



Enviro Events

by [Grace Nombrado](#)

As we begin our second year as a stewardship group, Free the Fern members have been busy planning some exciting events for 2022.

Check out some of the event ideas we are pursuing. Note: all these events are tentative, pending confirmation of grant funding.

Strawberry Social - June



Strawberry Social will be an opening for the Douglas Fir Teaching Garden on the Champlain Heights Trail. Thanks to our previous TD Park People Grant, we were able to plant hundreds of native plants for this garden last fall. At the Strawberry Social, participants will receive a tour of the 3 plots: ferns, berries, and flowers, eat local strawberries & shortcake (served in biodegradable bowls), enjoy music, and shop from eco-friendly artisans.

World Clean-up Day - September



We are looking into partnering with the [Neighbourhood Clean-up Party](#) initiative run by the city of Vancouver. They lend out pickers, gloves, bags and vests for clean-up events.

Grow Wild! - October



Grow Wild! Will be an all ages and ability weekend celebrating nature. It will begin with a Community Planting Event. Local volunteers will help plant hundreds of native plants at our 4 stewardship sites along the Champlain Heights Trail. Volunteer planters will also collaborate to create a nature mandala using rocks, leaves and sticks. We may also hold a “Weeding and Weaving” workshop, making baskets out of ivy, as part of this event.

Light up the Night in Champlain Heights - December



Light up the Night Champlain Heights will be our second annual lantern festival celebrating art & nature. We will offer nature lantern workshops, using sticks and leaves from the trail. Local artists will be welcomed to build larger lantern displays. Free the Fern hopes to secure funding to hire the [Carnival Band](#) to lead an illuminated procession along the Champlain Heights Trail. We will return for hot chocolate, cookies, and music.

We will be posting more information about these events, as they are finalised, on our [website](#).

THIS MONTH'S
OTHER STORIES

Invasive Pull



We had a great turn out at our monthly Invasive Pull on February 5, 2022. Catherine Munn was the host. It was held on the Red Alder Trail just west of Matheson Heights Co-op. 11 volunteers came out to help remove English ivy. Some of the ivy vines were as thick as an adult's arm! Several trees in the area had been consumed and killed by climbing ivy. Volunteers carefully cut the climbing ivy at chest height and removed it from the perimeter of the trees. They succeeded in removing 7 city green bins (approximately 2,520 L) worth of English ivy. Thank you to all our dedicated volunteers for your help! We look forward to introducing native plants in this area in the fall.

Weeding & Weaving



For our next invasive pull, on **March 5, 2022**, we will be having a special **Weeding and Weaving** event. Grace Nombrado & Joe Boyd will be hosting. They both previously attended a workshop on weaving with ivy, which was run by the [Still Moon Arts Society](#) at the Renfrew Ravine. On March 5, 10am-12pm, volunteers will begin by removing invasive English ivy and Himalayan blackberry from the entrance of Fir Trail, just north of [Kinross Creek Co-op](#). Grace & Joe will then demonstrate how the ivy can be woven into baskets. Volunteers will be able to practise the weaving technique and bring home their own hand-made basket. Interested volunteers can sign up by emailing us at freethefern@gmail.com

Enviro Kids



Free the Fern member Damian Assadi has spent the past year and a half doing outdoor education activities with Mrs. Renshaw's grade ½ class at **Champlain Heights Elementary**. On **March 4**, Grace Nombrado will also be supporting the class by taking the students out for a tour of the Champlain Heights trail, including the Douglas Fir Teaching Garden. The students will learn about identifying invasive and native plants, and they will spend some time measuring Douglas Fir trees to estimate their age.

Free the Fern members will also be participating in the **BeAware Fair**, on **April 13**, which will be held at **Carson Graham Secondary** in North Vancouver. At this event local environmental groups will make presentations to approximately 1400 students and 100 staff. Students will learn how they can become involved in the fight against climate change. Free the Fern will present examples of invasive and native plants, and demonstrate how to make baskets with invasive ivy.

Earth Day



Free the Fern will be participating in **Earth Day** on **April 23, 2022, 11-4pm** at [Everett Crowley Park](#). We will have an information table to sign up new volunteers, demonstrate basket weaving with ivy, display some of our paintings in our Art for Plants fundraiser, and share future plans with the community. We are looking for interested volunteers to help with monitoring the info table on Earth Day. Please email us at freethfern@gmail.com if you would like to help out.

Neighbourhood Small Grants

[2022 Neighbourhood Small Grant \(NSG\) and Greenest City NSG](#) online applications will be open this year from **March 15th to April 30th**. We encourage anyone who would like to apply for funding to do so. Each NSG grant is for up to \$500. This funding can cover such expenses as: native plants, garden soil, bird boxes, garden tools, paying an expert to run a workshop, food, and beverages. **Last year Free the Fern members successfully applied for and received 9 neighbourhood small grants.** Let's work together to apply for even more grants this year! Every little bit can help to make a positive impact on our environment and our community.

Recommended Links

Metro Vancouver Regional Parks has put out their [Nature Program Guide for Spring \(March-June\) 2022](#). There are nature events in many local parks for all ages, from birding to forest bathing.



With the help of Squamish Language and Cultural teacher, Rebecca Duncan, [Museum of Vancouver](#) has launched an [Indigenous Plant resource guide](#) for language learners. Learn to pronounce Indigenous plant names and identify them in local parks and neighbourhoods. Note: hə́ŋqəmiḥə́m translations and pronunciations coming soon.



Concerned about the future of **climate change**? Want to learn what climate change means for your neighbourhood? Then join [Cool 'Hood Champs](#), a fun & free hands-on program by UBC's [Collaborative for Advanced Landscape Planning \(CALP\)](#), where you'll develop your skills in **championing local climate action**! Local Cool 'Hood Champs [workshops start on March 26 at nearby Killarney Community Centre](#).

Free the Fern Stats

We ask that all volunteers (who complete stewardship work along the Champlain Heights Trail system) please track your volunteer hours. Our tracking form can be found on our [Free the Fern website](#) under the “volunteer” tab [here](#).

Between January 1, 2022 and March 1, 2022, **14** Free the Fern volunteers have: spent **75.5 hours** pulling invasive weeds, raking leaves, replanting native plants, moving leaf mulch, and hosting events. Together we removed **42 city green bins (5,760 L or 2 tons)** of **English ivy (51%), Himalayan blackberry (31%), Italian arum (5%), common periwinkle (4%), lamium (4%), and English holly (3%)**. Amazing work everyone!

Next Meeting



Our next members meeting will be held on:

Wednesday, March 23, 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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