



14

June 2022 Issue

FREE THE FERN

Community connection through  
environmental stewardship

**SUMMER HIATUS:** As we did last year, Free the Fern will be taking a summer break in July and August. Our focus in the summer will be on watering the native plants along the trail to keep them alive in the heat. We will resume our newsletter, events, invasive removal, and meetings in September 2022. We hope everyone has a wonderful summer!

## South Van Strawberry Social

by [Grace Nombrado](#)

Come join Free the Fern at the **South Van Strawberry Social** on **Sunday, June 5, 1-4pm.**

It will take place along the beautiful [Red Alder Trail, just east of Kinross Creek Co-op \(3530 Swansacre\)](#)



We will have:

- 200 FREE servings of strawberries, shortcake and whipped cream
- local craft vendors (jams, woven baskets, resistance knitters, natural skin care and more!)
- live music (including a 20s-40s jazz trio)
- eco-art workshop (make pencils out of invasive plants!)
- guided tours of the Douglas Fir Teaching garden (with 100s of native ferns, berries, and flowers!)

Come participate in this free and fun community event!

Check out <https://freethefern.ca/calendar-of-events/>

[https://www.instagram.com/free\\_the\\_fern/](https://www.instagram.com/free_the_fern/)

Thank you to our sponsors and supporters: [TD Park People Grant](#), [Neighbourhood Small Grant](#), [Independent Grocery](#), [Kinross Creek Co-op](#), and Free the Fern volunteers.

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THIS MONTH'S

OTHER STORIES

## Champlain Heights Summer Fair



Free the Fern has been invited to have an info table set up at the **Champlain Heights Summer Fair** on **Saturday, June 11, 2022**, 11-3pm. The event will take place at the nearby [Champlain Heights Community Centre](#).

We will be sharing some examples of native plants, demoing weaving ivy baskets, and spreading the word about the need to take out invasive plants.

We are looking for people to help at our Free the Fern table. Please email [freethefern@gmail.com](mailto:freethefern@gmail.com) to sign up as a volunteer.

### Double the Pulls - Double the Fun!

In May, Free the Fern members hosted two Saturday invasive pulls along the Red Alder Trail (double our usual amount).



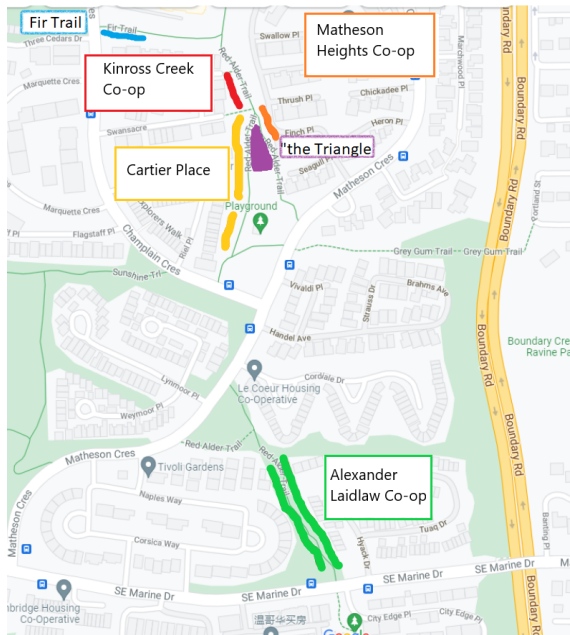
On **Saturday, May 7**, Paola Coloma, hosted an pull adjacent to Cartier Place townhomes on the Red Alder Trail. 12 volunteers were on hand (ranging in age from 8 to 70+ years old) to help with removing English ivy, Himalayan blackberry, and lamium (yellow archangel) from the trail edge. Volunteers succeeded in clearing 5 green bins (1,680 L) worth of invasives, 1 bin (120 L) worth of garbage, and a large bag of glass beer bottles. [Read more here.](#)



On **Saturday, May 21**, Catherine Munn, hosted a pull adjacent to Matheson Heights Co-op on the Red Alder Trail. 10 stewardship volunteers worked together to remove invasive English ivy and Himalayan blackberry that had grown around native snowberry and Douglas fir trees. Volunteers succeeded in removing: 7 green bins

(2,160 L) worth of invasive weeds, one (180 L) bin of garbage, and a bag of bottles and cans for recycling. In addition, volunteers prepped a large pile of ivy to be used later for basket weaving. [Read more here.](#)

## Progress in the Triangle



Our stewardship volunteers have been working hard to clear the northern part of an area known as “The Triangle” on the Red Alder Trail.

Prior to February 2022, the area had been a dense thicket of invasive Himalayan blackberry and English ivy. Over the space of 4 months, the area has been transformed.

Free the Fern volunteers have successfully removed all the surface invasives from the northern portion of the triangle. In April, at the tip of the triangle, we planted a selection of native plants. Martin Collins has built and installed an owl box. Now we are preparing the area for a large fall planting.



The process of preparing the soil involves: adding leaf mulch, adding wood chips, and returning fallen wood to the site. This process will help to retain moisture in the soil, feed the native insects (who in turn will feed the native birds), and increase soil nutrients. [Read more here.](#)

## Up-and-Coming Invasives

In May Free the Fern members have been tackling the removal of two up-and-coming invasives on the Red Alder Trail. Both these invasives are concentrated in specific sections of the trail, so there is some urgency to remove them, so as to prevent their further spread into our stewarded areas.



The first invasive we have tackled is [wild chervil](#), a biennial to short-lived perennial in the Parsley family. Over the past several years, wild chervil has been growing just east of the forest playground on the Red Alder trail. As the flowers were just beginning to go to seed, we focused on cutting and disposing of the flower heads. We will return later to the site to dig out the roots and mulch. We successfully cleared 3 x360L of wild chervil.



The second up-and-coming invasive that we tackled is [small balsam \(touch-me-not\)](#), which is an introduced, invasive species of *Impatiens* that is native to central Asia. The small balsam is also referred to as “touch-me-not” as, when it goes to seed, at the slightest touch, it will shoot its seeds great distances. Last year we also attempted to remove the same patch of small balsam, but, unfortunately, it had already begun to go to seed then, so we were not as successful. This year, however, we have been able to remove the entire patch of small balsam, adjacent to Kinross Creek Co-op, before any of the plants had visibly gone to seed. We succeeded in filling a 360L green bin with the small balsam plants.

[Read more here.](#)

## Soil Survey





On **Friday, May 27**, Free the Fern member and UBC forestry student, Damian Assadi completed a soil survey on the Red Alder Trail, in the area of "the Triangle". This survey involved Damian digging a soil pit approximately 67 cm deep and removing soil samples for testing. His survey will tell us more about the history of the area and inform us on which native plants may be best suited for future planting in the area. Damian will be compiling his findings and we will post those to our Free the Fern website.

## **Congratulations on our New Directors!**

On **Wednesday, May 25**, Free the Fern members voted in our inaugural board of directors. We will be officially registering as a Not-for-Profit Society in June. This will open up many new avenues for grant funding and sponsorship. Congratulations to all our new directors!

**President:** Grace Nombrado

**Vice-President:** Martin Collins

**Secretary:** Mya Lopez

**Treasurer:** Joe Boyd

**Directors at Large:** Damian Assadi, Jeannine Kenmuir, Catherine Munn, Erin Knock, and Robin Poirier

## Mark your Calendars!



Free the Fern members are planning many exciting events for fall 2022 and beyond.

**Monthly Invasive Pulls:** Sept 3, Oct 1, Nov 5, Dec 3

**World Clean-up Event** – Sep 17, 2022 -10am-12pm

**Grow Wild! Planting & Art Weekend** – Oct 22-23, 2022

## Everett Crowley Park Committee

For those interested to get involved with more invasive pull events, the [Everett Crowley Park Committee](#) is hosting monthly pulls:

**Saturday June 18**

**Saturday, July 16**

**Saturday, Aug 13**

All pulls run from 10am-12:30pm. Meetup location is the Champlain Heights Community Centre (3350 Maquinna Drive).

**Next Meeting**



Our last members meeting before our summer break will be held on:

**Wednesday, June 22 2022 at 7-8pm.**

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

[READ MORE ON OUR WEBSITE](#)



Free the Fern.

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