

## February!



Is Spring just around the corner? Please!

### *Wildlife in the Garden...*

Over the winter, those of us with gardens will play host to many 4 legged and feathered visitors, all looking for food and shelter, - an increasing difficult job in the city.

One of my favorites, of the 'fine feathered' variety, is the Rufous -Sided Towhee. You will find the Towhee hopping about the underbrush, never one to fly high. Often the Towhee is confused with the American Robin, due to the colour of the sides and flanks, red in both cases. However, these two species are not related at all, with the Towhee a member of the sparrow family, and the Robin being a thrush. If you look closer at the Towhee, you will see the differences, - in particular, the smaller size compared to the Robin. As well, the nest of the Towhee is usually on the ground, well hidden in a thicket or a shrub. Eggs are laid in May. While grubs and insects make up most of the diet of young birds, seeds are important throughout the winter. The Towhee is a regular visitor to my yard, generally feeding on seeds knocked out of the feeders by the other birds.

Of course, we all have unwelcome visitors as well, mostly the raccoons who perform their nightly crawl throughout the yard, often attacking sections of lawns in search of the chafer grub. This winter we installed solar powered, motion triggered noise deterrents, but

fear our raccoons must be deaf, as they don't seem to hear or pay any attention to the noise. Perhaps the reward is greater than the bothersome noise!

Ah well, our gardens would certainly be dull without our little guests, whether they are welcome or not!



*the Rufous-Sided Towhee*



I captured this photo of a squirrel sitting beside a bird feeder in my front yard. He certainly didn't look like he was lacking in food, and seemed to be relaxing and enjoying some rare afternoon sun.

## *Spring Wishes...*

If you have anything to share, - stories or pictures, that you think our BRAGS members might enjoy, please send them on! We'd love to see them!

Send to Cheryl Fiddis @ [ecfiddis@telus.net](mailto:ecfiddis@telus.net)

A friend in Ottawa sent me these lovely photos of a Yellow Peony which blooms in her yard each summer. This plant was given to her in memory of a loved one. Beautiful!



### *In Case You Didn't Know...*

The peony or paeony is a flowering plant in the genus *Paeonia*, the only genus in the family *Paeoniaceae*. They are native to Asia, Europe and Western North America. Scientists differ on the number of species that can be distinguished, ranging from 25 to 40, although the current consensus is 33 known species.

Just in time for those dark deary days, my Spring Botanus catalogue arrived. I found myself pouring over the "Unusuals", - a selection of 'something different'. Chosen by the Botanus team, these plants are certainly well deserving of the 'unusual' category. A Botanus bonus, is how they feature such wonderful pictures so you can really get an idea what everything looks like. A few that jumped out for me are: the Canna Dwarf Lucifer, the Bessera Elegans, the Ismene Sulphur Queen, and the Gloriosa Rothschildiana. What a lovely burst of inspiration for this years' garden! If you don't receive their catalogue, be sure to visit their website at: [www.botanus.com](http://www.botanus.com).



*Canna Dwarf Lucifer*



*Bessera Elegans*

### **BRAGS Membership**

If you haven't yet done so, please see Anne at the next meeting to pay your 2018 dues. Exact change is appreciated. Still only \$12 per year, BRAGS members share various gardening interests and enjoy monthly guest speakers, plus are entitled to discounts of regularly priced items at GardenWorks and other garden centres, simply by presenting their membership cards. Monthly meetings (excepting July & August) start at 7 pm at the Burnaby Village Museum, - Main Building, up on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. Easy to get to with ample free parking and refreshments are served! Please join us!

## BRAGS EXECUTIVE

### President

Wendy Thompson  
604-420-6513

### Vice-President

Bev Glover  
604-540-2883

### Treasurer

Susan Brandl  
604-433-4250

### Secretary

Linda Cholette  
604-298-9059

### Past President

Verna Adamson  
604-294-5550

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## STANDING COMMITTEES

### Membership

Anne Forsyth  
604-298-6350

### Nominations

Verna Adamson

### Publicity

Evelyn Crawford  
604-437-8395

## Rhododendron Festival

Verna Adamson  
604-294-5550

Bev Glover  
604-540-2883

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## OTHER COMMITTEES

### Plant Sale

David & Anne Forsyth

### Newsletter

Cheryl Fiddis  
604-435-2801

Anne & David Forsyth

604-298-6350

### Welcome Desk

Janet Hayes  
604-420-5995

### Refreshments

Faye Kilpatrick  
604-434-5921

### Speakers

Beth MacLaren  
604-253-7036

### Website

David Forsyth  
604-298-6350

## Upcoming Meetings Events/Club News

**2018!**

### **February 7, 2018**

Nicholas Funke, of Bartlett Tree Experts presents:  
"Managing young, and fruit trees" and more...

### **March 7, 2018**

Dianne Gaines presents:

"What's new in summer flowering bulbs and perennials."

### **April 4, 2018**

"Bonsai" with Peter Brolese, a long time member of the Bonsai Society.

### **May 2, 2018**

Pam Erickson with her newest presentation:

"The Evolution of our garden, and of course, Daylilies, Lilies, and Hostas". Pam will bring plants to sell.

### **June 6, 2018**

**TBA**

### **May 6<sup>th</sup>, Sunday - Save The Date!**

Rhodofest 2018!

Your volunteer help will once again be needed to make sure our upcoming Rhodo Festival is another success. Please keep the date free and be ready to sign up! Help will be needed before the festival, and during the big day, so there are lots of opportunities. Verna and Bev will have the sign up sheets available at an upcoming meeting.



## Out & About Etc...

*GW Customer Appreciation Day,*

*February 15, 2018*

Be sure to mark the date for GardenWorks 15% savings all day. Don't forget to visit to see what's just around the corner for Spring. The days are getting longer and brighter, and some gardens are already showing signs of new growth.