



# Happy One Year Anniversary!

by [Grace Nombrado](#)



On January 15, 2022, it will be our one year anniversary of Free the Fern! Let's take some time to look back and celebrate our

***Accomplishments of 2021***

**Events & Stewardship**



In 2021, Free the Fern members organized **11 events**. Including an [Invasive Removal Zoom](#), [Indigenous Plant Walk](#), [Community Planting Event](#), [Winter Solstice Lantern Workshop & Procession](#), and 7 other pull and planting events.

Free the Fern began stewarding (removing invasive plants and planting native plants) at [4 areas along the Red Alder Trail](#) - adjacent to Kinross Creek Co-op, Cartier Place, Matheson Heights Co-op, and Alexander Laidlaw Co-op.

## Administration



Free the Fern developed a logo (designed by Kiki Nombrado), [trail signs](#) (designed by Teresa Gagné), a [website](#), an [instagram](#), and [videos](#) (including one by award winning filmmaker, Daniel Akinshola), which created more visibility for Free the Fern.

Grace Nombrado also created a [Free the Fern lending library](#) with many books generously donated by Free the Fern members.

## Funding

In 2021, Free the Fern members received 9 [Neighbourhood Small Grants](#) (totalling \$3500), 1 [Rising Youth Grant](#) (\$750), and 1 [TD Park People Grant](#) (\$2000). For a total of **\$6,250** in grant funding. We also received over **\$900** in donations from local strata, co-ops, and businesses (Independent Grocer & Gardenworks).

Free the Fern used grant funding to organize our events (food & beverages, videography, and promotion), purchase a set of gardening tools (12 shovels, 6 rakes, 8 pruners, 32 garden gloves and more), and purchase soil and native plants.

In addition, our [Art for Plants Fundraiser](#), with bird art by Kiki Nombrado, raised a total of **\$2,063**. 100% of these funds will be used for native plants.

## Volunteer Hours



In 2021, **52 volunteers** spent **583 hours** helping to:

**51 % remove invasive plants**

**16% replant native plants**

**13% add leaf mulch to the soil**

**12% watering**

**9% other** (raking, photography, garbage clean-up etc)

## Invasive Removal



Volunteers removed a total of **66,420 L (23.5 tons)** of invasive plants from the Champlain Heights Trail in 2021. This is equal to **290 city green bins** (120L-360L size) or **370 bathtubs** of invasives!

Types of invasive plants removed, included:

33% **English Ivy**

24% **Himalayan blackberry**

20% **Lamium**

9% **Italian Arum**

5% **Common Periwinkle**

9% **Others** (morning glory, English holly, Daphne etc.)

## Native Planting



Volunteers planted over **551 native plants** in the Champlain Heights Trail.

Our most commonly planted native plants were:

1. Western sword fern
2. dwarf Oregon grape
3. thimbleberry
4. salal
5. vine maple

Volunteers moved over **106 wheelbarrows worth of leaf mulch** into our stewardship sites. This leaf mulch helped to preserve the moisture and biodiversity of the soil after invasive removal.

With the leadership of Teresa Gagné, Free the Fern also experimented with [native plant propagation](#) using softwood cuttings.

**THANK YOU** to everyone who has helped to make Free the Fern such a success this year! We hope we continue to grow and learn as a network of stewards.

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THIS MONTH'S  
OTHER STORIES

## Monthly Invasive Pull - Cartier Place



On Saturday, December 4, 2021, Cartier Place hosted our Monthly Invasive Pull adjacent to the Red Alder Trail. 14 volunteers, of all ages, helped with removing invasive English ivy, Himalayan blackberry and English holly. They succeeded in removing 5 giant piles of invasive weeds, totaling 3,120 L or 11 city green bins! [Check out our Free the Fern blog to read more and see pictures of the event.](#)

## Winter Solstice Lantern Procession



On December 19, 2021, thanks to support from a [Neighbourhood Small Grant](#) and [Kinross Creek Co-op](#) Social Committee, Free the Fern hosted the first annual, Winter Solstice Lantern Procession in Champlain Heights!

In the lead up to the event, we ran two lantern making workshops where 30 participants, of all ages, learned how to make a globe-style lantern with tissue paper and pressed Japanese maple leaves.

We had planned to run the procession on the night of Winter Solstice (December 21) , but the forecast was calling for icy rain. So, we moved the event up two days, to December 19, 2021. It turned out to be a great decision, as December 19 turned out to be a beautiful clear night with a view of the full moon and stars. Kiki Nombrado led the procession up the Red Alder Trail, playing holiday favourites on the glockenspiel. We then returned to Kinross Creek Co-op to enjoy hot chocolate, cookies, and caroling.

We hope to make this an annual tradition!

Check out our Free the Fern blog to read more about our [Lantern Making Workshops](#) and our [Lantern Procession event](#).

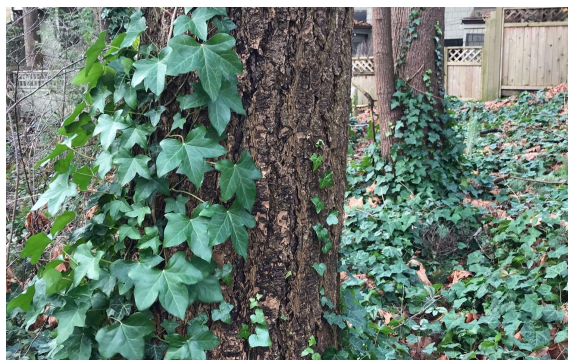
## Art for Plants Update



On December 4, 2021 at the [Tugboat Landing Artisan Market](#), Free the Fern had a table of our art as part of our [Art for Plants Fundraiser](#). It was a very successful event with hundreds of individuals attending the market. We succeeded in selling **\$670** worth of art!

In 2021, Free the Fern raised **\$2063** dollars with our Art for Plants Fundraiser. We have used over **\$800** this year to purchase plants for stewardship sites along the Red Alder Trail. We will be using the remaining **\$1,135** for planting along the Red Alder Trail in 2022.

## Free the Fern Resources



Thanks to the support of our volunteer stewards, we have created two new Free the Fern Resources:

**[Plant List](#)**: A comprehensive list of all the native and invasive plants within the Champlain Heights Trail system

**[Invasive Plant Identification](#)**: Common invasive plants and how to identify them (including photos).

The above resources are now posted on our [website](#), along with our videos and newsletters.

## Events Postponed

Due to the Omicron variant, Free the Fern has postponed two of our scheduled events. Our **Invasive Plant Mapping Project**, scheduled for December 27-29, has been postponed until the **end of April, 2022**. We look forward to welcoming volunteers from the [BCIT Ecological Restoration Program](#) and [Invasive Species Council of BC](#) to help with the mapping of the invasives on the Red Alder Trail at that time.

In addition, our **Monthly Invasive Pull**, adjacent to Matheson Heights Co-op, that was originally scheduled for January 8, 2022, has been tentatively rescheduled to **February 5, 2022**.

The health and safety of our volunteer stewards is of the utmost importance. We will continue to monitor the situation moving forward. Please check our [events](#) page for any updates.

## Next Meeting



Our next Free the Fern members meeting will be held on:

**Wednesday, January 26 2021 at 7-8pm.**

A reminder and a Zoom link will be sent out to members closer to the date.

[READ MORE ON OUR WEBSITE](#)



Free the Fern.

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