Alpine Garden Club of British Columbia

Trollius europaeus in the Swiss Alps.

Volume 63, Number 1 Quarterly Bulletin, 2020
In This Issue
Upcoming Events...........................................................................................................3
Related Events..................................................................................................................6
From the Editor ..................................................................................................................7
Editorial ID Challenge Photo..........................................................................................8
Club News - Seed Exchange Report ..............................................................................9
The Alps: The Playground of Europe .............................................................................10
Garry Who? The Garry Oak Meadows of British Columbia are Worth Getting to Know .................................................................15
Reminiscences: A Memory Walk with Bob Woodward .................................................22
Gardens Rock ....................................................................................................................26
Editorial ID Challenge Answer ......................................................................................28

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Membership Renewals Due

Membership fees are now due for 2020. Please send a cheque for $30 to Membership Secretary, Jane Byra, with your name and contact info. Cheques should be made out to the Alpine Garden Club of BC. Please email Jane at membership@agc-bc.ca for the mailing address, or bring them to the next meeting.

Or renew online using your credit card through PayPal on our website www.agc-bc.ca/membership-renewal

AGC-BC meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month except July and August in the Floral Hall, VanDusen Botanical Garden. Doors and Library open at 7:00 p.m. and the meetings start at 7:30 p.m.

Please bring plants for the plant draw; the proceeds of which go toward paying for the hall rental. Don’t forget to bring your coffee/tea mug.

2018 AGC-BC Upcoming Events

- Feb 12 - AGC-BC Meeting
  - Margaret Cadwaladr: A Secret Garden: The Story of the Darts Hill Garden Park
- Mar 11 - AGC-BC Meeting
  - Mike Bone: Middle Asian Steppe and its Mountainous Regions
- Mar 22 - Event: Saxifrage Sunday
  - Darts Hill Garden Park and Sellars Garden, 10 am - 12 pm
- Apr 4 - AGC-BC Annual Spring Show and Sale
  - Van Dusen Floral Hall, 11:30 am - 3:30 pm
- Apr 15 - AGC-BC Meeting *Note Date and Location*
  - Jenny Wainwright-Klein: The Schachen Botanic Garden
  - Location: UBC Botanical Garden, Reception Centre

For more information, visit http://www.agc-bc.ca/events

Club Events
Vol. 63, No. 1
Spring Plant Show and Sale
Chris Byra, Sales Coordinator

The Alpine Garden Club of BC will be holding its annual Spring Plant Show and Sale in the Floral Hall at VanDusen Botanical Gardens on Saturday, April 4. There will be setup on Friday at 5 pm for both the sale and show, and volunteers would be appreciated at that time. Volunteers will also be needed in the morning to help with unloading plants, setting up signs, pricing, and counting plants.

Doors open at 8 AM for Volunteers and Setup

Members Sale at 11:30 - 6 plant maximum per volunteer (if you provide six or more plants to the club table you are included in this group)

Public Sale 12 - 3 PM

Clean up 3 - 4 PM - it takes us less than an hour

For the Plant Show this year there will only be a few categories as we are combining many and we would encourage people to show plants in an area that will not be judged.

What to bring:
• Plants for the Club table and show
• Snacks
• Boxes for carrying plants

We look forward to seeing you there!

Club Events
Vol. 63, No. 1
Bus tour to Victoria

The Alpine Garden Club is planning a trip to Victoria on Saturday April 25, 2020, to take in the Vancouver Island Rock & Alpine Garden Club Plant Show & Sale.

Members will need to make their own way to Tsawwassen Terminal to be on the 9 am ferry (parking at the terminal for the day costs $19). A bus has been booked to take us from the Swartz Bay Ferry Terminal to VIRAGS Show & Sale and also visit several special private rock/crevice gardens in the Victoria area where we will be able to view some interesting and unique plant collections. The bus will take us back to the ferry terminal where we can walk on to the 5pm ferry back to Vancouver.

We suggest that you either take a packed lunch or purchase a sandwich on the ferry. There will be coffee/tea/cookies for sale at the VIRAGS show/sale location, but no real lunch items. You will need to wear good walking shoes, and be prepared for all weather conditions. If you plan on purchasing plants, make sure you have a good shopping bag with you (with your name on it) to accommodate your purchases, which will be stored under the bus.

We have limited seating on the bus. If you did not sign up at the January meeting, and will not be attending the February meeting, please get in contact with Rosemarie Adams to get on the list.

Members are responsible for their parking and ferry costs. There may be a small charge for members for the bus, but this will be minimal (no more than $20). If you wish to travel with your own vehicle on the ferry, you will be asked to keep the same agenda as the bus group for visiting gardens.

This will be a fun trip, and a good opportunity to spend some time with your AGCBC co-members.
Related Events

VIRAGS Annual Spring Show and Sale

The Vancouver Island Rock and Alpine Garden Society’s annual Spring Show and Sale, 2020, will be held at Cadboro Bay United Church, 2625 Arbutus Road, Victoria, BC, on **Friday, April 24** from 1 pm to 8 pm and on **Saturday, April 25** from 9 am to 3 pm.

As always, we look forward to welcoming gardeners and growers from across the Strait. For more details, please visit our website at www.virags.com.

Please note, that thanks in part to the revival in recent seasons of the VIRAGS Propagation Group, sale of club-grown plants will be ongoing throughout the Show, beginning Friday afternoon.

*Fritillaria michailovskyi*
From the Editor

Laura Caddy

I hope everyone is staying dry and warm this winter. Personally, I’m enjoying the gradual increase in daylight, and hints of spring with crocus, daffodils, iris and snowdrops already blooming in the E.H. Lohbrunner Alpine Garden (both in the rock garden and the bulb frame).

One of the great perks of my position at UBC is that I have access to the excellent library we have at the Garden, which holds issues of this Bulletin going back to 1970 (not quite all the way back, but certainly a good collection all the same). It was when I was looking for something entirely different (admittedly, I can’t seem to remember exactly what) that I came across the 50th Anniversary Commemorative Issue from 2005, and realized that means we are now in our 65th year as a group! There are excellent articles in this 2005 special edition that I really enjoyed reading, so I though I would highlight them by including an excerpt from one in this issue. I hope it encourages readers to go back and check it out in its entirety. Back issues to 2004 can be downloaded from the AGC-BC website. In addition, the reveal of the Editor’s ID Challenge is also from a past issue, as the plant chosen was named for a past member (and that is the only hint you’ll get for this one, other than the photo taken recently at UBC).

There is new content as well; two great articles from prolific contributors to the Bulletin Ben Stormes and David Sellars. Ben highlights a local ecosystem that is also the focus of one of the areas he curates at UBC Botanical Garden, and David shares highlights from his trip to Switzerland last year. I’m already scheming how I can get there and see those beautiful mountains and plants for myself. Luckily, I have David’s videos and photos to hold me over until I can make that a reality.

Pam Yokome has provided an update on the 2019 Seed Exchange, which was once again a success. I’m sure you’re all excited to get those seeds started, and many others, and I wish you the best of luck this winter sowing and propagating for a new season!
Editor’s ID Challenge

Too easy? Too hard? Let me know at bulletin@agc-bc.ca
Seed Exchange Report

Pam Yokome

The 2019 Seed Exchange was successfully wrapped up by the first week in January of this year. We had 51 generous donors that sent in either their lists or their seeds or both by the deadline and our members were very impressed with the variety of seeds available with a total of 1226 different plants represented. Unfortunately, there were approximately 50 different seeds (some very choice) that were sent in late and so did not make the seed list. Your Seed Exchange volunteers are trying to figure out how to help avoid a repeat for next years exchange.

This year our seed orders were only slightly down from last year - exactly 100 less. It was very heartening to see brand new club members sending in seed orders. A new wrinkle this year was the added requirement of phytosanitary certification for all orders sent to our EU members. After a bit of emailing back and forth with various government officials we did obtain the certificates during their quiet time between Christmas and New Year and will aim for that time slot next year. We have heard from some of those EU members that they received their orders and were relieved by the news.

This year the native North America seeds were the most requested. The most popular seeds ordered were *Eriogonum umbellatum*, *Lewisia tweedyi*, *Campanula zoysii*, *Androsace chamaejasme*, *Rhododendron camtschaticum*, *Penstemon* sp. and *Phlox diffusa*, in that order.

We are particularly grateful to those who venture into the fields and mountains to do wild collecting. We are grateful to all who send seeds to our exchange and to the dedicated group here who volunteer their time and energy to make the exchange possible. Special thanks to Linda Verbeek for her huge seed intake portion of the exchange, Pam Frost for her Vancouver group of expert seed packagers, the Darts Hill group who met twice a week this year for packaging and order filling and Ruth for her handling of all the seed sales of the excess. Many thanks to David Sellars for all the work done with our club website that is making my job so much more efficient.

May your seeds sprout and grow well and provide more seed for the next Seed Exchange!
The Alps: The Playground of Europe

David Sellars

The British mountaineer, Leslie Stephen published ‘The Playground of Europe’ in 1871 describing some of the first ascents in the Alps that he had made. The Alps today are even more of a playground than they were in Victorian times with numerous ski resorts, high elevation roads and extensive hiking trails. Leslie Stephen’s favourite area was in Switzerland:

But neither Chamonix nor Zermatt, in my opinion, is equal in grandeur or originality of design to the Bernese Oberland. No earthly object that I have seen approaches in grandeur to the stupendous mountain wall whose battlements overhang in mid-air the villages of Lauterbrunnen and Grindelwald.

The Bernese Oberland has magnificent scenery and extensive alpine meadows. It is one of the most accessible areas in the Alps for hikers and lovers of alpine flora. Rack railways and ski gondolas crisscross the open alpine slopes providing access to well-marked hiking trails. There is even a train to a high elevation botanical garden, Schynige Platte, with a splendid variety of well-labeled plants and excellent views of the surrounding mountains. Hiking in the Alps is a family activity and the trails are well used by all ages. This is in marked contrast to access to the alpine areas in western Canada where access is often challenging.

Gondola above Grindelwald.
We stayed at Grindelwald last July and bought a six-day pass for the rack railways, gondolas and interconnected bus routes. We hiked for six days, sometimes getting the train or gondola up to a high elevation station, hiking down and then picking up a train or bus to return to Grindelwald. Even though it was late July the alpine flowers were mostly at their peak. Many of the snowmelt emergent flowers such as *Pulsatilla alpina* were over but we still found gullies where late snow preserved some flowers for later enjoyment.

One gondola with the curious name ‘First’ rises directly from Grindelwald to an elevation of 2166 m. The views from the top to the peaks across the valley are stupendous with the Eiger, Monch and Jungfrau (Ogre, Monk and Maiden) particularly prominent. A broad track leads to the lovely lake of Bachalpsee and despite the crowds of people there is an incredible variety of alpine flora to see along the route. The blues of *Gentiana acaulis* and *Gentiana verna* were intense, contrasting well with the pinks of *Primula farinosa* and *Anacamptis pyramidalis*.
Clockwise, from top left: *Ranunculus alpestris*, *Soldanella alpina*, *Primula elatior*, *Ranunculus glacialis*, and *Androsace alpina*. 
From Bachalpsee we headed along a narrow trail towards Bussalp leaving the crowds behind. The trail crosses the crest of a rocky ridge and we were delighted to find *Androsace helvetica* clinging to the rock. The flowers were finished but the tight buns were exquisite and it was unusual for it to be growing at such a relatively low elevation. From the ridge the trail descends through blocky scree with more alpines including *Saxifraga paniculata* and *Linaria alpina*. From Bussalp we caught a bus back to Grindelwald.

The Eiger Trail runs just below the north face of the Eiger and is a good route for locating limestone-loving scree alpines. We took the train to the Eigergletscher Station at 2320 m and walked down the easy trail to a lower train station. The north face of the Eiger loomed above and the extensive screes below were dotted with plants including *Ranunculus alpestris*, *R. glacialis* and *Campanula pusilla*. Some areas had extensive mats of *Silene acaulis* in full flower. The previous day, across the valley we had climbed the grassy Lauberhorn.
*Rhododendron ferrugineum, Trollius europaeus and Pulsatilla alpina subsp apiifolia* were a perfect foreground for the glaciers and soaring cliffs. Our favourite hike was to a small mountain lake, Hexelseeli, nestled behind a ridge above the top station of the gondola First. From Bachalpsee we followed a narrow track past huge drifts of *Caltha palustris* and over a small pass to an undulating trail. Outstanding plants included *Saxifraga oppositifolia, Soldanella alpina* and *Viola calcarata*. Close to our high point near Hexelseeli we were delighted to find a beautiful cushion form of *Androsace alpina*.

The Alps are a wonderful mountain range to explore for alpine flora. There are many accommodation options, the access to alpine elevations is excellent and there are extensive well-marked trails. The Bernese Oberland is undoubtedly one of the best locations for alpine flower lovers, second only, perhaps, to the Dolomites in northern Italy. I have posted videos of two of the hikes mentioned which can be found at [https://www.youtube.com/user/MountainFlora](https://www.youtube.com/user/MountainFlora)
Garry Who? The Garry Oak Meadows of British Columbia are Worth Getting to Know.

Ben Stormes

The Garry oak meadows are a component of the local coast Douglas fir ecosystem that are largely restricted to south eastern Vancouver Island and the southern Gulf Islands. These meadows are characterised by an open deciduous canopy of *Quercus garryana* (though some meadows lack much canopy cover at all), relatively few other large-stature woody plants, and an understory rich in herbs and forbs which can put on a spectacular spring show. Where soils are deep, the oaks grow to a large stature and have a classic *Quercus* form of hefty, rounded crowns atop thick trunks supporting robust branching. Where soils are shallow, this same species grows as gnarled, stunted, seemingly contorted trees with thinner canopies and a more weathered appearance. Both iterations of this special ecosystem have their charm, providing a light and vibrant contrast to the dense, dark conifer forests that dominate much of our region’s lower elevation forests.

While these meadows are named for their oaks, they support a wide diversity of plant life, from dense and expansive colonies of bryophytes, to breathtaking diversity of ephemeral flowering plants. *Camassia quamash*, *Camassia leichtlinii*, and *Delphinium menziesii*’s dark purple blooms stand out among fields of pink *Plectritis congesta* in open, exposed areas. In wetter locations with good sun *Erythranthe guttata* forms equally as dense expansive colonies often accompanied by *Dodecatheon pulchellum* and *Micranthes occidentalis*.
Hidden in the dappled shade provided by the occasional groves of *Quercus garryana*, *Pinus contorta* subsp. *contorta*, *Pseudotsuga menziesii*, and *Arbutus menziesii*, you might be fortunate enough to find elegant drifts of *Erythronium oregonum*, *Fritillaria affinis*, and the occasional *Trillium ovatum* arising through an intricate groundcover matrix of *Sedum spathulifolium* and *Montia parvifolia*.

Not all plants in the Garry oak meadows occurs in vast drifts, indeed many are quite rare and may be difficult to spot. These occasional treasures, such as *Hosackia pinnata*, *Silene scouleri*, *Castilleja levisecta*, and *Viola praemorsa* require keen eyes and a slow pace of exploration if one is likely to distinguish them among the kaleidoscopic vibrancy of the meadows in which they grow. As striking as they may be in bloom, these spring meadow scenes are fleeting. With the onset of summer drought, the vibrant colours fade to a largely uniform golden brown. Searching for anything but the most conspicuous of fruiting structures is quite a chore if you’re embarking on seed collecting activities in these now-parched meadows. Yet the oaks, cloaked in their thick deep green leaves, stand out like island oases in the landscape, and offer a refuge from the intensifying summer sun.
The Garry oak meadows in British Columbia have always been limited in their distribution, but increasing pressures from development, invasive species, and habitat degradation have further reduced their hold. It is estimated that only 5% of British Columbia’s original Garry oak meadows remain, and the threats persist relentlessly despite conservation efforts. With a mission to “assemble, curate, and maintain a documented living collection of temperate plants for the purposes of education, research, conservation, community outreach, and public display”, UBC Botanical Garden is well positioned to serve as an important site for the conservation of this threatened plant community, and communicate to the public their role in its protection. To this end, the Garry Oak Meadow and Woodland garden at UBC Botanical Garden was created in 2005, sited to take advantage of existing topography and high solar exposure, ideal for many of the sun loving meadow species. Close to 250 accessions have been planted in the Garry Oak Meadow and Woodland Garden since its creation, over 80% of which have been propagated from wild collected seed harvested from local Garry oak meadows.

Garry Oak Meadow and Woodland garden at UBC Botanical Garden.
Clockwise, from top left: *Silene scouleri*, *Balsamorhiza deltoidea*, and *Eriophyllum lanatum* with *Clarkia amoena*, all growing at UBC.
Arriving at the garden during the start of its dormant period, I was unable to fully assess the meadow garden when I joined the UBC Botanical Garden in July 2016. An evaluation of all herbaceous plantings in the meadow was undertaken in the Spring and Summer of 2017, providing insight into what accessioned material remained, but arguably more importantly, what weeds had moved in. The results of this assessment identified areas of our meadow garden still supporting healthy populations of original plantings, as well as areas significantly compromised by aggressive perennial weeds, namely *Anthoxanthum odoratum* (sweet vernal grass) and *Agrostis stolonifera* (creeping bentgrass). Invasion by invasive species is a common pressure for *in situ* meadows, so in some ways there is opportunity to show first-hand the impact these species can have on these meadows right here at the garden. On the other hand, restoring the Garry Oak Meadow and Woodland Garden at UBC is vital to meeting our mission, and with this in mind, work began to restore and renovate the garden. Steps have been taken to propagate, both sexually and vegetatively, the original plantings that persisted to rejuvenate areas as large areas dominated by weedy species are removed. Cultural practices, such as careful irrigation management, strategic mowing regimes, and the use of various mulching materials has also been useful in the renovation process.

Renovation area, using wood mulch to suppress invasive grasses.
I often receive comments from garden visitors noting the seemingly endless nature of weeding in a large-scale meadow garden. Yet, rather than be downtrodden, I take this opportunity to inform them of why such work is warranted given the high number of locally endangered plants found in these meadows, their contribution to local, regional, and global biodiversity, and how these relate to our garden’s mission and why our work is crucial, now more than ever. I also crack a joke or two about it being job security. In this way, the renovation of the garden has itself become an opportunity for visitor engagement and education.

The efforts are paying off, and each season I am greeted by increasing populations of notable Garry oak species in the garden. Collaboration with non-profit and government organizations working to protect and restore Garry oak habitat on Vancouver Island have resulted in a reliable supply of seed for rare and endangered plants to supplement in-garden propagation efforts. Through this collaboration we have been able to establish healthy, reliable plantings of numerous endangered plant species in the garden, with even more species awaiting plant out this fall. Seed collecting on Vancouver Island, both from Garry oak meadows as well as associated habitats, has enabled increased diversity represented in our meadow, with an emphasis on establishing plants that extend the meadow garden’s bloom time beyond the notable “spring burst” of May and early June. These diverse garden collections are important contributions to safeguarding local population genetics and serve as resources for public awareness targeted at behavioural change through the garden’s outreach and education programs.
Each spring I am greeted by an abundance of spring colour in the Garry Oak Meadow and Woodland Garden at UBC Botanical Garden, a show that in my biased opinion rivals that of our notable *Rhododendron*, *Magnolia*, or alpine collections. And each spring I learn a little more from the garden about the importance of appreciating beauty while it lasts, understanding the natural rhythms of seasonal change, and the important role gardening and horticulture play in safeguarding plant biodiversity. I welcome you to join me in this experience, both in your own gardens or at UBC Botanical Garden, and to continue to push the boundaries of what our gardens could and should be.

Further Reading:
https://www.crd.bc.ca/education/our-environment/ecosystems/terrestrial/garry-oak-meadows
http://www.goert.ca/index.php
http://www.garryoak.info/contacts.html
https://botanicalgarden.ubc.ca/visit/garden-highlights/garry-oak-meadow-and-woodland-garden/

Above: Meadow *ex situ* at UBC.  
Below: meadow *in situ* at Harewood Plains, Nanaimo, BC.
Well, well, well, the Alpine Garden Club of British Columbia is fifty years old! And the fourth "well" refers to just how old that makes me feel. Ai-yi-yi! Jim (MacPhail) and I joined sometime in the early '60's because Jim's mother and stepfather Iva and Don Angerman were charter members of the club and mad-keen alpine (and all sorts of other) gardeners. When we visited the homestead on Westview Drive the house was often filled with the likes of Alleyne Cook (Barbara came later), Grace Conboy, George Boving, Marion MacDonell, Lea Macey, someone known only as Old Sam – all members of the Alpine Garden Club. They would be going on about the poor behaviour of folks such as Nelly Moser and Pink Pearl and such. I thought they were very rude to talk that way about their friends (secretly I thought they must be consorting with dance hall queens) but it turned out they were talking about a clematis and a rhododendron, whatever they were. And when they launched into torrents of Latin, I simply put them down as dotty but harmless. Then Don became ill and we were recruited to give a hand in the garden. Neither of us knew a tulip from a daffodil but slowly but surely these wee bits of greenery and colour exerted a power over us and Iva persuaded us to join the Club (as it was known). The rest, as they say, is history. And what do I remember?

THE SHOWS: Iva had divided and shared her collection of shortias and schizocodons (a thing I would be petrified of doing to this day... she still has a great love of these plants at the age of 102 when we show her slides of them). We plunked them into our tentative garden and they thrived. She suggested we "show" them in the Spring Show. We gathered a few plants, bunged them into puts, and sneaked them onto the show benches. We thought we were being terribly forward and presumptuous. The next day we visited the Show and found that we had won (!) not only several blue ribbons but also a trophy or two. And we were smack in the middle of our first Alpine Garden Club Controversy. I had entered a plant of *Draba mollissima* with one flower on it (all it ever had). Thelma Chapman (who later became our great friend) had entered the same plant in the same class (Cushion Plants) but she had cut off all the
myriad flowers in order to emphasize the "cushionness". My plant won, apparently because it had flowered (!) and the ruckus began. P.S. I still don't know the answer: should the flowers be removed if a plant is entered in the cushion class? You don't want to muck up with flowers a perfect cushion, as Jim once publicly remarked. But I just loved the Show (still do) with its marvelous array of potted plants. That year's Best in Show was Iva's *Ranunculus amplexicaulis* and that began my lifelong love affair with white buttercups. Not surprisingly we became mad keen on the Spring Show. We'd empty our alpine house, dig up practically our whole garden, cover our windowsills to push plants ahead, plunge plants in deep shade to hold them back: the whole rigmarole. In those days the Show and the Plant Sale were the same day and visitors would enquire if they could have two or three of those nice *eritrichiums* and maybe a few of those ever-so-pretty shortias that they had seen on the Show benches. There were wonderful displays (I still have slides) of such things as Alpines of the World, showing the geographical distribution of displayed alpine plants. Thelma and Nan Sherlock did educational fern displays. There were bonsai displays and simulated rock gardens with such plants as *Eriogonum thymoides* and *Fritillaria purdyi*.

In the competitive classes were large collection entries such as Jim's trillium collection with about 20 species. The Victoria people (as they were known) brought magnificent display plants such as Vern and Iris Ahiers' legendary *Daphne petraea* (always in perfect bloom) or Albert Demezey's saxifragas. Ed and Ethel Lohbrunner were often the judges and hard taskmasters they were.

There were strange happenings. Jim once won Best Plant in Show for a cushion of *Eritrichium nanum* with one flower (I was sorting slides the other day and came across a picture of said victor). Non-gardening friends attended the Show and I can still picture the convulsive laughter that overcame them as they gazed at the eritrichium and its trophy. Another time I won with a pot of *Fritillaria recurva*. I also grew the plant on a dry bank outside our garden fence, The day before the Show, while making my morning rounds, I came across the sweetest little girl smiling away at her clutch of posies she had picked for her teacher, the only one in Christendom, I'm sure, that had a student bring her a *Fritillaria*
recurva bouquet. "How nice," I muttered. I entered every year a plant of *Gypsophila aretioides*, a form of the plant that made a rock-hard cushion. It won every year. No thanks to me. I did nothing. Proof of my theory that it's the plant, not the person that deserves the accolades. Jim later killed it at UBC.

And there were judging controversies (still are, I'm sure, but I don't get to hear about them now; out of politeness, I guess). Once Iva entered a collection of the notoriously difficult Siskiyou violas (*V. hallii*, *V. cuneata et al.*) all in bloom and it was beaten by a collection of sempervivums. "There were more of them," explained the judge. Iva in her second century still hasn't got over that one.

Later Jim and I began judging the Show. Not a good idea as we were (and are) sometimes miles apart on what constitutes a great plant. That's why we resorted to averaging of several judges’ decisions. But my favourite reminiscence of all, concerning the Show, was to watch Thelma Chapman sweep into the hall after the judging, hands on her hips, a scowl on her face, muttering as she surveyed the ribbons and trophies, "Who the hell judged this Show???". Then I would appear and confess. She had her standards did Thelma and I so wish we had someone to rip the judging to shreds today with such panache. Later she became a judge. Guess what happened.

**THE BULLETIN:** Jim became Editor of the Bulletin and I was chief typist and bottlewasher. Like the Shows it was great fun and madly hectic. Jim was adept at humorous articles such as those his imaginary nursery company Whin, Furze, and Gorse and their various correspondence with one Carl Linnaeus about shipments of Love-lies-a-bleeding and Spotted Touch-me-not and Kiss-me-at-the-garden gate. (Sample line: "My thanks for the Live-forever. It died in transit"). Or Madame Flora's *Horoscope for Gardeners* by one Flora Bundy. The whole family was pressed into service. I did a monthly column on “Meet the Natives” (e.g. *Claytonia nivalis*), and later “What's in Bloom This Month”. Iva wrote poems, did articles on her favourite plants (hepaticas, *Primula allionii*) warned us to Beware the *Agriolimax* (aka the Slug). She also had to illustrate Farreriana (favourite quotations from the greatest of all garden writers, Reginald Farrer). Here's one I remember her cartoon for: "*Leontopodium alpinum* (edelweiss) is not a rarity ...one is treading dense flat lawns of it in places where
a dozen prams could race abreast without imperilling themselves, their conductors, or their inmates." Can you imagine the picture she drew? I rhapsodized authoritatively on such plants as *Gilia cephaloidea* (today I don't even know what it is: so much for rhapsody and authority). Francesca Darts roamed about her garden each month to tell us what was in bloom in *A Walk in the Garden*. I later did the same thing in our garden. Art Guppy, Geoff and Audrey Williams did travelogues of marvellous places to see plants. Geoff was later Editor and Audrey wrote such informative articles on a wide range of plants and places to see them. Best of all (for me) was the long-running mock epic battle between Cookie (Alleyne Cook) and me. Each month we would assault each other's horticultural prowess and taste. Many "fancy that's" and "who on earth would do it that way?" and "surely you wouldn't give garden space to that bit of nothing". It was all such a hoot.

Among my favourite articles: Jim's *Labelmanship or How to Acquire a Reputation as a Grower of Difficult Plants Without Actually Growing Difficult Plants*; his frantic *Plea for Adjectives* (to describe plants) and Art Guppy's reply with such suggestions as castaneous, disarticulate, basifixed, antrorse: quick, definitions, please); the report on our first trip to the Beartooth and the Bighorns, still etched indelibly in my memory; the symposium on the alpine house; the Bun Syndrome (all about cushion plants, silly); many how-to articles on how to build a peatbed or Thelma's upside-down scree; for Christmas A Festive Menu of Edible Plants (*mit* illustrations) etc. etc. A photography competition was initiated and the winning pictures were collected in *Albums of Western Natives*. I wonder if the Club still has those albums. When Linda Verbeek was Editor I was allowed to write articles on such things dear to me as *Arisaema*, Silver Plants, and *Alstroemeria* (not so dear anymore: too weedy). That was great fun and luckily for the world it came before I lapsed into my corydalis mania.

*Full issue available online at* [http://www.agc-bc.ca/2005-bulletin](http://www.agc-bc.ca/2005-bulletin)
Plants on a Plane

We all know we can’t bring plants on a plane for an international trip without plant permits and phytos but we are pretty sure it’s ok within Canada. Think again! Travelling back from Calgary last May we had been generously given a number of plants in small pots. Half of these were rejected at the security checkpoint when scanned. The security staff were very helpful in explaining the issue. The rejected pots were Saxifrages and contained stone chips and sand which exceeded the allowable limit for inorganic material. The plants that passed the machine were potted in a peat-based mix. Fortunately the security staff allowed me to go back through security, bare-root the offending plants and go through the system again.

There is nothing on the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority (CATSA) website prohibiting plants on planes. However under prohibited items there is this paragraph:

PROHIBITED: Inorganic powder and granular material
• Inorganic powder and granular material with a volume of 350 ml or more such as baby powder, foot powder, cooking powder, bath salt, sea salt and sand

I would guess the problem with granular material is that it could potentially be explosive.

So, for all you lovers of alpines out there who want to bring home treasures from other parts of Canada, make sure the plants are in a peat-based mix or bare-rooted and you will sail right through!
Saxifraga 'Tysoe Robin'
Editor’s ID Challenge

Excerpt from AGCBC Bulletin Vol.51, No. 1, 2008
*Galanthus elwesii* ‘Rosemary Burnham’
by Pam Frost

There is currently much fascination with the genus *Galanthus* in all its minute variation, so the story of the discovery locally of this snowdrop by a Club member will be of interest to other members. Rosemary Burnham, long-time member of the AGCBC, a past President, and very talented artist, discovered this distinct form in an abandoned garden just east of Vancouver.

As Rosemary tells it: “While a young and new gardener, I used to ramble around looking for plants in old gardens and lanes to add to my own. Very often my friend, Bodil Leamy, would come along, and one day, while we were rummaging around the remains of an old house in the bottom of one of Burnaby’s ravines, I found a clump of snowdrops, some irises, and a few blackberry and grass-smothered rose bush cuttings. When we looked closely at the snowdrops, we noticed that they were different, having green markings on the outer segments. They were much admired but not thought important, this being long before Galanthophilia (about 45 years ago!). Luckily I gave bulbs to many of my gardening friends, because my clump became overgrown and I lost it. My friend, Don Armstrong, a wonderful plantsman and gardener, decided to research the snowdrop with The Royal Horticultural Society and it was discovered to be unique and was named for me. Don gave me a few bulbs so I had it again until it was stolen from my garden! Another gardening friend gave me several bulbs, which are beginning to increase nicely and are planted in a safe place.”

*Galanthus elwesii* ‘Rosemary Burnham’ was awarded a Certificate of Preliminary Commendation as a hardy flowering plant for exhibition in 2005-2006 by the RHS. A botanical description of this cultivar appears in *Snowdrops – A Monograph of Cultivated Galanthus* by Matt Bishop, Aaron Davis and John Grimshaw.