



Environmental Sustainability in Action

Because plant life is the foundation of a healthy wetland ecosystem, we installed floating wetlands—teeming with emergent aquatic vegetation—in the Buxton Bird Marsh.

We completed the Arrival Garden,
revised the Japanese Stroll Garden so that visitors can
travel the circumference of the pond,
and created the Jurassic Garden near the Mid Pond stream,
designed to showcase the stunning *Gunnera*,
or dinosaur plant.

In partnership with Woodland Park Zoo and Bats Northwest, we began monitoring bats in the Buxton Bird Marsh as part of a regional program.

We produced customized varieties of mulch for specific garden areas—like acid-rich mulch made of shredded bark, dairy manure, compost, and cottonseed meal, specially formulated for the Rhododendron Glen and Camellia Trail.

We implemented new ways to reduce food waste at Bloedel Reserve events, including organizing our first-ever zero-waste staff and volunteer appreciation day.



Philip Bloomquist

Growing up in South Dakota, Philip helped his mother sell annuals, perennials, and veggie starts from her own retail nursery. On the opposite side of the state, his grandmother did the same thing. A third-generation plant specialist, Philip's studies took him on a path toward public gardens, eventually leading to Bloedel Reserve in 2014.

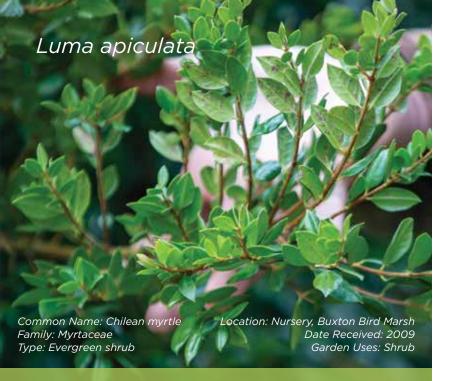
Under Philip's care, the nursery has become a magnet for volunteer activity as well as an indispensable source of plant materials at the Reserve. His propagation practices are valuable to the Reserve for five essential reasons: **Displays:** A robust nursery ensures we always have plenty of plants for our gardens.

Botanical diversity: Propagating a wide variety of plants means greater resiliency against pathogens.

Room to grow: Young plants purchased commercially wouldn't survive if planted directly in the gardens. In the nursery, they can grow robust enough to be planted out.

Sharing: Having a strong inventory means we can offer gifts of appreciation to volunteers and members, and exchange plants with peer gardens.

Plant sales: In a nod to the retail nurseries of his childhood, Philip is planning sustainably managed plant sales in the future, so that plants from the Reserve's collection can be available for purchase by members and visitors.



When Philip came to work at the Reserve, he marveled at the lone Chilean myrtle that had outgrown its pot and rooted itself in a corner of the nursery. Although transplanting was out of the question, the magic of propagation allowed Philip to begin cultivating the plant, which boasts a profusion of white blossoms twice a year, followed by dark, delicious berries. Now flourishing in the Buxton Bird Marsh, the Chilean myrtle's leaves are edible, too: Last winter, Philip used the dried leaves to add notes of juniper and bay to a batch of sugar cookies he shared with co-workers.



Mutualism is a principle that comes up often at the Reserve the idea that benefits can derive from reciprocal dependence. Sometimes mutualism is planned, sometimes it takes place naturally. Last year, it came about through a casual conversation between two neighbors.

"My neighbor Etta was telling me about her job as Communications Manager at Bloedel Reserve," explained Bainbridge Island beekeeper Bryan Kramer. "I asked her if anyone kept honeybees at the Reserve." Several conversations and three weeks later, Bryan had installed around a dozen honeybee hives across the Reserve.

Each colony consists of between 5,000 and 60,000 honeybees, depending on the time of year. Hosting these pollinators provides crucial benefits to the Reserve's plant life. And the bees are thriving here: Bryan, whose products can be found at Heyday Farm Store, estimates the insects produced 300 pounds of honey last year, some of which he bottled up for staff and volunteers in a sweet gesture of appreciation.



Social Sustainability in Action

Staff and trustees participated in two BE Culture Reimagine Equity workshops, which asked us to define, understand, and reimagine equity, and to better understand historical inequities in the U.S.

We continued developing our relationship with the Suquamish Tribe, programming a Native Residency in April this year and welcoming Tribal member Noel Purser to our IDEA Committee.

Our in-person Grief Groups returned to the Japanese Guest House for the first time since before the pandemic, and we presented a hybrid, virtual/live model of the Strolls for Well-Being program.

We offered 12 free public events through the Creative Residency program, attended (both virtually and in-person) by more than 300 people.

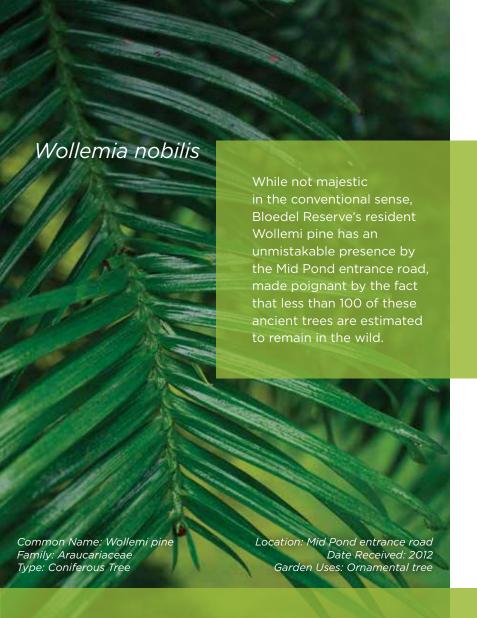
Responding to feedback from our visitors about their experience, we presented ten public-facing garden area pamphlets to the public that share the vision, history, design, and unique plantings of each area of the Reserve.



Imprints of Nature

Last September Bloedel Reserve had a return visit from 2021 Creative Resident Catherine Alice Michaelis, an acclaimed, Kitsap-based printmaker and creator of art books. With Bloedel Reserve staff, Catherine reprised her 2021 workshop, "Pulling Prints from Nature," which drew 300 attendees. Her technique, developed in residency at the Reserve, uses tree rounds of varied shapes and sizes, collected from different areas of the Reserve, to create prints on paper. This time, Catherine guided Bloedel Reserve staff in creating wearable art, transferring unique images from fallen trees onto t-shirts and sweatshirts. On any given day you can see these unique prints on staff members' shirts as they walk the paths and work in the gardens—living, moving reminders of how creativity and nature intertwine.

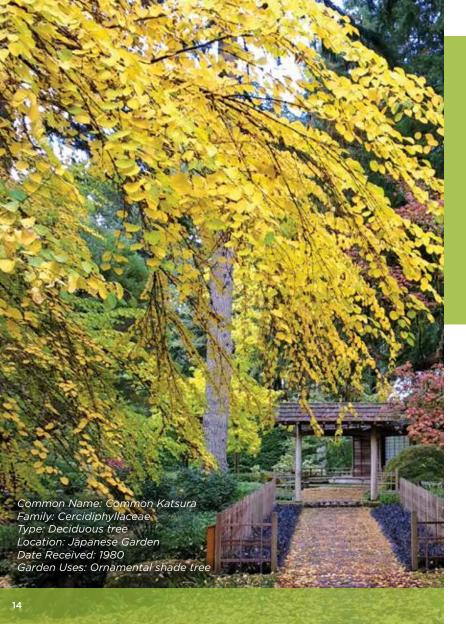




botanical gardens worldwide that has one, which means we're actively helping conserve this distinctive, 200-million-year-old species. If you have a garden, you can, too: Native to Australia's Blue Mountains, the Wollemi pine is amenable to cultivation and hardy in a range of climates. Here's hoping our 12-foot specimen, having doubled in size in the last decade, reaches its full potential someday, soaring to the 100-foot heights of its ancestors.

"Every morning as I walk down to the Residence I pass the lone Wollemi pine, its unique dangling foliage putting out light green new tips in January. I've come to love this tree since I started working here. I greet it every morning."

> Robin Gaphni, Well-Being Program Manager



Cercidiphyllum japonicum

Peach pie. Cotton candy. Crème brûlée. When the heart-shaped leaves of the Katsura tree begin to drop, something strange happens: Intoxicating smells fill the air. This is because the Katsura tree, native to Japan and China, contains a chemical called maltol. But the full effect doesn't kick in until the maltol blends with sugars, and that doesn't happen until the leaves have moved across the color spectrum from blue-green to burgundy to copper to golden yellow. On a crisp October day, if you stop by the Katsura tree, crunch a handful of dry leaves under your nose and breathe deeply, you're in for a transportive sensory treat.

"I love that tree. I can get people so excited about that tree, whatever time of the year it is, because of whatever it's doing. It's doing something interesting for them to see or smell or feel. And it smells like peach pie when the leaves come off, that is special."

> Tom Strid Member and Volunteer

Tom Strid

It was January 1989, soon after the Bloedels made the monumental decision to open their stunning home to the public, when Tom Strid first got involved with the Reserve. The organization had five employees then; now more than 40 people work here. Then, he was one of a handful of volunteers; today, over 300 individuals donate their time each year. Tom has seen trees planted as saplings grow to towering heights; he's even seen some of them succumb to disease or lightning, to be replaced by new saplings.

What remains unchanged over the last three decades is Tom's role at Bloedel Reserve: Since the beginning, Tom has led children on guided tours of the Reserve, spreading his contagious delight in this unique corner of the natural world and sharing his deep expertise as a botanist and biologist. "When I meet with a school group, I try to communicate the beauty and the complexity and the wonder of this place." In a new partnership with KiDiMu, Tom leverages his unique forté to ensure that young people have a chance to develop a relationship with nature. "I firmly believe that introducing kids to nature at an early age is so important," Tom says. "If we're going to preserve our natural world, they need to have a stake in it. They need to love it."



In tangible ways, Economic Sustainability begins with our staff: To fulfill our role as a treasured community asset and become a leader in sustainable horticulture, the Reserve must be managed and maintained by a strong and capable team of individuals. Recruiting and retaining this team begins with competitive salary, generous benefits, and a healthy, productive organizational culture.

In the next five years our Development & Communications team will focus on building strategies for a forward-looking system of people, finances, and philanthropy.

We'll continue fundraising to advance priority capital projects and program initiatives, like the Environmental Horticulture Center,

Creative Residency Endowment, and the WellFund, a flexible source of funds to care for the buildings and facilities at the Reserve. As we grow, we'll refine our business model based on a view of our financial future that's as holistic as it is realistic.



Economic Sustainability in Action

In a \$225,000 increase from 2021, our supporters contributed nearly \$1.3 million in new gifts to further budgeted work in 2022, exceeding our goals.

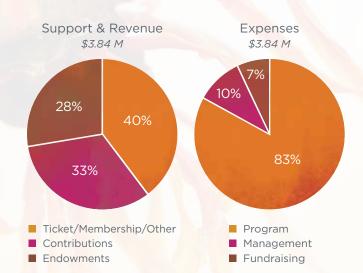
Thanks to our donors, grants, and other direct contributions, funding towards the Creative Residency and Strolls for Well-Being programs increased by nearly \$75,000 in 2022.

We earned more than \$1.2 million in admissions and memberships, surpassing the organization's record-breaking 2021 success by more than \$50,000.

We saw \$300,000 from other earned revenue in 2022, through gift shop sales, weddings, and other programs.



MAINTAINING OUR FISCAL BALANCE IN 2022



True Cost of Visit

Admissions
account for half our
earned revenue—20%
of the organizational total.
On average visitors pay
less than half the true cost
of a Bloedel Reserve
admission ticket.

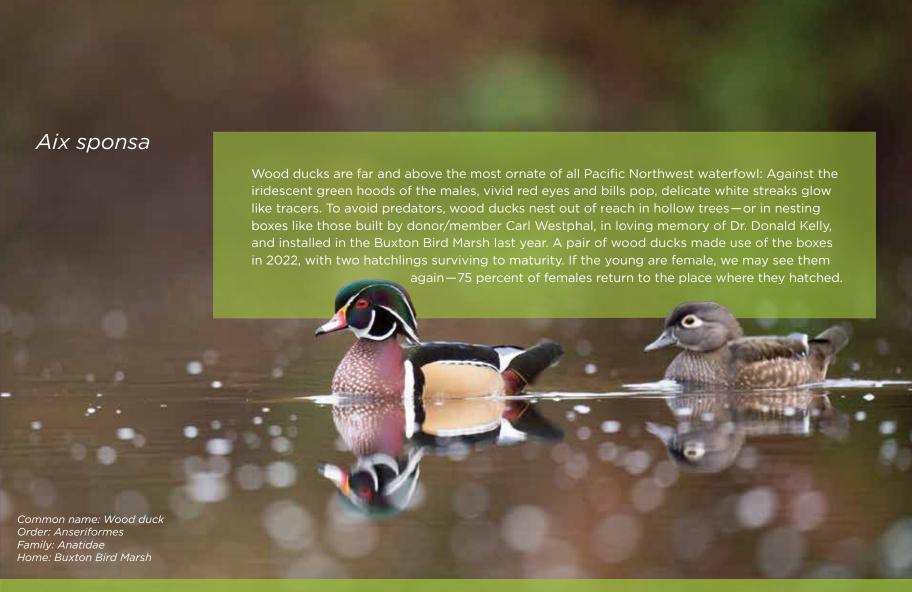


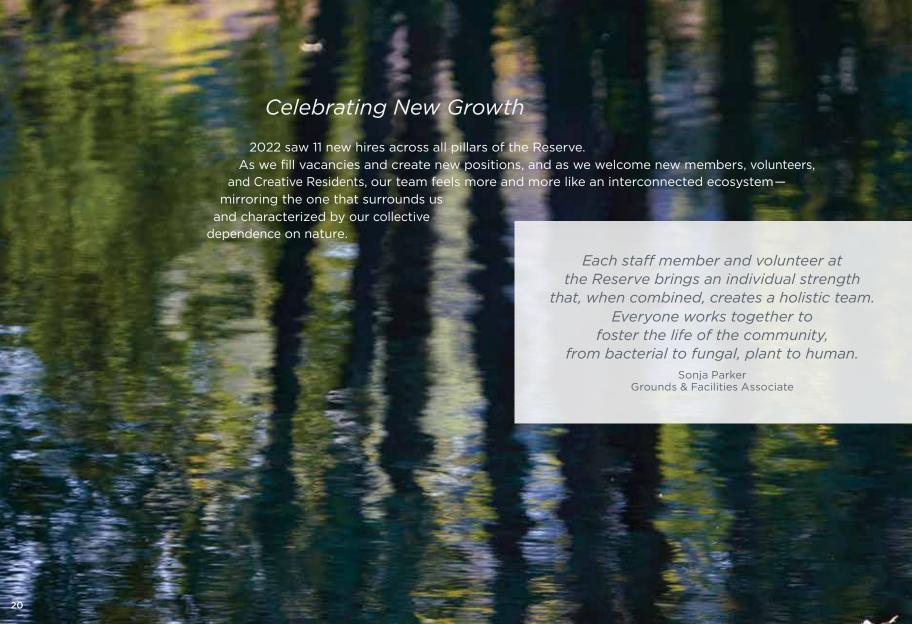
Carl Westphal

Before Carl Westphal's cousin, Jean Fisher, died in 2016, she gave him a most extraordinary gift: She put him in charge of distributing her fortune. By that time Jean, Carl, and his wife Davonne were quite familiar with the Reserve; they'd been visiting together since 1999, each experiencing the gardens in their own way. "Jean would take forever because she'd stop and look at everything," Carl explains, getting lost in the details while he absorbed the big picture.

For Carl, financial support is one way to participate in the life of this extraordinary place. His gifts through Jean's foundation have bolstered the Strolls for Well-Being Program, the Creative Residency Program, and the Compost Facility. "I have a strong spiritual belief system that I've been put here for a reason," he says. "I've been honored to be able to do this."

But Carl gives in other ways, too. "It's not just about the money," he says. "Quite the contrary." A woodworker, he was tapped last year to build nesting boxes for wood ducks in the Buxton Bird Marsh, his favorite spot in the Reserve to observe birds and animals. "If you're outdoors long enough, things happen that seem to be random. But if you learn how to pay attention to them, opportunities happen. Especially if you can sit quietly for a while." For Carl, the centering effect of watching this vibrant ecosystem—including the thrill of a duckling launching out of the nesting box for the first time—is more than compensation for his generosity, imbuing his relationship with the Reserve with a sense of reciprocity.





My favorite bench overlooks Mid Pond.
It feels to me as if it is the beating center of the Reserve each time I visit.
It can be a symphony of nature sounds or be the quietest alone space to sit and write.
People pass by, but the antics on the pond—between the ducks, dragonflies and frogs—provide
mesmerizing moments, as human sounds diminish into the backdrop.
—Kathleen Bullivant. Volunteer Docent

Sometimes we would just stop in one spot and silently let the energy soak in.

There is such comfort in standing in the presence of nature...! witness the love and care that goes into tending to each plant and tree, I understand how nature gives back to us if we only take the time to be quiet and absorb the peace and beauty.

—Tracy Overturf, Assistant Guest Services Manager

The other part of community for me is the plants and animals themselves. I think that's the heart of it. It's important that I'm friends with the bees or the birds or the snakes.

— Catherine Alice Michaelis, Creative Resident

There is not one aspect of sustainability that resonates with why I work here.
Instead it is the encapsulation of all the pieces. My drive is to provide a space for my kids and
their kids to be able to connect with the nature that I see and experience.
—Audrey Harmon, Development & Communications Coordinator

There's something special about the arrival of spring at the Reserve.

After the long dark days of winter, light starts to dip its toes into February and March
and our slumbering senses begin to awaken.
—Robin Gaphni, Well-Being Program Manager

My new experience working at Bloedel has confirmed what we all know deep inside: when the body or brain is out of balance, be it from the constant flow of information we receive daily and the perfectionism and striving that has become normalized in our culture, being close to the earth can offer restoration.

—Tara Wittrup-Moyer, Guest Services Associate

Humans need plants not just for food, but as part of our environment. This need is very clear in a garden like Bloedel Reserve, where people come to unwind and enjoy nature.

Our mental health needs the connection with the plant world.

—Darren Strenge, Gardens West Manager

An Interconnected Ecosystem

GROUNDS & HORTICULTURE

Kaslin Daniels

Director of Horticulture & Design

Dave Amos

Grounds 8

Horticulture Associate

Philip Bloomquist

Grounds & Horticulture Associate

Bob Braid

Caretaker, Grounds &

Horticulture Associate

Ken Little

Grounds & Horticulture Associate

Andy Moss

Gardens East Manager

Sonja Parker

Grounds & Facilities Associate

Sean Peterson

Gardens North Manager

Darren Strenge
Gardens West Manager

Tobin Tripp

Grounds &

Horticulture Associate

Fen Vitello

Grounds & Horticulture Associate

Haley Wiggins

Gardens South Manager

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Director of Facilities

Ben Buchanan Facilities Manager

Gunda Lunde Facilities Manager

Don McKinney

Facilities Associate

Alex Tracy
Facilities Associat

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Andrea Mercado Guest Services & Shop Manager

Tracy Overturf
Assistant Guest Services Manager

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Chris McLain
Scott Musselwhite
Abner Senires
Steven Starlund
Kate Treviño-Yoson
Tara Wittrup Moyer

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Sara Carlson
Accounting & Payroll Manager

Kristin Dalhoff Membership & Data Entry Coordinato

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Andre ten Dam
Director of Operations

Meg Fraser
Volunteer Coordinato

Robin Gaphni Well-Being Program Manager

Anna Teiche Operations Assistant

Kelley Walters Events Manager

Amy Weber Creative Residency Manager

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Director of Development &
Communications

Audrey Harmon
Development &
Communications Coordinator

Etta Lilienthal
Communications Manager

Dan Walker
Development Manager

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Photography generously donated by Pamela Bartha, Chuck Eklund, Erin Fisher, and Pete Kelsey.

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Sarah Wallace

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LANDSCAPE OF GIVING

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(\$10,000+ pledged annually for a minimum of 5 years or equivalent gift)

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(\$10,000+)

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Olivia Sears & Craig Bicknell, in memory of Frank Buxton

Anonymous and Mark Levine & John Keppeler, in memory of Kathy Denton

Richard Dulaney, in memory of Nugget Dulaney

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COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Bainbridge Artisan Resource Network
Bainbridge Community Foundation
Bainbridge Island Land Trust
Bainbridge Performing Arts
Kids Discovery Museum
Kitsap Immigration Assistance Center
Olympic College
Puget Sound Restoration Fund
Seattle Cancer Care Alliance
Seattle University
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"Everything is connected and sometimes we are privileged to see it right in front of us."

Carl Westphal

We have done our utmost to ensure the accuracy of these lists. Should you find any omissions or errors, please contact Dan Walker, Development Manager, so that we may correct our records. dwalker@bloedelreserve.org | 206-842-7631, x25







I've been Development Director since April 2022, but I've been coming here since I was a little girl. Relaxing on the Residence lawn with my family, staring into the Reflection Pool during a third-grade field trip, visiting here as a teenager, then bringing my own children to explore the trails...Bloedel Reserve is a beautiful, green through-line in my life and I'm grateful to walk these paths every day.

Bloedel Reserve in 2023 is an exciting place to me. So much has changed—and change is inherent in an organization like ours, which is as dynamic as nature itself. In its thoughtful, measured way, guided by our history and the expertise of all the people who have worked here over the years, the Reserve of today is open to new ideas, new ways of thinking and being.

At Bloedel Reserve, we belong to a web of community. You see this in our visitors, each drawn by their own individual experience, yet part of a multitude. You see it in the organizational partnerships that have arisen in the past year, across Bainbridge Island and across the Sound. It's evident in the efforts we're making to ensure this place grows more welcoming and accessible, and in the generosity of members and donors helping to support those efforts.

Welcome Wednesdays, for example, would be unimaginable without our community of supporters. On the first Wednesday of every month, this new program will let visitors decide the cost of a unique, individual experience in nature. This is the sort of innovation that excites me most about the Bloedel Reserve of now. The combined impact of every donation, whether \$5, \$50 or \$50,000, doesn't just keep the lights on at Bloedel Reserve. More than ever before, it opens the gate to a wider community.

Rebecca Walliman

Becky Walliman
Director of Development & Communications





