
The Garry Oak Leaflet



GARRY OAK MEADOW
PRESERVATION SOCIETY

SUMMER 2025



Kings Park, Fernwood Neighbourhood, City of Victoria. Formerly a residential lot and still inhabited by pre-colonial Garry oaks (175 years to 500 years old).

WHO WE ARE

The Garry Oak Meadow Preservation Society (GOMPS) formed in 1992 because local citizens

were concerned that woodlands and meadows were rapidly disappearing as a result of expanding human habitation in the Capital Regional District. Our society is dedicated to the preservation, protection and restoration of Garry oak (*Quercus garryana*) stands and their natural habitats.

We are a grassroots group helping to make a difference! We are 100% volunteer run. **Will you join us?**

VOLUNTEERS

We are looking for volunteers to help us engage in educational activities, to work with all levels of government through letter writing and attendance at council meetings and public hearings to raise awareness on the importance of Garry oaks and their ecosystems, and to work in GOMPS Garry oak nursery.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Garry Oak Acorn Collection

Photo by Carollyne Yardley. Garry oak acorns from pre-colonial Garry oak tree.

Garry Oak Acorn Collection

We are accepting acorns

The Garry oak acorn crop is shaping up to be significant this year. Furthermore, the acorns are ripening earlier than usual. Please assist in helping these trees, uniquely adapted to the region, be preserved in our urban forest.

Please do not collect any acorns that still have their caps on, as this is an indication that

they are not ripe. A round black mark on the acorn indicates that there has been weevil activity and should not be collected. Any break or split in the acorn also indicates inferior quality that we will not accept.

Before you drop off your harvest, please float test the acorns. If they float in a bowl of water, discard them as they are not viable. A 1L milk carton is the maximum container size for drop off.

Further information on collection, sorting and testing acorns is available at the GOMPS website: <https://www.garryoak.info/help-us-collect-acorns>.

Please note the Acorn Collection Information Handout that is located on the upper right hand corner of this webpage.

Drop off address:

1545 Eric Road, Victoria BC. There is a Rubbermaid bin along the left side of the house that you can place the acorns in.

Thank you, and happy collecting!



Celebrated annually on September 24, National Tree Day is a holiday dedicated to recognizing the importance of trees in our lives. Initiated in 2011 by **Tree Canada**, this day serves as a tribute to the beauty, resilience, and crucial role of trees across Canada's landscapes, both urban and rural. [Read more.](#)

Stewardship event in Victoria on the day:

<https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/tree-canadas-national-tree-day-stewardship-event-in-victoria-tickets-1505120278269?aff=oddtcreator>

Sidney Tree Appreciation Day 2025

Take part in Sidney's sixth annual Tree Appreciation Day. Come help us plant some trees at Philip Brethour Park, or pick up a free tree to plant on your own private property as part of the tree giveaway. Saturday, September 20, 2025, Philip Brethour Park, 9:45am to 1pm. No experience needed; all ages and abilities are welcome. Instructions, gloves, tools, and snacks are provided.

[Sign up to participate in Tree Appreciation Day](#)

<https://www.sidney.ca/events-and-attractions/tree-appreciation-day/>

CITY OF VICTORIA National Tree Day Tours

Explore our roots! Celebrate National Tree Day Sept. 24 by joining a free tree tour with City of Victoria arborists. Discover the rich history, ecological importance and community benefits of trees in some of your favourite Victoria parks on a quick, fun and informative tour. Registration required.

Date: Wednesday, Sept. 24

Event Time: Noon-1 p.m.

Locations: Beacon Hill Park, Banfield Park, Spirit Garden

Everyone welcome. **Registration.**

<https://www.victoria.ca/parks-recreation/trees-urban-forest>



2025 Garry Oak Ecosystems Gathering

Saturday, November 1st

09:00 – 16:00

University of Victoria

Keynote address by

Elder SELILIYE Belinda Claxton

and

Dr. Nancy Turner

Field trips will follow on Sunday, November 2nd

Stay tuned — registration and full program details coming soon!

Save the Date

Garry Oak Ecosystems Recovery Team (GOERT) has announced the 2025 Garry Oak Ecosystems Gathering.

Saturday, November 01

09:00 - 16:00

University of Victoria

Stay tuned - registration and full program details coming soon.

PROJECTS

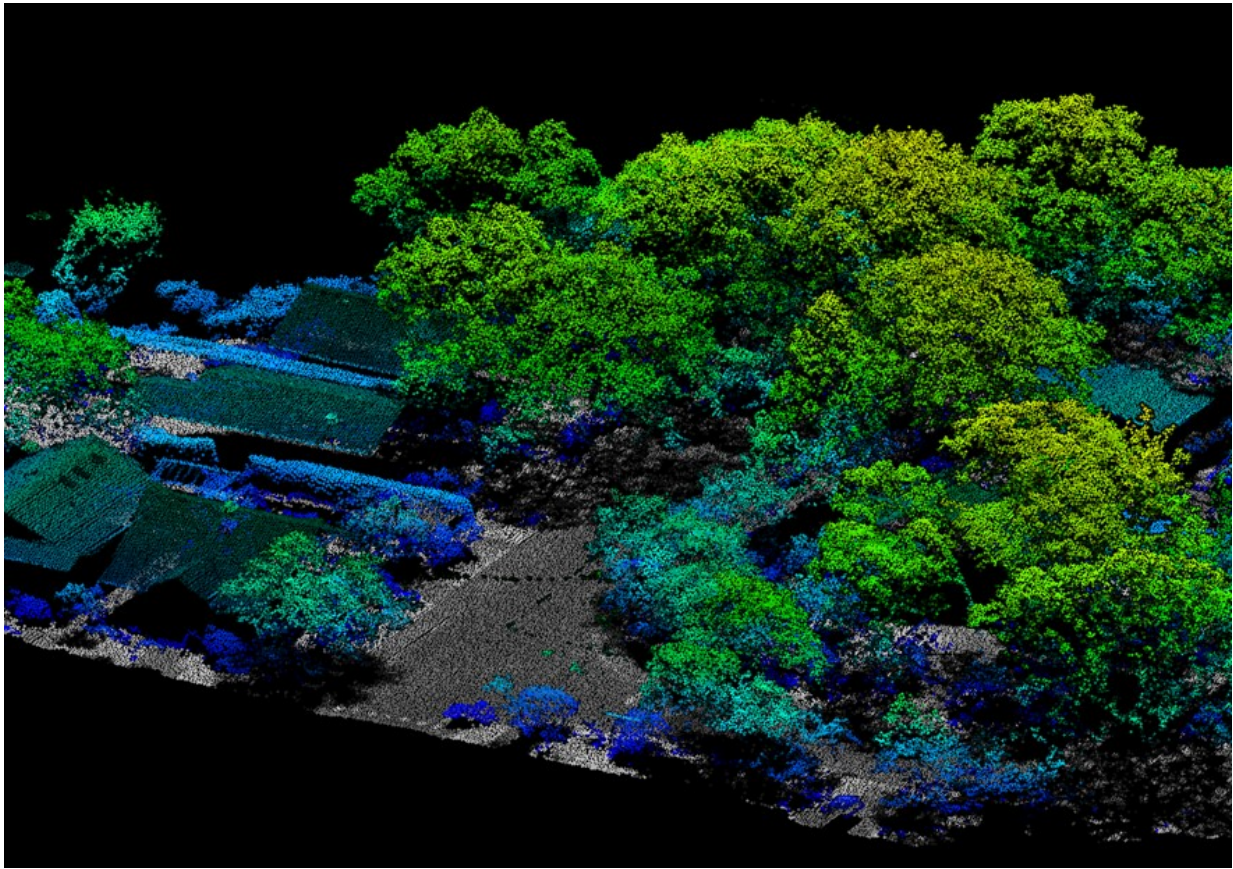


Photo by Ryan Senechal. On location at the Victoria International Airport for the Remote Sensing: Garry Oak Species Detection Project. Bell 206B3 Jet Ranger, equipped with a Phase One IXM-100 camera in the background. June 24, 2025.

Remote Sensing: Garry Oak Species Detection Project Update

On June 24, 2025, the Garry Oak Meadow Preservation Society met with the Terra Remote Sensing Inc. at the Victoria International Airport to conduct LiDAR/ortho imagery over the City of Victoria and the Urban Containment Boundary of the Municipality of Saanich.

Our goal is to eventually expand the method to survey all municipalities in the Capital Regional District. We hope to have located and calculated the overall canopy area and to offer the Garry oak mapping and high-resolution raw LiDAR/ortho data flown for this project publicly. This data sharing will support researchers, community members and other nonprofit organizations with our Garry oak species analysis, and will also enable additional novel data analysis approaches to map the urban forest canopy cover, including the size and extent of remaining Garry oaks.



Terra Remote Sensing. Screen capture. Image 3D point cloud. 900m AGL gets us 10cm 4 band Ortho (w NIR) and 20pt/m2 LiDAR.

UBC Capstone Project: Garry oak species detection analysis tool

By conducting species-specific detection analysis, we can form a species composition baseline.

In August, GOMPS received word back from the University of British Columbia (UBC) that our LiDAR project has been officially onboarded into the Master of Geomatics in Environmental Management (MGEM) program as a capstone partner. To recap, the partnership with UBC is to take the data we acquired with Terra Remote Sensing and develop the Garry oak species detection analysis tools.

GOMPS President Ryan Senechal has met with both grad students who will be working on the project, and we are thrilled.

Stay tuned for status update on delivery of the datasets soon.

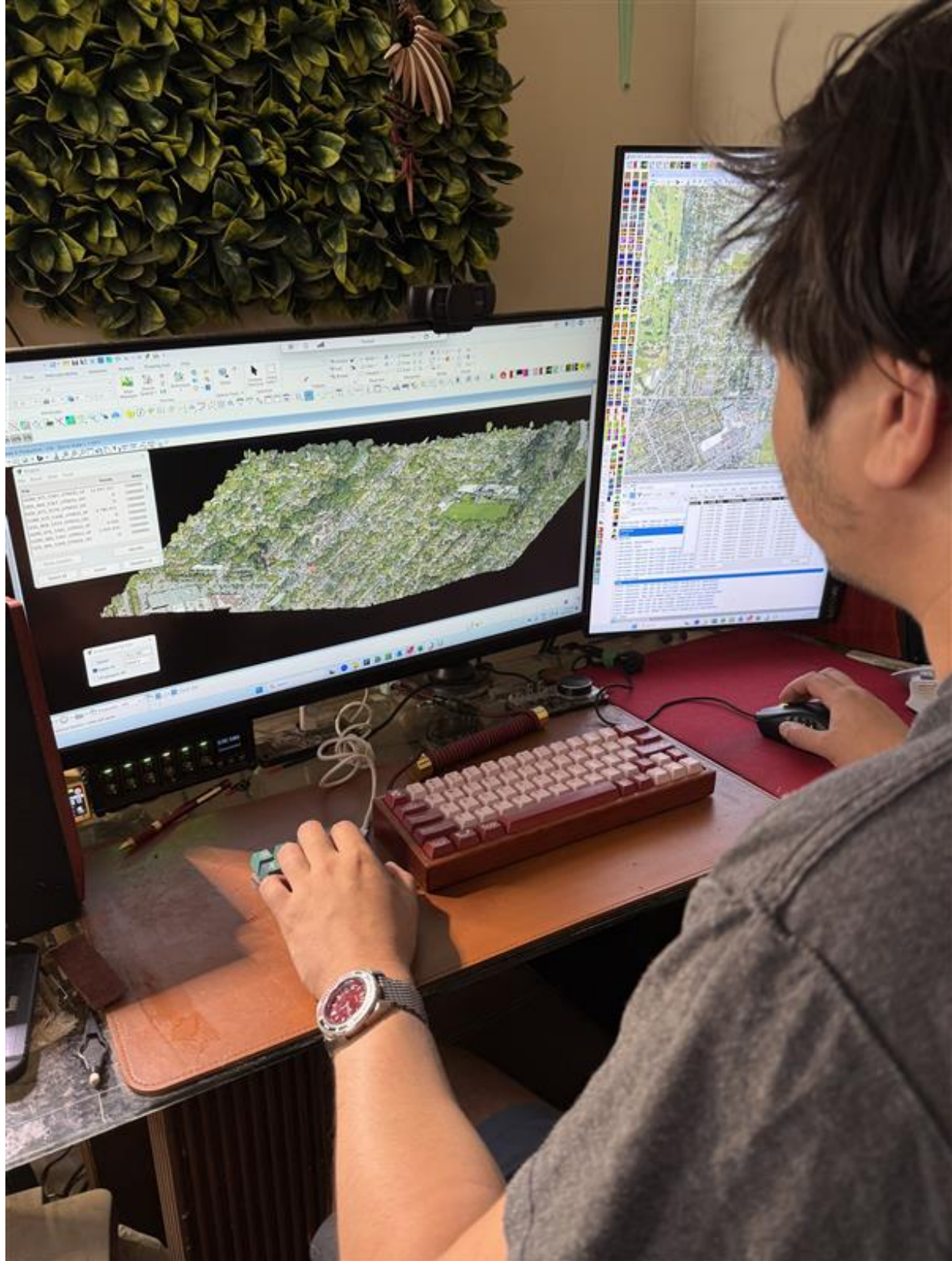


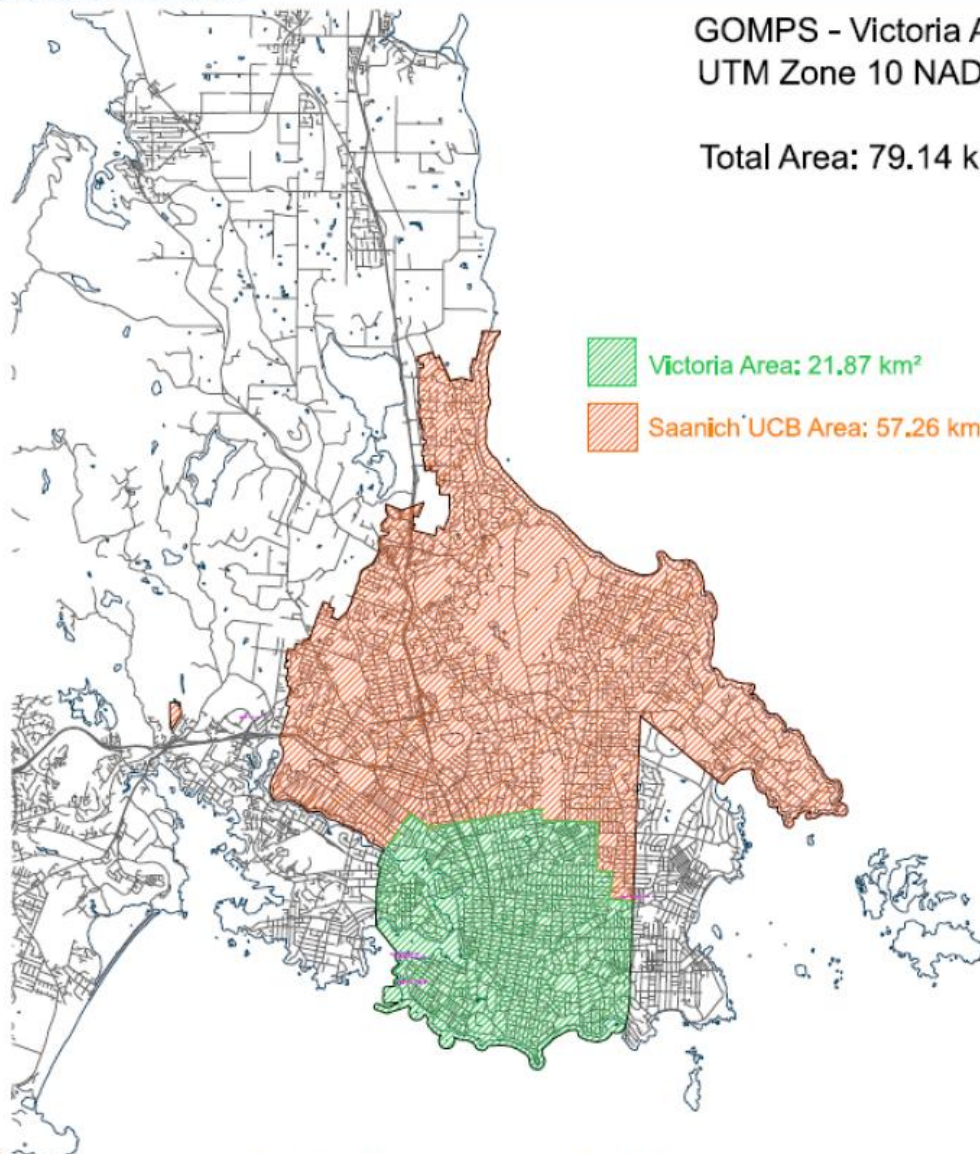
Photo by David Mostyn. Garry Oak Species Detection Project at Terra Remote Sensing.



Project Area Overview:

GOMPS - Victoria Area BC
UTM Zone 10 NAD83

Total Area: 79.14 km²



Description:

ClientIndex_GOMPS_VictoriaAreaBC_UTM10_.kmz

Map by Terra Remote Sensing. Victoria Area: 21.87 km² and Saanich UCB Area: 57.26km²



Photo by Ryan Senechal. Monitoring Garry oak seedlings from GOMPS Nursery. August 2025.

Garry Oak Monitoring (GOMPS Seedlings) Project Update

By Jacklyn Jolicoeur

On August 7, 2025, several GOMPS Board members were given a tour by Saanich Parks personnel Rick Hatch and Maddy Lister of two municipal parks where seedlings from our GOMPS nursery had been planted.

We visited Falaise Park and Chatterton Hill Park in the Royal Oak area. Most of the Garry oak saplings were doing well. During the Fall we plan to undertake additional observations in Saanich and other locations.



iNaturalist: Garry Oak Monitoring (GOMPS Seedlings) Project

Here is a link to the project on the iNaturalist website:

<https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/gomps-planted-go-monitoring?tab=observations>

Sample journal entries and photos for Falaise Park and Chatterton Hill Park Garry oak planting sites:

August 27, 2025

August 2025 Falaise Park

Location Falaise Park -a neighborhood park in the District of Saanich.

Planted 2021.

Estimated age of Garry Oak saplings 7 years.

Height varies between 1 and 1.5 meters.

Planting group size 20.

Survival rate not determined during this initial visit.

Seedling protection includes cages. Some supplemental watering.

Posted on August 27, 2025 09:53 AM by  jjolicoeur | 0 comments | [Leave a comment](#)

August 13, 2025

August 2025 Chatterton Hillside

Location: Chatterton -Grassy Hillside overlooking Highway.

Not a designated park, Saanich natural area.

Planted 2022.

Estimated age of Garry Oak Saplings 6 years.

Height varies average just under 1 meter.

Planting group size 10.

Survival rate 50% -Fair and mostly good condtion.

Seedling protection includes cages. No additional watering.

Posted on August 13, 2025 06:25 PM by  jjolicoeur | 0 comments | [Leave a comment](#)

Screenshot. Sample journal entries for Falaise Park and Chatterton Hillside locations, iNaturalist, 2025.



Photo by Jacklyn Jolicoeur. Garry oak sapling from GOMPS nursery. Location- Falaise Park, Saanich. Planted 2021; Age 7 years; Height 1.5M



Photo by Jacklyn Jolicoeur. Garry oak sapling from GOMPS nursery. Location- Chatterton Hill, Saanich. Planted 2022; Age 6 years; Height 1M.

ARTICLES

Gall Wasps – Making a Home in Garry Oak Trees

By Susan Grant, Ryan Senechal

Garry oak trees are the unwitting host of several tiny cynipid wasp species that spend part of their complicated life cycle in swellings, or galls, that they induce to grow from the tissues of Garry oak trees. In fact, the wasps produce two different types of galls; one inconspicuous type in the leaf bud where both male and female wasps develop, and another more obvious type on leaves or stems (like in the photos below) which leads to production of self-fertile female wasps. Each alternating generation exhibits a different lifestyle and method of reproduction, a process known as heterogony. Aphids employ a similarly complex development process.

The wasp larva secrete chemical signals that direct the meristematic cells in the cambium of the Garry oak to grow. The shape of the gall is distinctive for each wasp species (see the Mount Pisgah Arboretum article for examples of this diversity). Within the gall the wasp larva devours a continuously replenished supply of food from the tree's tissue. Because the vast majority of galls arise from superficial tissues of the supporting structure, the health of the Garry oak is not in jeopardy. Aesthetically, though, the galls may be unappealing.

The larvae within the galls can provide food to birds and insects, and one mechanism some cynipid wasp species employ to attract protectors is to induce production of an extrafloral nectary at the tip of the gall – a little honey pot for ants and wasps and hornets to enjoy and, thus, ward off predators.

References:

https://mountpisgaharboretum.org/wp-content/uploads/Willamette-Valley-oak-galls_final2.pdf

<https://bygl.osu.edu/node/2427>



Photo by Ryan Senechal. Twig gall wasp (Disholcaspis Mellifica), a nectar secreting species, found on a young Garry oak in Falaise Park.



Photo by Susan Grant. Speckled gall wasp (Cynips mirabilis) attached to the underside of Garry oak leaves on a sapling at the GOMPS nursery.



Photo by Susan Grant. Old, empty galls collected at the GOMPS nursery. Such galls were used to prepare ink as described in our Winter 2024 Newsletter.

Featured Garry Oak Woodland - Tacoma, Washington

Photos from a remnant pocket of Garry oaks in Tacoma, Washington. Photos by Ryan Senechal.



The Taylor's Chalkwing Butterfly is a threatened species which can be found among Garry oaks.

Oak Tree Park A Native Oak Ecosystem



Garry oak woodlands are special ecosystems that established themselves on areas of gravelly soil left behind by glaciers 15,000 years ago. Native Americans actively maintained oak prairies in the Northwest for thousands of years to keep the evergreen forests from moving in, thus protecting the camas bulbs and other prairie plants important to local tribes.

Although it ranges from southern British Columbia to northern California, Garry oak habitat had been reduced by nearly 90% by 2013, replaced by development and encroaching Douglas fir and other native and non-native plants.



Oak Tree Park is dominated by the picturesque native oak trees that provide a unique habitat in the Pacific Northwest, very different from our more common evergreen forests.



Listen closely and you may hear a Western Bluebird singing from a Garry oak tree.



The chocolate lily's starchy root was once eaten by native peoples, now it has become a rare plant.

Many plant and wildlife species that rely on native oaks have become so rare that Washington State has declared Garry oak woodlands to be Priority Habitat.

Want to do your part to restore and maintain this important resource? To find out how you can help, connect with Metro Parks' CHIP-In! program at www.metroparkstacoma.org/chip-in or 253-202-5978.



The Garry oak (also called Oregon white oak) is Washington State's only native oak tree. Volunteers play a vital role in the restoration and protection of the rare Garry oak habitat found here in Oak Tree Park.





Check out the size of the galls (California gall wasp)!





PAST EVENTS



Photo by Susan Grant. GOMPS display at Kwetlal (Camas) Day at Uplands Park with Board members (from left) Judy Spearing, Susan Grant, and Carol Milo..

Kwetlal (Camas) Day 2025

On May 4th, GOMPS Board members Judy Spearing, Carol Milo and Susan Grant participated in Kwetlal (Camas) Day, the annual celebration of Garry oak meadow flora and fauna hosted by the Friends of Uplands Park.

GOMPS provided one of the informational displays available to visitors keen to learn more about the natural environment at our doorstep and the various organizations working to protect and support ecosystem health, especially with so many current threats.

GOMPS members were visited by attendees from as far away as Courtenay, BC, and a lovely couple who travelled north from Oak Harbor, Washington. We provided information on our Garry oak nursery and the different mapping projects supported by GOMPS. Keen interest was expressed in our LiDAR initiative with a number of visitors signing up for our eNews to stay in touch with GOMPS activities.

Attendees enjoyed good weather and the music provided all afternoon by the talented local band, the Bald Eagles, also local environmentalists. Many thanks to the Friends of Uplands Park for organizing and hosting another delightful and informative gathering of dedicated, like-minded souls.

NURSERY NEWS



Picture by Judith Carder. Holly and Andrew taking two Garry oak seedlings to be part of their wedding ceremony & then planted out in the fall!



Picture by Judith Carder. One of our older seedlings left GOMPS Volunteer Nursery for a new home in Mill Bay at Frances Kelsey Secondary School as part of their new native plant garden horticulture project. Heather, Food Studies & Horticulture teacher, is coordinating this restoration project and, when her students showed great interest in including a Garry oak, she contacted GOMPS.

NEWS

“Petition: Save the Garry Oaks And Tree Canopy on Lynnfield Crescent” August 05, 2025

Message from the Petition Starter: "Join the crucial effort to preserve the Garry Oaks of Lynnfield Crescent. Your support is vital in showing decision-makers that our community values these irreplaceable ecological and historical treasures. Sign the petition to voice your opposition to their removal and advocate for a sustainable future that retains the natural beauty of our cherished neighbourhood."

Please see the link to the petition “Save the Garry Oaks And Tree Canopy on Lynnfield Crescent”.

<https://chng.it/f9BtnXX78>

ARCHIVES

The Quadra Overpass Garry Oak Plantation

By Pierre d'Estrube'

For the past year or two GOMPS has been contemplating the drafting of a model tree preservation by-law to be available as a template for municipalities of lower Vancouver Island. We have already contributed informational input to bylaw drafting committees of Saanich, Victoria and Oak Bay.

In an attempt to present convincing evidence to bylaw drafters re the pressing need for a drastic revision of these figures, especially for the protection of slower growing and threatened species (ex: Garry oaks, arbutus, yew), our hard working secretary and forester, Dr. Mike Meagher, undertook the measurement of oaklings of known age grown in a near-natural, non-irrigated habitat. Two such sites are to be found at the McKenzie interchange and Quadra Street exit of Highway #17.

This latter regeneration demonstration landmark was achieved through the vision and efforts of Jean-Anne Whitman, landscape architect and energetic member of GOMPS (formed in 1992). She was working in conjunction with the Ministry of Transport and Highways' Environment Branch, Roadside Development. Excerpts from her extensive documentation of the project indicate that "the plantation is being used to assess the growth and health of Garry oak seedlings and to evaluate the use of seedling protection tubes." The operation coincided with the Legacy Tree Planting Project for the Commonwealth Games.

Continued on page 6



Quadra overpass, October 1995, photo courtesy BC Ministry of Transportation



Quadra overpass July 2005, photo by P. d'Estrube'

Screen capture. *The Garry Oak Leaflet, Official Newsletter of the Garry Oak Meadow Preservation Society, Volume 13 No. 1. pg 5, June 2006.*

Newsletter - The Leaflet

GOMPS has rebranded the E-newsletter as the "The Garry Oak Leaflet" to honour the legacy of the print publication that circulated from 1994 to 2010. The printed leaflet is accessible in PDF format on our website. Each issue of GOMPS E-newsletters will now feature excerpts

and links to the archive. The first printed newsletter was published September 1994, and the first use of name "The Leaflet" was the January 1996, Volume 3, Number 1 issue.

This month's archive article highlights:

Read here: [**The Garry Oak Leaflet, Official Newsletter of the Garry Oak Meadow Preservation Society, Volume 13 No. 1. pg 5, June 2006**](#)

- When is An Oak Tree "A Tree?" By Dr. Michael Michael Meagher, RPF Ret.
- Managing Our Urban Forest, By Hal Gibbard & Dr. Michael Meagher
- Tree Preservation Bylaw, City of Victoria - A Brief History, By Cory Manton, Tree Preservation Officer, Parks Division, City of Victoria.
- The Quadra Overpass Garry Oak Planting, By Pierre d'Estrube

View historical GOMPS newsletters online - [**Click here to display a list of them, The Leaflet, from 1994 - 2010, in PDF format.**](#)

MEMBERSHIP

Join GOMPS today by filling out our printable membership form or make a donation via our website. Tax receipts are provided.

We're nearing development of an online form to accept memberships and donations through e-transfer and credit cards. Your support means the world to us, so thank you for being a part of this project. Stay tuned for updates! ♥



[**Printable Membership Form**](#)

DONATIONS

- Donate to GOMPS effortlessly through Canada Helps and support our mission to protect Garry oaks and their ecosystems. We are a registered society in BC with a charitable status recognized by CRA (141110908 RR0001). By donating through Canada Helps, you will receive a charitable tax receipt. Thank you!



INTERESTED IN VOLUNTEERING?

We'd love to hear from all interested volunteers!



Photo by Jacklyn Jolicoeur, GOMPS Nursery work party, planting acorns

We host weekly Garry Oak Nursery work parties on Sunday mornings from 10 am to 1 pm to keep our oaks growing and healthy.

The Nursery work area is outdoors and structured so volunteers can safely join Board members on site. Learn more about [volunteering here!](#)

*Please note there are certain areas within our premises where children may inadvertently put themselves at risk. Our activities may involve planting and transplanting seedlings. Considering the nature of the tools we use, our volunteer work requires care and attention to process. Training is provided.



Photo by Judith Carder. Nursery with green seedlings.

The GOMPS Volunteer Garry Oak Nursery has been in operation since 2017 to meet the challenge of producing locally sourced Garry oaks. The Nursery project is run by a task force drawn from members of GOMPS and addresses the rapid loss of Greater Victoria, Southeastern Vancouver Island & Gulf Island's native flagship tree – the Garry oak (*Quercus garryana*) – our province's only native oak.

Garry oak ecosystems are among the most endangered ecosystems in Canada with **only 3%** remaining in a natural state. In Canada, they are only found in British Columbia, on the southeastern tip of Vancouver Island, some of the Gulf Islands and a few spots on the mainland. We are looking for more volunteers to help at the nursery. Please connect with us and help grow the oaks!

[Volunteering at the Garry Oak Nursery](#)

[What you can do at home](#)

[Help us collect acorns](#)

[Become a Member or Donate](#)



Photo by Ryan Senechal. Camas meadow at Playfair Park, Saanich, BC.

Garry Oak Tree and Garry Oak Ecosystem Facts

- The ɫə́kwəŋən word for Garry oak ecosystem is Čəŋə́łč or Kwetlál
- The SENĆOŦEN word for Garry oak is ČEN̓,ɫĆ and pronounced Chung-ae-th-ch
- The HUL'Q'UMI'NUM word is p'hwulhp
- Garry oak ecosystems were shaped by Indigenous agroecological management over thousands of years.
- This population of oaks connects ɫə́kwəŋən and W̱SÁNEĆ people with their lands, traditions, foods, medicines, cultural practices, and ancestors.
- Of the family Fagaceae, and the genus Quercus. *Quercus garryana*, was named by Botanist David Douglas in the early 1800's to honor his friend Nicholas Garry, an officer in the Hudson Bay Company.
- Garry oak ecosystems arrived after the glacial retreat approximately 10,000 years ago, and at least 1,645 organisms (plants, insects, amphibians, reptiles, birds, mammals, etc.) have co-evolved with them.
- Garry oak ecosystems in Canada are some of the rarest, and the area they occupy is declining in large part due to development
- The largest urban oak in Victoria is on Falkland Rd. near Beach Dr. in Oak Bay

Territorial Acknowledgement

The GOMPS Volunteer Garry Oak Nursery is located on the traditional territory of the W̱

SÁNEĆ people encompassing the five local communities: BO, KÉ, CEN (Pauquachin), MÁLEXEŁ (Malahat), W̱ JOŁEŁP (Tsartlip), W̱ ,SIKEM (Tseycum), and S,ȚAUTW̱ (Tsawout). We acknowledge and thank the W̱ SÁNEĆ people on whose traditional territory we live, learn, work, and teach. Our advocacy efforts extend over the lə́kʷəŋən territory, known today as the Esquimalt (Kosapsom) and Songhees Nations. The W̱ SÁNEĆ and lə́kʷəŋən people have lived and worked on this land since time immemorial and whose historical relationship to the land and territories continues to this day.

Connect with us!



Garry Oak Meadow Preservation Society | Saanich Peninsula | Victoria BC, BC V8P3T7 CA

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