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**GARDENS AND GARDENING**

By **MINA G. HUTT,**  
Landscape Architect

Graduate in Landscaping U. of C. American School of Landscape Architecture and Gardening. Member National Landscape Service.

**HOW PLANTS OBTAIN AND MAKE USE OF THEIR FOOD**

It is well known that plants use some soil constituents in much larger quantities than others, and it is of considerable interest to know how a plant obtains its food supply in the proportions required. The soil solution contains various constituents, some of which provide nourishment and some which do not. Through the process of osmosis, plants exercise a certain power of selection, distinguishing between nutritive and non-nutritive constituents, and between those used in smaller and larger amounts. The amount of each constituent present in the soil solution that is taken into the plant is determined primarily by the amount of each constituent used by the plant in its manufacturing process, the process of osmosis automatically acts to keep up the supply.

We think of compounds in soil solution being absorbed by plants in the exact form in which they exist in the soil solution. We usually suppose that the sodium nitrate is a soil solution, passing as such into the plant but such is not necessarily the case. When a plant is grown in a water solution and nitrate of soda is added the compound is split into Sodium and Nitrate Radical, the nitrate is taken up by the plant while the sodium is rejected, which, combined with any carbon dioxide present, appears as sodium carbonate in solution outside of the plant. As a result the surrounding solution soon becomes alkaline. If Muriate of Potash or Sulphate of Potash is added the plant uses the Potash and rejects, for the most part, the acid portion the presence of which results in making the surrounding solution acid.

Some plants are weak feeding and others strong feeding. This depends upon several factors, chief among which are the extent of area of root hairs and the activity of the plants chemical processes. Plants which have large root systems and a large number of root hairs are in a condition to absorb more plant food than those with a small root system.

Roots in growing are attract-

ed in the direction of the most available food supply. When the plant food is uniformly mixed through the soil, the roots grow evenly throughout the entire mass. When the food is placed only about an inch or so below the surface of the ground, the roots form a mat in this layer. When the food is placed at the bottom of the hole in which the plant is placed the roots are slender and, without branching much above, form a mat at the bottom. In other words the root growth takes place where the food supply is located.

While in a general sense, all substances used for the building of plant tissue are of equal importance to the plant, (in the entire absence of any one of these, plants cannot develop at all), there are but three or four that nature does not furnish in abundance in the soil. These are Nitrogen, Phosphoric Acid, and Potash, and sometimes Sulphur.

Knowing those substances which nature does not in many cases furnish in sufficient quantities, fertilizer manufacturers have developed a number of fertilizers which provide the needed substances. However all fertilizers are not suitable for all kinds of plants and before buying any we would suggest that you ask some reliable seed house as to what kind to apply, or if you wish we would be pleased to have you write us stating the names of the plants as far as possible, to which you desire to apply the fertilizer.

NOTE—The writer will consider it a pleasure to answer questions concerning the garden in this column. The questions should be addressed to the writer in care of the Editor. The answer will appear in an early issue or if a personal reply is desired a stamped, self-addressed envelope should be enclosed.

The council instructed the municipal engineer to report on putting culverts in front of Lots 5 and 6, Block 36, D. L. 430, for which the owners, Thos. Smith and S. Smith had asked by letter.

Mr. Robert Allan, B.Sc., Naval Architect, 23rd and Kings, has just published in London, Eng., a text-book on ship design and resistance. This text-book was originally published as a pamphlet by Mr. Allan when he was head of the technical department of Messrs. Palmers, Yarrow-on-Tyne, and has been re-issued in a greatly extended form as the result of numerous requests from England for republication. Mr. Allan treats the subject of ship design in his book from the practical and technical points of view, explaining and embodying for practical use all the most recent experiment tank results of Baker, Sadler, etc., on this subject.

**NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY VISIT CAULFEILD**

A party of more than 100 members of the Vancouver Natural History society visited Caulfeild on Saturday to study floral life. Specimens of "Blue-eyed Mary" and "Seablush" were discovered. The society's program for the ensuing year is as follows: May 12, Burnaby Lake, bog flora; May 24, Crescent and Ocean Park, salt marsh flora; June 2, botanical gardens, U.B.C.; June 16, Brockton Point, marine biology; July 8, Hollyburn Ridge; July 28 to August 11, summer camp, Black Tusk meadows, Garibaldi Park; August 18 and 19, Grouse Mountain or Sannin Range.

**CRICKET CLUB DRAWING**

The drawing for the raffle put on by the West Vancouver Cricket Club took place in K. W. Savory's real estate office on Marine Drive at Ambleside last Friday afternoon. Colonel K. W. Savory and Capt. F. F. Lovegrove did the drawing, the following being the prizewinners: First Prize—Electric Coffee Percolator, ticket No. 233, won by Mrs. G. Gemmill, 15th and Esquimalt.

Second prize—Italian Embroidered linen luncheon set donated by Hudson's Bay Co., ticket No. 210, won by R. H. Simmonds, 2341 King's Ave.

Third prize—Bronze book-ends, donated by W. Worrall, ticket No. 158, won by C. B. Christie, 2317 Jefferson Ave.

"The doctor will see you inside," said the nurse to the patient as she helped him on to the operating table.

**LAYING CABLE DIRECT TO WEST VANCOUVER**

**Will Shorten Distance for Telephone Service on North Shore**

The first direct submarine telephone cable between the old Hollyburn wharf, West Vancouver, and Third Beach, Stanley Park, is being laid by the B. C. Telephone Company's tug Iwalani.

This cable will provide additional telephone facilities for West Vancouver. It will also shorten the wire distance between Seymour exchange and West Vancouver from 7.8 miles to 4.44 miles.

Under the present system calls from the city of West Vancouver are routed across the two Burrard Inlet cables to North Vancouver and then by land cable. With the new cable the calls will go direct to West Vancouver, leaving land cables between North and West Vancouver free for local business.

The new cable traffic to Third Beach is handled on regular city lines to Stanley Park, where it is dropped to Lost Lagoon, from which point it follows Tatlow Walk to the beach. This section was laid some weeks ago.

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