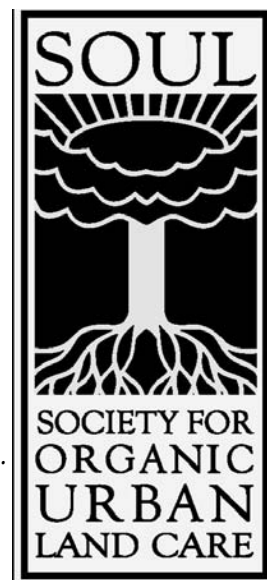


Organic Land Care *with*



"Teaching children about the natural world should be treated as one of the most important events in their lives."

Thomas Berry

Everything is the product of one universal creative effort. There is nothing dead in Nature. Everything is organic and living, and therefore the whole world appears to be a living organism.

-Seneca (Roman philosopher, mid-1st century AD)

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Our Mission:

"To support our communities in their transition to organic practices"

This newsletter is distributed free of charge to all SOUL members. Please feel free to share this publication.

SOUL

Address:

P.O. Box 8548
Victoria, B.C. V8W 1L4
info@organiclandcare.org
www.organiclandcare.org

Editor:

David Greig

greig@camosun.bc.ca

To find an organic land care professional in your area please visit the SOUL website at:
www.organiclandcare.org.

May 2009

May almost passed but with it came the good weather, at least in Southern BC. It appears that this year will bring many changes as the interest in all things organic and sustainable food production continue to capture the public's attention. Perhaps we are observing and participating in a societal change.

This is my last newsletter as a new editor will be selected at the next SOUL AGM in June. It has been an interesting two years where I have learned a great deal. Therefore, I would like to leave you with some thoughts.

To begin, I want to acknowledge how privileged it has been to edit the SOUL newsletter. To have worked for an organization that has helped move the organic debate from what was considered the fringes to now providing professionals and the public with a way to conduct horticulture is a remarkable achievement.

The movement to organic practices is taking hold and speeding ahead at a phenomenal rate. This will create wonderful opportunities to work together for a common goal. It also suggests that SOUL will become a support for people as they commit themselves to new ways of working with their "land".

In conjunction with organic practices, the movement toward community gardening is growing as more and more concerns are expressed about non-sustainable food production. With this focus on organic food, the need for SOUL will continue to grow because of our ability to be a resource for the community through support, membership and advocacy.

And, finally, it dawned on me upon completion of the last issue that I have been remiss in my duties as editor. Where I work, we conduct large meetings and events by acknowledging the territory of the First Nations it is taking place. As much as acknowledgement, it is a courtesy that demonstrates respect. Because I live in Victoria, I wish to acknowledge the territory of the of the Coast Salish people.

In this issue of the Newsletter I will briefly mention some of the salient points from the book *The Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children From Nature-Deficit Disorder* by Richard Louv as it has a great deal of relevance for our work. I will also mention a new type of chemical fertilizer, Forbid 240SC, that is now on the Market and is produced by Bayer, what I understood previously as an aspirin company.

I wish you all well. Please take care of yourself, each other and our earth. Thank you for permitting me to be you newsletter editor.
David Greig

I wanted to juxtapose two pieces of information for this month's issue of the newsletter. The first will be to talk about The Last Child in the Woods and mention some concepts that have relevance to our work with organic methods, practices and philosophy. To second piece is to bring forth information about new type of plant chemistry that has been invented to work as an insecticide.

Richard Louv wrote an interesting book that was talked about in two different venues; one at a Spirituality and Ecology Conference in Calgary, AB, and the other at a Horticultural Therapy workshop in Portland, OR. At both these places they were pointing to the need for people to be outside, in nature, in a garden, in a park, on any patch of earth. This, then is the essence of the Last Child in the Woods, that we need to go outside because we, for many people, have lost this connection and that "the disconnection from nature even when it is available, has enormous implications for human health and child development" (Louv, 2008, p. 43). "Biophilia" a term developed by Edward O. Wilson suggests that this "urge to affiliate with other life forms" is necessary for humans because we "have an innate affinity for the natural world, probably biologically based need integral to our development as individuals" (p. 43).

The research cited throughout his book, although primarily focused on children, suggests that humans need a connection with nature and that it provides benefits beyond beautiful landscapes. Nature, it posits, provides natural stress releasing. This was born out when I attended a recent workshop at the Good Samaritan Hospital in Portland, OR. At the hospitals of the Legacy Hospital system, they build specialized gardens within their hospitals. These gardens are used to promote healing amongst patients, but the nurses, care givers and family members also use them to rekindle their energy during moments of unstructured care. Louv returns to the idea of the importance of having an attachment with nature and its benefits. He refers to Howard Gardener who proposed the idea of multiple intelligences in 1983. Gardener at that time suggested that there were 7 different types of intelligence. Recently (1999), he added naturalist intelligence ("nature smart") to his list. Therefore, creating landscapes that are organic provide naturalistic environments for people to connect with and allows for life to flourish in balance.

It is interesting that this care of "nature" is often looked at as an intellectual concept whereas it should be viewed as "a how to" conduct oneself in an environment. I have mentioned just few of the concepts illustrated throughout his book, but it is rich in information that challenges conventional thinking about nature. This may not be new as those of us affiliated with SOUL are promoting connection to the soil in order to foster the development of landscapes that are healthy, bountiful and non toxic.

The second piece of information is about an insecticide called Forbid 240SC by Bayer Environmental Science. Yes, this is the same company that brings you aspirin. I found this particular insecticide disturbing as its technical information bulletin stated, "Forbid 240SC represents a new class of chemistry called the Tetramic acids...with an active ingredient Spiromesifen." Spiromesifen is applied directly onto the leaf of the plant and then it moves (translaminar movement) through the outside into the internal leaf tissues all the way into the phloem where it is held like a reservoir. When an insect penetrates the leaf surface with its sucking mouthpart (a stylet), ingests the chemical, it then stops eating and dies within one to two days.

This insecticide is registered in Canada for use on green house ornamentals, greenhouse vegetables (tomatoes, peppers and cucumbers) and on field ornamentals and vegetables as well as strawberries. What is disturbing is that the studies approving this chemical stated that there was limited toxicity left in the soil although beneficial insects could be destroyed and if it got into the water problems could occur. I also found myself thinking that if the chemical was held inside the leaf of the plant, could these reservoirs also be inside the vegetables or fruit. No wonder the public is unaware of what is happening to our food and soils. This is also not a connection with nature that is beneficial to people, plants or the earth.

<http://www.bayeres.ca>

http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/cps-spcc/pubs/pest/_decisions/erc2007-08/index-eng.php



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