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May 2022 Issue

FREE THE FERN

Community connection through
environmental stewardship

The Triangle

by Grace Nombrado

In February 2022, Free the Fern volunteers took on the challenge of clearing invasives (English ivy & Himalayan blackberry) from the Triangle. The Triangle is an area of the Red Alder Trail, between Matheson Heights Co-op and Cartier Place complex, that for many years has been a large thicket of invasives.



Volunteers, Ann & Doug, began the process by trimming back the blackberry and pulling the ivy from the sunny Southern edge of the triangle (shown below).



Soon Martin and Grace decided to help at the Triangle. But they chose to focus on the northern, more shady, portion of the triangle. Despite being thick with ivy and blackberry, the northern portion of the triangle also has some mature Douglas fir trees.



On April 2 2022, Martin hosted an [invasive removal event in the triangle](#). At the event 12 volunteers succeeded in removing 2,640 L (8 bins) worth of invasive ivy & Himalayan blackberry! Volunteers also collected 240L (1 bin) of garbage and 2 plastic garbage bags of cans and bottles.



Martin and Grace then decided to commit their Wednesdays to weeding the triangle. Soon Doug, Ann, and Jeanne decided to join forces with them and work together.



In addition to removing invasives in the triangle, in April Free the Fern volunteers began to replant native plants.



So far we have planted:

- 20 Oregon grape
- 6 sword fern

- 7 salal
- 5 bleeding heart
- 5 goatsbeard
- 4 Indigenous plum
- 3 elderberry
- 3 redwood sorrel
- 3 Douglas fir seedlings
- 2 red columbine
- 1 snowberry
- 1 oval-leaf blueberry
- 1 saskatoon berry

For a total of 61 native plants.

We plan to continue our restoration efforts in the triangle into 2023. Our goal being to restore the northern portion of the triangle by the fall of 2022 to a Douglas forest ecosystem. While, in the Southern portion, which is more sunny, we hope to remove all invasive and replant edible berries and fruits by the fall of 2023.

THIS MONTH'S

OTHER STORIES

BeAware Fair - April 13



On **Wednesday, April 13, 2022**, Free the Fern members Grace & Joe, were invited to present at the **BeAware Fair** in North Vancouver.

This event was hosted by Carson Graham Secondary school, and was attended by over 3000 students from the high school and neighbouring elementary schools. At the event, various government and environmental groups were on hand, including [Stanley Park Ecology Society](#), [Oceanwise](#), and [Maplewood Flats](#).

Free the Fern had a table set up sharing our stewardship work, examples of native & invasive plants, and demonstrating how to weave with ivy.

In addition to having a table at the event, Grace & Joe, also volunteered to make a short presentation to an audience of students. During the presentation, Grace described how baskets can be woven with invasive ivy, while Joe demonstrated the technique.

Many students were eager to learn more about native plants and invasives. Free the Fern has been invited back to attend the BeAware Fair again next year. For more pics of the event, check out our [blog post](#).

Earth Fest - April 23



On **Saturday, April 23**, 11 Free the Fern volunteers helped at **Earth Fest** at Everett Crowley Park.

At our Free the Fern tent we shared examples of native and invasive plants, garbage artefacts, baskets made of ivy, and photos of our stewardship efforts. We had a lot of interest and signed up a good number of new volunteers.

Special thanks to our volunteers: Joe, Grace, Paola, Kiki, Robin, Westley, Erin, Ann, Jeannine, Liam, & Camren. For more pics of the event, check out our [blog post](#).

Edible Plant Walk - April 30



On October 30, 2022 Grace met participants at Kinross Creek Co-op for a morning walk through the Douglas Fir Teaching Garden and down the Red Alder Trail. She shared her knowledge of edible native and naturalised plants. Despite the rainy weather, participants enjoyed the educational nature walk.

Check out our new Free the Fern [Edible Plants resource here!](#)

Two Invasive Pulls - May 7 & May 21



In May Free the Fern members will be hosting two invasive removal pulls on the first and third Saturday of the month.

On **May 7, 10am-12pm**, Paola will be hosting an invasive pull adjacent to **Cartier Place** on the Red Alder Trail. The focus will be removing invasive ivy and periwinkle in preparation for fall planting in the area.

On **May 21, 10am-12pm**, Catherine will be hosting an invasive pull adjacent to **Matheson Heights Co-op** on the Red Alder Trail. The focus will be on saving the trees by removing ivy (cutting at chest height from the tree trunks).

South Van Strawberry Social - June 5, 1-4pm



Thanks to a [TD Park People Grant](#), [Neighbourhood Small Grant](#) and support from the [Kinross Creek Co-op](#) Social Committee, Free the Fern is hosting a **South Van Strawberry Social** on **Sunday, June 5, 1-4pm**.

The event will be the official opening for our Douglas Fir Teaching Garden. Last fall we planted hundreds of native plants into three plots in the garden: ferns, berries, and flowers. We will have signage in the garden and people can walk and learn about the native plants.

In addition, there will be free strawberries from [Emma Lea Farms](#) as well as shortcake.

We have 5 local craft vendors signed up, and space for 2 more to sell their wares.

A 1920's-1940's jazz trio will be performing, along with other musical acts.

If you are interested in signing up as a craft vendor or volunteering, please reach out to us at freethefern@gmail.com

Free Plants from EYA!



The [Environmental Youth Alliance \(EYA\)](#) has gifted [Free the Fern 34 native plants](#), including salal, sword fern, red columbine, Canada goldenrod, big leaf lupine and others.



Free the Fern stewardship volunteers helped to plant these amazing free plants into our 5 stewardship areas along the Red Alder Trail.

Killarney Secondary School



On April 26, Grace met with the vice principal and students in the gardening club at [Killarney Secondary School](#). Grace will be providing support and advice, as the students plan to create a native plant garden in the central courtyard of their high school. Stay tuned for future developments!

TD Park People Grant



Free the Fern is excited to announce we have been selected to receive a [TD Park People Grant](#) for \$2000.

This funding will allow us to organise three major events in 2022: South Van Strawberry Social (June 5, 1-4pm), Grow Wild! Community Planting Event (October 22) and Light up the Night in Champlain Heights: Lantern Event (Dec 18).

In addition, this grant will allow us to fund the purchase of \$800 worth of native plants for the fall.

This is the second year that Free the Fern has been honoured with this grant. We are so grateful to those at TD Park People for selecting Free the Fern for this opportunity.

Do you want to be a director?

Over the past several months, Free the Fern members have been preparing for officially registering as a not-for-profit society. We have decided on our society's purpose and approved our bylaws. Now we are looking for up to 11 interested individuals who would like to put their name forward as a possible director on our future board. We will be voting in our board of directors at our next members meeting on May 25, 2022 at 7pm via zoom. If you are interested or would like to learn more about the opportunity, please contact us at freethefern@gmail.com

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 May 1, 2022:

- We have had **24** Free the Fern volunteers
- Volunteers have spent **249 hours** pulling invasive weeds, raking leaves, replanting native plants, moving leaf mulch, and hosting events.
- Volunteers have removed: **130 city green bins (37,260 L or 13.2 tons)** of invasive weeds
- Invasive weeds have included: **English ivy (48%), Himalayan blackberry (39%), lamium (5%), Italian arum (4%), common periwinkle (2%), English holly (1%), and others (2%).**

Amazing work everyone!

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, May 14

Saturday May 28

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 next members meeting will be held on:

Wednesday, May 25 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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