked in the education area of the annual poultry exhibition at the Saanich Fair, and is a member of the Cowichan Feather Fanciers poultry group.

### **Mary-Alice Johnson**

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Mary-Alice Johnson from ALM Farm and Full Circle Seeds in Sooke has been involved in the farm's teaching program for over 20 years. She has taught courses and workshops at the farm and throughout the community on Calendaring, Seed Saving, Winter Gardening, Cob Ovens, Growing Amazing Tomatoes, Salad Throughout the Seasons, Plant Propagation, Edible/Medicinal Herbs, Organic Farming as a Business, High Yield Organic Growing.

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## **Nashira Birch**

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Nashira is our centre's Education and Outreach Coordinator and was born and raised in a tiny back-to-the-land community in the mountains of British Columbia. She has since lived in Hawaii, Victoria, Malawi, and India, but has decided that BC is definitely home, and is now rediscovering the joys of gardening and composting. She has her BA in Child and Youth Care from the University of Victoria. She has been working for many years with young people and communities, as a youth program leader, an environmental educator, a curriculum developer, and a program evaluator. Her position here at the centre is exciting for her because it allows her to bring together her work with young people with her passion for playing in the dirt and creating a more sustainable life.

## **Robin Tunicliffe**

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Robin is an organic farmer and passionate food activist. She is a co-owner of Saanich Organics, a cooperative marketing business through which she and other local growers market their produce to Victoria-area residents and restaurants. She can be found at the Moss Street market in the summer and researching food policy issues at UVic in the winter. She has been farming for the past 10 years, and enjoys sharing her love of growing and eating with others. She is on the board of directors for UBC Farm, USC and Farmers without Borders.