



the **gardens**
at **HCP**

Horticulture Centre of the Pacific

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

2014



Welcome Volunteers,

Welcome to the Horticulture Centre of the Pacific. Thank you very much for choosing to volunteer with us and we are thrilled to welcome you to our team.

Many important activities at the Horticulture Centre of the Pacific could not go anywhere without the assistance of volunteers. For more than 30 years volunteers have been a valuable resource for the centre.

The purpose of the volunteer handbook is designed to give you basic information about our volunteer program and to assist you as you become part of the Horticulture Centre of the Pacific team. We suggest you use this manual as a reference during your service as a volunteer.

We hope you will find your experience here at the Horticulture Centre of the Pacific rewarding and meaningful. Thank you for your commitment

Warm Regards, Amanda Price
Volunteer Manager



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INTRODUCTION

This handbook is for the benefit and use of those individuals who wish to become volunteers at the Horticulture Centre of the Pacific (HCP). It contains the policies and regulations, which govern how the HCP works with its volunteers and pays particular attention to safety, volunteer duties and performance.

In order to achieve its goals, the Society believes that good working relationships are essential. Therefore its objective is that the business of the Society be conducted both efficiently and with goodwill to the mutual advantage of the HCP Society, its Board of Directors, staff members and volunteers when on HCP premises or when representing the Society in general.

HISTORY OF THE HORTICULTURE CENTRE OF THE PACIFIC

The Horticulture Centre of the Pacific (HCP) was created by a group of influential citizens who had a dream of a centre of excellence for horticulture training and it was officially incorporated as a not-for-profit Society in November 1979.

The original idea for the centre came from Joseph Kimball who brought in Mel Couvelier, then Mayor of Saanich. The Mayor developed a committee of interested citizens, chaired by Dr. Hugh Keenleyside to explore the concept for the centre in detail.

The name *Horticulture Centre of the Pacific*- (HCP) was suggested by Hal Herbert: *Horticulture* to encompass the botanical and agricultural activities, *Centre* to include demonstration gardens with teaching and research facilities and *Pacific* to reflect the international scope of its activities.

By 1983 funds were secured to hire workers to begin the work of creating the gardens and with precarious funding and legions of volunteers the work continued through the 80's and 90's. Over time regular funding has increased to provide for more paid staff, however funding challenges continue to the present and without those legions of volunteers who turn out every week the viability of the Centre would be dubious.

The Centre was sited on Crown Land and the first lease was signed in 1986 for stewardship of 135 acres, which was part of 306 acres known as the Glendale Lands. In 1995 this was reduced to 103 acres in return for an extended lease. Of this, approx 10 acres are in demonstration gardens with the remaining in second growth woodland that is being restored to its native habitat. In 1993 a beaver took up residence in the seasonal lake and built a dam on the outlet stream creating a wetland and important bird habitat, as it remains today. A weir built in 2005 maintains the water level. An observation platform followed and gives birdwatchers a clear view of the many returning species. A pair of bald eagles began a nest in 2008, fledging successfully in 2009, an exciting indicator of the rebalancing of the ecosystem.

The Horticulture Centre of the Pacific (HCP) encompasses two separate and interconnected spheres: The demonstration gardens, known as **The Gardens** and the **Pacific Horticulture College (PHC)**.

The HCP continues to be a not-for-profit society administered by a volunteer Board of Directors and is situated on leased land owned by the Municipality of Saanich.



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- 1) The spectacular demonstration gardens are open year-round to members (free) and to the public for a modest entry fee. Partnership gardening groups and societies have long been a source of plant material, funding and labour as they have developed gardens specific to their areas of interest. Visitors can enjoy the over 10,000 varieties of plants while learning what and how to grow in the Pacific Northwest.

The Conservation Woodland area is open to the public at no charge year-round from access points along Interurban Road. Currently the conservation area development is entirely reliant on grants, donations and the labour of an active and dedicated group of volunteers.

There are approximately 200 volunteers who contribute 18,000 hours of labour each year in all areas of the operation from gardening to construction, events and administration. At \$22.00 per hour this represents a value of \$396,000.00.

- 2) The Pacific Horticulture College, which is accredited by The Private Career Training Institution Agency, is the formal educational arm of the HCP. It has the capacity of training 24 students per year in a ten month certificate program. This program prepares students to be fully competent industry professionals. Graduates work as maintenance gardeners, in design and installation, in nurseries and with growers.

Numerous Community Education programs are available to the membership of the HCP and the general public. Industry training, specialized courses and workshops comprise the balance of educational offerings.

VISION and MISSION

The vision of the Horticulture Centre of the Pacific is as follows:

We will be an internationally recognized botanical garden and a respected centre of life long learning, conservation and research.

The HCP has a vision to be an internationally recognized centre of horticulture education and a botanical garden. International recognition is important as it allows the HCP to be ranked against the best education institutions in the world. Becoming a botanical garden will further enhance our capabilities, global reputation and credibility and strengthen our education programs by embracing global best practices in education, conservation and research.

The HCP will achieve its vision by effectively executing its mission of:

- **Providing an inspiring natural learning environment** in which visitors and students can learn responsible horticulture and conservation practices and the importance of plants to a sustainable world.
- **Reaching out to our community and the world** with innovative education programs that connect people, especially children, with plants and nature and increase awareness of the importance and fragility of our natural environment.
- **Developing, cataloguing and displaying a rich collection of plants** that demonstrates the rich heritage of plants that can be grown in our climate and contributes to the protection of biodiversity.



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- **Demonstrating responsible stewardship of our conservation lands** through our sustainable management practices, habitat restoration and education programs.
- **Providing high quality, accredited education for horticulture professionals** by responding to the needs of the horticulture industry and our students through innovative programs.
- **Engaging in research with partners in plant sciences** to expand our knowledge of native plants and their importance for biodiversity and sources of food.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS & GENERAL INFORMATION

Official Name: Horticulture Centre of the Pacific
Address: 505 Quayle Rd. Victoria, BC V9E 2J7
Phone Number: 250-479-6162
Website: www.hcp.ca

Hours of Operation: 9:00am to 5:00pm, 7 days a week
Excluding: Dec 24, 25, 26, & 31 and Jan 01

Admission (prices include taxes): Free for members
Non-member: \$11
Senior or Student: \$8.25
Guest accompanying member \$5.50
Youth under 16, Free
With same day Nourish Meal receipt: \$5.50

Restroom Location: There are two unisex restrooms located between the restaurant and Reception/Gift Shop Buildings.

Where to Park: Parking is available in the main parking lot, on the garden side of Quayle Rd, and in the Service Yard through Gate 4. **Sometimes the main parking lot may not be available due to events.

Bus Transportation: Bus #83 runs along Quayle Rd. There are two bus stops by our driveway. The Royal Oak Exchange and Camosun College Bus Loops are nearby. Please contact **BC Transit** directly for bus information at 250-382-6161 or www.bctransit.com

Restaurant on Site: **Nourish Bistro** access is from the main parking lot. For further information and hours of operation please visit: www.nourishingsight.com or call 250-590-6346

Drink Machine: A soda and water machine is located outside the main building. This machine accepts Canadian coins.



- Smoking Restrictions:** Smoking is prohibited in the gardens. There is a smoking area located by the PHC Classroom
- Size of the Gardens:** The total size of the property is 41 hectares (103 acres). The Gardens are approximately 10 acres with the remainder in the woodland including a small lake.
- Where does HCP get its Support?:** HCP is a not-for-profit society that is financed by an annual operation grant from the municipality of Saanich, additional funding grants, membership dues, admissions, facilities rentals, donations, plant sale and a major annual fundraising event “Art & Music in the Gardens in August.
- Who owns the land?:** In 2013, the Province of British Columbia transferred the HCP to the Municipality of Saanich for 99 years. Saanich in turn provided the HCP with a 60 year lease on the lands.
- Are the facilities available for rent?:** The Couvelier Pavilion, the Classroom, and the Lunch Room are available for outside rental for meeting and events. The Gardens are a popular venue for weddings. Please forward all inquiries to the Executive Director of Operations and Marketing marketing@hcp.ca
- What are the annual events at The Gardens?:** February: Hellebore Sunday Plant Sale
April: Spring Plant Sale
May: Tomato Day
August: Art & Music in the Garden
September: Fall Plant Sale
- Distributing Flyer and Posters:** All flyers, posters, brochures etc from other organizations and other publications must be directed to, and approved by, the Executive Director of Operations and Marketing before distribution or posting.
- Applying for Donations or Grants:** All applications for funding, gifts or services in-kind for your garden, project or department must be directed to the Executive Director of Operations and Marketing prior to approaching any companies or individuals.



ORGANIZATION OF THE GARDENS

HCP maintains several different types of gardens. Some of those are Partnership gardens that are maintained by other Societies from the community and some are under the direction of a volunteer Curator.

Examples: Partnership Gardens are the Mixed Borders maintained by the Hardy Plant Group of the Victoria Horticultural Society; the Rhododendron Garden partnered with the Victoria Rhododendron Society and the Lily Garden maintained by the Lily Society.

Gardens that are not partnered with outside Societies or organizations have HCP volunteer curators, who work in consultation with the Head Gardener and with volunteers to maintain and develop the gardens for which they are responsible.

The Gardens Available To Volunteer In:

- Anne’s Garden
- Birds, Bees, and Butterfly Garden
- Bonsai Garden
- Children’s Garden
- Conservation Park
- Upper Vegetable Garden
- Doris Page Winter Garden
- Hardy Plant Borders
- Heather Garden
- Herb Garden
- Japanese Takata Garden
- Lily Garden
- Native Garden
- Ornamental Grass Garden
- Polyhouse
- Rhododendron and Hosta Garden
- Saturday Team
- Western Woods

Other Volunteering Opportunities Include:

- Board and Committees
- Coffee Preparation Wed. AM
- Construction/Maintenance Crew
- Equipment Maintenance
- Garden Tour Guide
- Library / Archivist
- Outerbridge Park
- Reception / Office
- Special Events – Plant Sales, Arts and Music in the Gardens etc.

Some gardens noted above have Curators. Curators oversee their particular garden and volunteers with guidance from the Head Gardener.

Volunteers work in the gardens on either Wednesday or Saturday mornings from 9:00 – 12:00 Noon. In exceptional circumstances other arrangements can be made with the Head Gardener to volunteer at other times. An example would be an exchange or overseas student who is available for a limited period of time but has larger blocks of time available during the week.

Prior to Becoming an HCP Volunteer

You will be required to participate in initial orientation in the form of information about the HCP, its history, structure, values, goals and the roles available for volunteers. This includes information about your potential role and how it may fit into the larger organization.

- Please familiarize yourself with the regulations of WorkSafe B.C. which includes anti –harassment policies that apply equally to all personnel engaged in any activity at the HCP site or on its behalf elsewhere.
www2.worksafebc.com
- At the end of the orientation session, you will be asked to complete and sign HCP’s Volunteer Agreement.
- Background checks are required for volunteers who are working with children. This is a Provincial requirement and is carried out by the local police.

Volunteer Policies

- Your volunteer role can be enhanced by the sharing of horticultural knowledge and experience by garden curators, gardening staff and others who have the requisite expertise. This teaching is informal and occurs through the practical tasks being undertaken.
- You are encouraged to read and ensure that you understand and can uphold the Vision, Mission and Goals of the HCP and support them through all of your activities.
- You are asked to understand that the HCP will expect you to follow through on the commitment you have made. Keep in mind that volunteers are an extension of the HCP Staff.
- All garden projects must be approved by the Head Gardener. Please submit project ideas and details to headgardener@hcp.ca
- There is some flexibility in planning and coordinating volunteer activities including a request for a change of assignment. Understand that best efforts will be used to accommodate such requests and may not always mean an immediate move. Please inquire with the Volunteer Manager.
- It is necessary to notify the Volunteer Manager and/or Curator of your garden if you need to be away for a prolonged length of time or when you are leaving your volunteer role on a permanent basis. In this event we ask you to fill out an Exit Survey to assist the Society in making improvements if indicated.

As an HCP Volunteer, You are an Important Member of Our team.

- You can expect to be in, and equally to contribute, to a healthy and safe working environment.



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- You can expect to be welcomed and in turn you are required to include new volunteers in your work group as they are assigned and assist them to learn their role.
- You can expect to be treated respectfully and to equally provide the same level of respect for your co-workers and other HCP staff and colleagues.
- You should make yourself aware of the locations of first aid stations and to contact the Curator, Head Gardener or Office Staff if someone incurs an injury. (See Safety Procedures p. 12)
- Use safety equipment such as goggles and hearing protectors when participating in tasks that should require them, and obey instructions from supervisors when instructed to use safety equipment.
- Remember that the garden is open to visitors during the times when you are working. So it is extremely important that you ensure pathways are clear of tools and debris at all times when you are working in a garden area to ensure safety for both yourself and our visitors. Should equipment or tools need to be in the pathway, please use safety cones around the work area.
- Ensure that you are dressed appropriately for the weather and your tasks while working at the HCP. Gardening gloves and sturdy footwear are strongly recommended. Clothing with dangling straps, ties, flip flops and sandals are not permitted as they could cause an accident or injury.
- You must respect the confidentiality of any inside HCP information to which your volunteer activities may provide access.
- Your opinion is valued on matters involving your role at the HCP. There is opportunity for you to contribute to and participate in discussions which may affect our garden policies and procedures. However, please understand that not every opinion or suggestion, no matter from whom, can always be put into practice.
- You are not required to volunteer for events held at the HCP, however, if you are available or would like to work at events, your participation will be very welcome.
- As far as possible you will be supported in achieving your goals and expectations as a volunteer.
- You will be assisted to resolve any issues should they develop. HCP has policies and procedures in place to assist in any dispute resolution or grievance.
- For reimbursement of reasonable low cost expenses incurred for your garden, garden or department please have the garden curator or Head Gardener sign the receipt and ask the Office Manager, Volunteer Manager, or Head Gardener for payment. Prior approval must be sought for any major expenditure.
- All volunteers must record the total number of hours worked. This includes volunteering at the HCP, at home, or at other locations (i.e. promotional and educational events). The Volunteer Log Book is located at the Main Building and is out during coffee break on Wednesday mornings. All other times this binder is kept in the Reception Office.



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- Prior to using tools or equipment, please ask to be shown the proper use by a staff member. Certain equipment may not be available for volunteer use.
- Please ensure that tools are clean when returned.
- Know your limits, Garden within it. Please be aware of the nature of the terrain and natural risks due to uneven ground, as well as, using caution. Volunteers are responsible for ensuring that they only undertake tasks that they are physically capable of doing.

Guidelines for Curators:

When Curators require supplies or assistance from the Garden staff the procedure is as follows:

- Providing a minimum of 7 days' notice, please email the Head Gardener your request at headgardener@hcp.ca Please be as specific as possible to ensure your supplies are ready when you are ready to use them.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

- When a volunteer has a problem or complaint he or she takes the issue first to the person involved. If it cannot be resolved at that level the issue then goes to the next level. Depending on the situation this could involve the Garden Curator, the Head Gardener or the Volunteer Manager. If the issue is not resolved the volunteer can appeal by making a written submission to the President of the Board with a copy to the Executive Director of Operations. The President may refer the appeal to the Board. The President's decision is final.

SAFETY PROCEDURES

- Be familiar with locations of first aid kits
- Report all incidents – accident or injury to a staff member as soon as possible and within 24 hours
- If you witness an incident involving a visitor, report to staff on his or her behalf.
- Volunteers are NOT permitted to drive an injured colleague to hospital.

First aid for Minor injuries: This includes cuts or scrapes or removal of a splinter or dust from eye. Locate the nearest First Aid Kit and/or eye wash location.

Please note that all HCP Staff have current Level 1 First Aid Training.

First Aid stations:

- Main Building – Front Reception Office
- PHC Classroom
- Portable
- Takata Works yard
- Polyhouse # 1



Serious Injuries: Fainting, major bleeding, etc. **Always contact staff and do not attempt first aid unless you have been properly trained.** Should you have your cell phone with you, you can call the Front Reception Office at 250-479-6162 to advise of the event or injury.

If the injury is **life threatening**, call 911 first. Contact a staff person immediately so they can coordinate arrival of ambulance. Should you have your cell phone with you, you can call the Front Reception Office at 250-479-6162 to advise of the event or injury.

In an emergency or crisis situation, remain calm. Never put yourself in an unsafe or dangerous situation that could only add to the problem.

Fire Extinguisher Locations

Fire extinguishers are provided in the following locations.

- Main Building in Reception
- Main Building in Lunch room
- Classroom
- Couvelier Pavilion
- Kubota RTV (small tractor with box at back-extinguisher is in box)
- Portable
- Nourish Bistro
- Resource Centre





HORTICULTURE CENTRE OF THE PACIFIC

Volunteer Agreement

The purpose of this agreement is to formalize our working relationship with you, to express our deep appreciation for your services and assure you of our commitment to do our best to make your volunteer work an enjoyable and rewarding experience.

I. The HORTICULTURE CENTRE OF THE PACIFIC

We, the Horticulture Centre of the Pacific agree that _____,

having completed an orientation session dated: _____ is now a volunteer with the Horticulture Centre of the Pacific and

WE COMMIT TO THE FOLLOWING:

To support you with the tools and resources needed to fulfill your role, to the best of the Society's ability to provide them.

To always treat you with respect.

To provide you with the opportunity to have your voice heard in the development of policies and decisions that could affect your role. Final decisions will remain the prerogative of the Chief Executive Officer in conjunction with the Board of Directors.

To support you in achieving your goals and expectations as a volunteer by assisting you to resolve issues as they develop. Working toward resolution is guided by the policies, procedures and resources of the Society.

To enhance your volunteer role by the sharing of horticultural knowledge and experience. This includes garden curators, gardening staff and others who have the requisite expertise. This teaching is informal and occurs through the practical tasks being undertaken.

To provide an appeal process for disputes or issues that were not resolved to your satisfaction, between volunteers, volunteer and garden curator (also usually a volunteer), between volunteer and staff or between volunteer and executive director.

To change the agreed upon volunteer commitment to suit needs that arise in your personal life.



II VOLUNTEER

I, _____ accept the volunteer role at the Horticulture Centre of the Pacific, and

I COMMIT TO THE FOLLOWING

To follow through on the commitment I have made to the HCP team and to act responsively within the goals and policies of the organization.

To contact the Volunteer Manager if I cannot make it in or need to be away for a prolonged length of time, in the event that I am leaving my volunteer role on a permanent basis, or would like to change my volunteer role.

I agree to fill out an exit survey to assist the HCP in making improvements to its volunteer program.

To be aware of the locations of first aid stations and to contact the Curator, Head Gardener or office staff if someone incurs an injury.

To use safety equipment such as goggles and hearing protectors when participating in tasks that could pose a potential danger.

To wear clothing suitable to the weather, to not wearing clothing with dangling straps, ties, etc. that could get caught and cause an accident. This includes wearing sturdy footwear and refraining from wearing such things as flip flops or sandals that could lead to accident or injury.

To contribute to a healthy and safe working environment as outlined in the anti-harassment policy.

Signature of Volunteer

Signature of HCP Representative

Date _____

Date _____



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HORTICULTURE CENTRE OF THE PACIFIC

Volunteer Information Form

CONTACT INFORMATION

Date: _____

Name: _____

Street: _____ City: _____

Postal code: _____ Telephone: _____

My e-mail address: _____

I give the HCP permission send the Enews and other email communication to this email address

Birth Date: _____ Languages spoken: _____

Are you an experienced gardener? _____

What other expertise, training, skills or abilities do you bring to The Gardens at HCP and which you would be willing to share?

Is there a particular garden or department you would like to work in? _____

Are you interested in volunteering for Events such as those below? _____ **y/n**

Plant Sales (April & Sept.) _____ Hellebore Sunday (February) _____

Art and Music in the Gardens (August) _____ Anywhere I am needed _____

Foodsafe _____ **y/n**

In Case of an Emergency:

Emergency Contact #1 _____ Phone # _____

Emergency Contact # 2 _____ Phone # _____

Known Allergies: _____

If allergy is serious, do you have an EpiPen or other medication that might be needed? _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____



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The above information will be held in strict confidence in accordance with Privacy guidelines.

Volunteer Orientation Check List

Site

- Main Parking
- Office
- Lunch Room
- Resource Centre/Library
- Classroom
- Restrooms
- Couvelier Pavilion
- Carol Skinner Tool Shed
- Recycle/WB
- Wash Station #1
- Compost
- Gathering Place
- Takata Service area
- Poly Houses
- Service Yard
- Service Gates
- Parking Lot #2

Safety

- First Aid Kits
- Eye Wash Stations
- Fire Extinguishers

Tools

- Returned clean & hung up safely
- Kept off pathways
- Carried in safe manner
- Ear & Eye protection
- Gloves
- Foot Wear
- Appropriate clothing (no dangling straps or ties.)

Protocols

- Deer Gates
- Tractor right of way
- Introduction to staff
- Photo release for Website/Newsletter (Y/N)

Date: _____

Signed: _____