



Free the Fern June 2023 Newsletter



Indigenous Knowledge Sharing



Free the Fern was honoured to have Skwxwú7mesh educator, Matthew Williams, guide a [Native Plant Walk](#) on the Red Alder Trail on May 13, 2023.



17 participants gathered to learn from Matthew about native plants and their traditional uses for the Skwxwú7mesh peoples.

Together, we learned that:

- When dogwood flowers bloom, it is a sign that Western red cedar bark is ready to be harvested.
- Oregon grape roots can be harvested to make a yellow dye, while the Oregon grape berries can be harvested to make a purple dye.
- Every Skwxwú7mesh family would have a unique pattern and colour that they would dye their Cedar hats and baskets., so that at gatherings everyone's hats could be told apart.
- Swordfern roots can be cooked like a potato, fern fronds can be woven into dip nets, and fern spores can be mixed with water into a paste and put on minor burns.

And much more!

You can check out our [two-part video fo Mathew's walk on youtube here](#) (filmed and edited by Daniel Akinshola).



The walk concluded with fresh baked Bannock and jams prepared by Marge Wylie, an offspring of Chief Qua of the Tl'azt'en Nation ("people by the edge of the bay") and a residential school survivor.

We are grateful to the Vancouver Parks Board ([Neighbourhood Matching Fund](#)), [Tree Canada](#), and [Neighbourhood Small Grants](#) for helping to fund this Native Plant Walk.

THIS MONTH'S
TOP STORIES



Invasive Pull - June 3, 2023

After our successful [Invasive Pull on May 6, 2023](#), we are excited to gather for another [Invasive Pull](#) on **Saturday, June 3, 2023** from **10am-12pm**. If you are also interested in helping with removing invasive plants with us along the Red Alder Trail in South Vancouver, please sign up [here](#). Gloves, tools, and refreshments will be provided for volunteers. This will be our last pull before our summer break in July & August. We will resume our monthly pulls on September 2, 2023.

This event has been made possible thanks to funding from the City of Vancouver [Neighbourhood Matching Fund](#).



Native Plant Event - June 8, 2023

On **Thursday, June 8, 7-8pm**, we will be hosting a [Native Plant Event](#) via Zoom. This will be a chance to learn about native, edible plants and help us decide what to plant in our future Native Food Forest site this fall. Those who wish to sign up to attend the Native Plant Event, can sign up [here](#).

This event has been made possible thanks to funding from the City of Vancouver [Neighbourhood Matching Fund](#)



Champlain Heights Summer Fair - June 17, 2023

On **Saturday, June 17, 11am-3pm**, Free the Fern hopes to have an info table set up at the Champlain Heights Fair (Champlain Heights Community Center). But, we need volunteers to help make it possible! Please send us an email if you are able to help set-up, clean-up or run our table (lollypop quiz, volunteer sign-up, and native plant area). It should be a fun event!



Summer Break

Free the Fern will be having our annual summer break in July & August. This will give people a chance to spend time with family and have a holiday. This means we will have no regular Free the Fern invasive pulls or eco-art events over the months of July & August. We also will also not have newsletters for these months. We hope everyone enjoys the wonderful break. We look forward to connecting again in September, as we prepare for our Native Food Forest Planting event on Oct 21, 2023.



Free the Fern AGM - August 23, 2023

As Free the Fern officially formed as a non-profit in August 2022, we will be having our first Annual General Meeting towards the end of summer, on August 23, 2023, 7-8pm. We will be meeting via Zoom. Attending this event is open to everyone, and by attending you are considered to be a member of Free the Fern (no fees for membership required). At the AGM we will be electing any new directors for our board, so if you are interested in getting more involved with Free the Fern as a director, please let us know! We currently have 9 amazing directors, but can welcome 2 more for our 2023-2024 year. Email us at freethefern@gmail.com to learn more.



Neighbouring Nature Events

There are many other amazing groups in Metro Vancouver organising events in June. Check out what is happening below.

Sunday, June 4 - 2-4pm - [Medicine Wheel Workshop w/Victoria Buffalo Robe](#) - Trout Lake, Vancouver

Victoria will be guiding us through the process of making a medicinal oil infusion which can be used for daily skincare. All supplies are included.

Friday, June 9 - 9am-11am - [Birding With Me - Welcoming BIPOC Youth & Adults](#) - Jericho Beach, Vancouver

Led by birder and lead of the BC Rare Bird Alert website, Melissa Hafting, this walk will introduce you to the birds found at Jericho Park. See birds like warblers, Black-capped chickadees, and Hooded mergansers while meeting new people in the outdoors.

Saturday, June 10 - 9:45am - [ENVIRONMENT WEEK Remove Invasive Plants](#) - Cariboo Heights, Forest Burnaby.

This event is a partnership between the Lower Mainland Green Team and Cariboo Heights Forest Preservation Society. Remove invasive Himalayan blackberry and Small Balsam (touch-me-not). All ages welcome!

Saturday, June 10 - 10:30am-12pm - [Garden Workshop Hands on Day](#) - Loutet Farm, 1400 Rufus Ave., North Vancouver

Join the Edible Garden Project staff at Loutet Farm for a tour and discussion about the growing and harvesting processes! We will be touching on irrigation options, crop planning, harvesting, and how we farm while taking the wide ecosystem into consideration.

Sunday, June 11 - 10am-12pm - [Invasive Plant Pull](#) - Jim Lorimer Park, Burnaby

Join the [Invasive Species Council of Metro Vancouver \(ISCMV\)](#) as they help protect and restore Burnaby's beautiful Jim Lorimer Park! Volunteers are needed to remove invasive plants. This event is free and open to families, youth, and all community members

Saturday, June 17 - 10am-12:30pm - [Everett Crowley Park Committee: Park Stewardship](#) - Everett Crowley Park, Vancouver

Join ECPC for monthly stewardship events to help remove invasive plants, rewild native shrubs, and to learn more about the history & ecology of the 5th largest park in Vancouver. Gloves, tools and light refreshments are provided. Email ecpcstewards@gmail.com

Saturday, June 24 - 10am-1pm - [Weed Pull](#) - Glenbrook Ravine, New Westminister

Join ISCMV, the [City of New Westminister](#), and the [New Westminister Environmental Partners](#) for a stewardship event at Glenbrook Ravine! This is a family-friendly event, and we have ways for people of all ages and abilities to get involved and contribute.

Saturday, June 24 - 10am-12pm - [Himalayan Balsam Pull](#) - Deer Lake, Burnaby

Help protect and restore Burnaby's beautiful Deer Lake! Volunteers are needed to remove invasive Himalayan balsam. This event is free and open to families, youth, and all community members.

Thursday, June 29 - 5:30-7:30pm - [Eco-Mindfulness Workshop](#) - Strathcona Community Garden, Vancouver

Join Environmental Youth Alliance staff members Jess Duncan and Maria Paula Serrano for a grounding evening in Strathcona Community Garden. Engage in meditation and journaling exercises and take home a surprise gift.

If you know of a local event happening next month, let us know!

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