

Alpine Garden Club
of British Columbia



TROPAEOLUM SPECIOSUM

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Meetings are held the second Wednesday of each month except July & August, in the Floral Hall, VanDusen Botanical Garden. Doors and Library open at 7:00pm and Meetings start at 7:30pm sharp with the educational talk. Don't forget to bring a prize for the raffle which goes a long way to paying for the hall rental.

Front Cover: *Tropaeolum speciosum* – drawn by (then editor) Thea Foster, from the cover of the May 1982 issue of the AGCBC Bulletin. Vol.25 No. 5



PROGRAM:

Sept 17th, Ian Christie, Please note the date is Sept 17th, one week later than our usual meeting. It will be held at Vancouver College, 5400 Cartier St, Vancouver. Ian will be speaking on "Gentians, Home and Away". A not to be missed talk by the president of the Scottish Rock Garden Society. <http://www.christiealpines.co.uk> for more information.

Sunday September 21st from 1 – 4 pm - The Fall Plant Sale is at VanDusen Floral Hall

Oct 8 Our own president, Linda Verbeek will speak on Alpines of Western North America. Linda is renowned for her knowledge of this flora, honed through her many years of dedicated botanical work.

Nov. 12th AGM – see Notice of Motion and proposed changes to the By-Laws below.

Brent Hine gives us his presentation on the collecting trip he and Daniel Mosquin took through the drylands of Western North America. Some of these plants are already appearing in the dryland feature in the [*E.H. Lohbrunner Alpine Garden at UBC.*](#)

Dec. 10th Our annual and popular rare plant auction to benefit the CKNW Orphan Fund. Please keep in mind a plant donation. If you're at all hesitant about attending remember this is **also our Christmas potluck!**

Jan 14th Popcorn and a movie. Harry Jens' movie on his Yunnan excursion was so good we are going to present another of these botanical adventures. We'll add popcorn for a pleasant evening out in midwinter.

Feb 11th TBA

March 15th Note that this is a change from our regular meeting date and again we will have this meeting at the Vancouver Community College The intrepid explorer **Joseph Halda** will be speaking to our group, courtesy of the NARGS speakers tour. Topic to be announced.

PROPOSED AFFILIATION WITH NARGS - BALLOT

Hopefully everyone is aware by now that there is a motion on the table for the upcoming AGM, proposing that the Club should be affiliated with [The North American Rock Garden Society \(NARGS\)](#). As explained in the previous Bulletin, this is a major decision. The arguments for and against this proposal were published in the Winter & Spring issues and further comments are reprinted on the sheets enclosed with this Bulletin along with a mail-in Ballot. Please mail the Ballot to Mark Demers before November 1st, 2008 if you are unable to attend the AGM.

NOTICE OF MOTION The following motion will be put at the AGM on November 12th by Charlie Sale:

PROPOSED: *“That the Alpine Garden Club of British Columbia should affiliate with the North American Rock Garden Society (NARGS)”*

(There has been some correspondence re. the affiliation with NARGS, both for and against. Due to space limitations, the letters are reprinted on the sheet enclosed with this Bulletin.



Proposed motion to amend the By-laws of the Alpine Garden Club of British Columbia ~ Ian Plenderleith

Please note that I wish to move the following amendments to the By-laws at the Annual General Meeting of the Alpine Garden Club in November 2008.

- 1) By-law 4. B. b. to be amended to read – the Treasurer’s annual financial report. This report shall be circulated to members at the meeting prior to the Annual General meeting and shall include:
 - (i) a balance sheet to and including the last day of August. etc....
- 2) By-law 8.B to add a further position ix Web Site Manager to those listed.
- 3) By-law 6.B change to say: *“The executive shall meet at least eight times yearly.”*

The reasons for proposing these changes are as follows:

- 1) Receiving the financial report prior to the AGM will allow members time to study it before being asked to approve it.
- 2) The Internet was not appreciated when the original By-laws were written but has now become a major part of our Club’s activities and of daily life. As such, a Web Site Manager has an important role to play in the organization.
- 3) It has become usual to not hold regular executive meetings in either May or June, when the monthly meeting is usually a garden visit, or in December with the meeting’s festive activities.



SEED EXCHANGE

We were all badly shaken when Phyllis Plenderleith had a serious stroke in January. Ian and Phyllis have been running the Seed Exchange for the last 3 years, and they have made a marvelous job of it, and had no intentions of quitting for a while. We are happy that Phyllis has recovered enough to be home, and be looked after by Ian, but that is too much of a job to take on the Seed Exchange as well. For now, our previous Seed Chair, Pam Frost, has kindly (very kindly! she had done it already for 12 years!) agreed to step into the breach, and all of us who are involved with the packaging etc. will go the extra mile to make sure the Seed Exchange will work well. Every donor can help a little bit by being sure that the seed is clean and by including an alphabetical list of the seeds sent! We don't know yet how things will work out in the end for Ian and Phyllis, and we are trying to find ways to split the work so one person does not have to do it all. We'll keep you informed of further developments. Linda Verbeek.

Full instructions for the Seed Exchange are on a separate sheet enclosed with this Bulletin.

Ephemeral seeds – Trilliums: Ian Plenderleith

I have been less than overwhelmed with responses to my request for input regarding the germination of ephemeral seeds, particularly Trilliums, obtained from our exchange. However, there have been a few, including the accompanying one from Sandra Hofer, Twining Vine Garden at Fanny Bay on Vancouver Island. The responses, which have been received, all indicate that germination has been obtained from seed of a number of different Trillium species. It is not possible to know what percent germination has been obtained but obviously viable seed has been delivered to members.

When we obtain seed from species which we recognize as ephemeral we store it in the refrigerator at about 2 – 4 C (36 – 38 F) both before and after packaging until orders are filled and mailed out – about three to four months. We have no way of knowing how it had been stored before it is sent to us but it would be good to be able to offer recommendations.

Although this handling results in a percentage of viable seeds, at least for Trilliums, it may not be the optimal way of handling such seeds. I, and many of our members, would be interested in input regarding the best way of handling, storing and delivering such seeds. Suggestions have been made that ephemeral seed should best be stored slightly moist at outdoor temperature. In my hands this has led to the seed going moldy. Please give us your input and the benefit of your experience.

TRILLIUM GERMINATION

~ by *Sandy Hofer: a Vancouver Island nursery person*

Trillium germination. Sounds easy, eh? It can be depending on how the seed was treated during its history. For me, germination usually happens 18 months after collection (regardless of species) but if the seed was improperly stored, harvested before fully ripened, or migrates to the medium surface to dry out you might not ever see those rewarding little green sprouts.

To date, my trillium germination is limited to my own *T. ovatum* and only recently has expanded to include those from the AGCBC seed exchange when I joined in 2006. We use seed collection bags, sewn from sheer polyester drapes, with a draw string when pulled closes the open end loosely but securely around the flower stalk. To ensure pollination, flowers have been touched several times during blooming using pollen loaded cotton swabs from other plants. When the seed capsule start swelling and the petals start to wither, the petals are cropped so the bag can be easily slipped over the seed capsules and carefully drawn closed. Our bags are numbered, so a record is kept so when we retrieve them in September or October, collection is done in one sweep.

A piece of survey tape is helpful to mark bagged trilliums in our forested area as sometimes a seed bag can go 'missing'. This happened. I knew one was missing for a while, but exactly where was anyone's guess...until this spring when putting cages round the trilliums to protect them from the munching deer. Lo and behold buried under the dead sword fern fronds cleared way for proper cage seating was this orphan seed bag sitting at the base of the parent plant. There were even a few seedlings poking through the weave with more struggling within. Germination within the bag (sprouts vs. unsprouted seed) was about 80%. So, it goes to show that trillium seed doesn't need specialized treatment such as H₂O₂ baths and cleaning. As long as the ripe, mature seed experiences the same conditions it would normally experience in its native environment, germination will happen. Don't expect germination to be 100% as its nature's way to save some to germinate another time.

The Trillium seed from this year's exchange (AGCBC and other sources) is sown. The germination pot will be placed in a summer watering bed in dappled shade. At the first sign of sprouts, they will be moved to an unheated greenhouse so they can grow on without frost, snow, or cold weather retarding bulb formation.



At left, seeds from the AGCBC exchange. Dry seeds on left are straight out of the seed envelope. Seed on right are fully hydrated. Note the 'gooie-bob' still attached. We don't

remove these. All seeds are hydrated before sowing.



Trillium ovatum seedlings.



Alpine Garden Club Spring Show Report 2008 ~ by Diana Hume

Our annual Spring Show was held on the weekend of April 12th and 13th in the Floral Hall at VanDusen. Saturday turned out to be a beautiful day, the first summery day of the year after a very long, fairly cold winter. Perhaps partly because of the lovely day, we had a nice number of the public come in to have a look. There were 177 entries, up just slightly from last year, but still not close to the numbers we have had in the past.

The Bonsai class was well represented, giving our Bonsai judge, Roger Low, a fair amount of work to do. It was my fault that there were plastic saucers under some of the bonsai entries and next year I will know better.

The showing of the Primula classes was wonderful as usual, judged by Jean Hausermann. A sale of Primula, Fuchsia, and a few other treasures took place outside on the deck. Roxanne Much put on a wonderful display.

The remaining entries (the general section) were judged by Bob Woodward, Margaret Charlton, and Brent Hine. They all remarked that the overall caliber of the show was very high.

Both the set up on the Friday at 5 pm and the clean up on the Sunday at 4 pm were completed quickly and beautifully by our dedicated team of volunteers. Karen Thirkle and I would like to thank everyone very much.

Next year, we are hoping for more entries from more participants. It would be nice to try to catch up to Victoria's show, which is apparently 3 times the size of ours! Consider growing a few plants in clay pots and sinking them into the ground or into sand, pulling them up to tidy them up some time just before the show. If you don't relish the idea of having to bring in your plants on the Friday at 7pm and then picking them up again on the Sunday at 4pm, what about sharing the job with a nearby club member. (*Results are at the back of the Bulletin p.63*)

Gardens ROCK

ANDROSACES ANONYMOUS ~ by David Sellars, Surrey, British Columbia

An addiction to a genus is not uncommon among rock gardeners and an obsession with *Androsaces* is one of the more serious conditions that can be developed. After a series of rock garden failures you think you have finally kicked the habit and then you see a perfect specimen of *Androsace alpina* or *Androsace helvetica* in the wild and the addiction comes creeping back like thyme over a rock wall. Lincoln Foster in his book *Rock Gardening* described *Androsaces* as the joy and despair of his heart. Reginald Farrer expressed a similar sentiment in *The English Rock Garden* and said that "Perhaps of all mountain-races this name is engraved most deeply on the rock gardener's heart, like Calais on Queen Mary's, standing as well for his highest hope and pride as for his bitterest disappointments."

There are a few *Androsaces* from the Himalayas that are relatively easy to grow in any well-drained soil but they tend to be not the classic alpine cushion types. *Androsace lanuginosa* is undoubtedly the most tractable species and blooms in late summer and fall with trailing stems and profuse lavender flowers. It likes to be cut back in the early winter and will reliably appear again next spring. The fact that it is not evergreen may be a clue to its success in our gardens. *Androsace studiosorum* and the related species *Androsace sarmentosa*, are also quite easy to grow. The plant is gleefully stoloniferous forming offset rosettes that spring out on long stems, which then root several inches away. It is thus very easy to propagate. However the rosettes can form a loose pile that gets soggy, brown and messy in our winters and some winter protection can improve the overall plant appearance. The flowers are reliable, profuse and usually pink, and a mat of this plant can be quite attractive. *Androsace sempervivoides* is somewhat similar but flowers intermittently in our garden.

I have had considerable success in the past in nailing *Androsaces* to the perch from the Carnea Group but they have recently started to survive quite well in our garden. They like a very well drained soil, but because they are plants from acid meadows they need fairly rich humus. Our successful plants are grown in a stony sand with additions of "Sea Soil"

which is a mixture of composted fish and forest fines. *Androsace laggeri* from the eastern Pyrenees is an absolute joy with minute pink flowers set off by dark green needle foliage. It looks particularly fine growing with the white flowers of *Androsace carnea* subsp. *brigantiaca*. We also grow *Androsace halleri*, which is similar to *Androsace laggeri* but not quite as elegant. We do give these plants winter protection though they may survive without so much fuss.

I was inspired to build a sand bed a couple of years ago after reading about the success of Rick Lupp's sand beds in Tacoma. The principle is that you exclude all humus from the bed by installing filter cloth surrounding the bed to prevent worms and moles introducing adjacent soil. One objective is to limit the potential effect of fungi in the soil that do not exist in the plant's natural habitat at high elevations. When planting in the sand bed I wash off all the soil from the roots of the plant and in addition to minimizing humus in the sand bed, this bare root technique also helps to establish the plant quickly in the pure sand. A sprinkle of slow release fertilizer in the spring seems to feed the plants enough. Rick Lupp does not use rain shelters over his sand beds but we have a rain shelter, which is an added precaution in our probably wetter climate.

The sand bed has had its share of failures, some because I belatedly realized that *Androsaces* in the *Carnea* Group need humus in the soil. *Androsace chamaejasme* is also not growing well in the sand bed, probably because of lack of humus compared with the meadow habitat it enjoys in the wild. We also lost *Androsace dasyphylla* in the sand bed and having seen the glory of *Androsace alpina* in the Alps we were very disappointed when all three of our plants lasted less than a year.

We have been delighted to discover that *Androsaces* that we call *Douglasias*, grow very well in the sand bed forming tight dark green mats. *Douglasias*, which only grow in North America, are in the *Douglasia* section of the genus *Androsace* and the British insist on calling them *Androsace laevigata* and *Androsace montana*. If they grew in the wild in Scotland then they might still be a genus.

One of the best *Androsaces* for the sand bed is *Androsace villosa*, which is very floriferous but it does not form the tight cushions that we have seen on high ridges in the Pyrenees. *Androsace vandellii* is coming from seed this spring and is a definite candidate for the sand bed as we have only seen it in the mountains growing on rocks. The tightest cushions in the sand bed are *Androsace pyrenaica* and *Androsace muscoidea*. The latter is particularly diminutive with white flowers flat against the grey-green creeping mat.

Once you develop a taste for *Androsaces* they are very hard to resist. One of the best places to see them is in the Pyrenees where a number of beautiful *Androsaces* are endemic and some have a very narrow range. Locations and photos of Pyrenean *Androsaces* are available at www.mountainflora.ca. There is nothing quite like seeing *Androsace vandellii* clinging like a limpet to an overhanging rock to inspire and reinforce the rock gardener's heartfelt obsession for this genus.



Androsace vandellii (above) *A. muscoidea* (below)
Photos: David Sellars





A. alpina (above) *A. laggeri* (below)
(Photos: David Sellars)





PLANT SALE SPRING 2008 ~ by Linda Verbeek

Another year, another sale. It seems to be a refrain, these days that the spring was so cool. But this year was really exceptional: we have lived on the same property for over 30 years, and in all those years, I have never seen a Mother's Day on which the Lily-of-the-Valley were not in flower. But this year there wasn't a single one, and it might have been several days if not a week before they came out. We went on holidays the next day, so I don't know. But it did mean that some plants that normally are going dormant were looking good for the sale, while others that usually do show colour were nowhere near in bloom. Also this year we didn't have some of our long-standing sellers: Roger Barlow hasn't come for several years now, and both Fragrant Flora and Cusheon Creek have gone out of business. Pat and Paige Woodward are also unable to come to a sale for the time being. We really do miss their choice natives! But in spite of all that, it was a glorious sale. So, in no particular order:

Anna Burian had a special form of *Omphalodes cappadocica* - I wrote about the *Omphalodes* a couple of years ago, but this was a seedling of the form of *O. cappadocica* called 'Starry Eyes'. In that form the clear blue flowers have a white stripe down the middle of each petal. In the seedling, the flowers turned out to be a soft lavender blue – not even a colour I have ever seen in any *Omphalodes*. Anna called it 'Lavender Mist'. She also had the variegated *Convallaria majalis*, with cream stripes down the length of the leaf. I have had that in the garden for many years, but it is not as vigorous as the wild type – just as well, too. Ordinary Lily-of-the-Valley can only be grown where you can contain it. It is as aggressive as *Vinca* and as hard to weed out. Lastly, she had two kinds of *Podophyllum*, *P. peltatum* (the Mayapple) from eastern North America, and *P. hexandrum* from the Far East. As far as I know, all *Podophyllums* have peltate leaves, that is, the stem is attached in the centre of the leaf blade. The leaf then can be more or less dissected, and in some species can be nicely patterned with different colours – *P. hexandrum* does that sometimes. When the plant proceeds to flower, it proceeds to make a stem which forks into two petioles. The leaves are attached to these petioles in the normal way, i.e. at one end, and the flower emerges from the junction of the petioles. *P. peltatum* has a white flower, *P. hexandrum* a pink one. If they are pollinated, they develop into quite large fruits – hence I think Mayapple.

Chris and Sue Klapwijk are Rhododendron specialists, but they did have at least one other plant: *Arisarum proboscoides*, the Mouse plant. The leaves look like a small *Arum*, but the flowers, which emerge at soil level, look like mice with their faces in a hole. The top of the flower is chocolate brown, with a long brown tail, the bottom is white. I noticed them particularly, because we have brought those plants several times and they have never been popular. But Chris said he had no trouble selling them. Well, good luck to him! Of course, there were lovely Rhodies. Generally I prefer species, but 'Goldilocks' was a beautiful hybrid, a tiny plant with bright yellow flowers. *Rh. schlippenbachii* is not a new plant, but for all that you don't see it all that often. It is deciduous, and I think particularly sensitive to weevils or whatever it is that eats young Rhododendron leaves, so it ends up being slow-growing. But the large, clear pink, wide-open flowers are worth all the trouble. *Rh. stenopetalum* is another one I have mentioned before, it hardly looks like a Rhodie, the leaves are fairly narrow, and the petals are almost linear, so the flowers are not impressive, more peculiar. This one had the flowers much wider open than any I had seen before, so there was a starry effect. *Rh. oreotrepthes v. exquisitum* had lavender flowers. It is also not a fast grower – 5 to 6 ft in 15 years. *Rh. sargentianum* had tiny white flowers, a very charming effect.



Arisaema sikokianum

Lyle Courtice of HarkAway Botanical was a newcomer. He also had the Mouse plant, to my surprise. *Arisaema sikokianum* (see picture at left) is another Aroid, but much more impressive. It has a purple spadix with white stripes. It is also white on the inside, with a white spadix visible in the mouth – quite dramatic. Double Trilliums are few and far between, but Lyle had some double *T. grandiflorum*. The double petals are smaller than the three original ones and sit like a tuft in the centre. The same is true for double Anemones which Lyle also had - double or semi-double *Anemone nemorosa*. I have a very soft spot for Polygalas, and *P. chamaebuxus* is an especially charming one, with

the contrast between purple and yellow. The variety *grandiflora*, which Lyle had, is even more spectacular. It is a subshrub, maybe 25 cm high, which slowly expands with underground rhizomes. It is also fussy.

The Bischoffs' table had mostly Cyclamen, all sorts of species. The labels were on the side of the pot, so you had to look carefully to realize how many different ones there were. I was particularly charmed by *C.*

peloponnesiacum with quite speckled leaves. It should be blooming in the spring, but mine is obviously still fairly young. Otherwise, they had *Rhodohypoxis baurii*, in both pink and white, I think. This is a small bulb (or tuber) from South Africa, but it is remarkably amenable to our climate. It has survived a number of winters in the garden with no shelter, though it appreciates some protection from the wet. And it is very much worth while: the whole plant doesn't grow more than 5 or 7 cm tall, and it covers itself with the starry flowers, keeping this up for at least half the summer! The Sale was on May 3, I am writing this now in early July, and the *Rhodohypoxis* in the garden is still in full bloom. Another unfamiliar plant was *Polystichum setiferum*. This fern is closely related to the native Swordfern (*P. munitum*), but it is not stiff and shiny, but soft and matte on the surface. It is actually native in the British Isles, so should do well here.

Jason Nehring always has a very unusual collection of plants. This time it ranged from the native *Lilium columbianum* (an orange turk's cap lily), and the eastern North American *Viola pedata* (with highly dissected leaves and usually two-tone, violet flowers which I find shy-flowering) to plants from the Far East. One of these was a *Disporum*, which Jason himself had raised from Japanese seeds. It looked like a *Disporum* all right, but the flower was huge.



Jeffersonia dubia

Arisaema ringens has enormous, tripartite, very shiny leaves. The spathe is white with vertical pink stripes, and dark red lips at the opening. *Jeffersonia dubia* (see picture above) I have mentioned before – it is a plant for those people who prefer single bloodroot to double: the flower is exquisite, like a miniature lavender poppy, but it lasts only a day or two and the whole flowering period is short. The leaves are beautiful too - scalloped kidney shapes, starting out wine red, and maturing to a curious greyish green.

The last plant of Jason's that I want to mention is *Epimedium platypetalum*. Unfortunately, when I looked it up on the web, there appear to be two of them. They are both yellow, without spurs on the petals, but one form has the rather narrow outer petals spread quite wide so the flower looks very wide and flat, and the other one has shorter, wider petals that are positioned at about 45°, so the flower looks more like a bell. I can't remember what Jason's flower looked like. They'd both be worthwhile in the garden.



Asplenium trichomanes

Ian Gillam always has only a modest collection of plants, but they are really special. I think he has sold *Cassiope* before, but I don't remember if it was the same. This year it was *Cassiope selaginoides* v. *lycopodioides*, which makes very slender stems, with the leaves closely appressed to the stem, and the white bellflowers on singly on slender stalks. This one has an upright growth habit, like *C. tetragona*, although the typical form of the species in Alaska is prostrate. Just wonderful, but I don't know how he manages to grow them. Then he had *Asplenium trichomanes* (see picture at left) a little fern that typically grows in walls. It has a very dark rachis with rounded pinnae, and the whole frond is only about 20 cm long. It makes a clump, and does not run, and it is very attractive and not difficult if you can give it a

position it likes. Finally he had young plants of *Rhododendron* 'Curlew', a dwarf hybrid with yellow flowers (I like Rhodies with yellow flowers). I think the flowers are larger than those of the Klapwijk's 'Goldilocks', but not quite as bright yellow. Still, both of them are lovely shrubs, and 'Curlew' certainly is well behaved. It has been around for a long time.

Julie Coomey was into North American plants. Almost all the ones I made notes of are from N. America, although not all from the west. *Zauschneria californica* (which I think has been reclassified into the genus *Epilobium*, but then the taxonomists may have changed their minds again), is the California Fuchsia, and makes tubular, brilliant red flowers in late summers. It can stand the wet winters if you give it perfect drainage, like at the top of a wall, and full sun. When it is happy it can be quite rambunctious, and spreads with underground stems (although not that far). I discovered last year that it doesn't like cutting back – many plants will just make new flowering stems out of the leaf axils if you cut them back, but the *Zauschneria* didn't, so I lost a summer's worth of bloom!

Smilacina racemosa is also a West Coast native, (see picture at left) in fact it is quite widespread in Northwestern forests. Its common name is



Smilacina racemosa

False Solomon's Seal, which is sort of funny, because it doesn't much look like Solomon's Seal. It has the same sort of broad leaves along an arching stem, but the white flowers are presented in a big truss at the end of the stem, not in pairs all along.

I was rather charmed to see that Julie had the single Bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis*). The double one is much more popular, because the flowers last much better (they are sterile, so aren't tempted to let go of the

petals when the flower has been pollinated). But I love the simplicity and beauty of the single flower, glistening white with the central boss of golden stamens – even though each flower only lasts a day or two, courtesy of the active insects in my garden. I am sure you've heard this before, but so be it. Of course, *Sanguinaria* is native to eastern North America. My last item from Julie's catalogue, *Adiantum venustum*, is the only one not from North America, and hails from the Himalayas. It looks much like *A. capillus-veneris*, or the one the florists use, but it is quite hardy. And somehow these Maidenhairs always look quite exotic in the garden!

Kaz Pelka had his usual wonderful array of *Sempervivums* and other succulents, as well as splendid specimens of *Gentiana acaulis*, which he also has every year. But he also had *Saxifraga zimmerleii*, which I had never heard of. It looks like a smaller, daintier version of London Pride (*Saxifraga X urbium*).

We had a new participant this year, whose offerings hardly classified as 'alpines'. May Leong's total stock-in-trade was made up of *Epiphyllums*, the enormous epiphytic cacti that are sometimes seen as houseplants. These are not the well-known Christmas cactus, although the flowers have a similar form all over, but both plants and flowers are at least 5 times as large as the Christmas cactus. May had them in all sorts of colours, pink, red, orange, etc. They are beautiful but you need a large window to display them to advantage.

Dick Pearson always has unusual stuff too, and often they are fairly large. But that does not apply to *Erythronium dens-canis*, the European representative of this genus. This species has single, pink nodding flowers, somewhat like the native *E. revolutum*, although I think the plants are lower, with patterned leaves. Apparently the patterning is different between *E. revolutum* and *E. dens-canis*, so it is possible to tell them apart even

when not in flower. In its native haunts *E. dens-canis* grows in alpine meadows, although it is also known to occur in woods. Perhaps it doesn't like the soil to get too hot.

Otherwise I happen to have picked African plants among the ones that Dick had – and all monocots too! *Agapanthus* doesn't need much introduction, and I didn't see this one in bloom, but I assume it survives the winters. They are mostly not terribly hardy, although some of them can certainly stand considerable frost. *Watsonias* are related to *Crocoshmia*, and the flowers look like *Crocoshmia*, although the extent to which they flare at the mouth can be quite variable. *W. bulbifera* may be a variety of *W. meriana*, with buff orange flowers. *Crinum* 'Elisabeth', I imagine is a form of *C. X powelli*, which normally is pale pink or white. It makes a huge bulb – my biggest one must be at least 15 cm in diameter – with a long neck, from the side of which emerges the flower stalk, which can grow up to a meter tall. The flowers open gradually in mine, which means there are seldom more than 3 in bloom at the same time, but it also means they go on for a long time. *C. 'Elisabeth'* is a deep pink, and from the pictures on the Web I would think the flowering is more synchronous. *C. X powellii* is supposed to be hardy here, but I haven't tried yet. I have just put two offsets in the garden this spring – will report in due time. As house/patio plants they tend to bloom after you bring them in. They don't like coming in, and will drop all the leaves, but it is nice to have such an exotic flower in mid-winter! And they are quite sweetly scented too, so I don't think I will ever put all of them in the garden, where they are supposed to bloom in summer.

Ann Jolliffe had some nice low plants: *Anacyclus depressus*, the Atlas Daisy, with very ferny foliage in a flat rosette and white daisy flowers with a red reverse. It really likes hot dry conditions to persevere. *Geum montanum* is the European equivalent of *G. rossii*, which occurs in the mountains of western North America. As far as I can see, the foliage is somewhat less dissected, but the flowers are quite similar, large golden buttercups. Again, it needs very good drainage, being somewhat of a scree plant in the wild. *Viola sempervirens* is one of the considerable



Campanula bellidifolia

numbers of yellow-flowered *Violas* along the West Coast. It differs from the other common yellow woodland violet (*V. glabella*) in its habit – leaves all along the stem, instead of clustered near the tips – and in that the leaves are evergreen, not deciduous. Ann is quite enamoured of the *Campanulas* and this time she had *C. bellidifolia*, (see below) a delightful little plant from the

Caucasus, with tight little rosettes of leaves, and upward-facing, deep blue-purple starry flowers. Probably prefers a spot in a rock wall or something, but it would be a real star if it will grow.

The Club table did very well this year, with various unusual plants, such as the double Bloodroot (see above), and *Trillium ovatum* X *rivale*. This one looks more like *T. ovatum* in that the leaves are sessile, but the petals are rounded like in *T. rivale*.

Oxalis oregana is a ground cover in the Redwood Forests, and in the garden it can be quite aggressive, but the *rosea* form, which was for sale this time, is lovely. The leaves have a dark purple reverse, and the flowers are a clear pink, and larger than the white form. They show well above the leaves. *Chrysosplenium davidsonii* is much like other *Chrysospleniums*. These oddball members of the Saxifrage members generally like damp places, like seeps or the edges of springs. They make small mats of round, crenulated leaves, with in the centre the tiny greenish flowers surrounded by yellow bracts. I don't imagine they are to everyone's taste, but I have always had a soft spot for them.

We had also ordered a sample of plants from Roger Barlow— it hardly seems like a real sale if there aren't at least some plants of Roger's, although we would much prefer to have himself there and his lovely wife too. One of the things he sent was *Iris taurica*. Most people will know *Iris pumila*, which looks like a small bearded Iris on a plant that is only 20 to 30 cm tall. A few years ago, we had *Iris attica* in the sale, which is similar, but only about half the size. Now here was *Iris taurica*, which is half the size of that. It can hardly get any more miniature. It is also interesting that all three of them come in purple and yellow form. I imagine that *I. taurica* really needs a summer dry rest period. *I. attica* appreciates that, but *I. pumila* doesn't need it, although it probably gets it in nature, coming as it does from areas around the Mediterranean. *Gentiana paradoxa* makes a leafy stem with quite wide-open, upward facing flowers of a blue like that of *G. verna*! Mine hasn't flowered yet, but we're hoping. It would surely be a show! Roger had sent both *Androsace jacquemontii* and *A. sarmentosa*, the first one being a smaller version of the second (about half as large). They both spread by stolons and have stalked umbels of pink flowers.

Penstemon davidsonii is one of the widespread Penstemons of western North America, it makes a low shrub with small, leathery, roundish leaves, and in early summer, short trusses of blue-lavender to violet flowers. It usually grows on rocky slopes at the sub-alpine level.

Well, and then we hope that all the plants that changed hands are flourishing in their new locations, and that those of you who live in the Lower Mainland are busily planning (and potting up) for the Fall Sale.

(All the photos in this article were retrieved from non-copyright sources on the internet. I would LOVE to get some of our own photos & drawings!)

2008 SPRING SHOW RESULTS ~ by Diana Hume

Best in Show	Joe Keller	<i>Silene acaulis pedunculata</i>
Best Native BC plant	Joe Keller	<i>Silene acaulis pedunculata</i>
Best Cushion plant	Joe Keller	<i>Silene acaulis pedunculata</i>
Best Woodland plant	Joe Keller	<i>Cassiope x lycopodioides</i>
Best Alpine	Joe Keller	<i>Androsace vandellii</i>
Best Fern	Joe Keller	<i>Woodsia alpina</i>
Best in Expert Class	Ian Gillam	<i>Tropaeolum azureum</i>
Best Rhododendron	Joe Keller	<i>Rhododendron fastigiatum</i>
Best Dwarf Shrub	Joe Keller	<i>Cassiope 'Askival'</i>
Best Bulb or Corm	Ian Gillam	<i>Trillium ovatum 'Double'</i>
Best Native Bulb or Corm	Mark Demers	<i>Trillium rivale</i>
Best Bonsai	Mark Demers	<i>Cotoneaster</i>
Best Primula	Joe Keller	<i>Primula ellisiae</i>
Total Aggregate Points	Joe Keller	84 points

Well Done, Joe!



"Esther, is it possible, just possible mind you, that your green thumb has gone berserk?"