

THE URBAN QUILT PART 2 –WHY THE URBAN QUILT IS NECESSARY

Biodiversity refers to the variety of life found within the ecosystems of the planet. The complex relationships that exist between species, and species and their environments, provide humans with their life support system. Without a healthy interrelated web of life, the quality of human life and even the viability of human populations are compromised. For that reason there is concern regarding threats such as overpopulation, overexploitation and consumption of natural resources, habitat loss and degradation, invasive species and climate change, all of which may lead to a loss of biodiversity.

Biodiversity is under constant strain as human populations continue to expand to a predicted 10 billion people by 2050. Given that most cities are located in prime, biologically rich habitats, such as flood plains, the need for incorporating nature into the design and modifications of cities is of paramount importance to future generations. Sustainable development requires that ‘today’s generation not compromise the survival of future generations’. It is our responsibility to be aware of the consequences of our actions. Human development replaces forests with impervious surfaces, generates waste, creates toxins, degrades air quality, fragments the land and alters hydrological patterns. The costs to the environment are typically not included in our economic systems. Neither is a monetary value placed on nature’s services such as pollination, flood control, pest control, climate regulation and air purification. It has been estimated that if the United States had to pay for nature’s services this would total 33 trillion dollars, an amount which is nearly double its gross national product (GNP). This is revealing as the GNP is a primary economic indicator and is measured based on the market value of all goods and services produced by a country, often on an annual basis.

As earth’s ecosystems continue to be fragmented, species isolation becomes a serious concern. Isolation contributes to the reduction of population diversity, species diversity and ecosystem diversity; the three categories of biodiversity. Providing corridors between habitat patches allows separate populations to

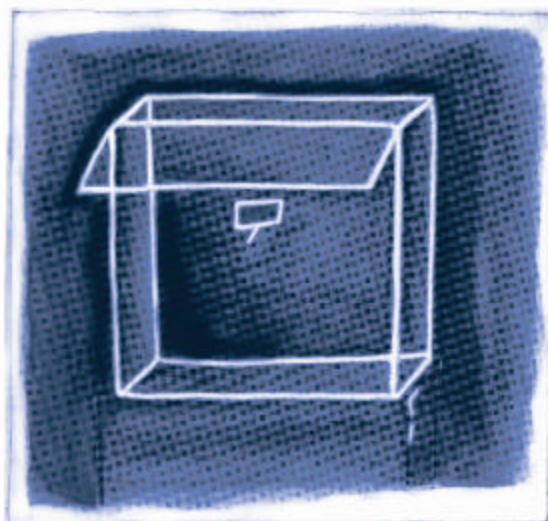
breed, increases genetic diversity and can increase movement, dispersal and gene flow. The more diverse and complex an ecosystem the stronger it will be in defense of disturbance.

Our next installment will consider the importance of habitat patch characteristics and connectivity in creating the Urban Quilt. Meanwhile create your own patch to add to the urban quilt; plant a tree, plant a shrub, promote sustainability and enjoy nature in the city!

—Tamsin Dunbar, Environmental Research Technician

The Institute of Urban Ecology presents Greenlinks 2004:

The Urban Quilt



August 19th to September 18th 2004

Featuring High Rise II
works by Sherrill Hardy

THE GREENLINKS EXHIBIT 2004

The theme of this year’s Greenlinks exhibit also falls under the banner of the ‘Urban Quilt’. Come and learn about the activities and programs of the IUE and enrap-ture yourself in works by our featured artist, Sherrill Hardy. Her multimedia installation piece, High Rise II, provides a platform for exploring the importance of maintaining a vital balance with nature while ‘suprastructura’ emphasizes the interactions of life forms. The Greenlinks exhibit runs from August 19 to September 18 in the Amelia Douglas Gallery, Douglas College, New Westminster campus.






HOMEOWNER AND BUILDER ACTION KITS –AN UPDATE

These kits, introduced in our last newsletter, will help homeowners and builders make more eco-friendly choices. There are many decisions to be made in the construction of a new neighbourhood or home, resulting in opportunities to reduce harmful impacts on the environment. Some of the opportunities include:

Storm water management. Currently, most storm water is run in to sewers and piped to local streams where it is released. This influx of water can cause increased pollution and erosion and degrade stream health. Storm water management systems have been developed that mimic natural systems. Through an array of strategies, storm water is infiltrated on site, reducing both the need for costly infrastructure and the adverse effects of urbanization.

New-Urbanism. This approach to neighbourhood planning focuses on reducing impervious surfaces, pedestrian-focused design and preservation of natural environments. Increased density means less infrastructure is required per resident. It also means that less land is needed to create a neighbourhood, leaving more land for natural areas. New-urbanist communities are twice as likely to incorporate stream and floodplain restoration and stream bank stabilization strategies in their developments as other developers (see *Journal Am. Planning Assoc.*, Vol. 69(4):404).

Materials. Builders have a wide selection of materials to choose from, and there are many eco-friendly construction materials on the market. In general, the best ones follow these guidelines (from GVRD's Best Practices Guide: Material Choices for Sustainable Design). Use:

-  materials that will not adversely affect human health
-  materials that will contribute to operating energy efficiency
-  materials that come from re-renewable resources and are harvested in a sustainable manner
-  materials that have a high re-cycled content and are recyclable
-  materials that are locally manufactured

—Karin England, Eco-Education Coordinator

THE GREEN LINK

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The Green Link is a quarterly publication of the Douglas College Institute of Urban Ecology. The IUE is a non-profit organization working to connect people with nature in the Lower Mainland. For more information about the Institute, to subscribe to the IUE's newsletter *The Green Link*, or to comment on the newsletter, please contact us at:

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We are always trying to reduce our paper consumption--let us know if we can send you your copy of *The Green Link* by e-mail.

INSPIRED BY NATURE –A NEW INITIATIVE

Inspired by Nature (IN Gardening) is a new series of brochures and workshops that promote living in harmony with nature in the city. The four brochures in this series suggest ways to create a garden to benefit you and your family as well as urban wildlife - Healing Gardens, Native Vegetation, Animal Houses and Investment Gardens.

The series is intended to help create a landscape that is magical, a garden that soothes the spirit, calms the mind, feeds the soul and invites shared moments with wildlife. Healing Gardens incorporate principles of aromatherapy and visual/art therapy. Native plants such as red columbine, Nootka rose and tall Oregon grape help to develop a sense of place and awareness of our local history, both human and natural. Animal houses for birds, butterflies, bats and amphibians invite wildlife into our lives so we may experience life together. Finally, Investment Gardens such as vegetables to eat, lavender for potpourri, sage for smudging and materials for crafts engage us to adopt sustainable values.

Some of the concepts for Inspired by Nature were developed last year during our Capitol Hill Greening Project, sponsored by VanCity. With the encouragement we received from members of the community around Confederation Park in North Burnaby we are pleased to expand the workshops throughout Greater Vancouver. If you would like to book a workshop for IN gardening, please contact us at: 604-527-5224.

—Val Schaefer, Executive Director

THE IUE COLONY FARM NURSERY –THE INSIDE SCOOP

For nearly ten years, the IUE has been working to increase wildlife habitat by planting hydro corridors, school grounds, riparian areas, and backyards throughout the Lower Mainland with native species. Over the years these enhancement sites have received over 50,000 native plants. By being able to grow and supply our own plants, the native plant nursery at Colony Farm Regional Park in Coquitlam has been instrumental in facilitating the success of many of our projects.

Today, the IUE's native plant nursery continues to be an important facet of our programs. We work with various secondary schools that help to propagate the plants from seeds and cuttings which then get planted by ourselves and other community groups. We also use the nursery to provide environmental workshops to Canada Scouts and Girl Guides where they can learn about the native plants we grow such as red osier dogwood, mock orange, Douglas-fir and salmonberry.

Recently, the nursery has been a training ground for our Katimavik volunteers. They were able to learn about native plants, plant propagation and general nursery maintenance. Throughout the year, 9 Katimavik volunteers aged 17 to 21 from all over Canada have helped with our nursery's up-keep and have reconstructed the pathways by laying landscape cloth and bark mulch. Starting in September we will work with a new group of Katimavik's who will help us to construct much needed shade pens which help keep the direct sunlight off of the plants.

Over the years the nursery has provided the IUE with plant material while continuously acting as a conduit for environmental education. As the continued success of the nursery relies on IUE staff and volunteers, we are always looking for potential volunteers to become involved –contact the IUE for more information.

—Chris Mehuys, Planting Coordinator



The Institute of Urban Ecology (IUE) Colony Farm Nursery

IUE NOTES & UPDATES

- **Weyerhaeuser Jobs for Youth Grant**

We would like to thank Weyerhaeuser Company Limited for awarding the IUE a grant of \$1,500 to hire a student. The grant helps fund our Environmental Education Program. With Weyerhaeuser's support we have been actively promoting native gardens, bird and bat boxes and sustainability to groups of all ages this summer.

- **Seedlings by Allard**

Thanks to Allard Contracting for donating 4,000 seedlings to the Institute in June. The western redcedar and Douglas-fir are destined for riparian areas, school grounds, parks and the many other areas we plant with the community.

- **Land Use Series Workshops Now Ready**

The Institute has developed a series of 10 workshops covering a wide range of land use topics. From urban biodiversity to public safety to green buildings to supplying aggregate for construction, these workshops address land use issues of interest to schools, home owners, builders, developers, municipalities and the concerned public.

The 10 workshops include instruction on Action Kits for the Developer, Builder and Homeowner, an exploration of Aggregates and Cities, and six aspects of Biodiversity and Green Space Management. For more information about this exciting new series, please contact us at: 604-527-5522.

- **Low Impact Development Conference Coming Soon**

Since 1998 The IUE has been offering an annual conference addressing various land use issues. The theme of this year's conference is Low Impact Development and we will be using the planned development of Coquitlam's North-east Sector as a case study. Consult the IUE website in the next month for details – www.douglas.bc.ca/iue.

THE IUE CONTEST RESULTS ARE IN

The IUE holds several environmentally-focused contests throughout the year. Two such contests were held recently: a youth writing contest and **Nature's Havens Challenge**.

'**Linking People and Nature**' was the theme for this year's writing contest, which encouraged youth to express their connection to nature in the city through poetry and prose. The results are in and the IUE would like to thank all who entered and to congratulate contest winners. Visit our website to view the winning entries which include works by **Cara Tweed, Amanda Chow, Selina Chow, Lauran Lan, Erin Brown-John, Danica** and **Karen Arguello**.

Our annual **Nature's Havens Challenge** garden competition celebrated its 8th anniversary this year. This contest encourages gardeners to create a space that is a haven for birds, butterflies and other wildlife. Entries were judged on the following criteria: habitat creation, use of native plants, provision of food, water and shelter, pesticide and herbicide free gardening, composting, harnessing rainwater and overall design.

First Place	Marion Patterson , Coquitlam
Gold	Jackie and Dave White , Coquitlam
Silver	Tom Patterson , Burnaby and Susan and Bernhard Zanders , Port Moody
Bronze	Ingrid Lae , Burnaby and Jeanine Dolan , Port Coquitlam

We hope that this contest will continue to inspire many people to add wildlife habitat space to their yard or balcony. If you are interested in creating a Nature's Havens garden but are unsure of what your first steps should be, contact the IUE. We offer several gardening workshops throughout the year, and have a new program which features the creation of a nature-friendly garden design for your yard for the small fee of only \$100.



INSTITUTE SPONSORS AND PARTNERS

Platinum (\$100,000+)

- The Real Estate Foundation of BC
- BC Hydro
- Human Resources Development Canada Job Creation Partnership Program
- Environment Canada- EcoAction 2000
- College and Pit Operators Partnership

Gold (\$50,000+)

- Challenge/Student Summer Works
- Terasen
- Habitat Conservation Trust Fund
- Douglas College

Silver (\$10,000+)

- Vancouver Foundation
- Fisheries Renewal BC
- VanCity
- City of Surrey
- Millennium Bureau of Canada
- TD Friends of the Environment Foundation
- Public Conservation Assistance Fund
- Douglas College Work Study
- Corporation of Delta

Bronze (\$1,000 - \$10,000)

- Shell Environmental Fund
- Canadian Council for Human Resources in the Environment Industry
- EJLB Foundation
- BC 21
- Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection
- Home Depot
- City of Coquitlam
- Coquitlam River Watershed Society
- Burrard Inlet Environmental Action Program
- Trans Mountain Pipeline
- Forest Alliance of BC
- Lehigh Cement Ltd.
- Art Knapp Plantland
- University of Victoria
- Weyerhaeuser Company Limited

In Kind Donations

- Habitat Restoration Program, Douglas College
- City of New Westminster
- Greater Vancouver Regional District
- T. Buck Suzuki Foundation
- Colony Farms Park Association
- Tree Canada Foundation
- City of Burnaby
- Linnaea Native Plant Nursery

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO ALL THOSE WHO HAVE GIVEN US THEIR GENEROUS SUPPORT AND DONATIONS