



"THE CREVICE"

In memory of Eswyn
Journal of the
Alpine Gardeners of Central Vancouver Island
<http://alpinegardenersofcvi.wordpress.com/>

Issue # 33

September - October 2014

FROM THE EDITOR: Dear Readers: I hope you will bear with my decision that going forward, the "Crevice" is going to be an occasional publication with more issues in the winter months, fewer in the summer. Hence the September - October designation on this one. I plan the next issue for November - December, to come out late November. Your contributions are gratefully received at Melanson.valerie@gmail.com. Next deadline: Nov 14.

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UPCOMING AGCVI MEETINGS

Monday, October 27th, 2014 - at Shelly Road Centre, Parksville (toward the water, off of Highway 19A, turn past Cultivate Garden and Gift and go 2 short blocks). Start at 12:30 p.m.

A SHORT ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING &

IAN EFFORD will speak on "IRISES FOR ALL HABITATS"

Ian writes: "Few have knowledge of irises beyond tall bearded and Siberians. In fact, irises offer a very wide selection of forms from less than two inches to over 8 ft. tall with plants suitable for conditions from near desert to swamp. There is an iris for almost every

type of garden condition except deep forest shade. To appreciate the variety available, one must examine the new iris hybrids and also begin to grow species which offer the greatest selection of form and habitat. Some of the species with their simple clean lines eclipse the gaudy blooms one sees in garden catalogues. The talk will be an illustrated account of the range of irises and discuss some of the practical aspects of growing them.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES:

I first became interested in gardening when I was about 8 years old. My uncle, with whom I was living, gave me a three by eight foot patch of garden in which to raise chrysanthemums. He helped me raise the plants and, once they flowered, I was hooked. At university I studied biology and ecology. This greatly influenced my perspective about plants and gardening so that, despite having owned a number of gardens, I remain a scientist and view all plants from their biology and biogeography rather than from the standpoint of pretty flowers. I particularly like rare or unusual plant genera or seedlings growing in neat, well-weeded rows rather than an English border.

I have been on the executive of horticultural societies, particularly those for irises and rhododendrons. I have also been president of the Ottawa Valley Rock Garden Society and of the Ottawa Botanic Garden Society. I constructed one 150ft long rock garden in Ottawa and have just completed another smaller one where new plants are just becoming established.



The photo is not perfectly focused but it is of a rock garden iris that I recommend. It is *Iris humilis* and must be grown in sandy gravel. It can give an excellent display within two or three years from seed.

Monday, November 24th, 2014 - AGCVI Christmas Lunch. Watch your inbox for more details.

Monday, January 26th, 2015 - Shelly Road Centre, Parksville - Meeting agenda TBA in next "Crevice" and "Newsletter"

Monday, February 23rd, 2015 - Shelly Road Centre, Parksville - Meeting agenda TBA.

Monday, March 30th, 2015 - Qualicum Beach Civic Centre, QB - Guest Speaker: **David Sellars** on "Where to find alpine jewels in the Olympic Mountains" & "Picos de Europa: The Alpine Garden of the Cantabrian Mountains". More details to follow. Meantime you can check out David's report on a hike of the Cresta de le Sele during his Dolomites tour in the International Rock Gardener at

<http://www.srgc.org.uk/logs/logdir/2014Sep251411672305IRG57.pdf>



A LETTER FROM KENTON SETH

*Editor: Many of you met Kenton last May when he came and spoke to us about "**Hunting Wildflowers of the Wild West**". I am tardy so the 'build' mentioned below is now done and Paul back in Victoria. But it is very interesting to read about the garden's evolution, so please check out Kenton's blog (at kentonjseth.blogspot.com) for all the reports. (Photo by Kirsten Juergensen of Kenton (L) with Gordon Mackay of Alba Plants (R) at May meeting.)*

"Dear friends in the AGCVI;

September 10, 2014

I'd like you to know that as I write this, I have taken hostage your friend Mr. Paul Spriggs and have forced him to help us build a large Crevice Garden in Denver, Colorado. I have not thought of an appropriate ransom to request from your island for his return. Maybe some really ripe blackberries.

He was lured down into the Wild West with the promise of seeing Denver-area rock gardens and a chance to climb the highest peak in Colorado. (Are you surprised?) Supplied with enough Indian food and microbrewed beer, and he does not seem too alarmed by this situation.

{This multi-gardener collaborative project is being documented at kentonjseth.blogspot.com}



Anyhow, we've been having a ball, and it's been a fun small-world moment to see my Canadian friend shove rocks around for this large public crevice garden in a suburb of the mile-high city, while in the interim we chat about our favourite rock-garden clubs, people, and plants. (Paul and I will have to share some stories and pictures of this Crevice Garden construction for "The Crevice" newsletter.) It has made me sentimental about my visit to your club to the point of revisiting my pictures of your absolutely great garden. {I'll never forget the beat my heart missed upon your *Anthyllis vulneraria* var. *coccinea*.} It was a hoot to meet and visit with your members and learn so much from all of you. I want to communicate that looking back on my Canada tour this spring, your club has a quality of flagship garden, program/newsletter, and working-officers that rivals, if transcends, that of big-city clubs.

I hope you are all at once proud of your club, but mostly continuing to distill pure joy from special plants.

And I'll return Paul when the altitude or the good times get to be too much for him.

Kenton J. Seth, Grand Junction, Colorado, USA"
(photos from Kenton).

The Editor made a list of most of the plants Kenton discussed in his talk. It has been divided to show what was available from Alplains in 2014, what was not.

Kenton Seth Wild West Talk Plant List

Seeds available from Alplains:

based on 2014 seed list, <http://www.alplains.com/>

Amsonia jonesii
Calylophus lavandulifolius
Castilleja sessiliflora
Epipactis gigantea
Echinocereus viridiflorus
Escobaria vivipara
Heuchera rubescens
Hymenoxys scaposa
Pediocactus simpsonii
Phemeranthes okanaganense
Physaria alpina
Primula parryi
Pulsatilla patens
Townsendia glabella
Townsendia incana
Townsendia spathulata
Zauschneria latifolia v. *ferretii*

Not Available from Alplains:

Agastache cana
Eriogonum ovalifolium v. *williamsiae*
Escobaria sneedii v. *leei*
Lithospermum incisum
Oreoxys alpina
Penstemon caespitosus
Penstemon debilis
Polygala subspinosa
Townsendia rothrockii

REPORT ON AGCVI ACTIVITIES

PARADISE MEADOWS

SEVERAL VISITS SHOW THE SEASON CAME EARLY & STRONG

VISIT ON JUNE 11TH

Report and photos by Bernie Guyader

June asked me if I knew what the conditions were like in the Meadows so I decided to take a drive up this morning. A little cool and foggy but the meadows were completely free of snow. I was pleasantly surprised at the amount of colour. The Cassiope and Phylodoce were starting to show some colour. I was only able to see two small colonies of the Trollius. Of course there are a lot of the Kalmia, Dodocatheon and Caltha. I'm attaching some photos. The light was a little flat so the colours aren't quite right



L: Bunchberry - *Cornus canadensis*, R: Skunk Cabbage - *Lysichiton americanum*



Western Bog laurel - *Kalmia microfila*



Marsh marigold - *Caltha leptosepala*, var. *biflora*, R: *Dodecatheon jeffreyi*



L: *Trollius* sp., R: *Viola* sp.

VISIT ON JUNE 23RD

Report by Erica Monderman, photos by Rosemary Taylor

On Monday, June 23rd, members of the Alpine Group and Native Plant Group visited Paradise Meadows in Strathcona Provincial Park. There were eight of us - June, Mike, Terry, Rosemary, Elaine, Anna, Judy and Erica. The weather was perfect for this outing, overcast with sunny periods and no snow left on the ground.

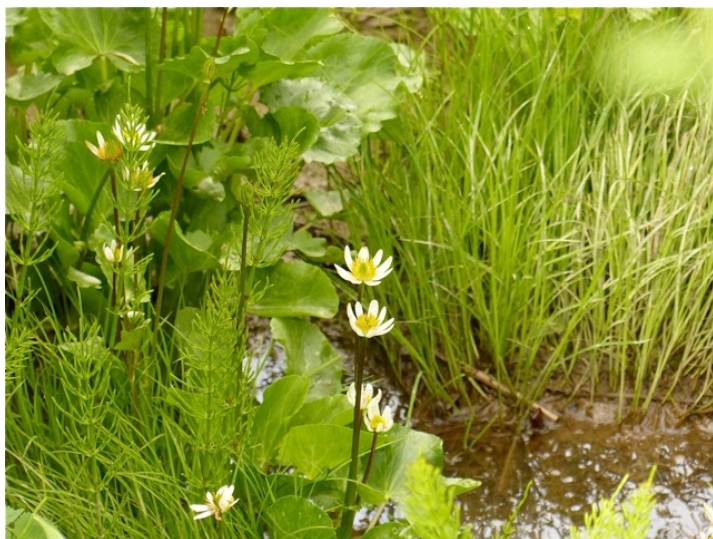
For some of us this was a first visit to Paradise Meadows. It was a wonderful experience with the expert guidance of June, Mike, Terry & Rosemary who shared a wealth of knowledge with us.

The alpine meadow is a field of colour, shape and texture with large areas of purple Jeffrey's shooting star interspersed with white marsh marigolds, pink mountain heather with white heather all with perfect little bell flowers. Many false hellebores not yet in flower.

Trailing all over were flowering bunchberries, bright pink western bog laurel that open into a small cup-shaped lighter pink flower. Tiny early blue & yellow violets, flowering false azalea, globe flower and so many more. Dwarf blueberry, Alaska blueberry, blue leaved blueberry all grow low to the ground. Each plant has its own spot, together they present a beautiful show.

The 3km loop took us at least 3 hours to complete with a lunch break half way through. We sat on the boardwalk next to a stream with trout. The whiskey jacks and their young joined us for lunch.

A day well spent and well worth a return trip to see arctic lupine, white flowered rhododendron and false hellebore in flower.



L: Marsh marigold - *Caltha leptosepala*, var. *biflora*, R: Mountain arnica - *Arnica latifolia*



L: Jeffrey's Shooting star - *Dodecatheon jeffreyi*, R: Five-stamened mitrewort - *Mitella pentandra*



Whiskey Jack waiting for a handout & young one learning the tricks of the trade!



L: Globe flower - *Trollius albiflorus*, R: Slender rein orchid - *Platanthera stricta*

July 29th - CLIFF & SUE BOOKER VISIT



Fall flowers were all well underway. L: *Sanguisorba menziesii*, R: *Gentiana sceptrum*
(photos by Valerie Melanson)