



**Free the Fern**

March 2025 Newsletter



## **Food Forest Updates!**



On **Feb 14, 2025**, we were excited to have a surprise visit from renowned ethnobotanist, [Nancy J Turner](#)! Nancy's research on Indigenous wild cultivation systems inspired us to create our Free the Fern [Food Forest](#) in 2023. For many decades, Nancy has been researching the traditional "wild cultivation" methods of our first peoples. Historically, Coast Salish, Gitxan, and Ts'msyen peoples planted Food Forests or Forest Gardens beside village sites. It was an honour to be able to guide Nancy down the Red Alder Trail and show her our Free the Fern Food Forest. She was impressed by our community stewardship effort along the trail!



Free the Fern Executive Director, Grace Nombrado, was also invited to share about our Food Forest at the [ISCBC Invasives Forum 2025](#) conference on **February 24**. Grace led a "speedy session" at the conference, sharing how our Free the Fern volunteers cleared 14.8 cubic meters of invasives in 2023 before planting over 600 edible species to create a [Food Forest](#).

This month, we also have begun a partnership with [VCC design students](#) to create an interpretive sign for the Free the Fern Food Forest. The sign will feature the history of the

space and images of some of the edible plants, including fruit & nut trees, berry shrubs, and ground cover.

We are excited to share about our Free the Fern Food Forest and inspire others to create food forests in their own area.

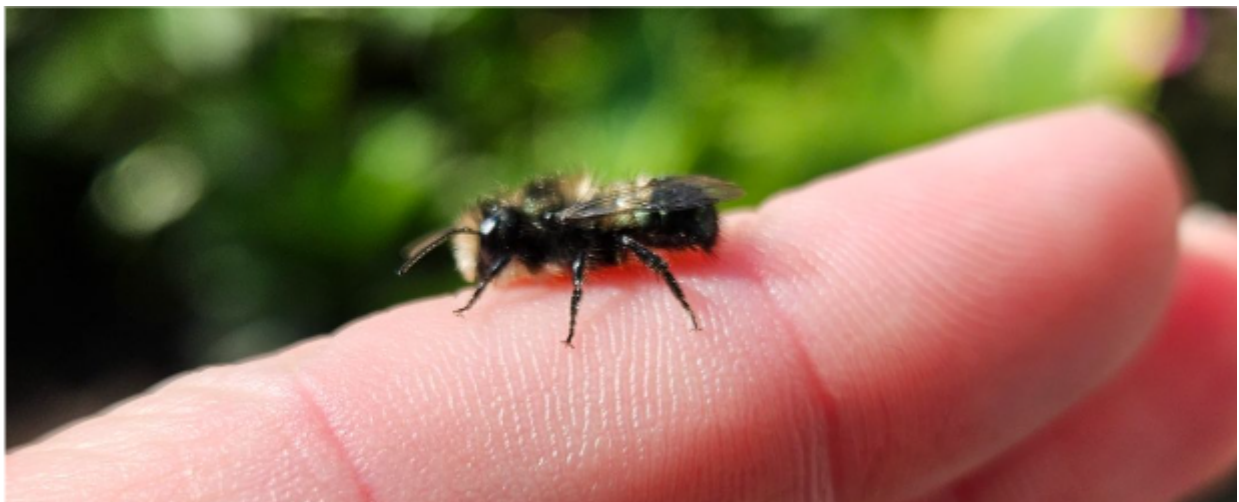
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FREE THE FERN  
TOP STORIES



## **Invasive Pull - Sat, March 1, 10am-12pm**

Join us on **Sat, March 1, 10am-12pm**, for an [Invasive Pull](#). We will be removing common periwinkle and Himalayan blackberry along the Red Alder Trail. All ages and abilities are welcome. Snacks & drinks provided! [Sign up to volunteer here](#).



## **All About Mason Bees - Tues, March 11, 7:30-8:30pm**

On **Tues, March 11, 7:30am-8:30pm**, local educator, **Amanda Stevenson**, will be leading an [“All About Mason Bees” workshop](#). For those nervous about inviting bees into your garden, mason bees are the ones for you. Mason bees are solitary, have no hive to defend, are very gentle and rarely sting! We are excited to learn from Amanda, as we plan to install a “mason bee hotel” beside our pollinator garden on the Red Alder Trail. [Sign up to learn with us!](#)



## **Forage & Salve - Sat, March 15, 10am-12pm**

On **Sat, March 15, 10am-12pm**, we were honoured to welcome outdoor educator, Kristen Penhall, for a [Forage & Salve](#) event. Kristen will teach us how to make a salve using local plants. We will then go on a foraging walk on the Red Alder Trail. All ages welcome! Complimentary tea and snacks provided. [Sign up to participate here.](#)



## Places that Matter Fair

On **Sunday, Feb 23**, we were honoured to be able to participate in the [Places that Matter Fair](#). The event was organized by the [Vancouver Heritage Foundation](#) and was held at the beautiful Heritage Hall on Main St. Four of our board directors were able to help at our Free the Fern table. We shared about our stewardship effort, signed up volunteers, and invited people to make pressed leaf bookmarks! It was a ton of fun and we hope to participate again next year! [Read more on our blog post here.](#)



## Mushroom Felting

18 community members gathered to learn how to [felt mushrooms](#) on **February 15, 2025**. [Anna Bondartchouk](#) led the felting workshop at Kinross Creek Co-op. Everyone enjoyed

learning how to create their own *Amanita muscaria* mushroom. To see the steps of how to create the mushroom, check out our [blog post](#).

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## Neighbouring Nature Events

Check out other nature events happening in Metro Vancouver this month!

**Sat, March 8, 10am-1pm - [Everett Crowley Park Stewardship](#)** - Everett Crowley Park, Vancouver

Get dirty, have fun and help the environment! Join the Everett Crowley Park Committee for monthly stewardship events to help remove invasive plants and learn more about the unique history and ecology of Everett Crowley Park.

**Sat, March 8, 10:30-12:30pm - [Cedar Weaving Workshop](#)** - Stanley Park, Vancouver

Feel the fibrous bark, smell the fresh, forest-y aroma, and come join Ali and Bella Casey from Red Cedar Woman Studio for a morning of sharing and cedar weaving.

**Sun, March 9, 8:30am-3:30pm - [Spring Seminar 2025](#)** - Michael J Fox Theatre, Burnaby

Join the [Vancouver Master Gardeners](#) for their annual Spring Seminar. Guest speakers will inspire you with practical advice to improve resiliency of your garden and there will be local vendors with items for sale.

**Sat, March 15, 10am-1 pm - [Invasive Pull with ECPC & ISCMV](#) - Everett Crowley Park, Vancouver**

Join ECPC & the Invasive Species Council of Metro Vancouver (ISCMV) for an invasive pull in Everett Crowley Park!

**Sat, March 29, 10am-1pm - [Invasive Species Walk](#) - VanDusen Gardens, Vancouver**  
Join Adrian Avendano, Executive Director of the Invasive Species Council of Metro Vancouver, for a walk through the VanDusen Gardens. Gain practical knowledge on identifying, preventing, and managing invasives in your own green spaces.

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

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