

"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)

<http://alpinegardenersofcvi.wordpress.com/>

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FALL COLOUR TRIP TO PARADISE MEADOWS, **October 11, 2013**

Report by Sue Beatty, photos by Sue & June Strandberg



We had two car-loads - Mike, Dorothy, Marion and Sue in one, as well as June, Linda and her daughter Elaine in another. On the way we picked up Barb and then finally met Bernie up the hill. It was a pleasant journey out looking at the fall colors and enjoying the good company - thanks to Mike and Linda for driving and Bernie for getting himself there.

We had a cloudy day, which meant the colors didn't pop as much as in the sun.



The upside to that is the cloud acted as a filter for the photographers who didn't have to worry about blow-outs. Since it was a little cool I think it might have been quite cold if the cloud hadn't been there. I would like to go back again one day when the sun is shining to see the glorious beauty in the sunshine.

Once again the valley seemed so different with much of the foliage dying back - the Indian hellebores were drooping and the leaves from the lilies were yellow and starting to lay flat too. However, all this highlighted the blueberry shrubs, the vivid greens and red berries. There were dewdrops everywhere and because of the clouds they stayed all day. It was wonderful on the blueberry leaves. The golden grass was so beautiful and fall like too. We didn't see many flowers but we did note the many different mushrooms poking thru the greenery. There were many different types though we didn't know what they were. We were surprised to see rhodo buds as well.

The Sundew was no longer visible but June spotted something that Margot (thank you) thought might be



Diphasiastrum sitchense - Alaska Club Moss.



And a closeup

It looked quite striking against the reds of the blueberry leaves.

We had company for lunch in the form of Stellar's Jays



and Whiskey Jacks

They were quite taken with Mike and two sat on his knee talking to him. One decided Barb was taking far too long to get into her sandwich and helped her take the wrap off. The Stellar's Jays were stunning and a bit shyer than the Whiskey Jacks but put on a show for a bite or two and came fairly close.



Between laughing at the birds and staring at the awesome views it was a lovely lunch - though a tad cold for some.

On the way out we saw Pearly Everlasting in various stages and that was the final flower we saw which actually looked like snow - a sign of what's to come.

Two notes - Hans Roemer has four club mosses found at Paradise Meadows and area, stiff, running, marsh and sitka listed under the old name of *Lycopodium*.

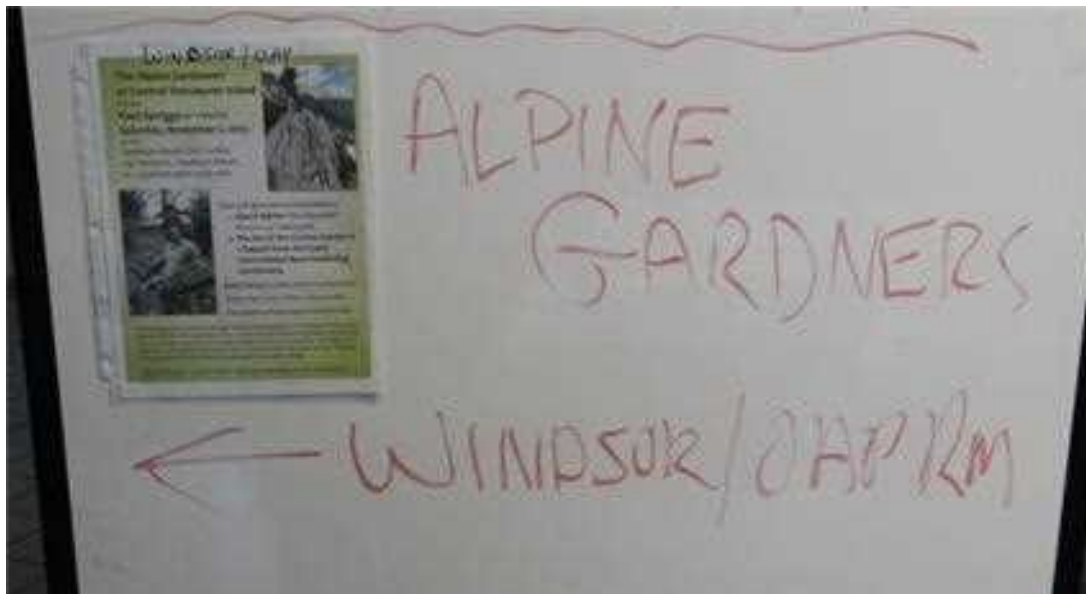
Pearly Everlasting and Fireweed were both listed as out on the board that day but we didn't see any Fireweed.



a wave of blueberry through the trees, and a closeup of water droplets on blueberry leaves

PAUL SPRIGGS SEMINAR - November 2, 2013

**Words by Valerie Melanson
with photos by Kirsten Juergensen & June Strandberg**



checking in with Barb Lemoine and Sue Beatty, then



having a look at the prize plants



and doing a little shopping at Paul's table capably managed by Paul's friend, Ty, a gardener from Victoria, assisted by our own Marion Summerer.



Valerie introduced Paul, who gave us two beautifully illustrated talks with an inspiring photo music segment at the end of each. The first was



This showed us a long list of areas that we just HAVE to visit, though access to some is very physically demanding ... At least we could enjoy the flowers and scenery vicariously. After we had a light lunch to recharge the batteries, compare notes and SHOP.



(Paul and alpine gardener friends, L to R: Dany, Shane and Ty)



After refreshment, Paul presented his second talk on



wherein he detailed the craft of building crevice gardens, then showed us some inspiring examples from Canada and Europe. He followed up by giving us some details on the 2nd Czech International Conference and introducing some of the top Czech experts (including our

friend ZZ) and some of their gardens. Again there was lots of food for our alpine gardener eyes and souls.

SOME CYCLAMENS SUITABLE FOR PACIFIC COAST GARDENS

By **ZDENĚK ZVOLÁNEK (ZZ)** of the Czech Republic
Photos by ZZ and Kirsten Andersen from Denmark

ZZ encourages AGCVI members to try these *Cyclamen* as they are all extremely suitable for Vancouver Island.

(Basic book facts on these *Cyclamen* were drawn by the editor from:

1. *Cyclamen: A Guide for Gardeners, Horticulturists and Botanists*, New Edition, by Christopher **Grey-Wilson** (Portland: Timber Press, 2002), ISBN 0-88192-587-X).
2. *Rock Garden Plants: A Color Encyclopedia*, by Baldassare **Mineo** (Portland: Timber Press, 1999), ISBN 0-88192-432-6)
3. *Genus Cyclamen in Science, Cultivation, Art and Culture*, edited by Brian **Mathew** (RBG Kew: Kew Publishing, 2013), ISBN 978-1-84246-472-4)

The genus name *Cyclamen* comes from two Greek words meaning windmill and flower and given the characteristic propeller arrangement of the flower, it is totally a propos.



Cyclamen collection of Kirsten Andersen in Denmark

Cyclamen alpinum

Grey-Wilson notes that this species is little, but larger than *C. parviflorum*. *C. alpinum* is sweet scented, has a solid blotch at the base of each petal, has marbled leaves and comes from south-western Anatolia in Turkey where it grows in coniferous or deciduous woodland or in scrub, often amongst the roots of the trees, on rocky slopes, up to screes at about 1670 m. It is variable in size and degree of toothing on the leaves and colour and sizes of flowers. Pale to deep or carmine pink. Leaf marbling is also variable. Avoid extremes of temperature or moisture but it should thrive where *C. cilicium* or *C. coum* would.



C. alpinum leaves

Mathew notes that their scent is musty-fragrant and they come from the snowline of the Cilician Taurus mountains. Also that their petals are often swept out more sideways and have therefore been called at times *C. trochopteranthum* = propeller-shaped flower.



pale-pink propeller flowers



deep-pink *C. alpinum*



Cyclamen cilicium

Mineo states that this species likes part shade in fertile, well-drained, gritty soil. Pale to mid-pink flowers in fall show a crimson blotch at the base of each petal. They are fragrant, 5-10cm High x 15 cm Wide. Originating from SW Turkey.

Grey-Wilson notes that this species is perfectly hardy in his cold East Anglian garden. It may not have been as popular because it is slower to expand than *C. coum* or *C. hederifolium*. It appreciates a sheltered leafy spot between shrubs where it gets sun part of the day. It is very floriferous. Although it comes from summer hot and dry southern Turkey, it does not want to be bone dry. In its native habitat it seeks the dappled shade of coniferous trees, shrubs and rocks where it can find some moisture. Named for ancient Cilicia in present day southern Turkey.



Cyclamen colchicum

Grey-Wilson notes that this species can be differentiated from *C. purpurascens* by its thick, leathery leaves with veins sunk into the leaf surface. They are also broadly heart-shaped, and more or less plain with only rather faint green pattern. The corolla is pale to mid-carmine pink and a bit darker around the mouth. Lilac scented. Their native habitat is woodland on dolomitic limestone, growing amongst tree roots or in rock crevices and on cliffs, in Abkhazia in the Caucasus (the area of ancient Colchis, hence its name). In the garden try in conditions similar to *C. purpurescens*.



Cyclamen coum



Cyclamen coum at Karlik

Mineo suggests cultivating these in part shade in a fertile, well-drained and gritty soil. They flower from winter to early spring and colours range from white to dark magenta, almost red. The leaves can be solid green or marbled. 5-10cm high x 15 cm wide. It is native to Bulgaria, Turkey, the Caucasus, Lebanon and Israel.

Grey-Wilson urges that no garden should be without these hardy little cyclamen that help us get through winter and assure us spring is on the way. The flowers can be buried in snow for weeks and suffer no harm

Cyclamen hederifolium

Mineo notes that this species has a synonym of *C. neapolitanum* and should be grown in sun or part shade in a fertile, well-drained, gritty soil. Flowers from September to November are pale to deep pink with a purple blotch at the bottom of each lobe. 10cm high x 15cm wide. It is native from Southern Europe to Turkey.



Cyclamen hederifolium 'Purpurteppich', a German cultivar



Cyclamen hederifolium



Cyclamen hederifolium in Croatia

Grey-Wilson urges everyone to grow *C. hederifolium* as they are "easy, dependable, floriferous, long-lived and adaptable". They easily self-seed around, so one can get a sizeable population fairly quickly.



C. hederifolium f. *album*

Cyclamen libanoticum

Mineo notes that this dainty, pepper-scented species is hardier than first thought and as well as being ideal for the alpine house is good in a sunny, raised bed with protection from winter wet. Fertile, well-drained, gritty soil. Flowers are white, turning pale pink, in winter to early spring. Each lobe has a maroon blotch at the base. 7.5 cm high x 15 cm wide. Native to Lebanon and Syria.



Short fat blooms of the hardy *Cyclamen libanoticum*
Photographed in the alpine house at Wisley

ZZ notes that, with the Wisley gardeners, he planted *Cyclamen libanoticum* in the crevice garden he built, but does not know yet if it has taken successfully or been a failure.

Cyclamen mirabile

Mineo notes that this species is similar in appearance to *C. cilicium*. The best forms have leaves marbled with red or pink on the upper surfaces.



C. mirabile young leaves

He recommends cultivating in part shade in fertile, well-drained, gritty soil. The flowers appear in fall - pale pink with a crimson blotch at the base. 5-10cm high x 15 cm wide. A native to SW Turkey.

Grey-Wilson notes that it is similar to *C. cilicium* but the petals have toothed edges.



Cyclamen persicum

Cyclamen persicum var. *persicum* f. *puniceum*, from Karpathos

Mathew has details about this species and its various varieties in various parts of Greece. The Cyclamen Society has made many expeditions there to study it.

Grey-Wilson details its long history in cultivation and breeding into so many florists' cultivars. In the wild this species with large corky tubers sports shuttlecock flowers in the

cooler, moister winter and spring. It goes dormant during the Mediterranean dry, baking hot summer. Summer is when the fruit ripen and the sugary-coated seeds are distributed by ants. It grows in open woodland and scrub in sunny or semi-shaded places. It is generally grown as a houseplant but needs to be in a cool but light place.

Cyclamen pseudibericum

Mineo notes that this species is not as hardy as others but grows well in containers or in a sheltered location kept dryish in winter by planting it under shrubs. Sun or part-shade in fertile, well-drained, gritty soil, kept somewhat dry in winter. Large flowers in early spring are lilac or magenta with a dark crimson blotch at the base of each petal. Fragrant. 10-15 cm high x 30 cm wide.

Grey-Wilson notes that the flowers have a short whitish 'nose' just below the chocolate-magenta (ace of spades) blotch. This is quite distinctive. They are native to coniferous and deciduous forests and scrub, generally growing amongst tree roots in deep leaf litter on metamorphic and igneous rocks. Occasionally they are to be found in more open rocky situations and screes. From the Amanus and Anti-Taurus mountains in Southern Turkey.



Cyclamen pseudibericum, a form from Joy Bishop,
a plantswoman from Surrey in the UK



Cyclamen pseudibericum at The Beauty Slope.
It is fully hardy in this Czech steppe garden.



Cyclamen pseudibericum roseum

Cyclamen purpurascens



the striking foliage, photographed in Southern Moravia



C. purpurascens at The Beauty Slope

Grey-Wilson states that this species is well known for being sweetly scented like a violet, not peppery like other *Cyclamen*. It is also the most northerly occurring species, a native of the Alps from France through Switzerland, northern Italy, Austria and stretching east into the Czech Republic and south down into the Balkans. They seem to prefer a continental

climate and enjoy leaf litter, pine needles, moist and the part shade of a woodland environment. They have un-lobed leaves with a horny toothed edge. The tubers are uneven and root haphazardly from sides and base.

Mineo cites that they need gritty, well-drained soil and that they flower in summer -deep pink. They grow roughly 7.5 cm high x 15 cm wide.

PLANT PORTRAIT - *Primula hirsuta* ssp. *hirsuta* f. *alba* **BY ZDENĚK ZVOLÁNEK**

As I write this it is the middle of November in the Czech Karst, I can see shiny whites in a small granite trough, which belonged to my partner late Joyce Carruthers. The whites are two inflorescences or umbels (five flowers in each one) of a quite rare primrose, which was a lovely gift (without a label) to her from our loved friend nurseryman Ron Beeston from Worcester. The flowers are one inch in diameter (they are larger in the spring blooming period) on quite short scapes. This form has broad rosettes with obtuse dentate leaves (6 cm long and one inch broad).



Primula hirsuta ssp. *hirsuta* grows in the Alps from an altitude of 200 m up to 3,600 m but always above silicate bedrock (with a similar taste for acid-neutral bedrock are *P. villosa* and *P. daonensis*). Together with Joyce I have visited one rare locality in Slovenia, where there

was a dwarf compact variety of *P. hirsuta* decorating rotted granite outcrops in company of the pretty, taller form, of *Primula minima*.

The reason, I write a short article about this Snow White, is not only the sweet memory of the existence of my great lady-gardener, but also to share an unusually good experience with this true alpine primrose. This heroine survived the very dry and hot summer 2013 in the shallow layer of acid-neutral soil, without care of the tired old and lazy head-gardener ZZ. The plant has been there 6 years, sheltered fully behind an orange German sandstone and partly protected in the shade of our country house.

We gardeners must trust but also control the names. I am not sure that the plant described in our trough is clearly named, because there is no felting with fine reddish hairs at its leaves. It seems to me that we celebrate a lovely hybrid with perfect vigour.



Joyce Carruthers

WHAT'S NEW IN MY GARDEN - JUNE STRANDBERG



Galanthus reginae-olgae

June has put the copper round on the slugs eat them before they set seed.

WHAT'S NEW IN MY GARDEN - MARGOT MOSER



Mid November - This is a *Lewisia tweedyi* I planted this spring so I think it is a little confused about when it ought to bloom. Now I have to rig something up to keep it from getting too wet in the winter so it will have a chance to bloom again next year - whenever.