

# CONCRETE JUNGLE FORESTRY LTD.

Urban & Wildland Forest Assessment & Mapping

Concrete Jungle Forestry Ltd.

## 903 Admirals Road

### **Garry oak Meadow Vegetation Assessment, Biologist Report**

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I.S.A. Certified Arborist (# PN5907A).  
I.S.A. Tree Risk Assessment Qualified.  
May 8, 2024

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### **Executive Summary:**

Prior to multi-family residential rezoning Township of Esquimalt Development Services requests a 903 Admirals Road north and west yard vegetation assessment to confirm or disprove whether portions of the lot can rightly be considered a Garry oak meadow. BC College of Applied Biology R.P.Bio. and ISA Certified Arborist Donald Skinner of Concrete Jungle Forestry Ltd. (CJF) has been retained by proponent Ramtar Developments to complete the assessment and provide a report documenting findings and Oak meadow conclusion.

### *Methodology.*

CJF first visited 903 Admirals Road March 14, 2024 to review property characteristics / location of natural versus 903 Admirals Road managed landscape. Highly modified / unmaintained east and south yards disqualified from Garry oak assessment. CJF plant list includes only those found between March 27 and April 10, 2024. Possible omissions; late spring / summer appearing native plants hidden beneath forest floor vegetation.

### *Garry oak Meadow Conclusion:*

#### *CJF Garry oak meadow conclusion:*

- Although home to 23 Garry oak the supporting herbaceous plant, bulb and shrub community does not support classifying 903 Admirals Road north and west yards as Garry oak meadow.
- Deciding factors; diverse non-native plant community and absence typically Oak meadow associated; Camas, Satin Flower, Chocolate Lily, Nodding / Hooker's Onion, Few-Flowered Shooting Star, Western Buttercup and Spring-Gold.

Instead, CJF considers the 903 Admirals Road north and west yards a modified woodland; home to native, landscape and invasive plants. Re-development unavoidably reduces current condition mammal / bird shelter, bird nesting opportunities however some ecological benefits can be recovered through plant salvage. Erythronium most notably, but also other species, as determined by salvage organization, may be of value if transplanted to local natural areas.

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May 8, 2024

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## Re: 903 Admirals Road; Garry oak Meadow Vegetation Assessment, Biologist Report.

### Introduction.

Prior to multi-family residential rezoning Township of Esquimalt Development Services requests a 903 Admirals Road north and west yard (Figure 1) vegetation assessment to confirm or disprove whether portions of the lot can rightly be considered a Garry oak meadow.

Figure 1: 903 Admirals Road; north and west yard vegetation assessment area.



BC College of Applied Biology R.P.Bio. and ISA Certified Arborist Donald Skinner of Concrete Jungle Forestry Ltd. (CJF) has been retained by proponent Ramtar Developments to complete the assessment and provide a report documenting findings and Oak meadow conclusion.

### Biologist Report Scope.

March 19, 2024; Bill Brown (Director Esquimalt Planning) supplied the following assessment report content mandates:

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- Site description (geology, soils, hydrology, ecological community classification, terrain).
- Vegetation (includes fungi and lichen) with particular emphasis on the presence or likely presence of rare or endangered species.
- Wildlife with emphasis on the presence or likely presence of rare or endangered species.
- Existing ecological value and site sensitivity.
- Potential impacts on ecological value if the site is developed.
- Recommended mitigation measures.
- Any additional information that relates to the ecological impact of the proposed development.

### **Methodology.**

CJF first visited 903 Admirals Road March 14, 2024 to review property characteristics / location of natural versus managed landscape. Highly modified / unmaintained east and south yards disqualified from Garry oak assessment.

Returning March 27. April 3 and 19, 2024 CJF developed a north and west yard plant list and noted native bird and mammal presence. Plants broadly subdivided by type:

- Invasive; all types.
- Landscape; herbaceous plants, bulbs and trees.
- Native plants, herbaceous plants, bulbs and woody shrub and trees.
- Bedrock outcrop; moss, lichen.
- Absent Garry oak meadow associated native plants.

### *Field equipment used:*

- iPhone camera.
- iNaturalist application to aid plant identification (ID).
- Notes / plant list; hand written, office transcribed after each visit.

CJF plant list includes only those found between March 27 and April 10, 2024. Possible omissions; late spring / summer appearing native plants hidden beneath forest floor vegetation. Individual species images recorded to assist with internet ID.

CJF assessment applies to subject property only. Neighbouring 897, 909 Admirals Road townhome community lands landscape managed with native and development landscape planted trees above. 905 Admirals Road single family residence landscape unmanaged.

March 15, 27, April 3, 10, 2024; fair / calm conditions allowed clear views of all understory plants.

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## **903 Admirals Road; Assessment Site Description.**

*North and west yard:*

- Biogeoclimatic (BEC) Zone; Coastal Douglas-fir (CDF) moist maritime (mm) – deepest soil 04 Site Series, seasonally moist bedrock Site Series undetermined.
- Topography; level / gentle slope south except for moss covered and vegetated bedrock outcrops (Figures 2, 3, 4). Outcrops rounded to steep sided, heights variable – estimated 0.5 to 1.5m.
- West yard:
  - Thin strip of lawn grass / unmaintained landscape immediately adjacent home west wall.
  - West of lawn; owner modified – dry stack rock walls, retained growing soil behind.
  - Previous owner planted landscape trees along west property line and in southwest corner.
  - Elsewhere; unmaintained vegetation native, landscape, invasive mix beneath native species trees (Figures 3, 4).
- Variable depth growing soil; deeper holds soil moisture longer into spring / early summer. Deep soil between bedrock outcrops capable of supporting large (height and girth) tree growth (Figures 2, 3, 4).
- Hydrology:
  - Atmospheric input / natural and irrigation upslope runoff – beyond site land rises to north and east (up Parkands Drive to Gorge Vale Golf Club).

*Current Site Condition (Figures 2, 3, 4):*

- Home: mid-lot (Figure 1).
- North / west yards; almost consistent tree cover, unmanaged mixed shade tolerant native, invasive, landscape vegetation beneath.
- East yard; managed lawn grass, Western Redcedar hedge and landscape garden beds.
- South yard / asphalt driveway; mix of non-native landscape and invasive / weed species, Single Western Redcedar (Dunster No.61) at driveway entrance.

## **Assessment Site Description.**

*North and west yard site condition:*

Tree resource primarily mix of Garry oak and Douglas-fir (Figures 2, 3) with mature landscape Lawson Cypress and Deodar Cedar (Figure 5). Onsite trees occupy dominant, codominant, intermediate and understory canopy positions. CJF estimates large landscape trees +/-50 years old, native / natural infill trees older and younger than landscape Cypress, Deodar Cedar.

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Figure 2: 903 Admirals Road; northeast yard corner, undulating bedrock outcrops / deeper soil between, April 10, 2024.



Figure 3: 903 Admirals Road; northwest yard corner, undulating bedrock outcrops / broad areas of deeper soil between, April 10, 2024.



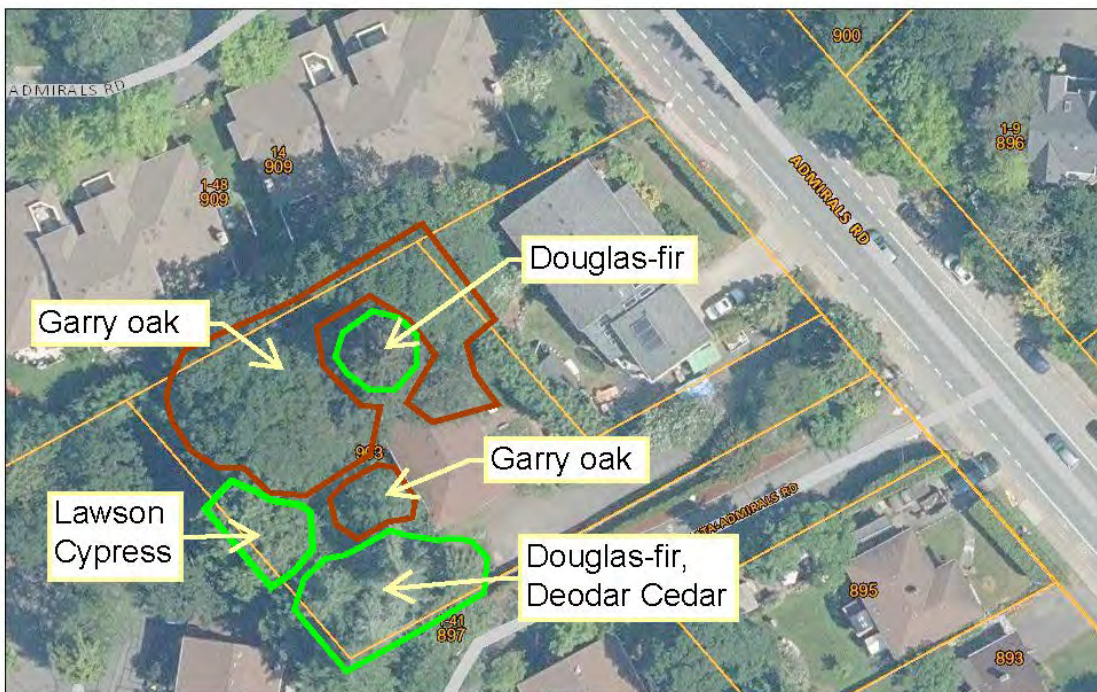
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Figure 4: 903 Admirals Road; west yard, south view lawn transitioning to unmaintained, April 10, 2024.



Figure 5: 903 Admirals Road; dominant / codominant tree cover polygons.



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Late March / early April; soils moist, ground cover vegetation lush (Figures 2, 3, 4), encountered plant flowering period; pre / post-peak and at peak. Typical spring herbaceous ground cover / shrub flowering pattern; earliest flowering late January / early February continuing species by species through late spring. March 27 to April 10 shrub leaf-flush and ground cover herb / bulb carpet except where canopy reduced sunlight / June to September dry season moisture deficit limit plant growth – primarily beneath Cypress and southwest property corner.

Between March 27 and April 10, 2024 the following invasive herbaceous plant, shrub, tree, moss and lichen species were observed:

### *Invasive Herbaceous Plants, Shrubs and Trees:*

- St Johns Wort (*Hypericum perforatum*).
- English Ivy (*Hedra helix*).
- Red Deadnettle (*Lamium purpureum*).
- Burdock (*Arctium sp.*).
- Purple Loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*).
- Yellow Archangel (*Lamium galeobdolon*).
- Lawn Daisy (*Bellis perennis*).
- Spurge Laurel (*Daphne laureola*).
- Himalayan Blackberry (*Rubus armeniacus*).
- Laburnum (*Laburnum sp.*).
- English Holley (*Ilex aquifolium*).
- Hawthorn (English or Common) (*Crataegus sp.*) understory.
- Plum, Cherry (*Prunus sp.*), understory sapling – natural infill from adjacent seed source.

Noted invasive species commonly found in Greater Victoria. Site distribution; scattered / patchy depending on offsite seed source proximity, available space / suitable growing conditions and time of year. Scattered Laburnum, English Holley / Prunus sp. understory sapling or very low intermediate trees.

*CJF opinion:* invasive species source; infill from adjacent private and public owned properties.

### *Landscape Herbaceous, Bulb and Low Shrub:*

- Bluebells (*Hyacinthoides sp.*), various varieties – blue, white, pink flowering.
- Snowdrops (*Galanthus sp.*).
- Daffodil (*Narcissus sp.*).
- Lawn grass (*Fescue sp.*).
- Cyclamen (*Cyclamen sp.*).

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- Candy tuft (*Iberis sp.*).
- Rose Campion (*Lychnis (Selene) coronaria*).
- Silver Dollar Plant (*Lunaria annua*).
- Lemon Balm – (*Melissa officinalis*).
- Common Dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*).
- Snow-in-Summer (*Cerastium tomentosum*).
- Violet (blue or white flowering) (*Viola sp.*).
- White Stonecrop (*Sedum album*).
- Annual Honesty (*Lunaria annua*).
- Cotoneaster (*Cotoneaster sp.*).

March 27 to April 10, 2024 landscape plants most abundant west / north yard ground cover; Bluebells, Snowdrops widely distributed across moist growing soil and organic matter filled bedrock outcrop 'valleys'.

CJF opinion; listed landscape species origin:

- 903 Admirals original unmaintained landscape spread.
- Adjacent landscape seed source infill.

*Landscape Trees:*

- Lawson's Cypress (*Chamaecyparis lawsoniana*) (Dunster Nos.45, 46, 47)
- Deodar Cedar (*Cedrus deodara*) (Dunster Nos.52 and 60)

Three-tree Cypress group along west property line, Deodar cedar west yard south.

*CJF opinion;* landscape trees previous owner 1970 to 1980 planted.

*Native Herbaceous Plants, Bulbs and Shrub:*

*Plants, Bulbs:*

- Western Starflower (*Lysimachia latifolia*).
- Pacific sanicle (*Sanicula crassicaulis*).
- Herb Robert (*Geranium robertianum*).
- Bedstraw (*Galium sp.*).
- Trailing Blackberry (*Rubus ursinus*).
- Licorice Fern (*Polypodium glycyrrhiza*).
- Mountain Sweet Cicely – (*Osmorhiza chilensis*).
- Miners Lettuce (*Claytonia perfoliata*).
- Common Chickweed (*Stellaria media*).
- Columbine (*Aquilegia Formosa*).
- Streambank Spring-Beauty (*Claytonia parviflora*).
- Coast Fawn Lily (*Erythronium revolutum*).
- Giant White Fawn Lily (*Erythronium oregonum*).

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Mixed White and Pink Erythronium cluster in west yard northwest corner (Figure 6), yellow irrigation flags mark polygon corners – approximate polygon dimensions 4x4m – partially within building footprint (Figure 7). Although uncommon compared to White, Pink Erythronium not locally rare / exceptional<sup>1</sup>.

### Shrub:

- Mock Orange (*Philadelphus sp.*).
- Common Snowberry (*Symphoricarpos albus*).
- Indian Plum (*Oemleria cerasiformis*).
- Oceanspray (*Holodiscus discolor*).
- Tall Mahonia (*Mahonia aquifolium*).
- Baldhip Rose (*Rosa gymnocarpa*).

Native shrub most abundant along north property line.

Figure 6: 903 Admirals Road, white and pink Erythronium mix, April 3, 2024.



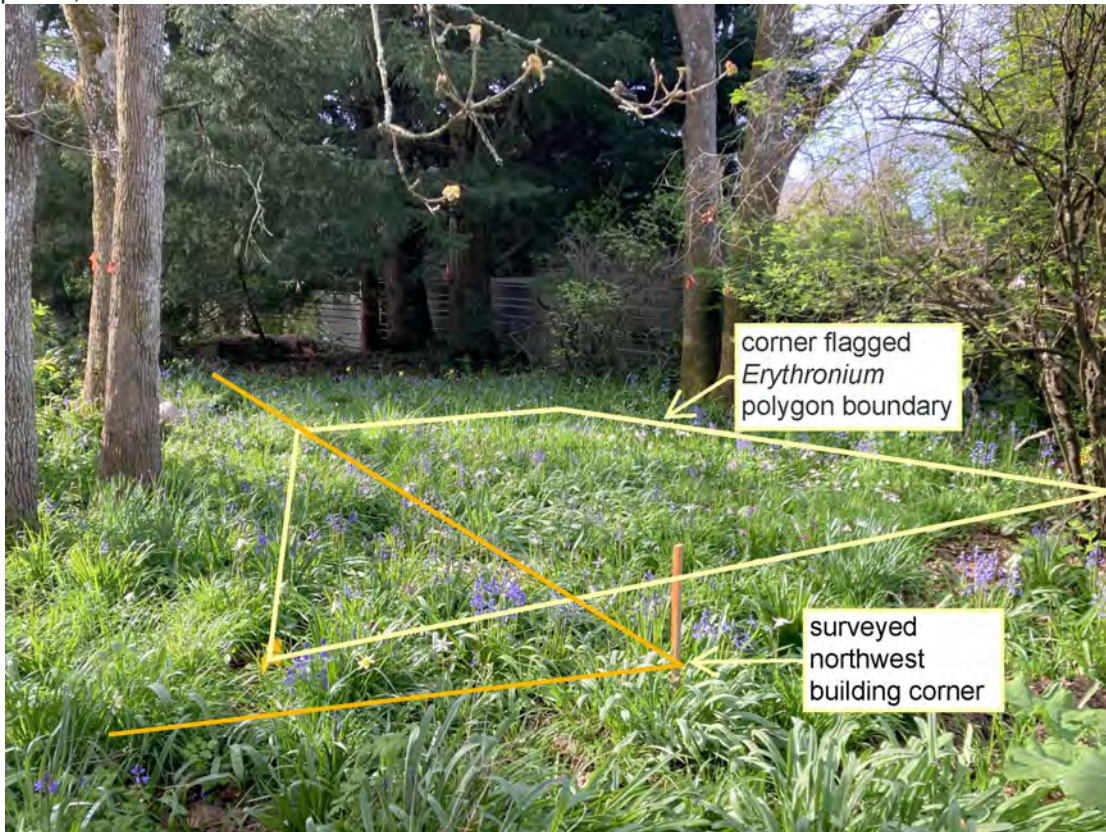
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<sup>1</sup> Horticulture Centre of the Pacific staff personal conversation, April 27, 2024.

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Figure 7: 903 Admirals Road; Erythronium polygon versus surveyed northwest building footprint, April 10, 2024.



### Native Trees:

- Garry oak (*Quercus garryana*).
- Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*).
- Arbutus (*Arbutus menziesii*).
- Pacific Yew (*Taxus brevifolia*).
- Sapling Grand Fir (*Abies grandis*).
- Seedling Black Cottonwood (*Populus balsamifera*, spp. *Trichocarpa*).

### In Greater Victoria adaptable:

- Douglas-fir most abundant coniferous tree.
- Garry oak, Arbutus common / patchy / scattered depending on sunlight / soil moisture, nutrient content.

### Tree abundance, site maximum height / girth determined by growing conditions;

- Rich / moist / sheltered = tall / spreading canopy, large growth increment.
- Dry / nutrient poor / exposed = short / thin / contorted structure, small growth increment.

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*CJF opinion*; at 903 Admirals Road; deep soil moisture / nutrients favour large coniferous / deciduous tree development, shallow soil / bedrock outcrop seasonal moisture deficit creates short / contorted trees. Dunster and Associates inventory confirms Garry oak most abundant tree with 23<sup>2</sup> onsite.

Locally Pacific Yew (903 Admirals Road; Dunster No.27) widely scattered understory trees.

### *Mosses, Lichens:*

- Juniper Haircap Moss (*Polytrichum juniperinum*).
- Common Feather Moss (*Polytrichum commune*).
- Yellow Fringe-Moss (*Racomitrium aciculare*).
- Homalothecium Moss (*Homalothecium sp.*) possibly Tree-Mat Homalothecium).
- Wallace's Spike Moss (*Selaginella wallacei*).
- Magnificent Leafy Moss (*Plagiomnium venustum*).
- Pelt Lichen (*Peltigera sp.*).
- Bear Lichen (*Usnea sp.*) – Garry oak branches.

Observed moss / lichen species common across bedrock outcrops except *Peltigera* which was found in one location and *Usnea sp.* on Garry oak branches.

Garry oak meadow species absent from 903 Admirals Road between March 27 to April 10, 2024:

- Camas (*Camas sp.*).
- Satin Flower (*Sisyrinchium douglasii*).
- Chocolate Lily (*Fritillaria lanceolata*) – May flowering.
- Nodding onion (*Allium cernuum*).
- Hooker's Onion (*Allium acuminatum*).
- Few-Flowered Shooting Star (*Dodecatheon pulchellum*).
- Western Buttercup (*Ranunculus occidentalis*).
- Spring-Gold (*Lomatium utriculatum*).

*CJF Opinion*: Missing species key members Greater Victoria Garry oak meadow plant community; Camas most frequently associated spring flowering bulb.

Absent invasive shrub; Scotch Broom (*Cytisus scoparius*).

March 27 to April 10, 2024 plant list included as Appendix 1<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> DUNSTER & ASSOCIATES Environmental Consultants Ltd., January 23, 2024 *Tree Management Plan for the Proposed Development at 903 Admirals Road, Esquimalt, BC*. Page 4.

<sup>3</sup> For onsite and redevelopment impacted neighbouring property Tree Protection Bylaw, 2022, No. 3076 protected tree resource details refer to; DUNSTER & ASSOCIATES Environmental Consultants Ltd.,

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## **Wildlife.**

Other than Deer scat CJF saw no other mammal sign between March 27 and April 10, 2024. Song birds present, woodland sheltering Song Sparrows observed March 27, 2024 (Figure 8). Obvious bird nesting behavior not observed – assessment site visits early in Greater Victoria March 15 to September 15 nesting season.

Figure 8: 903 Admirals Road Sparrow flock, March 27, 2024.



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## **Existing Ecological Value and Site Sensitivity.**

### *Ecological Value:*

Highest ecological value:

- Mammal / song bird winter shelter.
- Bird nesting opportunities; lower and upper tree canopies.
- Northwest lot corner White and Pink Erythronium.

### *Site Sensitivity:*

Surrounded by developed properties, albeit with landscaped grounds immediately adjacent 903 Admirals Road trees native / landscape vegetation has survived adjacent property disturbance. To its detriment, wider neighbourhood seed sources / landscapes have allowed invasive / landscape plant / shrub / tree species colonization.

*CJF opinion;* 903 Admirals Road north / west yard:

- If not redeveloped; plant community would continue to evolve in the same manner it has since regular maintenance stopped. I.e.; invasive / landscape infill increasingly challenging native understory plant dominance.
- Lengthy restoration required to establish native plant only landscape.

## **Potential Impact on Ecological Value Should Site Be Re-Developed.**

Multi-family residential redevelopment will unavoidably remove most existing vegetation with only select small tree / shrub / ground cover plants along north / west lot lines retained. Erythronium polygon lost to / impacted by construction; within building footprint / disturbed by construction overlap.

Post-development diminished ecological values include:

- Tree and shrub removal:
  - Mammal / song bird winter shelter.
  - Bird nesting opportunities.
- Native plant; White and Pink Erythronium polygon removed / heavily construction disturbed.

## **Recommended Mitigation Measures.**

### *Pre-development site preparation:*

Explore engaging native plant salvage group to collect Erythronium and move to new site. Ideally, bulb collection would occur July / August. If redevelopment approved and scheduled to start earlier, move bulbs in accordance with development schedule. Although limited presence at 903 Admirals Road, other salvageable plants; Pelitgera Lichen and Licorice Fern.

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Potential plant salvage organizations:

- Native Plant Study Group<sup>4</sup>.
- Habitat Acquisition Trust<sup>5</sup>.

## **Additional Information:**

No additional information at this time.

## **Garry oak Meadow Conclusion:**

*CJF Garry oak meadow conclusion:*

- Although home to 23 Garry oak the supporting herbaceous plant, bulb and shrub community does not support classifying 903 Admirals Road north and west yards as Garry oak meadow.
- Deciding factors; diverse non-native plant community and absence typically Oak meadow associated; Camas, Satin Flower, Chocolate Lily, Nodding / Hooker's Onion, Few-Flowered Shooting Star, Western Buttercup and Spring-Gold.

Instead, CJF considers the 903 Admirals Road north and west yards a modified woodland; home to native, landscape and invasive plants. Re-development unavoidably reduces current condition mammal / bird shelter, bird nesting opportunities however some ecological benefits can be recovered through plant salvage. Erythronium most notably, but also other species, as determined by salvage organization, may be of value if transplanted to local natural areas.

## **End Garry oak Meadow Assessment:**

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<sup>4</sup> [Native Plant Study Group – Victoria, BC \(npsg.ca\)](http://npsg.ca)

<sup>5</sup> [Habitat Acquisition Trust \(hat.bc.ca\)](http://hat.bc.ca)

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Appendix 1: 903 Admirals Road; north and west yard plant list developed March 27 to April 10, 2024.

### Invasive:

- St Johns Wort (*Hypericum perforatum*).
- English Ivy (*Hedra helix*).
- Spurge Laurel (*Daphne laureola*).
- Himalayan Blackberry (*Rubus armeniacus*).
- Red Deadnettle (*Lamium purpureum*).
- Laburnum (*Laburnum sp.*).
- Burdock (*Arctium sp.*).
- Hawthorn (English or Common) (*Crataegus sp.*).
- Purple Loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*).
- Yellow Archangel (*Lamium galeobdolon*).
- English Holley (*Ilex aquifolium*).
- Lawn Daisy (*Bellis perennis*).
- Plum, Cherry (*Prunus sp.*) (understory sapling – infill from adjacent seed source).

### Landscape:

- Bluebells (*Hyacinthoides sp.*, various varieties – blue, white, pink flowering).
- Snowdrops (*Galanthus sp.*).
- Daffodil (*Narcissus sp.*).
- Cotoneaster (*Cotoneaster sp.*).
- Lawn grass (*Fescue sp.*).
- Cyclamen (*Cyclamen sp.*).
- Candy tuft (*Iberis sp.*).
- Rose Campion (*Lychnis (Selene) coronaria*).
- Silver Dollar Plant (*Lunaria annua*).
- Lemon Balm (*Melissa officinalis*).
- Common Dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*).
- Snow-in-Summer (*Cerastium tomentosum*).
- Violet (blue or white flowering) (*Viola sp.*).
- White Stonecrop (*Sedum album*).
- Annual Honesty (*Lunaria annua*).

### Landscape Trees:

- Lawson's Cypress (*Chamaecyparis lawsoniana*) (Dunster Nos.45, 46, 47).
- Deodar Cedar (*Cedrus Deodara*) (Dunster Nos.52 and 60).

### Native:

- Western Starflower (*Lysimachia latifolia*).
- Pacific sanicle (*Sanicula crassicaulis*).
- Common Snowberry (*Symphoricarpos albus*).
- Herb Robert (*Geranium robertianum*).
- Bedstraw (*Galium sp.*).
- Trailing Blackberry (*Rubus ursinus*).
- Licorice Fern (*Polypodium glycyrrhiza*).
- Indian Plum (*Oemleria cerasiformis*).
- Oceanspray (*Holodiscus discolor*).
- Mountain Sweet Cicely – (*Osmorhiza chilensis*).
- Miners Lettuce (*Claytonia perfoliata*).

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- Common Chickweed (*Stellaria media*).
- Columbine (*Aquilegia Formosa*).
- Mock Orange (*Philadelphus sp.*).
- Tall Mahonia (*Mahonia aquifolium*).
- Baldhip Rose (*Rosa gymnocarpa*).
- Streambank Spring-Beauty (*Claytonia parviflora*).
- Coast Fawn Lily (*Erythronium revolutum*).
- Giant White Fawn Lily (*Erythronium oregonum*).
  - Fawn Lily polygon corners marked with yellow irrigation flags - ~dimensions ~4x4m – partially within building footprint.

### Native Trees:

- Garry oak (*Quercus garryana*).
- Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*).
- Arbutus (*Arbutus menziesii*) (offsite 897, 905 Admirals).
- Pacific Yew (*Taxus brevifolia*) (Dunster No.27).
- Sapling Grand Fir (*Abies grandis*).
- Black Cottonwood seedlings (*Populus balsamifera*, spp. *Trichocarpa*).

### Moss, Lichens:

- Pelt Lichen (*Peltigera sp.*).
- Juniper Haircap Moss (*Polytrichum juniperinum*).
- Common Feather Moss (*Polytrichum commune*).
- Yellow Fringe-Moss (*Racomitrium aciculare*).
- Bear Lichen (*Genus Usnea*) – Garry oak.
- Homalothecium Moss (genus *Homalothecium*) possibly Tree-Mat *Homalothecium*).
- Wallace's Spike Moss (*Selaginella wallacei*).
- Magnificent Leafy Moss (*Plagiomnium venustum*).

### Not Observed Garry oak meadow native:

- Camas (*Camas sp.*).
- Satin Flower (*Sisyrinchium douglasii*).
- Chocolate Lily – May flowering (*Fritillaria lanceolata*).
- Nodding onion (*Allium cernuum*).
- Hooker's Onion (*Allium acuminatum*).
- Few-Flowered Shooting Star (*Dodecatheon pulchellum*).
- Western Buttercup (*Ranunculus occidentalis*).
- Spring-Gold (*Lomatium utriculatum*).

### Absent Invasive:

- Scots Broom (*Cytisus scoparius*).