

"THE CREVICE"

In memory of Eswyn

Journal of the
Alpine Gardeners of Central Vancouver Island

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FROM THE EDITOR: Dear Readers: I ask for your tolerance once again. Various family crises / challenges have kept me from completing the planned August issue and for being tardy in sending it out. I hope you will accept this shortened version. I do fully intend to catch up on all the submissions, reports, photo exposes, plant lists, etc. in the next couple of issues. I do appreciate your submissions, believe me. With best wishes, Valerie.

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First time flowering, a three year old *Campanula cretica*

UPCOMING AGCVI MEETINGS

SEPTEMBER 29th - A ROUND ROBIN OF ACTIVITIES at Nanoose Place.

Please see your member newsletter in September for more details.

OCTOBER 27th - at Shelly Road Centre,

A SHORT ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING &

IAN EFFORD will speak on "IRISES FOR ALL HABITATS"

Ian writes: "Few have knowledge of irises beyond tall bearded and Siberians. In fact, irises offer a very wide selection of forms from less than two inches to over 8 ft. tall with plants suitable for conditions from near desert to swamp. There is an iris for almost every type of garden condition except deep forest shade. To appreciate the variety available, one must examine the new iris hybrids and also begin to grow species which offer the greatest selection of form and habitat. Some of the species with their simple clean lines eclipse the gaudy blooms one sees in garden catalogues.

"The talk will be an illustrated account of the range of irises and discuss some of the practical aspects of growing them."

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES:

"I first became interested in gardening when I was about 8 years old. My uncle, with whom I was living, gave me a three by eight foot patch of garden in which to raise chrysanthemums. He helped me raise the plants and, once they flowered, I was hooked. At university I studied biology and ecology. This greatly influenced my perspective about plants and gardening so that, despite having owned a number of gardens, I remain a scientist and view all plants from their biology and biogeography rather than from the standpoint of pretty flowers. I particularly like rare or unusual plant genera or seedlings growing in neat, well-weeded rows rather than an English border.

I have been on the executive of horticultural societies, particularly those for irises and rhododendrons. I have also been president of the Ottawa Valley Rock Garden Society and of the Ottawa Botanic Garden Society. I constructed one 150ft long rock garden in Ottawa and have just completed another smaller one where new plants are just becoming established."



"The photo is not perfectly focused but it is of a rock garden iris that I recommend. It is *Iris humilis* and must be grown in sandy gravel. It can give an excellent display within two or three years from seed."

A LETTER FROM CLIFF & SUE BOOKER

"To all our dear friends in beautiful BC and Alberta,

We have just arrived home to a cool and damp UK after an overnight delay from (and a potentially holiday ruining episode at), Calgary airport.

Our overall experience of Canada has been of majestic scenery, unbelievable hospitality, the most charming people (bar two - of which more later) and incredible gardens, flowers, food and true generosity of spirit.

We would like to warmly thank everyone we met on our tour, from our magnificent hosts to the gardeners who let us stroll in wonder through their havens, from the amiable folk at each lecture to dear Valerie and Cathy who organised each of these events, from our guides on our amazing hikes to the people who kindly purchased our little book. We thank you all.

We hope you enjoyed our talks and the presentations and that we inspired at least some of you to visit Italy and other parts of Europe where the flowers are so amazing?

We know we have made some lasting friendships during our visit and we invite you to contact us if you are ever in the UK or the Dolomites.

The holiday was almost marred by an incident at the Hertz car rental office at Calgary airport when my camera and all 3400 images on the memory card were stolen by an employee. To cut a long and distressing story short, we were wonderfully assisted by the airport police and by the thief's fellow workers and an arrest was made and my camera and images were very gratefully returned to me shortly before we flew home. The guy is in court next month and should really be joined by his manager who consistently lied through his teeth to try to save his own skin and the reputation of the company but, all this aside, we won't remember this incident - it will fade into insignificance when set against the sheer magnificence of every other aspect of our holiday and the truly marvellous people we have been privileged to meet.

Canada, we salute your beauty and the generosity of your citizens - you have all gained a place in our hearts and we can't wait to return to meet you all again. Many, many thanks.

Kindest regards to you all and ever so many thanks once again.

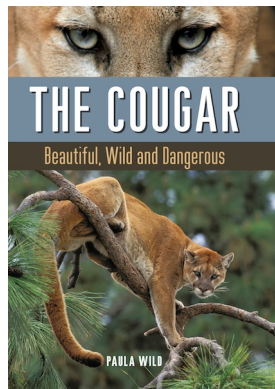
Cliff and Sue x "

OTHER EVENTS

Wednesday, September 10th: MARS presents Robert Argall speaking on Companion Planting for Rhododendrons. 7:30 pm at the Qualicum Beach Civic Centre.

Robert Argall of the North Island Rhododendron Society will share his planting techniques for a fabulous spring garden. The focus will be on the spring garden, but he will also include tips and techniques for adding companion plants to a large rhododendron collection.

Robert moved to the Comox Valley 42 years ago after university to teach high school English and Social Studies. His garden, initially only grass, some bushes, and trees, has evolved substantially, with three of his seven acres now landscaped. He comes from a gardening family as his great grandfather came to Victoria in the 1880s and started the first commercial greenhouses there. His talk will focus on the spring garden, but will extend into seeing the garden at various times. It will show what can be done to add to a garden which has a large collection of rhododendrons. Robert plants about 3,000 new bulbs each year in the autumn to accompany his early blooming rhododendrons, and his presentation will include some of these bulbs in bloom.



Thursday, September 11th: Author Paula Wild Gives Illustrated Talk on Living in Cougar Country at Nanoose Bay

Vancouver Island has the highest density of cougars, as well as the highest rate of attacks on humans. And chances are, if you spend any amount of time in the woods, a cougar's seen you while you've been totally oblivious to its presence.

That's a scary thought. But Paula Wild's new book, *The Cougar, Beautiful, Wild and Dangerous* (Douglas & McIntyre) provides insight into the impressive predator and the latest information on how to deal with a curious or aggressive cougar.

The Nanoose Naturalists invite the public to Wild's illustrated talk **Sharing the Landscape: Can Cougars & Humans Co-exist?** at the Nanoose Library Hall (249 Nanoose Road) on Thursday, Sept. 11 at 7 pm. Admission is by donation.

A BC Bestseller, *The Cougar* is the Gold Winner for Nature Book of the Year at *Foreword Reviews'* IndieFab Awards (USA) and was a finalist for the BC Book Prizes' Booksellers' Choice Award.

In an impeccably researched blend of natural history, scientific research and first-person accounts, Wild explores what makes this animal so beautiful, so dangerous and such a valuable part of our environment. The book includes 70 photographs with a colour insert, as well as fascinating facts about the largest cat in Canada.

Cougars can weigh up to 104 kilograms, leap six metres straight up from a stand-still and run up to 72 kilometres per hour. Their large padded paws allow them to travel great distances in near silence and they're absolute masters at blending in.



A collared cougar looks down at the photographer. Photo credit Steve Winter, Panthera.

They are also a vital component of a healthy ecosystem. That's why it's important for people to know how to live and behave in cougar country. As Wild says in *The Cougar*, "Co-existing with cougars isn't about fear, it's about knowledge."

Paula Wild is the author of six books, including *Sointula Island Utopia*, winner of a BC Historical Federation Certificate of Merit for its significant contribution to history. She has also written for numerous periodicals, including *British Columbia Magazine*, *Reader's Digest* and *Canada's History Magazine*. She lives in Courtenay, BC.

This event is made possible with support from the Canada Council Public Readings Program. For more information on the Nanoose Bay presentation and the Nanoose Naturalists, visit www.nanoosenaturalists.org. To find out more about *The Cougar* go to www.paulawild.ca.

Wednesday, September 17th: Eaglecrest Garden Club will meet at the QB Civic Centre with guest speaker **Brad Jalbert** from "**Select Roses**" in **Langley**. He will present "**Today's Healthy Roses grown without use of toxic chemicals**". Doors open at 6.00pm, with lecture at 7.00. \$5.00 entrance for non-members. All welcome. FMI [250 586 6129](tel:2505866129)

INTERNATIONAL REPORT

PRAGUE ROCK GARDEN CLUB SHOW, MAY 2014

Photos by Vítěslav Křenek, words by Zdeněk Zvolánek

The classic treatment here was hiding pots under aesthetic top dressing for the 3 week long show in the Charles Square in Prague. I was the head arranger of the show this year.



Abies koreana 'Silberlocke'



Rhododendron sp.



Aster alpinus 'Albus'



Campanula aucheri



Cypripedium calceolus



Cypripedium 'Sabine'



Gentiana occidentalis



Lewisia cotyledon



Pinguicula grandiflora



Allium karataviense



One of the show rockeries with *Lewisia* galore

PLANT PORTRAIT - SAXIFRAGA OPPOSITIFOLIA 'ODEON'

Text and photos by Zdeněk Zvolánek

DESCRIPTION OF A NEW CULTIVAR IN THE PORPHYRION SECTION



Saxifraga oppositifolia 'Odeon'

This distinctive form, which is named 'Odeon', was raised in the garden of František Paznocht in Moenchsroth, Northern Bavaria, Germany, in 2008. It is a seedling selected from seed collected from English cultivar *Saxifraga oppositifolia* 'Theoden' (the seed parent).



Saxifraga oppositifolia 'Theoden'

Both Saxifrages ('Theoden' and 'Odeon') are grown in broad (5 cm in diameter) holes in tufa (a soft travertine stone) without protection in winter. The same growing conditions for both plants are perfect to see their actual difference, because weather, substrate and amount of sun can change the shape (habits) or dress of plants, which are grown in different places. Generally the new cultivar 'Odeon' is a good improvement of well known 'Theoden', which is described below:

Cultivar 'Theoden' (Brian Burrow, 1985) is low (under one inch tall) and free flowering and free setting for seeds. Its large rose-purple petals are oblanceolate, acute. Free (solitaire flowers) have shown their very narrow bottom half of petals (the nail), which form only partly overlapped petals and more open cups (up to 20 mm across). The sexual organs are dully and pale purple (stamens, anthers and styles) and orange yellow (stigma). The nectar ring (the round area under styles and stamens) is yellowish. Sepals are red purple. Small opposite gray-green leaves are decorated with prominent silvering.

Cultivar 'Odeon' (František Paznocht, 2014) forms compact miniature cushions with even smaller, silver leaves than has 'Theoden'. Flowers are large (up to 20 mm), pink-purple; the reddish nectar ring at the bottom of flower cups adds more red shines into color. The broadly, oblanceolate acute petals are overlapping each other, forming firmly closed cups. The other parts of 'Odeon' are similar to the above, described 'Theoden'.

The new cultivar flowers freely in March every year and needs registration of its name for distribution in near future.

WHAT'S NEW IN MY GARDEN - Margot Moser

These are 2 plants blooming that bloomed in August in my garden. The first is *Goodyera oblongifolia* and the second *Platanthera dilatata* (probably). I'm particularly happy about the *Platanthera*, which is starting to show up in greater and greater numbers now that I have cleared away non-native grasses.



Goodyera oblongifolia



Platanthera dilatata (probably)

RECENT FLOWERS at ESWYN'S GARDEN, NANOOSE PLACE

Photos by Elaine Bohm



Fragaria 'Pink Panda'



Verbascum 'Letitia'