

# "THE CREVICE"

In memory of Eswyn

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

Issue # 4

February 2012

## From the Editor:

1. You will be in the throws of seed starting now. If not already finished and you need some advice on germination, check out these sites:

Ontario Rock Garden Society:

<http://www.onrockgarden.com/germination-guide/plants>

or try Alplains. For the seeds Alan Bradshaw carries, he gives codes re: germination: <http://www.alplains.com/>

Look up the seed you are interested in and then check the LEGEND section for information on the codes. Alplains carries lots of Western USA seeds, but also seed from Europe, South America and elsewhere.

2. A Key to Acronyms / Abbreviations we use:

Some of us that have been around a bit longer in the Alpine SIG use abbreviations / acronyms that might be a bit of mystery for newcomers to the group, so here is a preliminary key. If there any other abbreviations you like to see defined, please let me know.

**AGCBC** = **Alpine Garden Club of British Columbia**, based at VanDusen Gardens in Vancouver. Their website is: <http://www.agc-bc.ca/index.asp>. They publish an electronic format Bulletin

**AGS** = **Alpine Garden Society**, based in Pershore, UK. Their website is: <http://www.alpinegardensociety.net/> They publish a quarterly, "The Alpine Gardener".

**NARGS** = **North American Rock Garden Society**, based in the USA. Their website is: <http://www.nargs.org/> They publish a quarterly, "The Rock Garden Quarterly".

**ORGS** = **Ontario Rock Garden & Hardy Plant Society**, a chapter of NARGS, based at the Toronto Botanical Gardens. Their website is: <http://www.onrockgarden.com/>

**RBG Edinburgh or RBGE** = **Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh**, based at Edinburgh, Scotland. Their website is: <http://www.rbge.org.uk/> They publish a quarterly, "The Botanics".

**RBG Kew or RBGK** = **Royal Botanic Gardens Kew**, based in London, England. Their website is: <http://www.kew.org/> They publish a quarterly, "Kew Magazine".

**RHS** = **Royal Horticultural Society**, based in London, England. Their website is: <http://www.rhs.org>. They publish a quarterly, "The Garden", and a specialist quarterly, "The Plantsman".

**SRGC** = **The Scottish Rock Garden Club**, based in Scotland. Their website is: <http://www.srgc.org.uk/>

**VIRAGS** = **Vancouver Island Rock and Alpine Garden Society**, based in Victoria. Their website is: <http://www.virags.ca/>

## **PLANS FOR 2012 – FIRM & TENTATIVE:**

**February 27<sup>th</sup> – FEBRUARY REGULAR MEETING** – Monday, February 27<sup>th</sup>, 1-3 p.m. at Serious Coffee, Heritage Plaza, 9-1209 Island Hwy East, Parksville, in the meeting room. Mike Miller will demonstrate creating and planting up a small tufa mountain in a dish.

**March 12<sup>th</sup> – 2ND FIELD TRIP (carpool) – TO AGCBC MEETING**, Van Dusen Gardens, Vancouver & DAVID SELLARS GARDEN in South Surrey: – Monday March 12, 2012. **Visit to David Sellar's Garden** in afternoon. In evening **Malcolm McGregor** will speak on "**Saxifrages around the world and in the garden**". Malcolm is editor of the NARGS "Rock Garden Quarterly" and author of **Saxifrages: A Definitive Guide to the 2000 Species, Hybrids & Cultivars**. Malcolm was the Editor of the Scottish Rock Garden Club Journal from 2000 to 2006 and is the current Editor of the NARGS Quarterly. He lectures regularly on alpine plants and rock gardening and has travelled widely in North America, Europe, Turkey and the Himalayas observing and photographing plants in the wild. Choice of taking late Tsawassen ferry in the evening (BC Ferries willing), or staying overnight.  
Contact June S. re: carpooling.

**March 26<sup>th</sup> – MARCH REGULAR MEETING:** at June Strandberg's, 1980 Island Hwy, between Village Way and Bennett Rd. in QB, 1 p.m. June will lead a mini workshop on taking cuttings and potting them up. Bring sharp secateurs, small pots with potting compost,

and rooting hormone, if you have it.

**March 27<sup>th</sup> - 3RD FIELD TRIP (carpool) - TO VIRAGS, Victoria**, Tuesday, March 27, 2012 - **David Sellars** will speak on "**Chaos in the Rock Garden: Putting Theory into Practice**". Doors open at 7:15 p.m. Meeting begins at 7:30. at Gordon Head United Church Hall, 4201 Tyndall, Victoria B.C. Contact June Strandberg re: carpooling.

**March 28<sup>th</sup> - SIG SPECIAL PRESENTATION: DAVID SELLARS -**  
**Wednesday, March 28<sup>th</sup>**, here at QB Civic Centre, 1 TO 3 PM., **doors open 12:45 pm** on "**Alpine Jewels of the Olympic and Wenatchee Mountains, Washington State**". David plans to bring plants to sell. He will also present a show of photos entered in the 2011 NARGS Photo contest.

**April 14<sup>th</sup> - CARPOOL TO VIRAGS SPRING PLANT SHOW & SALE IN**  
**VICTORIA**. Location: Cadboro Bay United Church, 2625 Arbutus Road, Victoria, 9 am to 3:30 p.m. Admission by donation, VIRAGS Member Plant Sale at 11 am, Specialty Nurseries sales all day, Afternoon Teas.  
Please contact June Strandberg re: carpooling.

**APRIL 28<sup>TH</sup> - ALPINE SIG SPRING PLANT SALE** at Louise Cotterill's, 886 Primrose St., QB, more info to follow.

**April 30<sup>th</sup> - APRIL REGULAR MEETING: BUILDING HYPERTUFA**  
**TROUGHS AND DISHES**, more info to follow.

**May 28<sup>th</sup> - MAY REGULAR MEETING**: at Eswyn Alpine Garden at Nanoose Place, Nanoose, TBC with more info to follow.

**June 25<sup>th</sup> - JUNE REGULAR MEETING**

**July 30<sup>TH</sup> - JULY REGULAR MEETING - WILDFLOWER WALK AT**  
**PARADISE MEADOWS, TBC**

**OTHER PLANS TO DISCUSS & FIRM UP:**

TRIP TO OWL AND STUMP RARE PLANT NURSERY, YELLOWPOINT, IN JUNE  
TRIP TO BERNIE GUYADER'S ROCK GARDEN IN COURTENAY  
TRIP UP MT. COKELEY IN AUGUST  
TRIP TO RHODODENDRON LAKE

**SEPTEMBER - WORKSHOP ON BUILDING A CREVICE GARDEN IN A**  
**TROUGH** with Gordon Mackay. Please see interesting article on the subject by the Ottawa Valley Rock Garden and Horticultural Society from 2004

<http://www.ovrghs.ca/articles/other/slab%20in%20a%20bag.htm>

(thank you to Sue Beatty for this link)

### **MEMBER ADVERT FROM ANNETTE DEXTER**

I am having to cut back on my plants so will be selling quite a few at very good prices. It will have to be by appointment only ( two people at a time) AS THE PARK DOES NOT ALLOW yard sales. I plan to start selling on Feb. 17th - if you are interested please call me at [250-954-3601](tel:250-954-3601) to set up a time. If you want to know if I have a specific plant just call. If I am not in please leave a message and I will get back to you.

### **FOLLOW UP ON EVENTS**

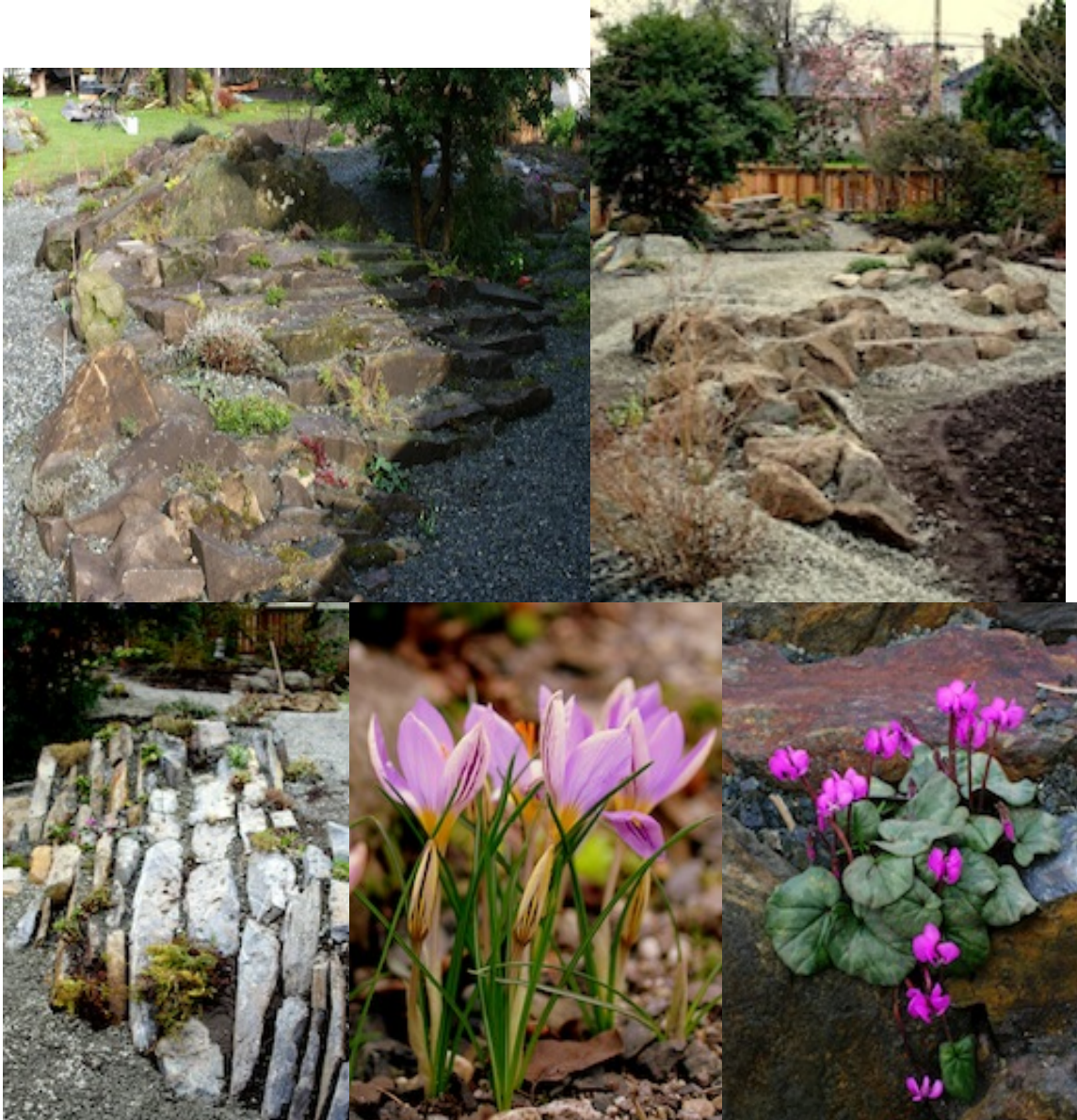
**Zdenek Zvolanek** has been in touch and has sent along a photo of Iris histrioides 'George'. He notes that it was taken from a crevice, where it was happy (Victoria) for 5 years. A quarter was given to Amanda Carruthers for the new crevice garden and the rest (see photo) is prepared for journey to Beauty Slope in Czech Republic.



Zdenek "recently built three small outcrops with plenty of crevices in granite, schist and sandstone, as a reconstruction of half of the garden of late Joyce Carruthers for her



daughter Amanda Carruthers. People can visit this garden, which has mature crystalline schist crevice garden after contacting Amanda (e-mail\* [threemore@shaw.ca](mailto:threemore@shaw.ca)\*). I believe that the reconstructed part will be great after 3 years. Photos enclosed."



Zdenek asks that we all read **The International Rock Gardener**, the electronic monthly journal which he edits with Maggi and Ian Young for [www.srgc.org.uk](http://www.srgc.org.uk) .

Editor's note: This journal is a must, full of beautiful photos, plant profiles, trip reports, etc. The Journal is now entering its third year. All issues are worth investigating. Here is a link to the website:

<http://www.srgc.org.uk/logs/index.php?log=international>

And attached to this newsletter is a proof of the February issue, kindly sent by Zdenek.



**Visit to the Eswyn Alpine Rock Garden at Nanoose Place after the Seminar**

L to R:

Zdenek Zvolanek, Paul Spriggs, Amanda Carruthers, Gordon Mackay, Grahame Ware

**Grahame Ware from Owl and Stump Rare Plant Nursery** attended the pm session of Zdenek Zvolanek's Seminar. We are planning to visit his nursery in June.

---In the meantime check out his website at: <http://www.owlandstumprareplants.com/>

And some of his writings:

---article on "Six Favourite Heucheras suitable for the rock garden" , The International Rock Gardener, Sept 2011 issue, pp. 12-19.

NB: Grahame is co-author of the Timber Press book on Heucheras:

Heucheras and Heucherellas: Coral Bells and Foamy Bells,

by Dan Heims and Grahame Ware,

(Timber Press; illustrated edition (April 10 2005)

978-0881927023, cloth, 208 pp)

---an article on Roscoea in the latest issue (#128, Jan 2012) of the SRGC's The Rock Garden. Pp. 58 - 71.

--- plant portrait 'Asarina procumbens 'compact form': The origins, the mystery and the simple beauty', International Rock Gardener, January 2012 issue, pp 16-22.

**NB: Grahame has submitted an article to this newsletter: "Plants that Dazzled Me in 2011". Please see the attached .pdf file.**

Also at the ZZ seminar was **Gordon Mackay from Alba Plants**. We are planning a crevice in a trough seminar with Gordon in the fall. In the meantime check out his nursery website at:  
<http://www.albaplants.com/>

## **GOOD READS / USEFUL LINKS**

### **GREAT PHOTOS - YOU CAN GET A LOT IN A SMALL SPACE**

Check out this photo posted by Panayoti Kelaidis of Denver Botanic Garden on Facebook (thanks to Sue Beatty):

<http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=297012330354841&set=a.212356272153781.52976.212102705512471&type=1&theater>

### **2<sup>nd</sup> INTERNATIONAL CZECH ROCK GARDEN CONFERENCE 2-5 MAY, 2013, IN CZECH REPUBLIC**

<http://czrgs.cz/conference.html>

## **A FEW TIPS ON PRICKING OUT & POTTING UP SEEDLINGS BASED ON MY EXPERIENCE SO FAR**

By Valerie Melanson

I am still a novice in growing alpiners, but I have learned a few things by trial and error and would like to pass them on, in hopes they help, or for comment.

1. **RESEARCH FIRST**: Just like for germinating seeds, do some **RESEARCH** on your plant's likes. For example I had some *Campanula aucheri* seedlings - I researched and found out they have a taproot, so made sure that I potted them into deep seedling pots. *Saxifraga federici-augusti* ssp. *grisebachii* seedlings like a limey, well-drained, rocky potting. *Gentian* seedlings don't like to be pricked out individually - it's best to transplant them in clumps and wait on division until they are mature. *Primula maupiensis* likes damp and shade or it will fry.
2. **PRICKING OUT & POTTING UP**:
  - make sure the seedling compost is well dampened. Roots are less likely to be torn off and more compost will stick to the roots and that makes for better potting up. NB: some seedlings don't have much root at all, but go for it anyway. I found that with *Delosperma* and *Astragalus* and they lived in spite of me !!
  - use a very small tool to prick out - e.g. a chopstick, a seedspoon or or



some such. Even tweezers can help for sturdier seedlings like *Saxifraga* or *Sempervivum*- with care.

--Hold the seedlings gently by their leaves, not stems. Stems can get broken or bruised and that is death to your seedling.

--Use a sterile as possible a soil to pot up - e.g. I mix some starter mix with some sea soil. Add any amendments like oyster shell, glacial rock dust, grit, sand (as indicated by your research). Water well (so any peat or coir rehydrates) and let settle and drain.

--Use your pricking out tool to make a hole for the seedling, then settle the new soil gently around the roots you fingers or tool. I use a 591 ml squeezable Aquafina water bottle with a fine plastic rose top (available from Lee Valley) to drip water gently around the seedling to make sure the soil contacts the roots fully.

--Top with #2 or # 3 grit to deter moss growth and slugs.

--Other pests: If your research has indicated slugs love your plant - like *Soldanella* alpine or young *Cyclamen*, then use extra defenses like copper collars, copper mesh. If wood bugs love them, then sprinkling corn meal periodically around the seedlings in a ring, helps deflect them - also use corn meal traps in your trays (small plastic pots with lids and hole cut in side, full of corn meal). If aphids love your juicy seedlings, then have a squirt bottle of Safer's soap at the ready.

--If it is still cold out, you will have to either keep the newly potted plants inside under grow lights and covered in vented domes to prevent them from desscating, or in a greenhouse with enough warmth not to freeze and covered in domes, or if warm enough outside put your pots in solid trays with vented domes over them and place in a shady protected area for a couple of days, then move to a partially shaded area so they get more light and don't get leggy, then as the plants grow and strengthen give them more sun as per their requirements. NB: Open and close vents or even prop up the covers as required so that the plants don't freeze or cook or get too much rain and drown. As they grow stronger and bigger and the weather improves they can be integrated into the garden.

I'd appreciate your feedback on the above. Everyone has different experience and ideas to share. Editor, [Melanson.valerie@gmail.com](mailto:Melanson.valerie@gmail.com)



## **THE STORY BEHIND OUR QUALICUM BEACH GARDEN CLUB WEBSITE**

**<http://qualicumbeachgardenclub.wordpress.com/>**

**by Sue Beatty**

Louise Cotterill believed the club needed a website but cost was prohibitive. I'm not a web master but I've done lots of sites using free software and I was asked to look at it for the club. The reasons for the site were to have a place for members to go for information and attract new members. So, last year the Qualicum Beach Garden Club web site was born.

You can have a beautiful website but you need to get the traffic or it's pretty pointless. Enter June Strandberg :-). June has been an avid supporter of the website and giving suggestions as well as information and pictures. To date we've had 6,736 views on our site with the majority of them on the alpine page. It's really exploded since the crevice garden was added - searches for crevice, alpine, rock are getting us lots of hits. At June's suggestion we added ZZ's and Paul's name - both very well known on the island and ZZ around the world.

The garden club funded extra memory for the site this year and we've got some amazing pictures on there from the group members - and the native plant group. The club has reaped the reward from the alpine group as we've had some inquiries about membership and a few other requests.

I personally am really happy to see the site being a success so quickly - it's not hard to do a site but it does take some time and I'm happy because it was so worth it. I'd like to see other groups use the web site - not only for members or their own sig but to help grow the club. Again, I give all credit for the success to June and her amazing marketing skills.

## **RECIPES FOR TREATS AT THE LAST MEETING**

**By Sue Beatty**

**Coconut Slice** is one my Mom made when I grew up and one of my favorites - I triple it and make it on a large cookie tray and it freezes well.

### **Crust**

1 cup flour  
2 tsps baking powder  
3/4 cup caster sugar divided  
1 egg  
2 tbs butter

Mix 1st 3 together, rub in butter and then the add the egg. Press into tray - I use parchment paper but you could butter the tray if you don't mind the extra fat

2-3 rounded tablespoons of jam - I use way more than this and I love it with strawberry or raspberry jam but I do use lemon curd and the other day I used a pumpkin spread - it's

fun to experiment. Just spread it over the base.

1 cup of coconut  
1 egg  
remainder of caster sugar

Mix together and carefully spoon over the jam/spread. I usually make more of this so it has a good coating on it - it just never seems enough.

Bake for about 30 minutes on 340 degrees - I put it a bit lower in the oven and once the top is golden brown it's done.

**Snickerdoodles** - a new one I tried this Christmas and my husband loves it. This is wonderful warm out of the oven - sadly they'd cooled off by the time I got to June :-)

1 1/2 cups sugar  
1/2 cup butter or margarine, softened  
1/2 cup shortening - NOTE I NEVER USE SHORTENING OR MARGARINE SO 1 CUP BUTTER (I PROBABLY PUT IN 3/4 CUP) it may taste better with the shortening  
2 eggs  
2 3/4 cups unbleached flour  
2 teaspoons cream of tartar  
1 teaspoon baking soda  
1/4 teaspoon salt  
1/4 cup sugar  
2 teaspoons ground cinnamon - I add cardamom too

Heat oven to 400°F.

Mix 1 1/2 cups sugar, the butter, shortening and eggs in large bowl. Stir in flour, cream of tartar, baking soda and salt.

Shape dough into 1 1/4-inch balls. Mix 1/4 cup sugar and the cinnamon. Roll balls in cinnamon-sugar mixture. Place 2 inches apart on ungreased cookie sheet.

Bake 8 to 10 minutes or until set. Remove from cookie sheet to wire rack.

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If you have items or ideas for new sections or articles, or would like to write on a topic, please contact the editor, Valerie Melanson, [Melanson.valerie@gmail.com](mailto:Melanson.valerie@gmail.com). Submissions would be very welcome. The newsletter will be sent out in the body of an email and as Word and .pdf attachments. If you do not have a printer and wish a paper copy mailed to you, please contact Valerie above. Submission deadline is 12<sup>th</sup> of month, with newsletter to be sent out circa 15<sup>th</sup>. Frequency - most months except December.