



Lots of buzz about humble garden broom



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A new year has begun, and I have a new garden toy to play with.

The story of this happy acquisition began a week or so before Christmas, with a phone call from a garden centre newly re-established from another location to a site close to my home in Qualicum Beach.

Enterprising staff there had followed up a Times Colonist Homes article on a "garden broom," found a source, and brought some in to the store.

Lilyan, a longtime employee at KenDor, was thrilled with the brooms. She had swept one of the greenhouses using one of them, and declared the place looked as though it had been vacuumed. I was invited to try one.



This is a standard style of broom in Sri Lanka, the working end of the broom consisting of the hard midribs of dried and fallen coconut palm fronds (leaves), bound to the handle with recycled coconut fibres.

It's a magic broom, stiff and strong enough to lift up and remove wet leaves glued to a concrete driveway. Wielded with a light hand, the broom is gentle enough to whisk away leaves and debris from rock chip pathways without removing the chips too.

I've used my garden broom to clear cedar droppings off garden beds and pathways, and it brushes my short rock walls clean of debris in a jiffy. Because the broom is so slim, each end of the broom's working part can be easily used to access and clean thoroughly any tight spots between rocks or plants.

During our last gardening session shortly before Christmas, I introduced Daphne to my new toy. She watched me whisking clean a bit of rockery by the back lawn and promptly went out and bought three of the brooms as gifts.

I've come to think of this new garden aid as my "brake" because it serves equally well as broom and rake.

An extensive Internet search has failed to disclose a list of Canadian stores carrying The Garden Broom, manufactured by Ravi