

"THE CREVICE"

In memory of Eswyn

Newsletter of the

Alpine Gardeners of Central Vancouver Island

(formerly The Alpine & Rock Garden Special Interest Group
of the Qualicum Beach Garden Club)

Issue # 21

Part One

August 2013

FROM THE EDITOR:

-- Please join us in celebrating our new name - The Alpine Gardeners of Central Vancouver Island, replacing our lengthy moniker of The Alpine & Rock Garden Special Interest Group of the Qualicum Beach Garden Club. In this case, shorter is definitely better and more accurate in describing the geographical coverage of our group.

-- Items for the next "Crevice" can be sent anytime to Melanson.valerie@gmail.com.

-- Something I saw on Twitter - "I suffer from OCG" = Obsessive Compulsive Gardening. That's me!!

-- My apologies to Chris Chadwell for erroneously stating that "all" his seeds could be started by the one method reported on in the last issue. Chris has sent in a detailed correction and much additional information on starting his seeds, including a PDF file that you will find with this newsletter.

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UPCOMING AGofCVI EVENTS

Please Note: *Everyone must have paid their QBGC dues in order to participate in our SIG activities.* A matter of insurance coverage, etc. This is in effect until the end of December when we will have our own AGofCVI dues and insurance for 2014.

Please Note Members: It is a great help to know yes or no if you are coming to an Alpine Gardeners event. When June sends out an email with event details and asks for an indication, please send her a quick email, so she has an accurate number for planning. Thank you.

Monday, August 26th: Mini Garden Tour, starts 12:30 p.m. at Mike Miller's. More info via email direct with members.

LOOKING FORWARD TO THE FALL:

Monday, September 30th, 2013, 1 p.m.: Regular Alpine Gardeners Group Meeting, at Nanoose Place - Discussion on Preparing Your Plants for Winter, Seed Submissions to AGCBC, Venue for Christmas Lunch. A chance to visit the Eswyn Garden and do some weeding, so bring along your kneeling pad, bucket and tools, if you can help.

MONDAY, OCTOBER 28th, 2013: Meeting TBC, if needed.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 2ND, 2013: PAUL SPRIGGS, QB Civic Centre Windsor/OAP Rooms, 10:30 to 3:30. More details to come.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 25TH: CHRISTMAS LUNCH

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2014:

MONDAY, JULY 28TH, 2014: Cliff Booker, well known alpine photographer and speaker will be in B.C. and coming to visit us.

THE BEAUTIFUL PELOPONNESE **A BOTANICAL GLORY OF GREECE, Part 2**

by Cliff and Sue Booker

After the warm Mediterranean atmosphere on the coast at Kardamili, we had expected cooler temperatures and higher humidity when we headed ninety miles north into the mountains to the beautiful resort of Dimitsana - but we were to be very pleasantly surprised.



Dimitsana

The sun shone quite ferociously throughout our five days in the hills and clouds never sullied the deep blue sky.



There were drawbacks to this incredible weather of course, with pollen clouds being the greatest culprit, the slightest breeze releasing drifts of microscopic yellow grains into the sultry air, instigating bouts of hay fever even in those of us who had never suffered any symptoms before. Another less serious side effect of the heat was the way it made us puff and pant on even quite gentle hikes, but, fortuitously, this shortage of breath resulted in many more stops to photograph the stunning plants and views.



We won't bore you with the routes that we took or the destinations that we visited, but our daily journeys took in remote, often crumbling mountain passes, isolated monasteries,



flower-rich meadows and verdant forests. Many botanically minded people visit the Peloponnese in autumn to see the drifts of bulbs and the enticing colonies of cyclamen, but spring in these parts proved just as rewarding with a galaxy of species and veritable panoply of colour.



Beautiful meadows

We will let our images illustrate the beauty of the area and the flora and we hope we might inspire you to consider a visit to this magnificent part of Greece.

Cliff and Sue Booker - July 2013



Orchis italica



Orchis papilionacea



Anacamptis pyramidalis



Tripodium tetraphyllum



Geranium brutium



Orobanche species



Tiny crevice dwelling *Campanula* & guest



Campanula ramosissima



Anemone Trio



Poppies, the one on the right with *Anagallis*



Two more Bee Orchids, *Ophrys*. Another Orchid spotted at Dimitsana



Two Views of *Tragopogon sinuatus* and a *Centaurea raphanina*



A colour combination

Cephalanthera



A Peloponnese roadside

A wonderful rock

Iridescent beetles



Some of the local gourmands

CORRECTIONS / ADDENDA TO PREVIOUS CREVICES **FROM CHRIS CHADWELL**

RE: "Crevice", July 2013 p. 18

"As you will have read in Linda Derkach's report last month, Chris Chadwell recommends starting all his Himalaya collected seed outdoors in pots dampened from below and covered in polyethelene bags:

Please note I DO NOT recommend starting all seed collected in the Himalaya to be covered in plastic bags.

I DO recommend the method for the majority of *Primula*, *Rhododendron*, *Meconopsis* and similar genera which grow in moist conditions - some of which having a light requirement to germinate well (hence covering them with grit can retard germination).

It just so happens that the collections below are either *Primula* or *Saxifraga* that are likely to be better suited to this method compared to typical outside treatment,

covered with horticultural grit, with variable moisture levels depending upon consistency of watering/rainfall. And so better results are likely to be achieved.

"Primula macrophylla, CC7385 - 1 pot

Primula meeboldii, CC7386 - 2 pots

Primula moorcroftiana, CC7382, CC7383 - 2 pots

Primula munroi, CC7363 - 1 pot (I did have success with Jan 2013 sowings of 1 pot OT & 2OC, but the seedlings are delicate and survival rate not high)

Primula reidii, CC7341 - 1 pot

Saxifraga Jacquemontiana, CC7397 - 1 pot

Saxifraga moorcroftiana, CC7377 - 2 pots"

BUT a majority of Himalayan species are better sown following more usual methods. So please include a note in the next available issue. I certainly wish to encourage more people to raise plants from seed - and to have greater success. Sticking rigidly to what is says in the books is not the best way. Adding a range of methods, makes sense but there are exceptions to every rule, so important to ALWAYS emphasise it will not work in every case.

*He mentioned you could do this up to June and get results":

It is accurate to say that I have personally got respectable, even good results sowing as late as early June in my UK garden near Heathrow/to the West of London. I would not recommend sowing any later - and as few others sow late, I cannot judge how well this would work elsewhere.

It is worth trying/considering - though of course most gardeners are busy in their gardens with other tasks by May or June.

As I tried to explain at the workshop, my approach is to recommend some fresh approaches to seed- sowing and growing-on. I make no claims to be the most skilled or dedicated of growers and whilst it is great to hear what specialists in particular genera or top nurserymen or winners of prizes on show-benches or modern-day plant hunters have to say, what works for them or in their part of the world/garden, is not always applicable elsewhere. I have the opportunity to observe in person what others do and have also accumulated information/records through correspondence/e-mail etc.

But it is important to "qualify" statements/claims/recommendations through critical analysis.

RE: "Crevice", June 2013, p.14

Would you also draw attention to the comments about "Clumping". Whilst I strongly endorse the method, there most definitely exceptions to the rule, so best to 'qualify' its suitable to something along the lines of "a majority or most", rather than imply everything.

I attach a copy of my latest 'Cultivation Tips', which should clarify matters further.

(please see PDF file sent out with this newsletter.)

FOLLOW UP ON ALPINE SIG EVENTS

Hike to Lake Helen Mackenzie and Battleship Lake in Strathcona Park

Report by Sue Beatty with photos by Sue, June Strandberg and Valerie Melanson

On Friday, July 19th, 2013 at 7.45 am, Valerie, June and Sue left Qualicum Beach to meet up with Bernie at Paradise Meadows Trail Head between 9 and 9.30 am. We got there at 9 am with Bernie arriving a few minutes later. The weather was gorgeous - sunny and warm. We started our hike as soon as we said our hellos'. We headed up in the direction of Lake Helen Mackenzie to head down past Battleship Lake.



Since we had done Paradise Meadows Loop Trail the week prior I was surprised how much it had changed. The beautiful white and pink heathers were now brown and ready to start going to seed. The *Dodecatheon jeffreyi* were almost finished too. The *Veratrum viride* were almost ready to bloom.

We turned onto the trail we would take fairly quickly and started up. We were definitely on the shady side of the trail and the plants in the rocks and crevices on our left were lush and fairly abundant.



Botanizing along the trail



Pedicularis racemosa

On our right was another abundance of plants that liked more of a boggy environment. Some of the differences I noted - there were less heather then on Paradise Meadow Loop, but they were in flower on Helen Mackenzie Battleship Lake Loop Trail. We also saw the odd *Dodecatheon jeffreyi*, but again, not as abundant as below.



Goodyera oblongifolia



Saxifraga ferruginea

On the rocky side of the path we saw *Pedicularis racemosa*, *Saxifraga ferruginea*, *Goodyera oblongifolia*, *Tiarella trifoliata*, *Gaultheria procumbens* and on the boggy side was *Pinguicula vulgaris* in bloom. Valerie was quite excited to see the flower as she'd never seen it blooming before - I hadn't either but I only saw it for the first time last week in Paradise Meadows.



Pinguicula vulgaris

Now we reached the nameless pond, which is actually quite beautiful and had lovely yellow water lilies in it. It was here we saw the *Trientalis arctica* covered in tiny little water drops. *Menyanthes trifoliata* was poking out of the water in the reflections of the sky making a beautiful picture.



Pond with No Name



Menyanthes trifoliata

We saw lots more of the *Pinguicula vulgaris* here but without the bloom.

Still enjoying the pond we saw *Luetkea pectinata*, *Vaccinium uliginosum* and *Clintonia uniflora*.



Vaccinium uliginosum



Luetkea pectinata

Bernie also pointed out a huge 'rock', which was actually a ton of big stones in lime - quite beautiful. We also had a family of whiskey jacks following us - well, Valerie, who had lots of nuts for them. The baby was a bit nervous but he warmed up to Valerie very quickly and was soon eating out of her hand. They stayed with us (Valerie) for quite a while.

We came to a lovely stream and soon after we arrived at Lake Helen Mackenzie.



Sue Beatty, Bernie Guyader & June Strandberg at Lake Helen Mackenzie

There we met another friend who decided to check out what Bernie had for lunch - a friendly little squirrel. He decided he liked what Valerie had to offer and chased the whiskey jacks away from the nuts! We had a good laugh watching their antics.

We decided to press on to Battleship Lake and eat our lunch there. On the way we saw a lovely natural crevice garden area with *Antennaria*, *Veronica wormskjoldii*, heather and *Potentilla drummondii*. We spent a while just admiring it.



A natural crevice garden



Potentilla drummondii



Veronica wormskjoldii



Antennaria sp.



Battleship Lake with Mount Washington in the distance

We were now on the sunnier side of our hike and we noted there were more people and fewer flowers. We had a very enjoyable lunch at Battleship Lake while watching the damselflies. Afterwards we carried on down back to Paradise Valley



View down to the boardwalk on the meadows & Ponds above the meadows

and went to see the *Drosera rotundifolia*. Although it was still very small it had actually grown a bit since the week before.



Drosera rotundifolia

While heading back to the trail head we saw *Platanthera dilatata*, *Tofieldia glutinosa*, *Rhododendron albiflorum*, *Leptarrhena pyrolifolia*, *Erigeron peregrinus*, *Aster foliaceus*, *Eriophorum angustifolium* and *Pedicularis bracteosa*.

We had a great day - thank you Bernie for leading us, and Valerie for driving and stopping off for treats on the way home!

PLEASE TURN TO PART 2 FOR FURTHER INTERESTING ARTICLES