

# Organic Land Care *with*

**The earth neither grows old or wears out if it is dunged**

*-Columella, circa 45 A.D.-*

**To forget how to dig the earth  
and to tend the soil is to forget ourselves**

*- Mahatma Gandhi-*



## **Organic Land Care with**

**SOUL** is published ten times per year by the Society for Organic Urban Land Care.

### **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**

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

## **March 2008**

Happy March to everyone! The days are become longer and the mornings brighter, everything seems to be awakening from the winter. Although our winters are very green compared to other areas of Canada, we still have our share of wet, dark and cold and are no less excited by the return of the sun and the anticipation of sustained lengths of time in the gardens. As we contemplate the many tasks to do on our landscapes be it in gardens or on patios, attention must be given to the micro- and macro-organisms that have been somewhat dormant, but are now becoming very active. One such creature is the "noble" earthworm. Much can be said about this remarkable earthmover. But, alas, there is not enough room to extol all of its virtues, so the article chosen for this newsletter is to present information about "Biosolids, Animal Manure, and Earthworms: Is There a Connection?"

In this issue, a new feature begins which highlights sustaining and professional members. As Dayle Cosway, President of SOUL, explains, the benefits of being a professional SOUL member includes networking with organic land care professionals from product providers through to multi-aspect landscapers, educators, and designers. All these members are listed on the SOUL website by region and a printed list of local professional members is distributed at local trade shows and events. The shows attended are listed on the SOUL website and professional members are always welcome to exhibit their business cards and brochures at our booths. Furthermore, the Professional and Sustaining members are people and companies we are proud to promote as they are putting into practice a commitment to organic land care and ethical business models.

Thank you,

David

*It is with great pleasure that I would like to introduce Phil Nauta, Organic Gardener's Pantry, as the first professional - al member to be highlighted.*

## Ingredients For Plants And Soil

The Organic Gardener's Pantry is a new business that supplies organic products to organic gardeners. It was recently started by SOUL certified professional member, Phil Nauta, in Victoria, BC. When operating his previous gardening service in London, Ontario, he found it very challenging to get many of the products that he had learned about through Gaia College's Organic Landscape Management program. Since moving to Victoria last fall, he has met Organic Master Gardeners, Gaia College graduates, and other SOUL members who are also finding it difficult to get these things in Canada.

It didn't take long for Phil to realize that he would enjoy filling this void. If you are an organic gardener, landscaper, farmer, greenskeeper, retailer, or anyone else who works with plants and soils, you can now find organic products at [www.gardenerspantry.ca](http://www.gardenerspantry.ca). Separated into the four categories of microorganisms, biostimulants, minerals, and energizers, the website has detailed information about all of the products. While many companies offer a confusing array of so-called "organic" fertilizers that are often unnecessary or even harmful, Phil has assembled a small product list that he feels covers most of the off-site amendments needed to bring soils and ecosystems towards a balance.

In the microorganisms section, several effective microorganisms (EM) and mycorrhizal fungi products represent some of the most important landscape inputs. The biostimulants section offers liquid kelp, liquid fish hydrolysate, and liquid humic and fulvic acids for the many benefits they provide. The minerals section includes a paramagnetic glacial rock dust, a new sea minerals product based on Maynard Murray's research, and several of the important mined mineral sources, such as high calcitic lime and rock phosphate. The newly emerging field of energizers will be expanded in the future as more research is conducted. Phil offers a homeopathic product that is new to Canada, but

has been used around the world for nearly 20 years. It is called Pengergetic and it is based on the work of Nikola Tesla and Wilhelm Reich. Most of the products are OMRI Listed, and all are approved for use under the SOUL Standard.

While Phil encourages people to search for products locally to support their community and cut down on the environmental impacts of transportation, many of his products are difficult to find, and also come in small, concentrated forms, so he is happy to ship to anywhere in Canada.

Please visit [www.gardenerspantry.ca](http://www.gardenerspantry.ca) for more information.

## Biosolids, Animal Manure, and Earthworms: Is There a Connection?

<http://toxics.usgs.gov/highlights/earthworms.html>

A recent study looked at the organic chemicals that animal manure and biosolids leave in the soil, and their accumulation in earthworms. It was found that the earthworms accumulated "soil contaminants" in their bodies and that these chemicals "included the active ingredients commonly found in a variety of household products—including the disinfectants found in antibacterial soaps, fragrances used in perfumes and detergents, and pharmaceuticals."

The experiment was conducted on "a soybean field fertilized with biosolids, a corn field fertilized with swine manure, and a soybean field (control field) that had received no applications of either biosolids or manure for at least 7 years." Earthworms collected from these fields had accumulations of disinfectants, antifoaming agents, flame-retardants, antibiotics, synthetic fragrances and chemicals that bind fragrances in soaps. Surprisingly, in the control field that had nothing added to it for 7 years, the earthworms had less but similar accumulations of chemicals within their bodies. This suggested that the chemicals from biosolids and animal manures persisted in the soil for very long periods (or came from another source) and that earthworms could concentrate chemicals in their bodies that may not have been detectable otherwise.



**Congratulations to the new graduates of the Ecological Landscape Design Certificate and Organic Master Gardener Courses in Burnaby and Victoria.**

**Well done!**