



VANCOUVER
BOARD OF
PARKS AND
RECREATION

July 10, 2018

MEMO TO : Park Board Commissioners

FROM : Malcolm Bromley
General Manager, Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation

SUBJECT : **Titan Arum “Corpse Flower” at Bloedel Conservatory**

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to advise you about a rare and exciting new plant at Bloedel Conservatory. An *Amorphophallus Titanum*, more commonly known as a titan arum or corpse flower, has recently been moved to the Conservatory in anticipation of it blooming within the next week.

When the corpse flower is ready to bloom, the spathe will unfurl, exposing small flowers in rings around its base that release scent molecules to signal their readiness for fertilization. When it blooms, a fleeting spectacle that will last just 24 to 48 hours, it emits a powerful stench similar to rancid or rotten meat. The uniqueness and appeal of the corpse flower is attributable to its rareness, its stench, the deep-red flesh color of the open spathe which attracts pollinator insects that typically feed on dead animals, and its size (it is the largest unbranched flower structure in the plant kingdom). It also has the largest known corm in the world which produces leaves and flowers. The corm, a type of tuber, can grow up to 200 pounds. Each year, it produces a leaf, which can reach up to 15 feet to absorb energy from the sun. Once the corm has enough energy stored to produce a flower bud and attempt to reproduce, a thrilling visual phenomenon unfolds. Its enormous flower spike, called a spadix, can reach up to 12 feet.

The plant has been placed in a location ideal for public viewing at Bloedel Conservatory and is currently concealed until a media release is distributed later today to announce this extraordinary plant to the public. The Park Board’s horticulture team expects that the corpse flower will most likely bloom within the next few days.

The Bloedel Conservatory is currently open regular hours from 10:00am to 8:00pm daily, but once the corpse flower blooms, the Conservatory will feature extended hours of operation to allow as many visitors as possible to experience the scent and sight of one of nature’s most distinctive displays. This spectacular natural event will also be supported through social media and a range of other promotional initiatives. To the best of our knowledge, this will be the first corpse flower to bloom publicly in British Columbia.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Malcolm Bromley'.

Malcolm Bromley
General Manager - Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation



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Copy to: PB Senior Leadership Team
PB Communications