



Russell Nursery Gardening News

Celebrating 20 years in business

March 2013



A sure sign of spring!

We gardeners are eternal optimists and there is nothing like a spring day (even a chilly one!) to make us want to get out there and get going. When it comes to turning all the dreams and schemes into reality we can help. Here's to another year of great growing. We hope to see you soon!

What's Up at the Nursery? Lots actually. Perennials and bulbs are popping up, trees are budding, new stock is arriving, classes are starting and our new retail/class space is nearly done. All in all, the place is looking very spring-like!

Edibles: Time to stock up on seed potatoes, onion sets, asparagus roots, pea starts, fresh herbs. **Also small fruits:** Blueberries, raspberries, strawberries, saskatoons, cranberries, and rhubarb. Try something exotic like figs, honeyberries or goji berries.



Bare Root Roses available now.

We think that roses should be integrated into beds and borders and co-exist with other plants. To that end we try to bring in only the healthiest and easiest of roses.

[2013 Rose Catalogue](#)

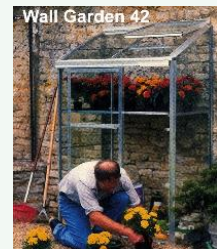


ProtekNet Insect Netting: This is a great new product that can be cut to any size and reused many times. It can even be sewn into bags for use on bushy fruits like currants. Guards against carrot rust fly, cabbage moths, spotted wing drosophila and many other insect pests.

Some great new plants: Look for such things as a whole lot of new dwarf rhodos. Also new trees like 'Little Twist' flowering cherry. 'Royal Raindrops' crabapple, Magnolia 'Centennial', Magnolia 'Judy Zuk'.

Bees: Mason bee houses (made by Brian!) and mason bees are available now. **It's almost time** to release your bees. If you're wondering what all the buzz about bees is, sign up for the bee class on Saturday, March 23. **(see below for details)**

Greenhouses: Over the last year greenhouses have sprouted up all over the nursery and if you have been contemplating a greenhouse, you may want to come by and have a look. **Hall's English Greenhouses** have classic lines, are well made and will enhance any garden for many years to come. They range in size from a compact lean-to type 2' x 4' wall garden - for the smallest of spaces, to a spacious, freestanding 14' x 8' Magnum.



UPCOMING CLASSES

Classes are free but space is limited.

Please reserve by [email](#) or call 250-656-0384



WHAT'S THE BUZZ? Sat. March 23 10:00 a.m. Timing is everything, especially when it comes to mason bees. Releasing them at the proper time can make all the difference. **Local bee expert Greg Cook** will explain the ins and outs of looking after these fascinating creatures and how to help them, help you and your garden.

NATURAL LAWN CARE Sat. March 30 10:00 a.m. **with John Close of Lush Eco Lawns.** A beautiful lawn doesn't have to be synonymous with overuse of water, fertilizer and chemicals. A lawn is really a collection of plants, and like all plants will thrive if given the right conditions. Learn how to have a healthy, green, low

2013 Pre-BONSAI Collection

There are some interesting new items in this years collection. Most are either bare root or plugs. Also featured are potted two year old maples, parrotia and more.



Plant Design Service

Need some help? Just ask.! We are now offering two levels of design help focused on planting plans for either new beds or existing garden areas in need of replanting.

[More information](#)

Quick Links

[Nursery Website](#)
[Greenhouses](#)
[Nursery Notes](#)
[More About Us](#)



Fallen Tree Art Studio & Gallery

maintenance lawn without pesticides or chemical fertilizers.

TEN BEST DESIGN TIPS FOR A GORGEOUS GARDEN. Sat. April 06, 10:00 a.m. *with Louise Boutin, Garden Designer and Landscape Architect* Simplify your to-do list by targeting the best moves to achieve the greatest impact. Louise will discuss tips on structure, style, colour and focus areas. We'll look at strategies for screening the bad parts, highlighting the good ones and creating focal points. We'll also talk about container placement for best results; gateways, entryways, and terrace food pots.

GROW VEGETABLES ALL YEAR, NO MATTER WHAT SPACE YOU HAVE

Sun. April 07 and Mon. April 08 10:00 a.m. *with our own Faye Ford* Are you harvesting vegetables from your own garden right now? If not, you are missing out on the peak harvest time for many of the most nutritious vegetables: spinach, kale, chard, purple sprouting broccoli, leeks etc. Even root vegetables may still be in the ground ready for pulling and eating. Perhaps you feel you don't have the space or time to garden all year? It's easier than you think. Join Faye's class and **learn to grow vegetables in small spaces all year round.**

BONSAI WORKSHOP Saturday, April 13 10:00 a.m.

Enjoy this rare opportunity to *work alongside members of the Vancouver Island Bonsai Society* in this hands-on workshop. Club members will be working on their own specimens as they guide you through the process of creating a bonsai. Whether you need help getting started or have questions about what's next, this workshop will be fun and informative. Instruction is free, but basic supplies and plants will be available for purchase. *Class size is limited, and pre-registration is required.*

HOW TO SET UP A HOBBY GREENHOUSE Sunday, April 14 10:00 a.m. *with Mike McCandlish of Chalet Creek farm & Garden.* This class will be of interest to anyone who is either pondering a greenhouse or is just getting started with one. Mike will talk about the benefits of having a greenhouse and how to make the most of it. He will cover how to choose the right location for a hobby greenhouse and how to set it up to make the most of the space. He'll also be able to answer any greenhouse related questions that you might have.

Spring Cleaning Ornamental Grasses

The basic rule of ornamental grass maintenance is to leave them standing over winter and don't mess with them until they are actively growing in early to late spring. They don't require much care, but will benefit from some annual grooming and spring is the time to do it. Most of the grooming involves cutting back, and when and how to cut back depends on the type of grass you have. [Read More](#)



Random Notes: What Went Wrong & What Went Right?

Early spring always feels like a fresh start for gardeners, a chance to look back on what happened last year, see what worked and what didn't, and to learn from those mistakes. A few observations from our gardens...

COULD HAVE BEEN BETTER:

Mulch left on too late: Soil is helped by winter mulch, which protects it from pounding rain and the freeze/thaw cycle. My mistake was to leave the mulch on too late. Better idea is to move the mulch over a bit, and expose the soil to let those early rays of sun warm it.

Too much, too early! Another mulch mistake was using a straw mulch too early, trying to keep the seed beds moist. Bad mistake. The seedlings had to reach so high to get above the straw, the poor little things were tall and lanky from the beginning.

Seeds for winter vogs planted too late Young plants need the longer hours of daylight to maximize early growth. If they miss out on this, it can't be made up even

(at Russell Nursery)

Open Saturdays and Sundays
from 10am - 5pm, and by
chance.

**Re-opening
Saturday, April 20**

*~ Abstract and
mixed media images ~*

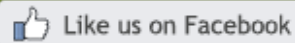
**1st Exhibit of the Year
May 01 - May 31**

Featuring work by:

Michele Cullen Russell
Alison Sproule
Kristin Rohr

**Meet the Artists Day
Sunday, May 05**

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and news:



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with a hot August. Start seeds early. Winter crops, need to be full sized plants by Halloween, so get the seeds planted in time for this to happen. **(Start winter leeks TODAY!)**

Never enough... Especially in the winter veggie garden, I forgot that I was planting for several months of eating. Plant more! (Can plant successive crops of peas in spring.)

More protection needed. Insects are voracious and determined. Too many brassicas were turned to lace by the cabbage moth, but this year I'll foil them with insect netting.

The dear deer...can't read. I should have protected new plantings. New growth on almost anything is tasty. I also should have caged a newly planted maple to protect the bark from being stripped by a huge buck using it to scratch his antlers.

Plants need to eat too! I try to treat the earth with respect and feed my soil well. However, some plants do need fertilizer, whether organic or not, and they will tell you if they are hungry. Mine complained a little last year; apparently I didn't feed them enough. This year I'll use Acer in April, for sure. I promise.

More Water, or why my zucchini didn't grow: Even irrigated areas can dry out and an area that I thought was well watered was bone dry two inches down. The only way to know if a spot is getting enough water is to dig around a little bit.

WHAT WORKED WELL?

Best decision ever! Getting rid of the front lawn.

I planted lots of hellebores last year, and they are magnificent now. Plant fewer varieties, more of each. Mass plantings are much more dramatic.

Peas in vermiculite are a miracle! Start peas, sweet peas, beans and corn (ie very large seeds) in a container with damp vermiculite rather than starting them in the ground. No rot, no varmints eating seeds, and 100% germination. Plant in ground when 4" tall.

I'm harvesting vegetables in March so I must have done something right! Some are outside, some in the greenhouse where I have been picking shiny clean, perfect leaves all winter.

Cutting back, in time! Managed to get the epimediums all cut back before the unfurling flower stems got in the way. Timing is everything in spring maintenance. Ferns are next, then ornamental grasses, which should be cut down when new growth first appears.

Finally getting rid of stuff that wasn't working: What a relief to get rid of ugly old shrubs and plant something new.

Accepting less than perfection was my greatest achievement this gardening year; focusing on the beauty of each leaf, flower and morsel. It's good enough.

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