



"THE CREVICE"

In memory of Eswyn

Journal of the
Alpine Gardeners of Central Vancouver Island

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

Issue # 37

Part 1

Late Summer 2015

FROM THE EDITOR: Time for seed saving - the many exchanges will appreciate your help, including our own at the AGCVI. Collected recently in my garden -



Allium oreophilum (syn. *A. ostrowskianum*)

and



Centaurea hypoleuca 'John Coutts'

Why grow from seed? Grown from Goteborgs botaniska tradgard seed started in March



2015 & now flowering in my garden: *Codonopsis tangshen*



Your contributions to "The Crevice" are gratefully received at Melanson.valerie@gmail.com.
Deadlines for Upcoming Issues: October 15, 2015, for Fall, January 15, 2016, for Winter,
March 15, 2016, for Early Spring.

CORRECTION to Issue # 36, Part 2, page 22 - the bottom left photo of course is a *Gentiana acaulis*, NOT *Silene acaulis*. My apologies for the silly mistake.

TABLE OF CONTENTS, PART 1:

Pages 1-2: Editor

Page 3: Table of Contents

Page 4: Upcoming AGCVI Events

Pages 5-6: Other Events of Interest

Pages 7-11: Plant Portraits: *Lilium pyrenaicum* & *Ranunculus parnassifolius*, by David Sellars

Pages 11-24: AGCVI Activities Reports:

Pages 11-15: Visit to Paddy Mark & Mark Nixon's, Nanoose Bay, April 29, 2015

Report & photos by June Strandberg

Pages 15-18: Visit to Courtenay & Comox, May 21, 2015

Report by Mike Miller & photos by June Strandberg

Pages 19-24: Visit to Dan Schwarz & Vel Rhodes' Garden, Port Alberni, May 22, 2015

Report & photos by Judy Millicheap, further photos by Valerie Melanson

TABLE OF CONTENTS, PART 2:

AGCVI Activity Reports Continued:

Pages 25-30: Garden Tour, May 25, 2015, Report & Photos by Margaret Castenmiller

Pages 30-38: Trip to Paradise Meadows, June 27, 2015 by June Strandberg & Margot Moser

Pages 38-39: Krista Kaptein's Visit to AGCVI, June 29, 2015: Photos by Kirsten Juergensen

Page 40: A Big Thank You

Pages 40-41: What's New in My Garden: June Strandberg

Pages 42-45: Photos from Our Hikes on the Beaufort Range this Summer, by Vel Rhodes & Dan Schwarz

Pages 45-47: Plant Portrait: *Edraianthus serbicus*, by Valerie Melanson



L: *Allium* 'Ivory Queen', R: Botanical tulips
(close ups via digital microscope)

UPCOMING AGCVI SPECIAL EVENTS

The Alpine Gardeners of Central Vancouver Island

present

Dr. Hans Roemer



**Monday, October 26th, 2015, 1-3 p.m.
(doors open 12:30), East Hall, QB Civic Centre,
747 Jones Street. \$5 at door includes entry in
prize draw & coffee/tea**



Alpine vegetation in the Rockies is subject to a climatic regimen different from what we have on the coast, with summers earlier, but sometimes also lasting longer than what we experience on the island, especially this year. In the Rockies we see alpine communities stretch over large areas. Dr. Roemer's recent impressions are from areas near the northern and southeastern boundaries of the province. Despite the great distance, they have many floral elements in common, even though they are combined in different plant communities, many of them of spectacular beauty.

Born and raised in southern Germany, Hans apprenticed in horticulture and studied landscape architecture & landscape ecology. He earned a PhD in plant ecology from the University of Victoria in 1972. He worked in conservation with the provincial Ecological Reserves Program & Provincial Park System. Since retiring in 2002, he has been working as a botanical consultant, mainly in rare plant inventories and monitoring. A member of the Vancouver Island Rock and Alpine Garden Society for over 30 years, he has led many club outings to the mountains of Vancouver Island & northern Washington State. Most of his gardening is with bulbs and other drought-tolerant plants. He is a contributor to a new book on alpine plants of the Pacific Northwest (Pojar & MacKinnon 2013).

More info? Valerie at 250-594-4423 or McLancon.valerie@gmail.com (photo by Dr. Roemer)

OTHER EVENTS OF INTEREST

NANOOSE NATURALISTS

The Nanoose Naturalists will be starting their new season with a talk by Brian Kingzett the Director of the VIU Deep Bay Research Centre. He will be speaking about the Grey Whale project they recently completed.

The meeting is at the Nanoose Library Hall in Nanoose Bay at 7 pm on Thursday September 10. Everyone welcome.



Gordon MacKay
from Alba Plants in Cowichan Bay
"Pruning Ornamental Trees & Shrubs"
After Flowering is a GREAT time to Prune.

Gordon is a landscaper, horticulturist,
certified arborist and instructor.

Wednesday Sept. 16th
7:00pm. OB. Civic Centre:
Hosted by Eaglecrest Garden Club
All welcome
Non-members: \$2.



MUSHROOM EVENT

There will be a mushroom show on **Sunday, October 18**, put on by the Arrowsmith Naturalists at the North Island Wildlife Recovery Centre, 1240 Leffler Road in Errington, 11 am to 4 pm. They will be collecting and identifying the day before and would appreciate any assistance and mushrooms for the show. For further information, please contact Terry Taylor at trtaylor@shaw.ca

PLANT PORTRAITS

Lilium pyrenaicum and *Ranunculus parnassifolius*

Text and photos by David Sellars

Wendy and I went back to the Pyrenees for our third visit at the end of June 2015. We specifically wanted to see good specimens of *Lilium pyrenaicum* and *Ranunculus parnassifolius*. We had seen both plants on previous trips but they were not in good flowering condition.

Lilium pyrenaicum is found in the Pyrenees and Cantabrian Mountains but it also occurs further east in the Caucasus. It flowers in early June at low elevations and can be hard to find in flower later in the year at higher locations. We had heard that the Vallee d'Eyne in the Eastern Pyrenees was a good place to find the plant. The best forms of *Ranunculus parnassifolius* are also found in the Eastern Pyrenees in the mountains above Nuria. It is a Pyrenean endemic and the pink-tinged Nuria form has been described as one of the world's most attractive mountain flowers.



Nuria is on the Spanish side of the Pyrenees and there is a rack railway that allows easy access to an elevation of 1970 m. The Vallee d'Eyne is on the French side just over the mountains from Nuria.

We had only walked a few hundred metres into the Vallee d'Eyne when we came across our first splendid *Lilium pyrenaicum*. It had multiple flowering stems and the beautiful yellow Turk's Cap flowers with red anthers were set off by the narrow shiny-green leaves. There were many plants beside the trail at around 1800 m elevation. They seemed to prefer openings in lightly wooded areas that were fairly moist but well-drained.





One enormous clump was being pollinated by two large Hummingbird hawk-moths.



We found about a hundred plants of *Ranunculus parnassifolius* in the mountains above Nuria at elevations above 2500 m in moist fine-grained limestone scree in full-sun. The leaves are surprisingly large and heart-shaped similar to the genus *Parnassia*. The flowers are also large and white with exquisite pink veins. It is an extraordinary plant to find at high alpine elevations and not hard to find if you hike up to the right locations.





We have *Ranunculus parnassifolius* growing in the garden in a well-drained moisture retentive soil. The flowers and foliage are relatively small compared with the plant in its native habitat. I have *Lilium pyrenaicum* started from seed and plan to plant it out this fall.

AGCVI ACTIVITIES REPORTS

AGCVI VISIT TO PADDY MARK & MARK NIXON'S GARDEN

APRIL 29, 2015

Report and Photos by June Strandberg

The garden was wonderful, the rhododendrons were at their very best and all enjoying the cool weather.



There was cherry blossom, magnolias, camellia and Garry Oak growing right in the rock, a beautiful sequoia, a ginkgo and many more. Lower down a few firs had been cut so as to return the view of Nanoose Bay to the way it was over 40 years ago when the house was first built.



The troughs were rearranged and contained lots of interesting little plants -



I think some new troughs are on their way - we look forward to seeing them next year. The natural rock garden with its hand-made little crevice garden is coming along nicely.





- we missed the erythroniums this year with Spring coming so early but there were lots of other things to see.



The marsh marigolds round the pond and the primula by the little stream made bright splashes of colour and, of course, the rhododendrons which we had managed to time just perfectly!

We had a very good visit but it was sad to see the Calypso bulbosa really has left! Thank you Paddy and Mark for inviting us and showing us round.

AGCVI TRIP TO COURTENAY & COMOX, **MAY 21, 2015**

Report by Mike Miller, photos by June Strandberg

Several car loads of our members drove to Comox/Courtenay on May 21st to go through Bernie Guyadar's Comox garden then on to Shane Tillapaugh's and finally Dany Fortin's gardens in Courtenay. A number of us had been to Bernie's garden before, but the other two gardens were new for all of us.



Most of Bernie's alpines are in the front of his home in troughs and small beds. The plants in his crevice garden are maturing nicely after two years in place and slowly creeping to fill in space. Some plants had died back partially during last winter, but were putting on growth. All his troughs are

well established and it is interesting to see what ours might look like in ten years or more. The mature Rhododendron glen filing most of the back yard with its interesting understory is always fun and the large Arisaema species in flower was wonderful. We also enjoyed the cold drinks and cookies in the shade later.

The second garden was Shane Tillapaugh's in central Courtenay.



Shane works in Courtenay's public gardens as a horticulturist. His small front yard is fascinating in the collections of crevice gardens and plants. He has set them out so there are north slope/south slope crevices for those who need cool or warm roots zones. It was interesting to see plants tucked in here and there and he explained some that had simply disappeared so obviously he had not met their very precise needs. In the back yard was a thriving roof garden of sedums with lots of flowering going on.

It was a very short drive over to Dany Fortin's home and we first noted only ornamental grasses and some perennials, no lawns. Dany is a horticulturist with the city of Comox working on the public plantings. Entering Danny's back yard is like walking into a cool green Eden.



First off there is absolutely no room for a weed and the lushness everywhere is wonderful. The path leads you around a central planting, but you must stop frequently to note all the interesting not often seen plants. Some of the super tall lilies were extraordinary. There is a very nice crevice garden near the back gate with some good specimens growing well.



There is a double crevice setup with micro Hostas and Pleione orchids which drew a lot of attention.

The day was great with three very experienced gardeners and some wonderful plants. We looked after our number one policy fun and friendship.



Rock garden created by Dany Fortin at Comox Rec Centre, features cacti and other drought tolerant plants.

VISIT TO THE GARDEN OF DAN SCHWARZ & VELDA RHODES - May 22, 2015

Report and photos by Judy Millicheap
(with extra photos by Valerie Melanson)

I was so excited when I heard that Dan and Velda were going to open their Port Alberni garden for the club to view on May 22.

Anna Campbell and I were invited to their garden back in 2007 and we still talk about the lovely day we had there. What really stood out for us was the grove of *Cardiocrinum giganteum*. They were well over 12 feet and the scent from them wafted through out the air. Spectacular! Anna and I thought we knew the names of a large number of perennials but had to admit that we did not know the names of most of Dan and Velda's plants.

Dan and Velda are plant collectors and they also start off many of their plants from seed. Their property is large and every flowerbed is botanical delight.

On the 22nd Dan and Velda greeted us at the head of their driveway.

The first plants we could not help but notice was a huge display of bright pink silenes. Next to them were *Iris chrysographes* "black form" in amongst



Cirsium rivulare 'atropurpureum'.

A beautiful combination.

Looking closer to the ground we could see *Penstemon hirsutus* v. *pygmaeus*. A plant everyone was drooling over was *Dactylorhiza foliosa*, a which is a type of hardy orchid. It is on the list of plants I must have!



(Dactylorhiza grown from seed collected wild by Dan's aunt in Slovenia)

Dan and Velda are proud of their collection of Mayapples. *Podophyllum* 'Spotty Dotty' is a rhizomatous perennial that grows 12-18 in tall and is distinguished by its unusual spotted leaves.



Flowers, usually hidden under the foliage range from white to deep burgundy and then may give way to a spherical flesh green fruit, thus the Mayapple.

We split into two groups. Some went with Velda and some with Dan. I was in Dan's group. He was so enthused answering all of our many questions .What is this plant called! What is the common name? How hardy is it? and so on! We saw lots of interesting sun loving shrubs and perennials.

Beautiful healthy rhodos border the edge of the woods. One of the paths opened up to a sprinkling of one of my favourite plants, the Himalayan blue poppy.



Meconopsis 'Lingholm Variety', grown from seed - in a glade created by an upturned stump

The leaves of our common yellow skunk cabbage are fun to photograph, but Dan and Velda also have the more rare white variety. Woodland phloxes looked pretty on the woodland floor.

Walking around a corner, we were in awe when we saw Japanese primulas of every colour bordering both side of a path and then a collection of aquilegia to die for, along with hostas and exotic ferns.



Further ahead I could see the green of the cardiocrinum growing in different stages. They were surrounded by more primulas, hostas and ferns. A couple of gunera plants made a bold statement. I also liked the double white flowered of the *Ranunculus acrifolius* 'Flore Pleno'.



An interesting fern is the *Onoclea sensibilis* fern. They were very impressive, taking over a good area of land.

These are just some of the beautiful and interesting plants in this incredible garden. I bought some plants that were for sale. One I am really looking forward to seeing in the spring is *Corydalis tenuifolia* "Chocolate Stars". Apparently the foliage is a striking chocolate colour when it comes out in spring. Another plant I bought is called Dolls Eyes!

I was also impressed that Dan and Velda know the Latin names for all of their plants! Their garden is truly beautiful and I thank them for sharing it with the Garden Club.

Also seen in Velda and Dan's garden:



A gorgeous double Aquilegia



Iris Japonica variegata



L: *Penstemon hirsutus* v. *pygmaeus*, R: *Rhododendron*