

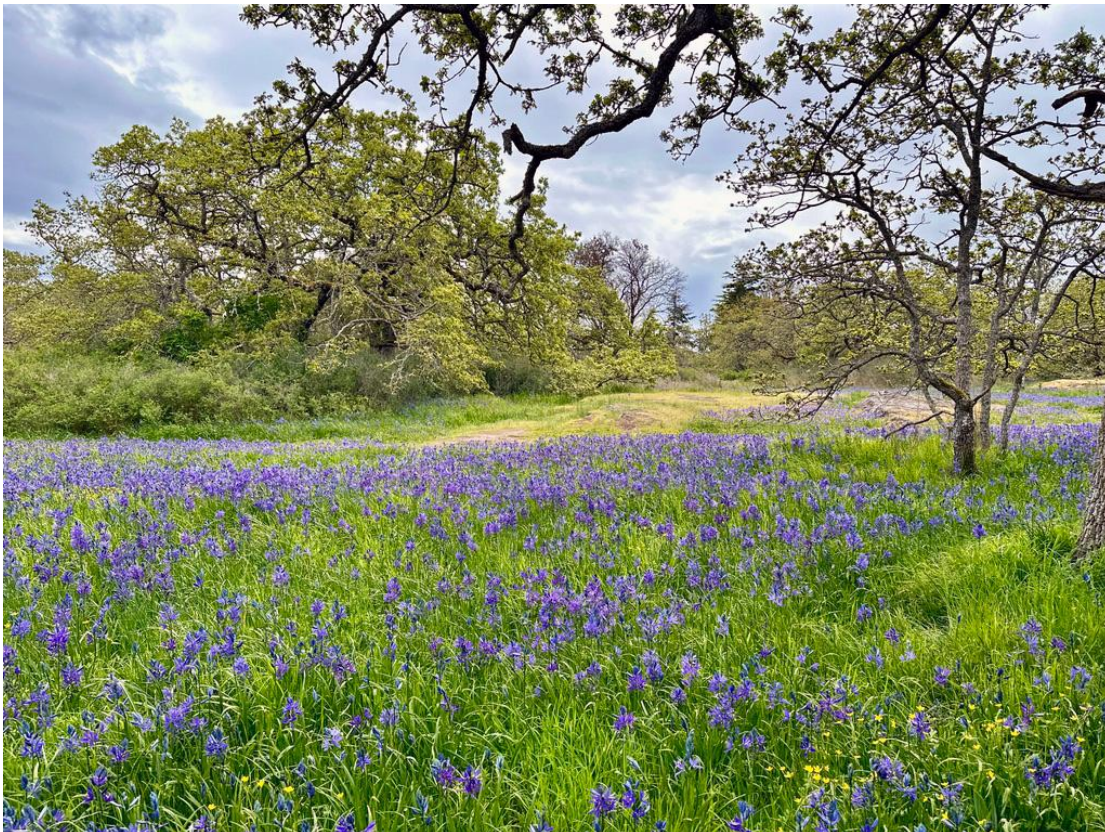
From: Garry Oak Meadow Preservation Society enews@garryoak.ccsend.com
Subject: April 2025 E-news and Kwetlal (Camas) Day
Date: May 1, 2025 at 10:25 PM
To: gompssc@gmail.com



**GARRY OAK MEADOW
PRESERVATION SOCIETY**

Welcome to our E-news

SPRING 2025



Spring kwetlal (camas) Garry oak meadow in Victoria BC.

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



Camas Day

Sunday

May 4, 2025, 12–3 p.m.

Beach Drive Field

at Entrance to
Cattle Point






***Live Music
with the Bald Eagles
*Environmental
Organizations Displays
*Camas Meadow Walks
*Free Refreshments
*Family Activities
*Prizes of Native Plants**

Friends of Uplands Park
*Creating opportunities for
stewardship, education and inspiration*



Kwetlal (Camas) Day, on Sunday, May 4, from 12 pm to 3 pm.

Uplands Park, Beach Drive on grassy field at the Cattle Point entrance

Friends of Uplands Park Society is having its annual celebration. Come by and say hello, enjoy the displays, music, free refreshments, prizes, family activities and Wildflower Meadow Walks of 1 hour will begin at 12:30 pm.

More info: <https://friendsofuplandspark.org/event/camas-kwetlal-day-sunday-may-4-1200-300pm/>

PAST EVENTS



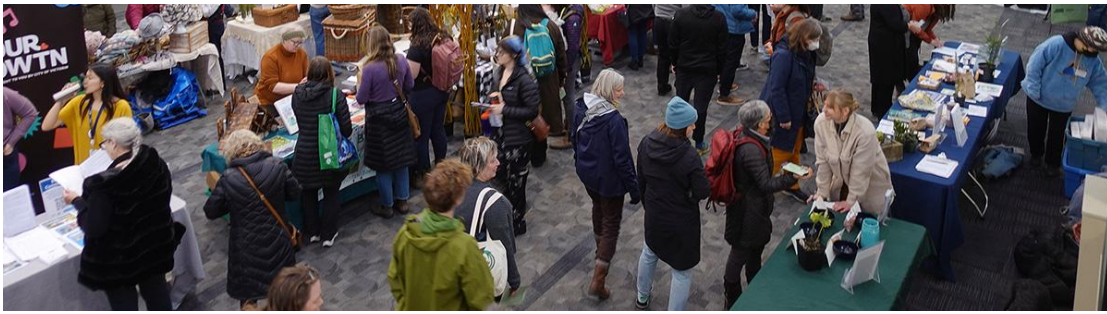


Photo by Julie Emerson. Seedy Saturday crowd at the Crystal Garden.

**Seedy Saturday Victoria, on Saturday, February 15, from 11 am - 4 pm.
Crystal Garden.**

On February 15th GOMPS Directors and Members set up a booth to join over 50+ incredible vendors for Seedy Saturday this year! From seeds, plants, and garden supplies to non-profits and more. Thanks to all the visitors who came by to say hello, and signed up for our Enews!





Photo by Ryan Senechal. GOMPS members Michael Croteau (pictured) and Ryan Senechal at tree planting event at Reynolds High School, March 2025.

On March 03, 2025, GOMPS president Ryan Senechal and past president Michael Croteau Participated in a tree planting event at Reynolds High School.

The event was at Reynolds High School where they collaboratively planted a Garry oak with the Flexible Studies class. This oak was planted to replace a neighbouring oak that had to be removed due to basal decay, and students were able to participate in the removal and replacement process. A ceremony was held at the completion of the planting, and students, staff, Michael, and Ryan joined in drumming and sharing gratitude. You can see this young tree as you drive by Reynold's natural area on Borden St.

NURSERY NEWS





Picture by Judith Carder. GOMPS Nursery new work shelter.

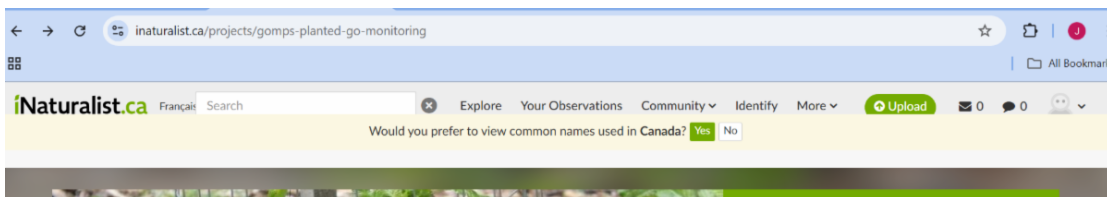
Improvement for GOMPS Garry Oak Volunteer Nursery From Nature-based Climate Action Grant – Victoria Foundation

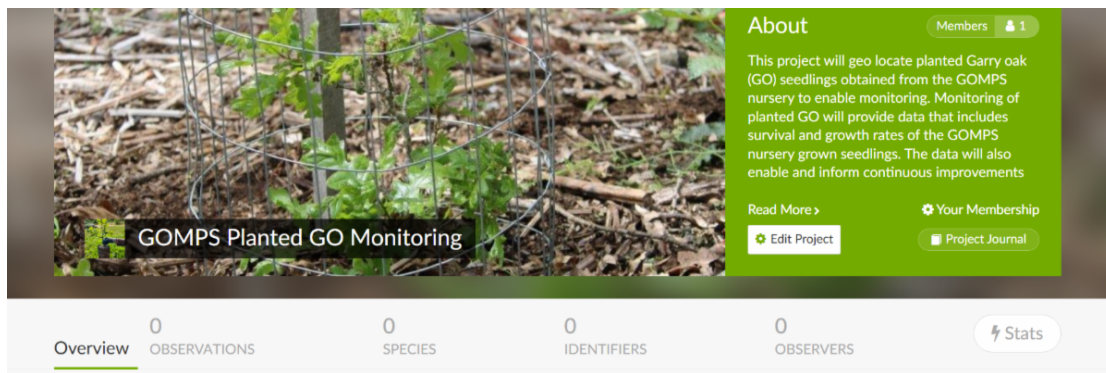
- In 2023 GOMPS applied for a Nature-based Climate Action Grant administered by the Victoria Foundation for key infrastructure and maintenance investments for sustainability of the GOMPS Garry Oak Volunteer Nursery.
- In 2024 GOMPS received a \$13,000 grant to assist with Nursery costs including the erection of a secure and safe work shelter for nursery volunteers having lost 2 previous shelters due to wind, snow & storm damage.



Picture by Judith Carder. GOMPS Nursery new work shelter.

- GOMPS thanks Volunteer Susan Grant who researched shelters, arranged & supervised installation of the shelter and Volunteer Marion Nyberg for making the shelter's accesses safe for volunteers & visitors.
- The latest Nursery shelter made it through its first winter enabling volunteers to better enjoy the workparties at the Volunteer Nursery!





Screenscapture by Ryan Senechal. iNaturalist project.

iNaturalist Data Collection

GOMPS has set up an iNaturalist project to collect data on the planting successes for GOMPS Nursery-grown Garry oak seedlings distributed to Saanich in previous years. We hope to obtain some photos and provide members with a link in future.

In 2022 Saanich planted 52 Garry oak:

- 15 Cuthbert Holmes Park
- 3 Goward Park
- 12 Chatterton Hill Park
- 5 Braefoot Park
- 1 Vic Derman Park
- 3 Rithet's Bog

In 2021 Saanich planted 88 Garry oaks:

- 20 Falaise Park
- 3 Beckwith Park
- 15 Bruce Hutchison Park
- 10 Ferndale Forest
- 4 Cedar Hill Park

In 2020 Saanich planted 52 Garry oaks:

- 12 Whitaker Trail Resto
- 12 Ferndale Forest
- 2 Feltham Park
- 5 Bruce Hutchison Park
- 15 Layritz MoTI Project
- 6 Falaise Park



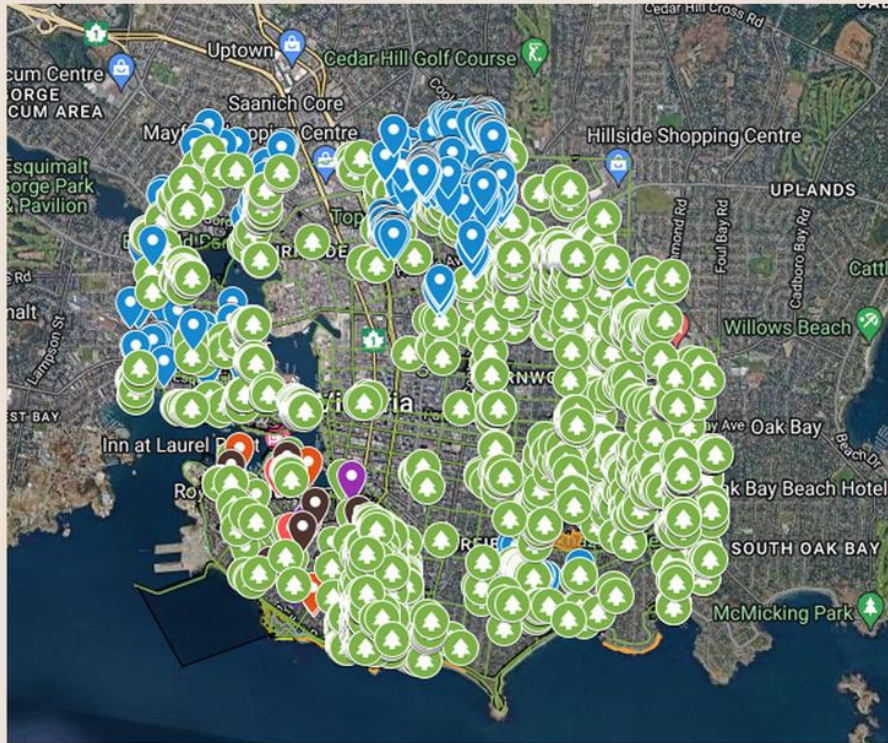


Picture by Judy Spearing. 2020 Whittaker Trail restoration site (before) at PKOLS (Mt Doug).



Picture by Judy Spearing. 2020 Whittaker Trail restoration site (after) at PKOLS (Mt Doug).

PROJECTS



VCAN COMMUNITY MAPPING PROJECT

<https://thevcn.wordpress.com>

Final Report

March 31, 2024 to March 31, 2025

///// My Great Neighbourhood Grant funded by



Final Report, Victoria Community Network Association Mapping Project (VCAN)

The Victoria Community Network Association Mapping Project (VCAN) was funded

The Victoria Community Network Association Mapping Project (VCAN) was funded by the City of Victoria's My Great Neighbourhood Grant (Resilience) program. Thank you to the VCAN Mapping Team for your time and significant contributions to the project.

From March 2024 to March 2025, the project aimed to assess biodiversity distribution within Victoria's neighbourhoods on private property, complementing the city's existing tree inventory on public land. The urban area of the City of Victoria is the Garry oak ecosystem (GOE)—a fact often left out of discussions on the urban forest.

Project Objectives:

- Enhance awareness of cultural ties to the territory and the effects of settlement.
- Foster connections between residents and the urban natural environment.
- Develop a more complete map of Garry oaks and biodiversity elements.
- Identify wildlife corridors for organism movement between complex ecosystems.

The project's outcomes aim to inform ecological and cultural restoration, urban development, park acquisition, and canopy equity initiatives.

Phase 1 Highlights:

- Development of an interactive web map accessible and editable by community members.
- Creation of tutorials for mapping significant areas.
- Organization and conversion of data for analytical purposes.
- Preliminary habitat analysis for statistical assessment.

The VCAN Mapping Team also initiated a letter for discussions with builders and developers to address land use changes impacting the Garry oak ecosystem and consider planting native plants and trees as a tangible act of connecting with the territory.

This project serves as a catalyst for dialogue to foster cultural and ecosystem awareness, ultimately promoting a healthier urban canopy and ecosystem through collaborative efforts.

VCAN Community Mapping Final Report: <https://shorturl.at/apmN6>

NEWS

Letter: Saanich development would take a toll on Garry oaks, [Victoria News](#), by Murray Goode

Residents gear up for a fight as Saanich feels the growing pains of density, [Globe](#)

and Mail, by Kerry Gold

Saanich resident looks to halt transformation of Garry oak meadow to townhouses, April 23, 2025, Victoria News, by Olivier Laurin

Letters April 5: Oak Bay needs thoughtful approach, Times Colonist by Leona Frenette

Townhouse project planned around Oak Bay mansion; critics say it's too big, Times Colonist, April 2, 2025, by Darron Kloster

Garry Oak Ecosystem Restoration Project 2025 with the Roman Catholic Diocese of Victoria. Help remove invasive species from the slopes of Christmas Hill and restore an important Garry Oak Ecosystem. Every 2nd and 4th Saturday. 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm.

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!



[Donate](#)

ARTICLES



Photo by Julie Emerson. Young Garry oak and Arbutus bark.

By Julie Emerson, Nursery Volunteer

Where Garry oak grows, on southeastern Vancouver Island, we also find Douglas fir and Arbutus. These are distinctive, drought-tolerant, native trees with fascinating connections. There are open meadows and mixed woodlands with Garry oak and Douglas fir. Eventually, in the successional trajectory, Douglas fir will predominate. But fire is a friend to the fire-resistant Garry oak, removing the Douglas fir trees that block its sunlight, and allowing Garry oak the space to thrive. Fire also doesn't phase an Arbutus trunk – it can drop some branches and sprout fresh growth from the base. In this photo (above) there's a young Garry oak snuggled right up to an Arbutus.

Consider the bark of these three trees. Mature Garry oak bark has tough reptilian-like scales. Douglas fir bark has thick, groovy ridges. Arbutus, the darling of BC fine art painters, has deep burnt sienna bark peeling away to expose the chartreuse green inner bark, which sheds dark red curls on the ground.

Colonial Scottish botanist David Douglas named the Garry oak for his friend Nicholas Garry, who was the deputy governor of the Hudson's Bay Company from 1822-1835. Douglas fir was named after him, too, although its Latin name, *Pseudotsuga menziesii*, is in honour of the rival Scottish botanist Alexander Menzies. His name went to *Arbutus menziesii*, too. Arbutus comes from *rbutus*, meaning strawberry, because its red berries look like strawberries, much enjoyed by birds.

Native Garry oaks will be leafing out soon. We can quickly tell a Garry oak from the introduced English oak: on a Garry oak, the petiole, or short stem to the leaf, is 1-2 cm. long, but almost invisible on an English oak. The needles on a Douglas fir are flat with a groove in the centre. These evergreen conifers through the winter are lovely. Arbutus is the only broadleaf evergreen tree in BC, and it is termed both evergreen and deciduous, because it carries both its new leathery green leaves and its old browned leaves at the same time, looking weird until summer when the old leaves fall.

Trees have an underground network of mycorrhizal fungus: trees supply sugar to the fungus, and the fungus gives soil nutrients to the trees. Dr. Suzanne Simard at UBC began *The Mother Tree Project* in 2015 and discovered the chemical signals Douglas fir trees send to each other - the same kind of signals as human neurotransmitters! Mother trees feed their seedlings. They have kin recognition, sending more nutrients to help Douglas fir trees than to other species of trees. The offspring grow much better if they are in the network. I'm hoping that researchers will also investigate this interconnection between Garry oak trees. When repotting a young Garry oak seedling, we are advised to include some soil from underneath a full-grown Garry oak – some of that familiar fungus, no doubt, to help it do well in its new home. We should maintain as many Garry oaks as possible to assist this unique environment with its local genetic adaptations.

The life span of a Garry oak and a Douglas fir can be so much longer than ours, 500 years or more, and an Arbutus can be 300 years old. In our time on earth, let's appreciate and protect this trio of trees.





Photo by Julie Emerson. Mature Garry oak tree bark





Photo by Julie Emerson. Mature English oak tree bark.



Photo by Julie Emerson. Mature Arbutus tree bark.

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 lək'wəŋən word for Garry oak ecosystem is Čaŋētč or Kwetlal
- The SENĆOTEN word for Garry oak is ČEN,İŁĆ 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 lək'wəŋən 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,́KE,ĆEN (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 lək'wəŋən territory, known today as the Esquimalt (Kosapsom) and Songhees Nations. The W̱ SÁNEĆ and lək'wəŋən 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

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)