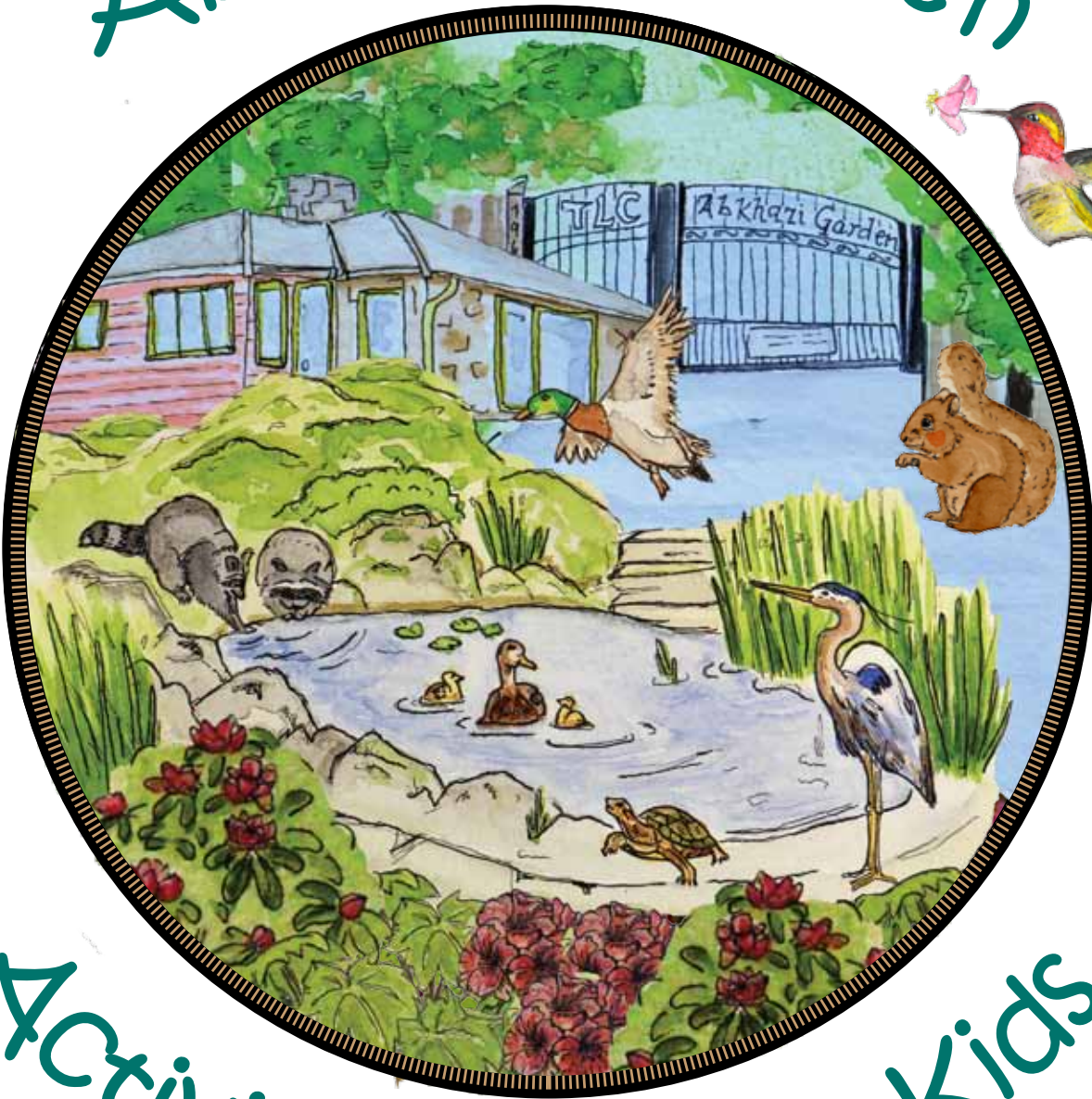




TLC The Land Conservancy
of British Columbia

Abkhazi Garden



Activity Book for Kids

Abkhazi Garden
1964 Fairfield Road
Victoria, BC V8S 1H4

Hours of Operation

April 1 – Sept 30:
Open 7 days per week
from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Oct 1 – March 31:
Open Wed through Sun
from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

New volunteers welcome!
Contact our Site Manager
volunteer@conservancy.bc.ca

Abkhazi Garden is owned
and managed by:

The Land Conservancy of B.C.
5150 Cordova Bay Road
Victoria, BC V8Y 2K6

Toll free 1-877-485-2422
250-479-8053

membership@conservancy.bc.ca
www.conservancy.bc.ca

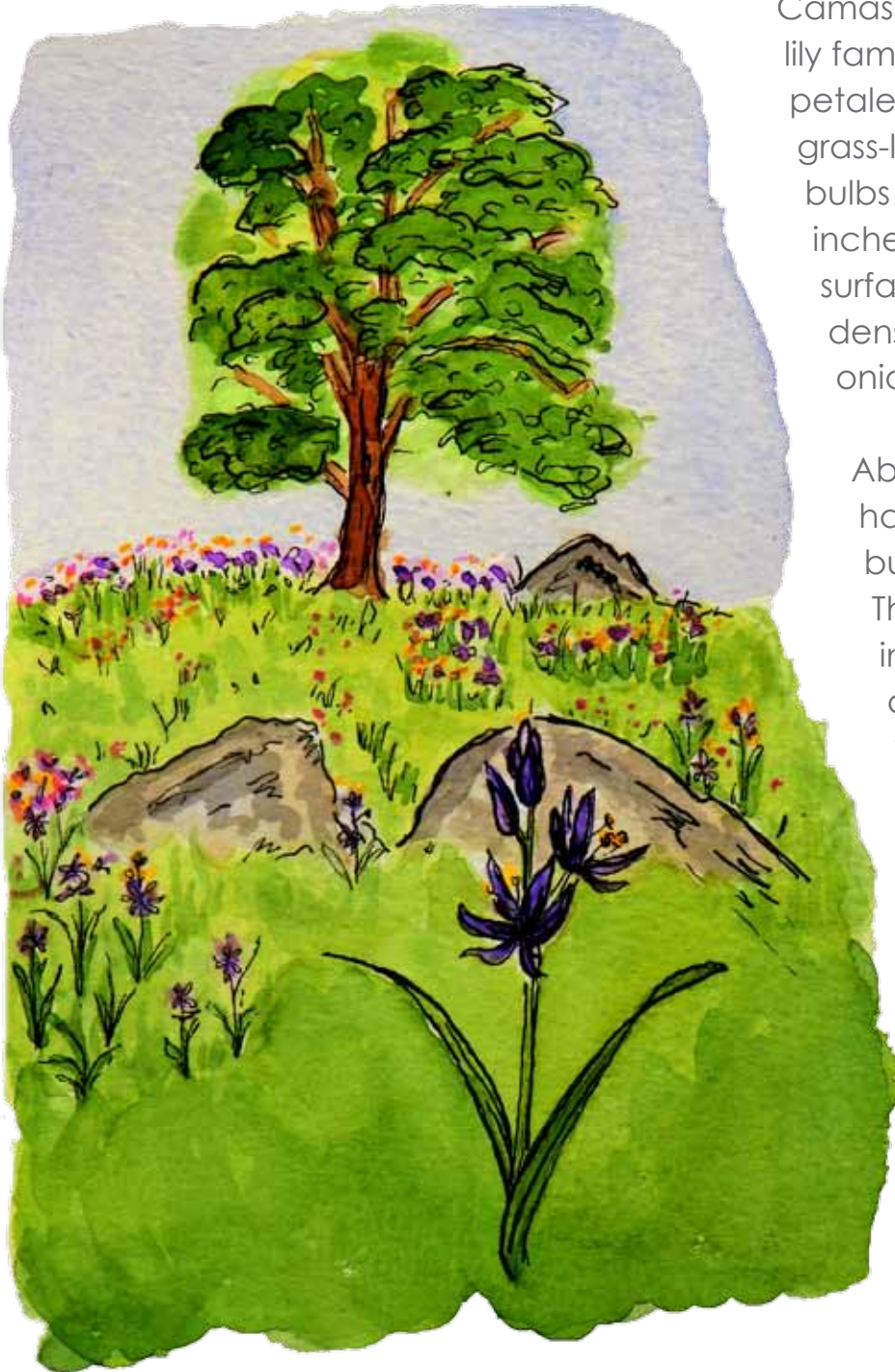
Illustrations by Karen Iwachow
Descriptions by Cherie Miltimore

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Indigenous Land

Abkhazi Garden is situated on the traditional territory of the Lekwungen peoples, today represented by the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations. The garden is now planted with plants from all around the world. A few Indigenous plants to the region remain such as the Garry Oaks and camas.



Camas is a member of the lily family with beautiful six-petaled purple flowers and grass-like leaves. Camas bulbs grow four to eight inches beneath the ground surface and resemble small dense potatoes or small onions.

Aboriginal people harvested the camas bulbs for food and trade. The bulbs were steamed in large pits for a day and a half until they were "soft, brownish and sweet."



The Garden That Love Built

Prince Nicolas Abkhazi was born in Tbilisi, Georgia in 1899. He moved to Paris, France in 1921. He studied law and looked after an estate in France.

Peggy Pemberton Carter was born in Shanghai, China in 1902. She lived in England and travelled around the world. Peggy studied piano and aspired to be a concert pianist.

Peggy met Nicolas in Paris, France when they were both in their early 20's. They explored gardens, art galleries, and attended concerts together. They became good friends and spoke in the common language of French.

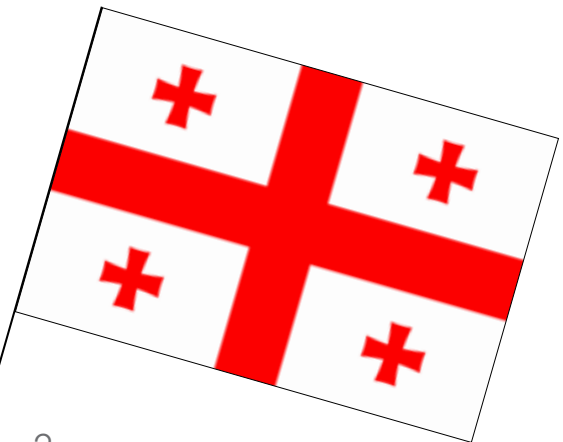
After the Second World War, they reunited in New York, USA, and were engaged on the empire state building. They came to Victoria, Canada to marry and live. Prince Nicolas and Princess Peggy Abkhazi created a magnificent garden together over many years. We call it the garden that love built.



Can you name the countries these flags belong to?



1. _____

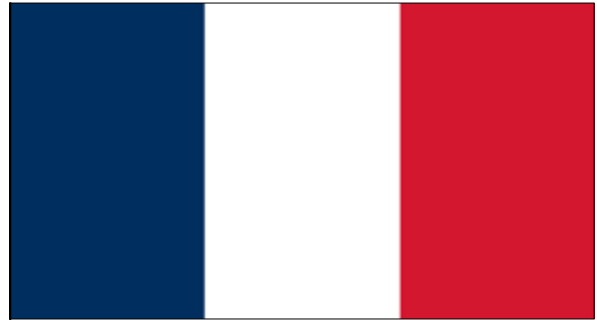


2. _____

Can you name the countries these flags belong to?



3.



4.



5.



6.

Create a Flag for Abkhazi Garden

When Prince Nicolas and Princess Peggy designed their garden, they were influenced by the gardens in the countries that they lived in. These countries included Georgia, China, England, France, Canada and the United States. Each of these countries has a flag that symbolizes their nation. After exploring the garden, create a flag for Abkhazi Garden. What colours would you use and what symbol would you put on it

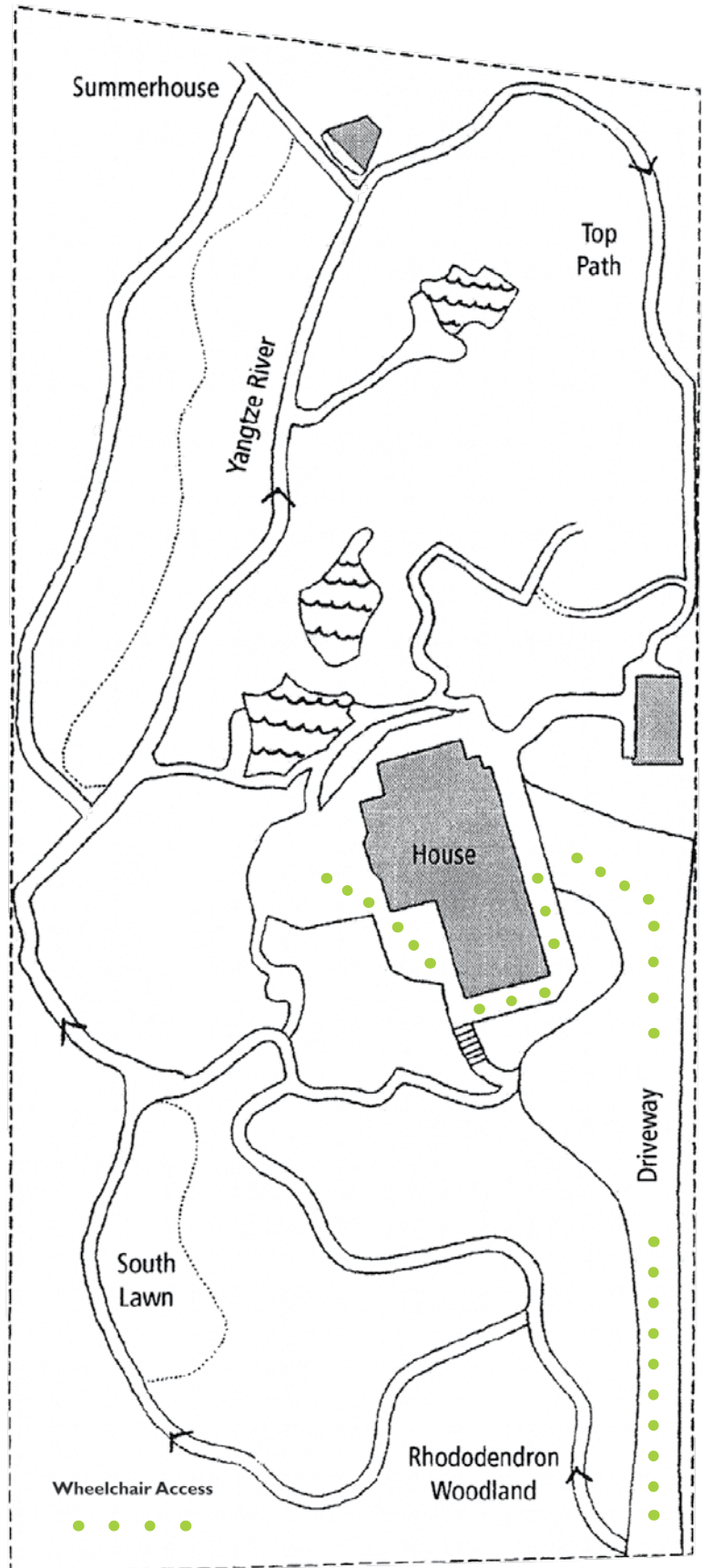


Map of the Garden

The Abkhazi Garden map shows you the layout and design of the garden. You will see the pathways, ponds, and buildings marked on this map.



Please stay on the pathways and stay with your garden guide. We will start in the rhododendron woodland.



Rhododendron Woodland

In the Rhododendron woodland you will see tall trees, shrubs and ground cover. Can you identify the Garry Oak trees, rhododendrons, and sword ferns as you walk through the woodland?

Can you identify these plants?

Trees: Garry Oak

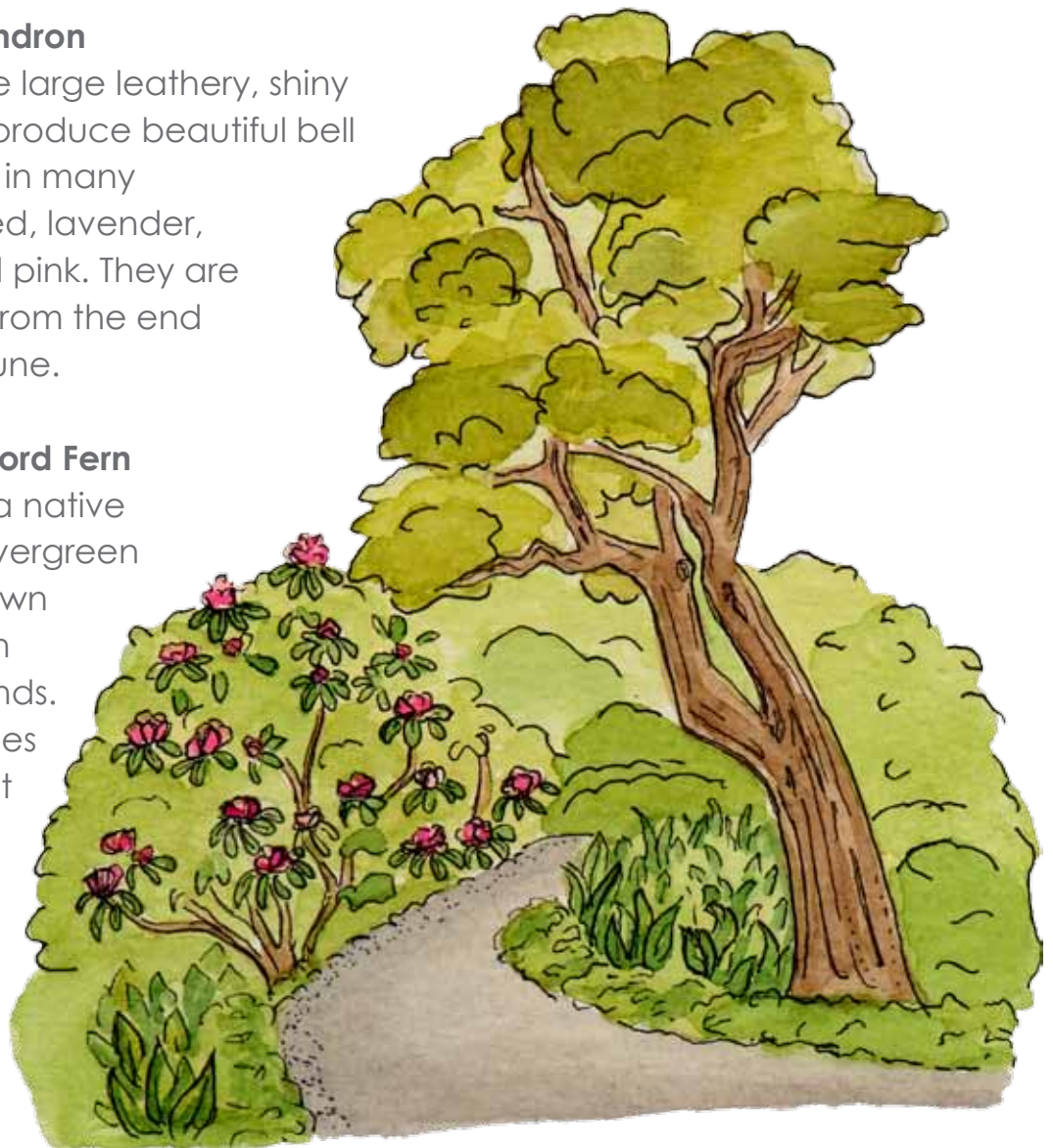
The tall trees in the Rhododendron Woodland are Garry Oak trees. These deciduous trees have well rounded canopies of green leaves and sturdy trunks. The trunks are white to grayish in colour and are distinctly furrowed.

Shrubs: Rhododendron

These shrubs have large leathery, shiny leaves and they produce beautiful bell shaped blossoms in many colours such as red, lavender, white, yellow and pink. They are in peak blossom from the end of April to early June.

Groundcover: Sword Fern

The sword fern is a native plant that is an evergreen groundcover known for its bright green sword-shaped fronds. Indigenous peoples used the large flat blades in pit ovens, in storage boxes and baskets, on berry drying racks and as flooring and bedding.



Seek and Find in the Garden

As you wander through the Garden in different seasons, you will see a variety of perennials in different stages of blossom. Take a look to see if you can find these plants and other features in the garden?



Tetrapanax



Spanish Pine



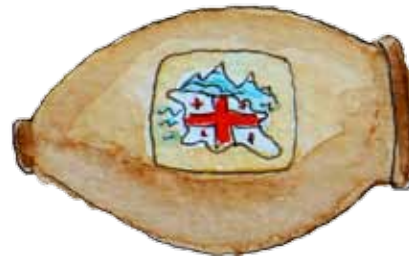
Teahouse



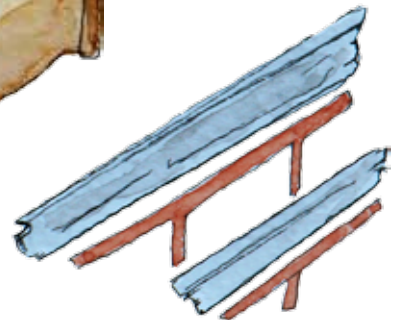
Bumble Bee



Oak Bench



Qveri



Memorial



Bamboo Bench



Molly the Witch



Garden Gate



to Bee or not to Bee

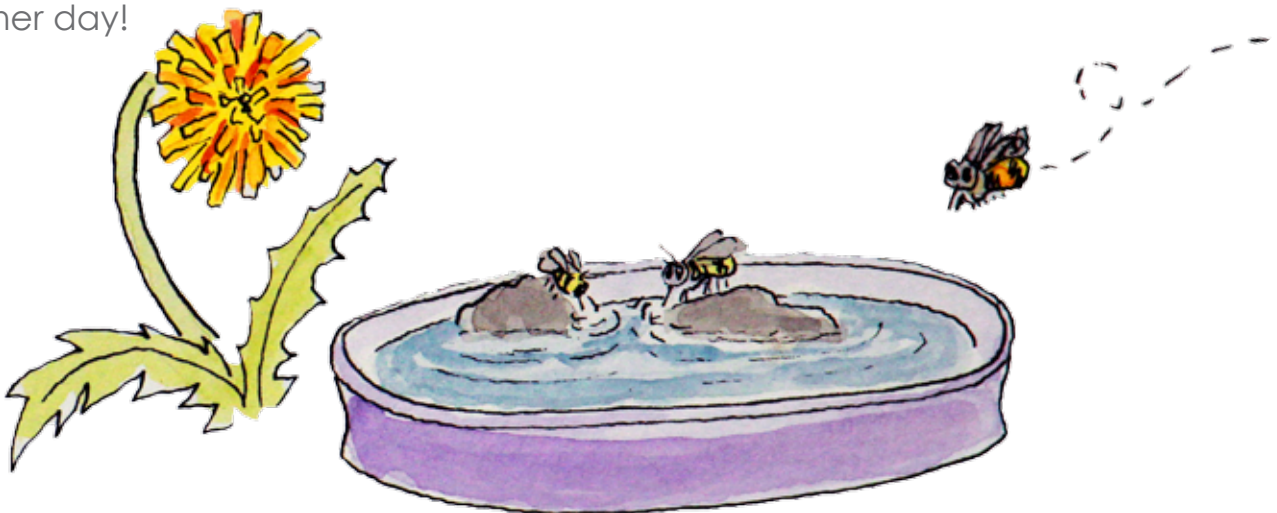
As flowers bloom and our landscape is paraded with yellows, reds, purples, and blues, bees start to come out to pollinate flowers. You probably know what bees look like, but did you know that B.C. has about 500 species of bees? Bees come in all shapes and sizes and specialize in pollinating all types of plants, from orchids and daffodils, to dandelions and paintbrushes. They buzz around all day, collect pollen, and help plants reproduce and produce seeds! In fact, orchards throughout B.C. and the U.S.A. use bees to increase the number of fruit they can sell. Next time you are drinking juice or eating an apple, think of the bees that helped that fruit grow!

Urban Fact: Bees do well in an urban environment if they have a diversity of flowers, including dandelions, and some leaves to hibernate in! Numerous different Queen bees do not form honeycombs to overwinter but find dead pieces of wood or layers of leaves to sleep over the winter.

Activity: Create a bee friendly pond and flower bed!

Native plants are the best for our native pollinators. Plant these around your backyard if you have one or on your windowsill.

Bees need water just like us! They use water to dilute their honey, drink, help digest, and feed their babies. To make a bee pond you need a shallow dish made of a permanent watersafe material (less than 5 cm deep). Put some rocks in the middle to act as landing pads, place in a cool spot in the garden under some leaves, and you're done! Change the water every other day!



Gardeners in Action

The service area is where the head gardener and volunteers grow plants and make compost. There is a green house for propagating plants, a potting shed and a compost area. Volunteers bring garden waste to the chipper that breaks down the plant material for the compost bins.

How do gardeners make compost at Abkhazi Garden?

Pick a sunny spot. Sun helps increase the temperature of the layers to enable the bacteria and fungi to work faster at breaking down plant material.

Start adding those layers! Composting starts with brown chippings from woody stems, then add greens from grass clippings and leaves. Then add another layer of brown, then greens until the bin is full.

Aerate. Turn the compost once a month to provide the composting microbes and larger creatures with the oxygen necessary to convert the organic matter into compost.

Water. Watering compost semi-frequently is vital for breaking down the nutrients in the compost mixture. Water the compost once a week in dry weather. Without water, the combination would either not break down or break down at a much slower pace.

It's ready to use! Compost is ready when it has cooled, turned a rich brown colour, and has decomposed into small soil-like particles. This can take several months. Once the compost/mulch is garden ready, our volunteers take wheel barrows of mulch and distribute it around plants in the different areas in the garden.

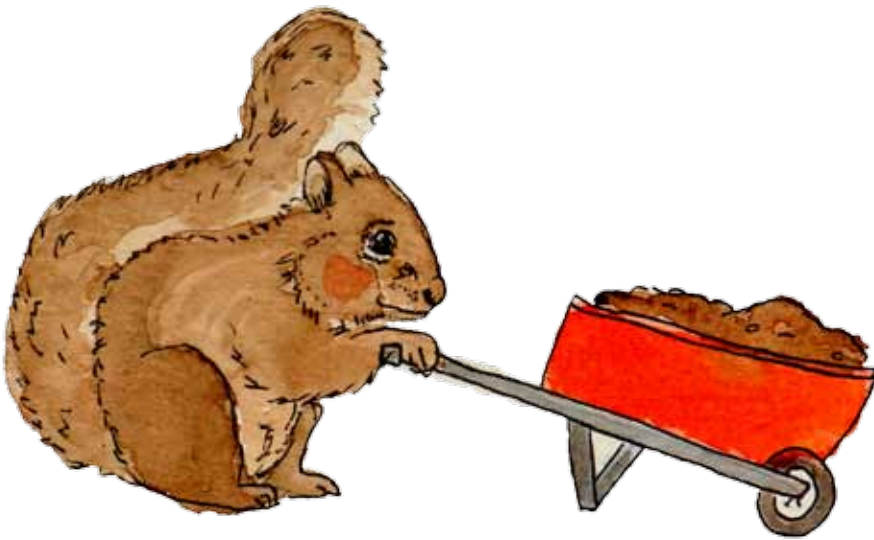
The mulch produced in the compost bins benefits the garden in many ways:

- Provides nutrients to plants
- Retains moisture
- Acts as a weed suppressant
- Provides warmth in winter



Craft a Soil-arium

In your classroom or at home, you can create your own compost - and ultimately nutrient-rich soil - using a wide mouth glass jar layered with soil, newspaper, kitchen scraps, dead leaves, and grass clippings.



1. Add a small handful of dirt to the bottom of your glass jar.
2. Add a layer of shredded newspaper or cardboard.
3. Add a layer of kitchen scraps.
4. Add a layer of organic yard debris (leaves and grass).
5. Repeat this order of layering until your jar is almost full to the top.
6. Add rainwater so everything is damp.
7. Put on lid with holes.



8. Mark a fill line to show height of the mixture.
9. Observe the break down of materials over 12 weeks.
10. When composted add to plants in your garden.

Ponds in the Garden

Prince Nicolas created three ponds in the garden from natural depressions in the rocky area. Garden ponds are popular in garden design as they help create a relaxing environment, moderate temperature, and spread light.

At the lower Abkhazi Garden pond, you will hear the sound of a soothing waterfall. A water pump circulates the water into the middle pond which falls back into the lower pond. The movement of water helps oxygenate the water to help sustain plants and fish life.

The Abkhazi ponds are filled with water lilies and reeds, and are surrounded with flowering plants. These ponds encourage more wildlife in the garden for insects, fish, turtles, and birds. Take some time to sit at the lower pond and observe the plants and wildlife around the pond.



Sit Spot

A sit spot is an activity that focuses our senses to a specific place near our house. It allows us to observe the natural world throughout the seasons and become intimately familiar with its changes.

1. Choose a spot nearby where you can sit undisturbed.
2. Once there, sit down and clear your mind of thoughts.
3. Focus on what you can see, what you hear, and what you smell.
4. You can sit for 5 minutes to an hour, depending on what's best for you.
5. The key is to repeat this as many days as you can so that you become aware of all the small things that go unnoticed in everyday life.
6. Keep a journal to record what changes over time.



Wildlife in Abkhazi Garden

Raccoons are identified by their bushy, striped tails and mask-like band of black fur under their eyes. They make their dens in the ground, in trees or in crevices in rocks and feed at night. A racoon eats nuts, fruits, insects, snails, fish and discarded food. A racoon is often spotted in a tree in the service area of the garden.

Rabbits are small, furry mammals with long ears, short fluffy tails, and strong, large hind legs. Rabbits seek shelter for resting and sleeping under thick brush and shrubs. They are active in the evening and early morning hours. They eat weeds, grasses, clover and flowers and are often seen hopping across the South Lawn area.

Squirrels live in trees and have a long fluffy tails. They have small pointed ears and sharp claws that enable them to climb trees quickly. They are active in the day looking for food. They especially like acorns that are the seeds for oak trees. You may seem them jumping from branch to branch in the Rhododendron woodland.



Deer have large ears, short tails, and long, slender legs and smooth, brown fur. They like to eat grasses, leaves and shoots of trees and other woody plants. Often a deer with her fawns will break into the garden to find food to eat. Deer can wreak havoc in a garden by munching on plants. Needless to say these beautiful animals are not welcomed in the garden and they are quickly chased out.



Hummingbirds are small birds, usually between three and five inches in length. They have long, narrow beaks used for extracting nectar from flowers. You may hear a humming noise in the garden which comes from their wings beating so fast. Watch them dart from one flower to another to feed on nectar. Hummingbirds visit between 1,000 and 2,000 flowers per day.

Great blue herons are large majestic birds with long necks and legs suitable for hunting in shallow water and tall grass. These birds can be spotted around shorelines and in shallow marshes, either slowly wading through the water or waiting patiently for their prey. A blue heron is often spotted in Abkhazi Garden by the ponds looking for fish.



Ducks are small waterfowl with webbed feet and a broad flat beak called a bill. They feed on a variety of grasses, aquatic plants, and invertebrates. Every spring a pair of mallard ducks return to Abkhazi Garden to lay their eggs. After the eggs hatch, visitors may see the mother duck and her ducklings waddling through the garden.

Turtles are slow moving reptiles who lives on land or water and whose body is protected by a bony plated shell. The red-eared slider turtles that live at Abkhazi Garden are often seen basking on the edges of the garden ponds or swimming in the water. These turtles eat aquatic vegetation and insects. The head gardener supplements their diet with fish pellets.

Lizards are scaly skinned reptiles with a small head, short neck, long body and a long tail. European wall lizards can often be found basking on rocks or tree trunks in the full sun at Abkhazi Garden. This invasive species feeds on a variety of insects, spiders, other invertebrates and fruit. On warm sunny days, hundreds of these lizards can be seen on the glaciated rock and scurrying over pathways.



Glaciated Rock in the Garden

When Princess Peggy came to Victoria after the Second World War, she hiked to the top of the rocky outcrop of land with her good friend, Muriel to watch the sun set over the Olympic mountains. She loved the rock as it seemed to be there forever and it gave her a sense of security and permanence.

This outcrop of rock has indeed been around for a long time as it has survived millions of years of erosional processes. Millions



of years ago an extensive glacier carved its way across Victoria. This glacier was essentially an extremely powerful frozen river of ice that moved over the landscape.

The glaciated rock in Abkhazi Garden is rock that shows evidence of having been exposed to the glacier. Look closely at the rock to see that it has striations or deep scratches caused by debris being carried by the glacier moving over the rock.

Today the glaciated rocks in Abkhazi Garden are covered by moss and lichen. Mosses are tiny plants usually bright green in colour. Moss has rhizoids which are root like structures which allows moss to attach itself to rock surfaces. Lichens are made up of two tiny living things: a fungus and an alga. The fungus and the alga benefit from living together. The alga produces food, and the fungus gathers water. They can occur as greyish green growths on rocks

There is a lot of glaciated rock in the garden and the Abkhazi's embraced this natural landscape and designed their garden around it with ponds, alpine plants and building their home in the centre of the garden on rock.

Moss Rehydration

Moss may not look like much to the everyday hiker, but they are critical for ecosystem development as they slowly break down rocks over thousands of years, make soil, and eventually create an environment that allows shrubs and trees to grow! They break down rocks by releasing acid that combines with water to ever so slowly break down rocks. However, in the summer moss dry up almost completely, stop growing or photosynthesis, and appear dead! Do not be fooled though, this is how moss have survived for almost 470 million years! They were the first land plants, do not have roots, and watched as other plants, trees, and flowers started to grow in the environment they helped create. These senior citizens should be treated with the utmost respect!

Activity: Moss revival!

Remember, moss does not have roots and has to rely on rain, streams, or lakes to provide it with water. In summer, moss will dry up for months at a time before rain wakes it up from its slumber.

Take a glass of water and find a moss patch. Touch the moss and draw what it looks like!

Pour the water on the moss and wait a minute. What changed?

Try in your garden
or classroom!



Architecture in the Garden

The science and art of designing buildings is known as architecture. People who practice architecture are called architects. In 1946, Princess Peggy hired an architect, named John Wade who designed the summerhouse and house to fit within the surrounding landscape.



The summerhouse was designed with a curved front, with French doors and a pergola above. Prince Nicolas and Princess Peggy sat on the porch area in front of the Summerhouse to view their garden and plan its design.

The summerhouse sits at the top of the area in the garden known as the Yangtze river. Peggy spent many years of her life in Shanghai and had a fondness for the meandering Yangtze River. Princess Peggy imagined a Yangtze River in her new garden creating a winding lawn with a path running alongside the rocky outcropping.

From the Summerhouse you can view the modernist bungalow style house built in 1947. It is perfectly situated on its rocky site for magnificent views of the garden and vistas beyond. The house is constructed with use of natural wood and stone. The house has no dining room. Prince Nicolas and Princess Peggy Abkhazi entertained in their living room and would take their guests out for dinner.

Build a Bird Nest

Bird nests are marvels of architecture and design. Birds build nests so that they can lay and hatch eggs and take care of their young ones. These nests also protect their eggs and chicks from predators and adverse weather conditions. Some birds nest in trees, bushes, the ground, on balconies or cliffs or under bridges and in nesting boxes. Typically it takes a bird from two days to two weeks to build a full nest. Birds will use a combination of sticks and twigs, dried grasses, moss, hair, mud and even spider webs to build their nests.

Try it for yourself!

1. Observe birds building nests and observe a real nest that has been vacated by the bird.
2. Go on a walk and collect items such as twigs, leaves, dried grass, moss, hair, feathers, and yarn.
3. On a paper plate build a nest without the use of glue or tape. Yarn can be added if not collected on your nature walk.



Test your nest! Would a bird approve of its structure?

Does the nest stay in tact when you lift it up?

Can it withstand the wind? Test it with a hairdryer.

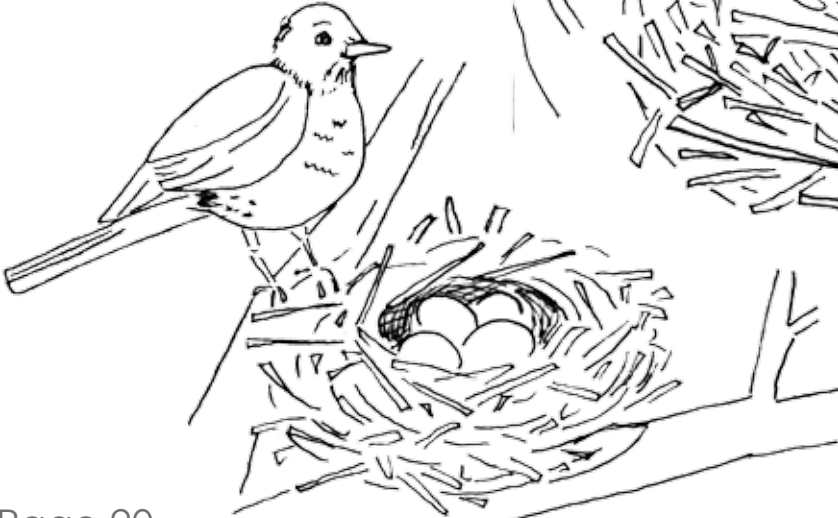
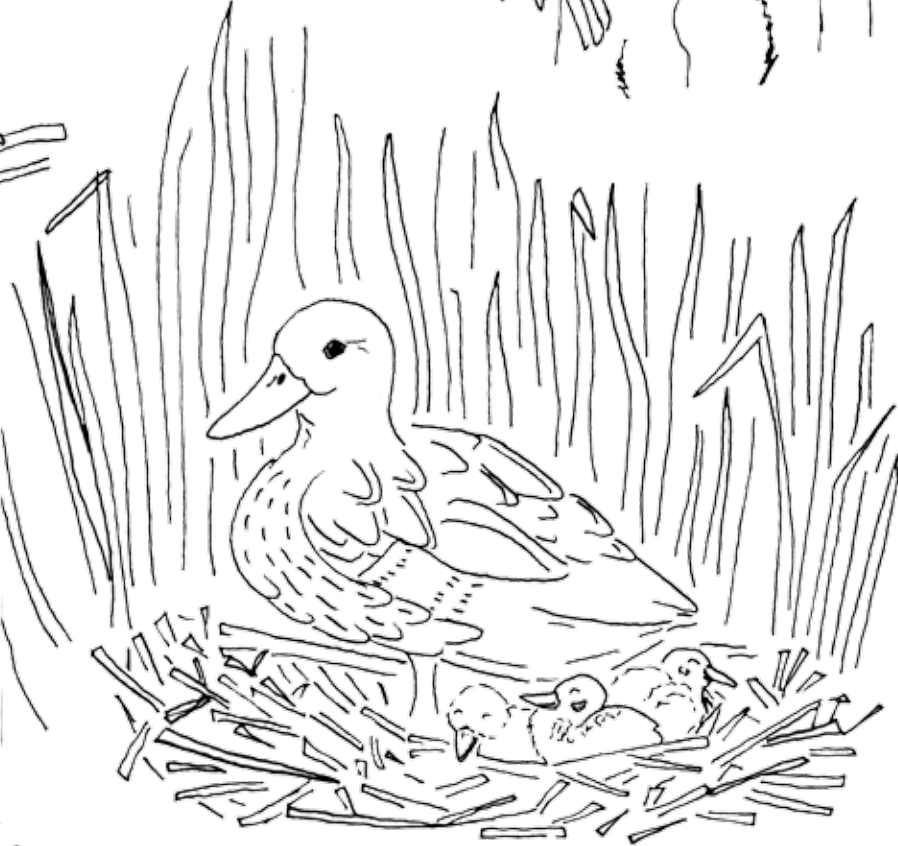
Can it withstand rain? Test it with a watering can.

Is it deep enough to hold the eggs and newborn chicks?

Does it provide insulation to keep the chicks warm?



Colour us!

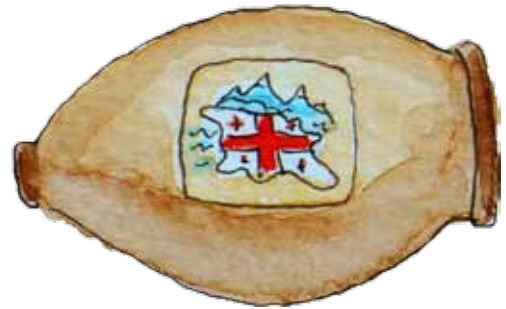


Georgian Garden

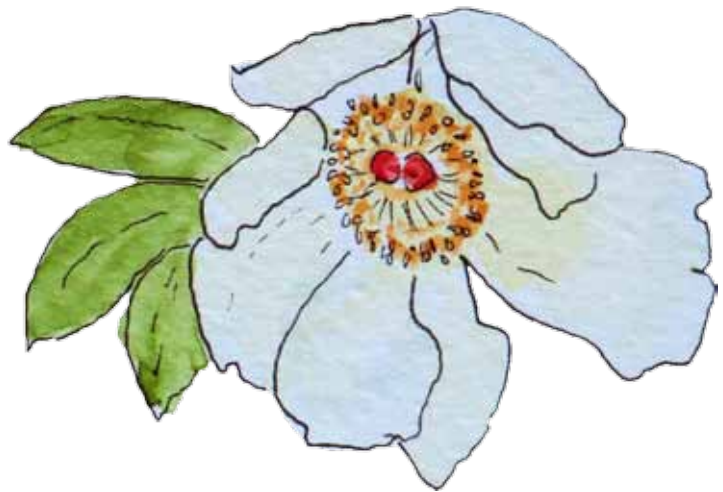
Abkhazi Garden has been greatly influenced by the countries where Prince Nicolas and Princess Peggy lived in. There are plants in the garden from around the world. Once section of the garden is devoted to the country of Georgia where Prince Nicolas was born.

Georgia is a country in the Caucasus region, at the intersection of Eastern Europe and Western Asia. It lies on the coast of the Black Sea and is bordered to the north and northeast by Russia, to the south by Turkey and Armenia, and to the southeast by Azerbaijan.

Qvevri wine-making is practised throughout Georgia, particularly in village communities where unique varieties of grapes are grown. The Qvevri is an egg-shaped earthenware vessel used for making, ageing and storing the wine. To acknowledge the wine making culture of Georgia, there are grapes and a qvevri in the Georgian garden.



We also have the Molly the Witch (*Paeonia mlokosewitschii*) peonies in the garden that hail from the woodlands in the Caucasus mountains of Georgia. These plants have blue-green leaves, often veined or edged in purple. The single flowers are rounded in form, in an amazing clear yellow with darker yellow stamens.



Design Your Own Garden

Princess Peggy and Prince Nicolas spent many years designing their garden. They embraced the natural landscape of Garry oak and glaciated rock. They created ponds, designed pathways and planted plants from all around the world. If you were to design a garden, what would it look like?



Elements you may wish to include in your garden:



Tree



Shrub



Groundcover



Flower



Bird



Rock



Rabbit



Pond



Pathway

Word Search

Find the following words in the puzzle hidden → ↓ and ↘

R A B B I T S N Q P J J Q W E
 H D A L M R E Z X R N L R S H
 F P R E O H A B G I P O N D S
 L E C K S O B S Y N W V I S O
 Q G H W S D K Q N C G E N H F
 M G I A B O H U C E A T D A L
 A Y T N S D A I A L R U I N O
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 S G H U M M I N G B I R D B I
 S E P G E O R G I A J L W J O

Princess
 Abkhazi
 Peggy
 Nicolas
 Prince
 Oak
 Flowers
 Turtle
 Ponds
 Moss

Architecture
 Hummingbird
 Georgia
 Shanghai

Love
 Garden
 Heritage
 Map

Rhododendron
 Camas
 Lekwangen
 Indigenous
 Bees
 Lizard
 Squirrels
 Rabbits



We hope you enjoyed exploring TLC's Abkhazi Garden

Submit photos of your experience with the activities in this Activity Book for your chance to win fun prizes like plush toy critters and TLC apparel. Email membership@conservancy.bc.ca with your pics or share via Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram tagging us @TLC4BC and including #ActivityBook

Departing Message

Try to read our departing message by translating the symbols below.



| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
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| A | B | C | D | E |

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| V | W | X | Y | Z |

When you can read the message, make up some of your own and try them on your friends.

