

"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 # 22

Part 2

September 2013

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ESWYN ALPINE & ROCK GARDEN NEWS

by Elaine Bohm

our new sign

REGULAR WEEDING DAYS

Starting in September there will be a weeding day at Eswyn's Alpine Garden on the 2nd Thursday morning of each month at 10:00 am. Anyone who can help would be most appreciated. Please bring your kneeling pad and weeding gear



Campanula 'Marion Fisher'



Sylvia Paish at work



Kaffir Lily - *Schizostylis*



Leadwort - *Ceratostigma plumbaginoides*

OTHER UPCOMING EVENTS

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 12TH, 2013 - RON LONG will speak @ QUALICUM BEACH GARDEN CLUB - He will be showing slides and talking about plants on Pink Mountain, 120 K north of Fort St. John. For more information check out: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G_yyO461U7w

Here is further information received from Ron Long:

Pink Mountain Biodiversity Research Initiative

Pink Mountain is located 120 km north of Fort St. John in northern British Columbia. The mountain is unique in the province for its rich flora and fauna.

Preliminary studies on the flora of the summit plateau reveal that Pink Mountain hosts more red- and blue-listed species (endangered or threatened) than any other location in the province north of Vancouver (Conservation Data Centre information).

To date, 12 red- and blue-listed plant species have been identified. In addition to the listed species, Pink Mountain also hosts a number of botanical curiosities. For example,

the southernmost populations of some arctic species, such as the rare *Rhododendron lapponicum* can be found. Two species of orchids not otherwise known to occur in tundra habitats are located on the mountain, while sub-alpine plants such as *Zygadenus elegans* can be found on the tundra summit.

The exquisite and odd can also be found: two miniature gentians and a rare *corydalis* are also here, as are five species of the partially-parasitic *pedicularis*.

The exceptional plant biodiversity of Pink Mountain is matched by an extensive fauna. Large populations of elk, moose, whitetail deer, stone sheep, mountain caribou and black bear frequent the mountain, as well as smaller rarely-seen animals like the pine marten. The mountaintop supports a substantial population of hoary marmots and a diversity of birds like the golden eagle and horned lark.

Pink Mountain is known worldwide in the butterfly community for its assemblage of rare arctic butterfly species. Geologically, Pink Mountain is also the southernmost occurrence of permafrost in BC. Much of this is recent knowledge and has been determined although no comprehensive biodiversity survey has ever been done on Pink Mountain by qualified scientists.

Despite its importance to B.C. biodiversity, Pink Mountain is under threat of development from the proposed construction of a wind farm. Wind turbines have already been tested on the summit, and the impact of maintaining that single test site has directly affected one of the threatened plant species. The installation of dozens of wind turbines will destroy the ecological uniqueness of Pink Mountain.

A letter writing campaign over the past two years has made the provincial government aware of the special assemblage of plant and animal species on the mountain and has pressed for the creation of a preserve on a portion of the summit. So far, results have been disappointing.

Presentations to nature societies and gardening clubs around the province have generated significant interest from club members wanting to preserve the ecological integrity of Pink Mountain. A proposed Pink Mountain Biodiversity Research Initiative (PMBRI), intended to further document and study the flora and fauna of Pink Mountain, has been endorsed by executives of both the Native Plant Society, The Vancouver Natural History Society and the BC Council of Garden Clubs. This scientific initiative is also being supported by UBC Botanical Garden. PMBRI will involve a three-month field study to cover the entire bloom and seed-set period of the flora of Pink Mountain, with a preceding planning period. Several months of lab and herbarium analysis will follow the

field study. Seeds will be collected for propagation and for eventual distribution to gardeners through a seed exchange program.

Funds are being solicited to support this initiative. For further information contact Ron Long at rlphoto@shaw.ca.

MILNER ROOF GARDEN - LATE AUGUST 2013

photos by Kirsten Juergensen

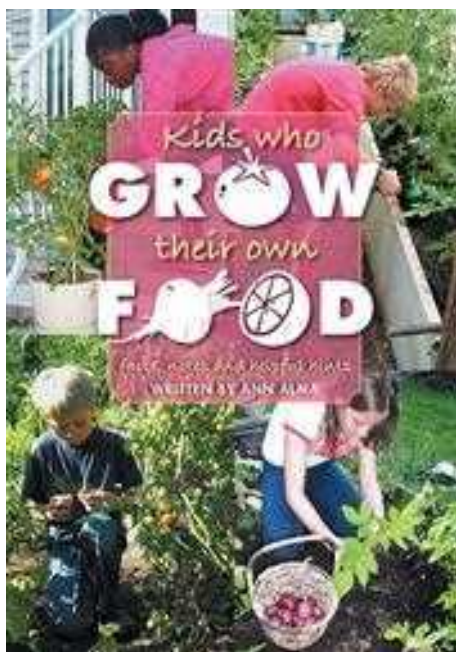
Kirsten has sent along some photos to show plant growth progress on the Milner Roof Garden. This in spite of our summer drought. Obviously Mike's planting system agrees with these plants.





BOOKS:

Member Annette Dexter has sent along information on the following new publication:



Kids growing food for the family? What a wonderful idea. Ann Alma, best-selling author of seven books has just released a colourful book full of helpful text, photos, charts, bulletins, even some garden-related jokes. Master gardener Brian Minter's review starts with "I love this book...it's fun, easy to read and entertaining. I particularly like the personal touch...it makes the reader feel connected...." This is a book for the whole family. For more go to <http://www.annalma.ca>
Ann Alma

Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden in Federal Way Well Worth a Visit

by Linda Derkach

(reproduced with permission from the MARS "Rhodovine", September 2013 issue)

As part of the ARS Convention in May 2013, members could enjoy a tour of the Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden in Federal Way, Washington, near the SeaTac Airport. Located on land donated by Weyerhaeuser, the garden includes an extensive collection of rhododendrons, their companions, a rock garden, stump garden, conservatory for tender plants and a very tempting sales area of healthy and robust treasures. Check out the website at www.rhodygarden.org for information and special events. If you are in the area, a visit is a must!



Pyrrosia sheareri is a spectacular felt fern

in the Rutherford Conservatory at the RSBG in Federal Way.



The alpine rock garden at the RSBG harbours many treasures, including this beautiful specimen of *Penstemon rupicola* 'Pink Holly'.



Lovely *Aquilegia discolor*.

- an alpine from Europe - also graces the rock garden at the RSBG



This area of the garden is being developed as a stumpery and will include ferns and other shade lovers in addition to rhododendrons.



Rhododendron 'Goldstrike' was one of many species and hybrid rhododendrons and their companions for sale in the nursery at the RSBG.



Daphne sericea thrives in the garden.



Kalmiopsis leachiana 'Glendoick' is an ericaceous, evergreen shrub suited to rocky ledges and alpine gardens. A great companion for rhododendrons, it is also happy in a cool position in a woodland garden.

Qualicum Beach Garden Club & the Special Interest Groups (SIGs)

History by June Strandberg, photos by Kirsten Juergensen

As we - The SIG Alpines and Rock Garden Plants - leave the QBGC and go our own way we wonder how the SIGs came into being.

We did know they started when Linda Rehlinger was president so we asked Linda and here is her reply:

"I think that I was President of the QBGC in the 2005-2006 year. While I was Vice-President JoAnne Moger and I were talking about the Salt Spring Island Garden Club's Special Interest Groups and we thought that it would be a good thing to try to get some started here, so when I took over as President it was one of the things that I put forward. I was very pleased when you and Eswyn agreed to mentor a Rock and Alpine Group."

Our SIGs began in the spring of 2005. Linda says she thinks there were 9 or 10 sheets set out that year and she remembers West Coast Basics, Vegetable Gardening, Hypertufa and Propagation forming groups. (If anyone remembers more please let us know) The Alpine and Rock Garden Group was not one of the first. Eswyn was in the middle of writing her book about War Brides and too busy to take on more garden projects and I was not prepared to start without her - so we waited.

In the spring of 2006 Eswyn was feeling comfortable with the progress of her book so off we went with 14 members!! On March 27th 2006 we had our first meeting at my house learning about soil mixes, when and how to sow our seeds - Eswyn gave a demonstration showing several methods of sowing, including aftercare as well as equipment needed.



March 27, 2006, L: Eswyn giving her seed starting demo at the first meeting,
R: Eswyn, Linda, Joy Smith, Dorothy, Odette, Sandy and Mary Blair

I gave a demo on how and when to take cuttings and the use of hormones and Eswyn wrote her first Newsletter - she wrote 27 in all before she died in July 2009. September 27th 2013 would have been her 90th birthday.

Today there are 10 Special Interest Groups associated with QBGC. They contain something for everyone, gain us many new members and keep the club vibrant and alive!

Thank you Qualicum Beach Garden Club for nurturing us all these years and thank you JoAnne and Linda for finding the SIGs and thank you Saltspring Island Garden Club for showing us the way.



May 29, 2006, L; JoAnne Moger, R: Linda Rehlinger, when we planted up hypertufa troughs made by the Hypertufa Group to be sold at the St. Mark's Fair.



Barb Lemoine and Jo D'Ath Shiu at Barbara Kulla's.
R: Lorraine S, Karen, TBI, Barbara, Nicola, Valerie, Lorraine W, JoAnne at Liz's house when Gordon Mackay gave propagation demo 31.05.10



L: Louise, Dorothy, JoAnn, R: Feb 27, 2012 - Mike doing Tufa planting demo at PCC



L: A visit to Linda Rehlinger's in Coombs, probably July 31, 2006, R: Can anyone identify this occasion?

WHAT'S NEW IN MY GARDEN - LORAIN WILHELM

Loraine writes: "These were two of the plants that I was successful in growing from seed that I got from our seeding session in February. I had blooms in July and again in late August. Hopefully I will be able to get them through the winter."



Silene caroliniana



Silene davidii on seed packet, but it is not correct name (info from June S). Can anyone help identify this?

WHAT'S NEW IN MY GARDEN - ELAINE BOHM



a feathered visit to the pond

PLANT PORTRAIT - *Calceolaria arachnoidea* aka Capachito morado by Valerie Melanson

I have been interested in the South American *Calceolaria* genus since starting growing alpines from seed and have been successful to a degree in growing and keeping some species alive long enough to flower a year or two. Now to work on their long-term survival in my garden where their cheery little yellow 'Mary's slipper' flowers add a bright spot!

Anything with a species name of *arachnoidea/arachnoideum* (= like a spider's web) intrigues me. Last year I found out it applied to a **red-purple** flowered *Calceolaria*, a native of Chile. The colour change is a bonus too! This species also differs from its yellow flowered broad & green leaved cousins in having woolly leaves that give it a greyish cast.

Chileflora.com describes the species as being a high alpine for part shade/shadow (20-40%), and needing damp roots - inhabiting bogs, marshes and river-banks. The flowering stems grow to about 40cm. The website notes it can survive short periods of drought.

I was fortunate to obtain seed from the AGCBC 2012-13 exchange (seed # 394), and sowed some on February 8th, 2013. I started them as a scatter of seed, surface sown for light germination, 20C on a hot mat, under a vented dome, under a grow light. There was 1 sprout on Feb 14th and I potted up 10 on April 6, 2013.

I decided to pot up a plant (and used some Spanish River Carbonatite that Wrightman's recommends - was this helpful? Time will tell)



status on June 20, 2013

and position it where it gets morning sun, but mostly shade the rest of the day, and where I can keep it damp with judicious waterings.



Rapid flower development - L: July 24th, R: July 29th

Flowering success was achieved in late July 2013. Unfortunately a visiting deer decided the flower heads would make a lovely snack - but I got the photos first, which is what I ask of the local family.



August 1st



August 1st - a good healthy plant

The plant is bulking up happily and I will repot, dig it in again and rig up better defences for next year, in hope of achieving full flowering and seed set.

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"THE YAK", NEWSLETTER OF THE FRASER SOUTH RHODODENDRON
SOCIETY, September 2013

(thank you to Linda Derkach for arranging, and Barbara Kulla for the idea)



Mimpish Squinnies

A short while ago, Madam President, sent me a link to an appealing website depicting images of unusual botanical art. At first glance I was reminded of illustrations from childhood books of elves and fairies. However, information near the bottom of the page revealed that the artist's inspiration rose from plant descriptions given by no less an eminence than [Reginald Farrer](#), author of the much acclaimed book "The English Rock Garden". The artist, [Abigail Rorer](#), utilised the descriptive prose of Farrer, "whose wit and outlandish dismissals of certain plants tickled" her fancy, as the basis for her work. Her paintings, based on Farrer's distainful, rococco descriptions of certain species, together with his captions below them may be found [here](#).

I might just mention that Madam President's alerting me to this delightful site was actually a shot across my digital bow, as Farrer's characterisation of *Cypripedium tibeticum*, found on the website, aligns completely with her view and is decidedly counter to mine.

Sean Rafferty

Links:

Reginald Farrer - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reginald_Farrer.

Abigal Rorer - <http://www.theloneoakpress.com/>

Here - <http://50watts.com/Mimpish-Squinnies>