

"THE CREVICE"

In memory of Eswyn

Newsletter of
The Alpine & Rock Garden Special Interest Group of the
Qualicum Beach Garden Club

Issue # 17

Part 1

April 2013

FROM THE EDITOR:



Joys of Spring: L to R - *Epimedium x rubrum* 'Fairy Wing' enjoys the shade and doesn't mind being next to a cedar; *Calypso bulbosa*, an endangered wildflower in B.C., part of a small patch in the Rotary Peace Park by the Tourist Info Bureau in Parksville; *Pulsatilla vulgaris* ssp. *gotlandica* from a seedling from Elaine Bohm is now enjoying my Scandinavian trough.

Once again "The Crevice" is chock a block with lovely photos and submissions, so it has been split in two parts.

Thank you to all the contributors, including **CLIFF BOOKER**, who shares further photos of the Wengen Area of Switzerland. Cliff plans to come visit us end July 2014. Please watch "The Crevice" for further details.



Pulsatilla vernalis



Primula

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

Page 1 - Editorial

Page 2 - Cliff Booker Photos & Table of Contents

Pages 2 - 3 - Presentation to Will Lemmon

Pages 3 - 5 - Alpine SIG Events

Pages 5 - 6 - Eswyn Alpine & Rock Garden April News by Elaine Bohm

Pages 6 - 7 - Eswyn Garden Plant Portrait: *Narcissus romieuxii* by Elaine Bohm

Page 7 - SPCA Pet Calendar - request for submissions

Pages 8 - 11 - Portrait of a Genus: *Asarum*, - The Wild Gingers, by Todd Boland

'PLANTS OF PARADISE MEADOWS' BOOKLET PRESENTATION TO WILL LEMMON

Report by June Strandberg, photos by June & Nancy Whelan

Margot Moser, Barb Lemoine, Mike Miller and I went and had a nice cozy party with Will Lemmon and Nancy Whelan in the Sunroom at The Gardens. Margot gave Will a copy of her booklet, 'Plants of Paradise Meadows', and he was thrilled with it!! He is the one who led us up there the first time - we have been every year since and much enjoyed that magic place with all the flowers and spikey trees. It is one of our favourite trips, we plan to go again this July and maybe even a second time up in the fall.



Nancy & Will Lemmon study the photos L to R: Mike, Margot, June, Barb, Will in front

UPCOMING ALPINE SIG EVENTS

Please Note: Everyone must have paid their QBGC dues in order to participate in our SIG activities

MONDAY, APRIL 22TH - NOTE NEW DATE (1 week earlier than usual) & TIME - **SIG MEETING** AT NANOOSE LIBRARY HALL, 12:30 - 2:30 P.M., followed by visit and/or work party at the Eswyn Alpine & Rock Garden at Nanoose Place. More details to follow in an email from June Strandberg.

SATURDAY, MAY 4TH, 2013 - **OUR PLANT SALE @ MARS SPRING FLING**, in the Qualicum Beach Community Hall at corner of Memorial and Veterans Way, 8:30-12:30. Come early for the best choice of alpine & native plants for your rockery, woodland, containers, troughs or borders!

MONDAY, MAY 6TH, 2013 - **VISIT TO BERNIE GUYADER'S GARDEN** - Bernie has invited us to visit his garden in Courtenay on Monday, May 6th in the afternoon. Anyone who would like to come please let June Strandberg know and if you are willing to drive. normjune@shaw.ca

On
Monday, May 27th

The Qualicum Beach Garden Club
Alpine & Rock Garden Group
presents



Chris Chadwell

speaking on

**PLANT HUNTING FOR
ALPINES IN THE BORDERLANDS OF
WESTERN TIBET**

Garry Oaks & Arbutus Rooms, Parksville Community Centre
Doors open 12:30, Presentation at 1:00, Followed by Q&A,
Refreshments. \$5 Entry Fee

includes Prize Draw for Plants
including some grown from seeds
collected on Chris's last expedition.

Session ends around 3:30 p.m.

Chris Chadwell is a veteran of 27
expeditions to the Himalayan region.

He will share his fine images of
recent explorations for rock garden
plants in the NW Himalaya and Little
Tibet.



***ALSO, on WEDNESDAY, MAY 29th, 2013 - A HIMALAYAN SEED SEMINAR with
Chris Chadwell at Alba Plants at Cowichan Bay - Members have already had an email***

about this. If you haven't booked a space, please contact Valerie at Melanson.valerie@gmail.com , to see if space is available. Cost is \$15 payable in advance. Seminar runs from 10:15 to about 1:30. Bring bag lunch. Coffee/tea provided.

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2014:

MONDAY, JULY (CORRECTED MONTH !!) 29TH, 2014: Cliff Booker, well known alpine photographer and speaker will be in B.C. and coming to visit us.

ESWYN'S ALPINE & ROCK GARDEN - APRIL NEWS

Report & Photos by Elaine Bohm



Draba sp., flowering in the new crevice area



Saxifraga sp. Kabschia section



Unknown alpine iris transplanted
from Eswyn Lyster's garden



Armeria sp. (or Trift)



April at the garden



Erythronium revolutum

PLANT OF THE MONTH IN ESWYN'S ALPINE & ROCK GARDEN

***Narcissus romieuxii* (subsp. *romieuxii* var. *romieuxii*)**

Text and Photos by Elaine Bohm

N. romieuxii are often referred to as "hoop petticoats". They thrive in a well-drained sunny location and this particular subspecies can quickly multiply so the crevice area at Eswyn Alpine & Rock garden is a desirable location.

June Strandberg's meticulous records indicate that in 1997 she purchased the seed of *Narcissus romieuxii* (subsp. *romieuxii* var. *romieuxii*) # 705.100 derived from a colony first collected in Middle Atlas, Mts., Morocco in 1962 by Jim Archibald. Best known under the Field # JCA 805. Plus *Narcissus romieuxii* subsp. *albidus* var. *zaianicus* # 705.405 Ex JWB 89-24 collected from a lower, moist locality in Morocco. The late Jim Archibald was a noted plant hunter and has been given credit for the majority of forms

of *N. romieuxii* that are grown today. *Narcissus romieuxii* can vary from almost white to intense yellow with funnel shaped flowers.



As a new club member, one of the greatest joys in growing alpine plants is found by raising them from seed. Our mentor, June Strandberg, must be given credit for guiding us in the process of becoming alpine gardeners.



PARKSVILLE SPCA 2014 PET CALENDAR

Plant lovers are often animal lovers too, so if you would like to be part of this annual fundraiser showcasing wonderful creatures from this area, I'd love to hear from you. The donation per date is \$25, every penny of which goes to the Parksville Shelter. I need a photo of the animal, with his/her name, and a preferred date with alternates if that date is already taken. Photos can be emailed to me: pmark@shaw.ca or if you have a real photo, it could be sent by snail mail to 2399 Garryoaks Drive, Nanoose Bay, V9P 9G1, I'll scan it and send it back.

I really hope to hear from you! Paddy Mark

PORTRAIT OF A GENUS

***Asarum* - The Wild Gingers**

by Todd Boland

Curator, Alpine Collection,

Memorial University of Newfoundland Botanical Garden

Wild ginger or *Asarum* is probably more well-known by wildflower enthusiasts or hikers than by gardeners. As a forest-floor wildflower, they are common throughout eastern North America, the Pacific Northwest, much of Western Europe and East Asia. In fact, of the 70 or so species, the vast majority hail from East Asia. There are 8 species in North America and only one occurs in Europe.

Asarum belong to the Aristolochiaceae family. This family comprises only 5 genera, mostly from warm temperate regions. The wild gingers are generally low (under 15 cm) shade-loving species that may be deciduous or evergreen. Some authorities place the evergreen types into a separate genus called *Hexastylis*, but for simplicity, I'll describe them all under *Asarum*. The leaves are relatively large, produced either singularly or paired and are round to heart-shaped.

The evergreen species are particularly treasured for their glossy textured foliage that is silver-veined or blotched on a few species. The flowers, which are produced in spring, are often hidden by the leaves and basically sit on the ground. Each flower is produced individually and has 3 petal-like sepals. While generally coloured green to maroon, they are quite interesting, albeit, sometimes malodorous. The blooms of the Asian species are particularly attractive. Plants slowly form colonies via underground rhizomes.

Some like the European *A. europaeum* or the American *A. canadense* and *A. caudatum* can be used as a ground-cover but the other species are slower to spread. The common name comes from the fact that the rhizome, when chewed, has a distinct ginger-like taste. In fact, their rhizomes can be used as a substitute for fresh ginger.



Asarum canadense



Asarum caudatum

In the garden, provide these plants with dappled sunlight and a rich, organic soil that remains reasonably moist. Neutral to acidic pH seems to suit them best. The easiest way to propagate is by division, which is easy as the plants produce rhizomes that root along their length. They are wonderful companion plants for ferns, *Podophyllum*, *Anemone*, *Hepatica* and *Arisaema*. Generally the Asian species are only hardy to zone 7; many of the American species are fine for zone 6 with the notable exception of *A. canadense* which can survive zone 2! The European species is the hardiest of the evergreen types, good to zone 4 or even zone 3 if properly insulated.



Asarum europaeum

For foliage effect, it's hard to beat the American species native to the SE States, in particular *A. arifolium*, *A. hartwegii*, *A. shuttleworthii* and *A. virginicum*. These have evergreen leaves not unlike good variegated forms of *Cyclamen hederifolium*. If snow cover is guaranteed or if grown under a good layer of leaves, these species can survive into the mildest parts of zone 5. Also with attractive foliage is the western American species *A. marmoratum*, but it is not reliable north of zone 7. There are also several Asian species with very attractively marked foliage. Among the best are *A. splendens*, *A. maculatum* (*A. sieboldii*), *A. macranthum* and *A. magnificum*. There are several others but they are difficult to find and rather expensive. These are also rated hardy to zone 7.



Asarum marmoratum



Asarum splendens

As mentioned, the flowers are considered interesting at the very least. The European wild ginger and most of the North American species have maroon-purple flowers. Some like *A. caudatum* have larger flaring flowers with elongated sepals, thus are a little more attractive. The real floral winners are the Asian species. Some of these are intricately veined and marbled. The best of all might be *A. maximum* which has relatively large flowers that appear velvety black with a white 'eye'. Like the Asian variegated species, these florally interesting species also fetch huge prices.



Asarum maximum

PLEASE CONTINUE READING "THE CREVICE" WITH PART 2