

*Alpine Garden Club*  
*of*  
*British Columbia*



## **CLUB BUSINESS**

### **PROGRAMS**

**David Sellars**

#### **Wednesday, September 12: Grahame Ware Brodiaea- Natives and Near Natives Worthy of Your Consideration**

Grahame Ware has been a specialist grower of rare plants for over two decades. He has an extensive background in horticulture including working for the Pacific Northwest Seed Company and establishing Round Lake Gardens, a nursery in the Okanagan. He is the co-author of "Heucheras and Heucherellas" (Timber Press), the definitive guide to these genera and their hybrids. It was a long research project that solved many of the mysteries and mistakes of this very popular group of plants. He is the founder and owner of Owl & Stump Rare Plants near Ladysmith on Vancouver Island and is a long-time member of AGC-BC.

#### **Special Meeting: Monday, September 24: Kristl Walek Seedy Perspectives: Collecting, Cleaning and Storage of Seed**

Kristl Walek is the owner of Gardens North, a Canadian seedhouse offering an eclectic mix of perennial and woody seed as well as fern spores. In 1992 Kristl started Gardens North as a humble, small dining-room operation with the seed of plants from her own backyard. Since then the business has grown to international proportions; as of 2012 sales are in over 40 countries and still growing. A large proportion of the seed she sells is wild collected.

Kristl is considered one of the leading experts on seed germination and has written and lectured on the topic to many international organizations. She was a contributor to Norm Deno's "Seed Germination and Theory" and in 1998 was the 1st recipient of the NARGS Geoffrey Charlesworth writing prize for her article on seed collecting, cleaning and storage. She is currently finishing a book about the propagation of eastern Canadian native plants from seed.

#### **October: No Meeting**

With a special meeting late in September and another in early November the Executive has decided that there will not be a regular meeting on the second Wednesday of October.

#### **Special Meeting: Wednesday, November 7, 2012: Harvey Wrightman**

## **Growing Alpine Plants**

Established in 1985, Wrightman Alpines on Ontario grows about 2000 species and varieties of alpine plants. The mail order catalogue lists over 600 alpines and perennials, which are shipped to enthusiasts throughout Canada and the United States.

The display gardens demonstrate a variety of landscaping techniques using stone as the main building material. Dry-laid stone walls and flagstone pathways along the foundation of the house hold tufa crevice gardens and are a collaboration of Josef Halda and Harvey Wrightman's construction. Hand-chiseled stone troughs are displayed as examples of container gardening. Crevice gardens constructed of tufa and limestone and a backyard scree garden, form the backdrop for a myriad of colours, texture and forms of favorite alpine plants.

### **Wednesday, November 14: Chris Czajkowski Alpine Flora of the Remote British Columbia Coast Range**

Chris Czajkowski grew up in England, travelled the world with a backpack for a decade, and arrived in Canada in 1979. Three years later she was building her first off-road cabin in the wilderness, about 150 km inland from Bella Coola. In 1988 she moved to a higher location on a fly-in lake where she built three more cabins and created the Nuk Tessli Alpine Experience, an ecotourism business catering to hikers and naturalists. She has written ten books about her nearly thirty years of wilderness living.

At first she lived At Nuk Tessli full time, but in 2006, she bought a derelict homestead not too far from the mountain resort but with rough road access. Ginty Creek is still quite remote, being three and a half hours' drive from the nearest bank, traffic light, supermarket and cellphone tower. It is ideally located to pursue Czajkowski's love of wilderness and the natural world. She has several more books in the works. For more information on her books and artwork, and an update of her adventures, visit her blog: [www.wildernessdweller.ca](http://www.wildernessdweller.ca)

## **BOOK REVIEW**

**Small Space Gardening for Canada by Laura Peters (Lone Pine Publishing, 2012, Paperback, 176 pages: \$Cd 24.95, \$US 24.95)**

**Review by: Glen Patterson, April 4, 2012.**

Whether you have just a small space such as a balcony, or a patio, or a stairwell, or a large residential garden, this book is an essential read to give you innovative and exciting ideas.

The book is important for finding how to find room for a garden in such as small space as a patio, balcony, and stairwell or on a roof. It will give you ideas about finding unused spaces even in a large garden.

Peters' book will give you lots of fun in looking for these unused spaces in your condo, townhouse or residence and discovering what kind of plants you can use. It outlines the necessary space, and what species will adapt to those sunny or shady, dry or wet, places. You will get advice on the health and maintenance of the plants, the necessary pest control and the adaptability of the selected plants to the environment you have chosen.

Certainly, Peters should have said more about the soil requirements, especially with respect to alkalinity and porosity. This is a big subject, so, some references should have been given.

I particularly appreciate the emphasis given for using roofs, patios, and stairwells. I think that much more should have been said about the neglect by most gardeners of making wall gardens.

I think the book is inspiring for all gardeners. I liked the format and the photographs but I think it is important for every book to have a comprehensive index. For all gardeners, I think this book should be a best seller.

## **ARTICLES**

### **Plant Show 2012**

**Ian Plenderleith**

The annual plant show this year was held in conjunction with the Spring Sale on April 9<sup>th</sup> at VanDusen Botanical Garden. The sale was in the Floral Hall, the usual site of the Fall Sale, and the show in the Cedar Room. The space available for the show was, as a result, smaller than in recent years and the duration was limited to a single day rather than the usual two. Again this year, as last, spring in the Vancouver area has been slow with predominantly cool rainy weather. This may have slowed the progress of some plants but may have been timely for others and no apologies will be offered. (I'm not sure what a normal Vancouver spring is.) Nevertheless, the number of plants displayed was slightly greater than

last year, about 140. Immediately obvious this year was a decrease in the usual large number of *Primulaceae* as several of the usual primula enthusiasts were absent for various reasons. The quality of the plants shown was, overall, of a high order.

Linda Verbeek was responsible for the organization of the show this year, Joan Bunn was recorder and the judges were Margaret Charlton, Brent Hine, Ian Plenderleith and, for the bonsai, Roger Low. Apart from the anticipated decisions regarding plants additional challenges were presented by some incompletely filled out entry labels.

In class 1, (six plants of a single genus) two firsts were awarded; one to Joe



*Lewisia tweedyi*. Photograph by Ian Plenderleith

Summer 2009 Bulletin) was outstanding for perfection and number of flowers. It was good to see Mark Demer's pot of *Trillium hibbersonii* (or *Trillium ovatum* var. *hibbersonii*) (see frontispiece) which is a BC endemic possibly extirpated in the wild. Philip MacDougall displayed a cluster of pots of well-grown *Podophyllum vesipellis* hybrids to take the best woodland category. Joe Keller's floriferous *Lewisia tweedyi* was best BC native alpine. Joe's *Silene acaulis pedunculata* 'Mt. Snowdon Form' was outstanding for its perfect form and size winning best cushion and best in show. (I didn't measure it but I'm sure that it was at least 20 cm in diameter.) David Sellar's *Saxifraga* 'Allendale

Keller for six very well grown lewisias and the other to Ann Jolliffe for six exquisitely presented fritillarias. Two firsts were also awarded in class 7, both to Philip MacDougall, for *Corydalis curviflora* and *Epimedium wushanensi* hybrids. Dana Cromie's *Tropaeolum tricolor* won out in a difficult decision between entries in the plant from seed category. Diana Hume's *Trillium ovatum* X *rivale* (Eds. note: see the article *Trillium "ovatum x rivale"* by Roger Whitlock in the



*Silene acaulis pedunculata* 'Mt. Snowdon Form'  
Photograph by Ian Plenderleith

Beau' was stunning with flowers entirely concealing the foliage. Jason Nehring's *Soldanella alpina* and *minima* were both very lovely with *S. minima* taking first. Linda Verbeek's *Tecophilaea cyanocrocus* was best corm or bulb. *Dionysia* 'Anniele' grown by Mark Demers was a beautiful and difficult plant in perfect condition. Larry Wick created an outstanding miniature garden as well as a trough garden in a log; very creative and artistic. He also won best bonsai with *Juniperus* 'Shimpaku'. I apologize to those whose excellent entries I have neglected to mentioned individually.



***Saxifraga* 'Allendale Beau'.**  
**Photograph by Ian Plenderleith**



***Dionysia* 'Anniele'.** Photograph by Ian Plenderleith

### Trophies:

Best in show	Joe Keller	<i>Silene acaulis pedunculata</i> 'Mt. Snowdon Form'
Best Cushion Plant	Joe Keller	<i>Silene acaulis pedunculata</i> 'Mt. Snowdon Form'
Best Alpine Plant	Mark Demers	<i>Dionysia</i> 'Anniele'
Best Fern	Joe Keller	<i>Polypodium glycyrrhizza</i>
Best Dwarf Shrub	Joe Keller	<i>Salix nakamuraana</i> var. <i>yezo-alpina</i>
Best Bulb or Corm	Linda Verbeek	<i>Tecophilaea cyanocrocus</i>
Best Miniature Garden	Larry Wick	
Best Bonsai	Larry Wick	<i>Juniperus</i> 'Shimpaku'
Best Primula	Joe Keller	<i>Primula auricula</i> 'Broadwell Milkmaid'
Best Woodland Plant	Philip MacDougall	<i>Podophyllum vesipelle</i> hybrids (a group)
Best Plant from Seed	Dana Cromie	<i>Tropaeolum tricolor</i>
Best Native Bulb or Corm	Diana Hume	<i>Trillium ovatum</i> X <i>rivale</i>
Best Native BC Alpine Plant	Joe Keller	<i>Lewisia tweedyi</i>

**Highest aggregate points                      Joe Keller                      59 points**

## Spring Plant Sale

Linda Verbeek

For the first time since I joined the Club, this year the Show and the Sale were combined into a single event. We all thought that this might attract more interest to our Show, which certainly deserves more attention than it has had in the last number of years. Small it may be, but there are wonderful plants to look at every year. And also we thought that it might also entice a few more buyers. However, this meant that we had to change both the venue and the timing of the Sale, and that, of course, is always a chancy thing to do. As it happened, the event coincided with a festival at VanDusen Gardens (where we held Show and Sale) and we had lots of people coming by.

The Sale was a month earlier than normal, and at this time of the spring, that makes a huge difference in the way plants look. Some certainly were barely up, and not ready to go on sale, and overall the number of plants was less than normal. But on the other hand, there are plants that are already going over in the beginning of May and they looked wonderful this year.

As usual, I noted some highlights from all the various sellers. I liked the fact that Grahame Ware (our only “overseas” seller this year) was bringing quite a few natives, like *Penstemon cinicola* (a fairly small, violet-blue flowered Beardstongue from northern California and southern Oregon, growing on igneous rocks), *Goodyera repens* (the rattlesnake plantain from our coniferous forests, this one mostly east of the Cascades) and *Piperia* (formerly *Habenaria*) *elegans*. The latter two are orchids, and I don't know how easy they will be to keep, but hopefully the necessary attendant fungus was already in the soil mix. In any case, it is very enterprising of Grahame to try these. And I don't think the *Penstemon* is going to be that easy, either. Not that Grahame hasn't got other plants as well. I liked *Iris taurica*. This is either a species in the *Iris pumila* group, or a subspecies of that plant, depending on which taxonomist you follow, and like *Iris pumila*, it apparently comes in yellow and blue forms. It looked like it might be even a little smaller than *I. pumila*, which would make it an ideal rock garden plant. However, coming from so much further east, it might like it rather dry in summer. Good if you have a rockery you don't want to water!

The Bischoffs brought mostly *Cyclamen*, one of their great loves. It was unfortunate for them that *C. coum* had just finished blooming, I think a lot of people might have fallen for that if they could have seen what a wonderful display it makes in February and March. In my experience not-so-experienced gardeners gape at *Cyclamen hederifolium*, unable to believe that a *Cyclamen* can be hardy. But *C. hederifolium* blooms in August, which is at least a

reasonable temperature. *C. coum* blooms in winter! The other *Cyclamen* I noticed was *C. cilicium*, which in my garden overlaps with, but is later than *C. hederifolium*, and seems just as happy outside.

Ann Jolliffe, like me, has quite a love for bulbs, and this time it even showed on her sale table. Pots of *Fritillaria carica*, *F. kurdica* v. *crassifolia* and *Ornithogalum arianum* were enough to impress anyone. I actually badly wanted the *F. carica*, but there was only one, and several other suitors. This is a yellow-flowered *Fritillaria*, not as bright as our own *F. pudica*, but clearly yellow, and an elegant little plant. I wouldn't put it in the open garden, though. *Ornithogalum arianum* is a sturdy plant from eastern Turkey and Iran, with a pyramidal spike of typical white flowers. Ann and I both got the seed at the same time, but she has flowering bulbs and I have barely a sprig, so I was happy to acquire one. Growing where it does, it probably likes both the winter and the summer dry, and then a fast growth spurt in the spring – which means it is probably happier with some protection and a little more warmth in early spring than I can give it. However, I'll try. *Gypsophila cerastioides* is an old favourite of mine (even before I found out that it is also liked by Christopher Grey-Wilson, who was editor for the Alpine Garden Society in England for many years). It comes from the Himalayas, and doesn't look like a *Gypsophila* at all. In fact, it does look more like a very dainty, small *Cerastium*. I found out in the nick of time that this is one like *Campanula cochlearifolia* – you have to move it every few years – or let it move itself, but this one doesn't do that so readily. I am just nursing mine back to health. And although I'd heard of *Cardamine pentaphylla*, I'd never actually seen it. A Cress, yes, but you might say with attitude. Large, digitate leaves on sturdy stems, topped by dark lilac flowers of good size. It is a woodlander from Europe, and likes moist, well-drained humus.

Anna Burian had quite a show of Primulas, including a big pot of *P. marginata* – which was also represented in the show! – and various auriculas. I think auriculas are among the prettiest primulas, but unfortunately they don't like me. I've never been able to keep them alive for any length of time, and flowering .... forget it! But others don't have such problems. Anna also had one pot of *Narcissus watieri*, a small, pure white Narcissus from the Atlas Mountains. You'd have expected it on the show bench rather than on the sale table! But she wasn't ignoring the natives, with *Trillium ovatum* and *Podophyllum peltatum*, the eastern May apple. This is an intriguing species and a very vigorous plant if it gets established. It will spread its umbrella-shaped leaves far and wide. The single flower is white and nodding, underneath the leaves, and the fruit is large and red, although not exactly apple-shaped.

Jason Nehring, was also into natives, with *Trillium kurabayashii*, with its large spotted leaves and dark red flowers, and *Lewisia columbiana*. I have talked



about the latter a couple of times already, so will just mention it. Then he had *Cardiocrinum cordatum*, a slightly smaller relative of the giant lily that grows so well at UBC Botanical Garden. And finally *Anemonopsis macrophylla*. This is a woodlander from Japan, and quite hardy, but it dislikes excessive winter wet and wants summer moisture – so not ideal for our climate. Which is not to say that someone couldn't grow it here, in well-drained soil and leafy shade, perhaps. It grows to 75 cm, and makes large lavender, nodding flowers in late summer.

Joe Keller also paid tribute to the natives, with *Lewisia tweedyi* and *L. nevadensis*. He grows all *Lewisias* to perfection. One plant I didn't know at all was *Salix jejuna*, which is a creeping willow endemic to Newfoundland. It grows at most 6 cm tall, and the catkins are reddish-purplish. I wish I'd know that during the sale – it might be lovely in a trough. It grows on calcareous soils. Joe also had small plants of *Primula* 'Broadwell Milkmaid', a large pot of which was in the show. This is a *P. allionii* hybrid, and the show plant was completely covered with the milky-white flowers. I must say the sale plants were also doing their best!

Dan Szierzega had as usual, mostly bulbs. People must have been unobservant last fall, because he had several bulbs of *Colchicum luteum* for sale, this time in full growth, although they'll probably start to think about going dormant fairly soon. This is not a plant for the open garden, but it grows well in a pot (I've had mine now for 2 winters) and it increases well, too. This year mine had twice as many flowers as last year. It is one of the earliest of the bulbs to flower. The flower looks like a rather small *Colchicum*, but it is the colour of *Sternbergia lutea*. Dan was also selling a collection of *Sarracenias*, but most of those are not reliably hardy here. And finally *Paeonia veitchii*, a Chinese species with rather finely divided leaves – if not as delicate as *P. tenuifolia* – and pink flowers. It grows only 40 to 50 cm tall and can make a sizeable clump. I grew it from seed once, and found the foliage very pretty, but it seemed to heave itself out of the ground a bit, and got killed in a severe winter, although it is supposed to be quite hardy. Maybe it was again the combination of wet and cold.

Philip McDougall was selling lots of *Podophyllum*. He had a set of 20 or so pots of them in the show, and won a trophy for those. But some of the plants in the sale were just as nice, all sorts of patterns and colorations on the leaves. Some were offspring of *P. veitchii* and some of *P.* 'Spotty Dotty', I think. And a few hybrids of *P. veitchii* and *P. pleianthum*, which seemed to have the shape of *P. pleianthum* (that is, a pentagon with slightly hollow sides), and at least some of the colouring of *P. veitchii*. Philip was also selling a selection of *Epimedium* hybrids with *E. wushanense* as one of the parents. They appeared to come in a variety of heights. *E. wushanense* itself can grow to over a metre.

Richard Pearson tends to have really unusual things – I remember decades ago he actually imported live plants from Japan, and maybe some of them have still survived. Anyway, it is not often that you'll see a *Crinum* in our sale, but Richard had *C. moorei*. This is a plant from eastern South Africa, and apparently it doesn't tolerate frost. It grows to a metre or more tall, and usually has pink flowers, although white ones occur too. It is one of the parents of *C. X powellii*, which I have grown for years as a patio plant. Like *C. moorei*, it doesn't like full sun, even in our climate. I find that it grows happily outside all summer, and then loses its leaves when I bring it in for the winter, but blooms on the naked bulb. It makes a huge container plant, and I didn't want another, but it would be quite a show on a shady patio. Staying with the non-hardy, there was also a white-flowering Vireya Rhododendron. This section of the genus Rhododendron is exclusively tropical and not hardy, but they have some spectacular flowers. I think I have mentioned *Titanotrichum oldhamii* before, a hardy Gesneriad from Japan, with yellow flowers reminiscent of Foxglove. As it likes to be damp at all times (maybe not soggy), it should do alright here, but so far it doesn't seem to have taken off.

Sue Klapwijk had her table full of Rhododendrons, always a wonderful display of spring. A lot of them are hybrids, but there are always some true species around, too. This year I fell in love with *Rhododendron pubescens*. This has flower clusters like *R. racemosum*, but the flowers are a little larger and paler, I think. Sue said it could grow up to 2 m, but took well to pruning. She had *R. russatum*, which has quite intense dark purple flowers. I didn't buy that, because I already have a sturdy plant in the garden, which is in full bloom right now.

We ourselves had, for the first time, *Paris mairei*. I've had this plant for a number of years now, and brought it to the monthly pot show at least once, but we've never had spares. It looks much like *P. polyphylla*, with the same very long and slender yellow petals – more like threads than ribbons, actually – but it differs in that the leaves are not stalked, and have pale veins marking the leaf, and in that the ovary is purple. Another plant we've not had for years, because the parent plants died, is *Bupleurum angulosum*. This plant in the carrot family makes tight clusters of greeny-yellow flowers set off by large bracts, a bit like *Astrantia*, but the bracts are not frilly. They look a bit like a saucer presenting the flowers. *B. angulosum* is smaller and daintier than *B. longifolium*, but obviously a little more difficult too, as *B. longifolium* is very vigorous in my garden, and shows no signs of dying out. *Mimulus primuloides* is a tiny monkey flower growing in very wet places – we collected the seed years ago on the edge of a lake in Oregon, but it apparently occurs in BC too. It is perennial, but dies down to almost invisible winter buds. I grow it in a pot in a saucer of water, but it would be worth trying to grow it along a pond if you had one. I think it would want full sun.

Sylvia Mosterman, like Sue Klapwijk, had mostly shrubs and trees. *Ribes sanguineum* 'Pokey's Pink' is a form of the native flowering currant with clear candy-pink flowers. This is not a colour I've seen before in this species, and I personally think it is way more attractive than *R.s.* 'Icicle', which leaves me cold. *Prunus* 'Okame' is a flowering cherry with quite dark pink flowers in spring (it would look very nice with the *Ribes* in front of it!), and good fall colour too. It isn't exactly small – 10 m tall by a spread of 8 m, but might not be that fast growing, and it keeps a nice rounded form. *Prunus incisa* 'Little Twist', is another flowering cherry, with white flowers on branches that zigzag. Not as dramatic as the twisted hazel, but noticeable. It is also much smaller – 2 m by 2 m, and it has good fall colour too. *Cornus capitata* is a tree from the foothills of the Himalayas, and usually evergreen. The flowerheads must be about as large as our native *C. nuttallii*, but of course that isn't evergreen. It is not clear how tall it would grow, in the wild it can go up to 30 m or so, but in cultivation apparently it doesn't – or it isn't old enough yet. The fact that it is evergreen is a bonus, and it may not be susceptible to the anthracnose that bothers our native Dogwood.

The Club table had some unexpected things, too. Like a bonsai of a *Larix*, and not looking like it has just been started either. I wonder who donated that, it would have represented years of work. *Chrysosplenium davidianum* comes from China, but it doesn't look that much different from the native one (*Chr. alternifolium* var. *tetrandrum*). The stems and veins are brown-fuzzy, though, and that was visible. It should grow just as well as the native one in damp shade. They all bloom early, with the effect being provided more by the yellow bracts than by the tiny flowers themselves. The genus belongs in the Saxifrage family. *Allium flavum* is a very pretty, somewhat pale yellow onion with a fairly lax umbel. It isn't so hard to raise from seed, but I haven't yet found a place where it is happy in the garden. I actually wrote an article about *Pachyphragma macrophyllum* and a few other Brassicaceae a few years ago (Fall 2008), but this was the first time I'd seen it for sale. It was obviously its year, because it was quite popular too on the sale tables at the Western Winter Study Weekend in Everett a month or so before our sale. *Androsace armeniaca* has the typical *Androsace* umbels, but the rosette is very striking, with long seriously toothed leaves. It comes from Turkey and Iran, and is apparently a biennial, but easy. That is, if it will set seed. Also part of the Club's plants, but not in the regular sale, was a collection of large shrubs of the genus *Daphne*. Apparently someone at UBC had done a study on the genus, and these plants were now surplus and slated to be destroyed. We are very grateful to Brent Hine for rescuing them and logging them over to VanDusen. There were some wonderful specimens of *Daphne genkwa*, *D. X transatlantica*, *D. jasminea* and others, some in flower even. These were sold in a silent auction. *D. X transatlantica* is a cross between

*D. caucasica* and *D. collina*, and being a hybrid and sterile, it blooms all summer long, with white or pale pink flowers. *D. jasminea* is a true rock garden shrub. The form from Greece grows only a few dm high, and blooms freely with white or pink flowers. There is another variety from North Africa, but it is not very floriferous and the flowers are not spectacular.

It doesn't often get mentioned, but there wouldn't even be a sale without the hard work of all our volunteers. Foremost among them Mark Demers, who organizes and runs the sale and has been doing this for years, making sure we have the space, the tables, the covers, the cash registers, keeping the sellers informed, etc. Almost equally important is Joan Bunn who arranges for us to have media coverage and who organizes posters and hand bills and even, this year, balloons to attract attention to our signs advertising the sale.

Beyond those two there are all the willing hands that come Friday night and Saturday to set up tables, carry flats, help price things for the Club table, man the cash registers when it comes to the actual sale, and do all the odd jobs that spring up. A special thanks to those who stay to help clean up afterwards. And last but not least, we should not forget Dorothy Yarema who makes sure there is coffee and tea right through the day. They are all highly appreciated, and I hope they are all having fun, too, because the sale is always a very joyous occasion.

## Finding *Lewisia rediviva* on the Lewisia Highway

### David Sellars

From Hope, British Columbia, the Crowsnest Highway (Hwy 3) climbs east over a



series of mountain ranges and descends to Osoyoos in the Okanagan Valley before continuing its tortuous course to the Crowsnest Pass in the Rockies. In the section of highway from Hope to Osoyoos it is possible to see five different species of *Lewisia* within several kilometres of the road. *Lewisia tweedyi* with its marvellous yellow flowers can be found on the slopes of Frosty Mountain in Manning Park, a disjunct population from its main centre near Leavenworth, Washington. On the eastern, drier

side of the Cascade Range, *Lewisia columbiana*, *Lewisia pygmaea* and *Lewisia*

*triphylla* occur on shallow soils in the open forest. As you drive further east on the “Lewisia Highway” the climate becomes even drier and a real gem of the genus *Lewisia rediviva*, unfurls its water lily flowers on the arid slopes amid the sage brush.

Fortunately, *Lewisia rediviva* is the easiest *Lewisia* to see on this route and can be found only a few steps from your parked car. After Keremeos, Hwy 3 heads south down the beautiful Silmilkameen River Valley with vineyards undulating along the slopes. The highway then turns east and climbs up over the shoulder of Mount Kobau before descending to Osoyoos. At the height of land, a wide gravel road heads north up to the summit of Mount Kobau.



*Lewisia rediviva*. Photograph by David Sellars



*Lewisia rediviva*. Photograph by David Sellars

Turn left onto this road and park beside the road after about 100 m. The main area of *Lewisia rediviva* covers a rocky ridge just west of the road as shown in red on the Google Earth image. More plants can be found east of the road on a rocky knoll.

The best time to go to Mount Kobau is on a cloudless day in the first week of June. The flowers of *Lewisia rediviva* will open more when it is warm and sunny. In some years the main flowering may be slightly earlier or later depending on the spring conditions that year. After viewing the fields of *Lewisia rediviva* at the bottom of the Mount Kobau road it is worth driving to the top of the mountain which is feasible without four wheel drive



*Fritillaria pudica*. Photograph by David Sellars

as long as there is no snow. A short trail leading south from the top parking lot leads to a lookout where there are more *Lewisia rediviva* growing among the rocks. In the first week of June only the thin long leaves will be seen but if you go back at the end of July, the plants are likely to be in flower at that time. The high elevations of Mount Kobau hold other alpine treasures, most notably, *Fritillaria pudica* which flowers just after the snow melts in early June.

## **Winter in Horsefly**

### **Jurgen Hornburg**

(Eds. note: Horsefly is a small community east of Williams Lake and lies at an elevation of about 1000 m)

It is late February. Since the winter solstice, the sun has given us an additional 2 1/2 hours of daylight. In our latitude (53 degrees north), the days have become noticeably longer. But there are nearly 1.5 metres of snow covering the garden with a white, glittering blanket. The raised alpine beds look like buried Viking longboats waiting eagerly for the next journey.

A reality check cold snap has descended and the temperature is sitting at -22 degrees Celsius. The red polls, chickadees, and grosbeaks are eagerly gobbling up the sunflower seeds out of 3 feeders. Some are perched on shrubs against the south house walls, fluffed up to twice their size, soaking up the early sunrays. The stems of the red osier dogwoods are sparkling against the snow background.

Even though the hostile environment seems to exclude life on its surface, underneath, the efficiently insulating snow cover sustains and protects a myriad of alpine plants. Just above the soil, where it meets the snow, a unique narrow layer of snow crystals is formed, pukak snow. They warn us to never build a house of pukak snow (pronounced (poo-cuck)). This layer of pukak snow provides a haven for a variety of life like voles who use the pukak layer and build a devilish integrated network of tunnels. The grass stays green under this layer and provides nutrition for these animals. Unfortunately, so do the alpine plants!!

When the snow finally receded by April of 2011, a veritable intermingling of tunnels showed in the pukak layer. Later, with the snow totally gone, one could see the detritus of the voles meals along their former tunnels. Cruciferae seemed to be a favorite meal for these discerning guys. For example: of the two healthy spreads (diameter of 30 cm) of *Degenia velebitica*, only a sad stubble of miniature stumps was left. Another difficult loss was *Convulvulus boissieri*. Even

though some of the alpine beds were raised with 40-50 cm steep, rock walls, a handful of other alpiners also fell to the ever-present voles.

What to do about these voles? Get a cat? We have one along with two dogs that are avid vole hunters. Train an owl to hunt in your back yard, not likely. The pukak layer so important to protecting the alpiners also protects the voles from weather and predators. The voles are essential to the food chain. They are staple diet of a number of bird and mammal predators. For many owls and hawks, voles make up as much as 85 percent of their diet. Foxes, coyotes, bobcats and even wolves eat them. Voles have become an important link in the food chain between the grasses and the carnivores and birds of prey. Maybe even more important than alpine plants in the garden.

The trick is to have back ups-to anticipate possible losses. One can take cuttings or collect seeds, which can help cover future losses. Or, there are the seed exchanges. What unremitting joy they provide on a bleak winter's day. After, much painful selecting of the "must have" species, the seeds arrive and seeding turns into an almost euphoric activity. There are about 220 pots with seeds sitting upstairs in the growing room. Already about 40 are showing hopeful and healthy seedlings. Another 150 pots from last year's seed harvest are sitting under the snow. By the spring equinox, they will be dug out and put into the warming green house. A month later, "Look Ma, there is *Claytonia lanceolata* and, over there is *Clintonia uniflora*!!! Wow, the *Soldanellas* have made it, and there *Thlaspi caespitosa*. I can't believe it! Smell it!

In the end the combination of pukak snow for protection and hungry voles making to spots in the alpine bed are the duo that keeps me seeding and seeding.

"He who plants a tree plants a hope".

## **Botanical Art in British Columbia**

### **Lyn Noble**

"PLANTS!" We grow them, we conserve them, we study them, and we even paint them. Yes we are plant enthusiasts - and the most enthusiastic amongst us is Dr. Roy Taylor who currently is a board member of 2 Vancouver Island botanical gardens. Dr. Taylor, while Director of U.B.C. Botanical Garden, established 'Friends of the Garden' (FOGS), encouraging their many, diverse activities, including native plant conservation and awareness, a 'Shop in the Garden', the 'Back 40' for plant propagation, publishing and traveling art exhibits plus Botanical Art courses.

The FOGS, with his guidance curated an exhibit and compiled a book "Plantae Occidentalis: 200 Years of Botanical Art in British Columbia" which was published in 1979. The book provides an overview of the progress of botanical art in this province beginning with some details the history of coastal exploration circa 1729 when botanists, artists and cartographers on board the ships recorded and collected land data and plants in this 'new land'.

Through succeeding years of B.C. development the railways came west with engineers, scientists, artists, gold seekers and settlers to discover and celebrate the land and its native plants.

Plantae Occidentalis: 200 Years of Botanical Art in British Columbia, the exhibition, was on display at the Museum of Anthropology for 5 months. To quote a review of the show by Mary S. Aikins: "It illustrates the creative



**Richard Matthew Ciccimara**  
**Watercolour**  
**Licorice Fern (*Polypodium glycyrrhiza*)**

partnership of scientists and artists in transmitting images of British Columbia to the rest of Canada and the world. The display will include many lesser-known or forgotten works by artists of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, as well as works by contemporary botanical and floral artists. Illustrating only native and naturalized British Columbia plants, this exhibition will include approximately 100 works: prints, line drawings, oil paintings, watercolours and graphite and tempera works. The role of women in the field of botanical illustration is of special interest, as it was primarily among women painters that botanical art flourished in B.C. in the late nineteenth century."

This was followed by another smaller exhibit and publication "Cloud Flowers - Rhododendrons East and West", published in 1981. Both exhibits traveled extensively

throughout North America. The FOGS continue these and many other activities to enhance our enjoyment of plants year round. A number of photographs that



depict the works of various botanical artists have been reproduced from *Plantae Occidentalis* with permission from the UBC Botanical Garden. Richard Matthew Ciccimara (1924-1973) was born in Austria but settled in Victoria in 1955. This watercolour painting of a licorice fern provides a wonderful representation of his art.

J. Fenwick Lansdown (1937 -) is a renowned bird painter known also for his botanical paintings. This watercolour is an outstanding work, the type often used to accompany his ornithological paintings.



**Oldriska Ceska**  
**Watercolour**  
**Western Wild Ginger (*Asarum caudatum*)**

Oldriska Ceska (1938 -), a native Czechoslovakian who came to BC in 1969 is a scientific illustrator who produced several botanical papers for the provincial government.

This shaggy mane mushroom depicted in 'air brush' is an excellent example of the art of Francis Beebe (1914 -) who was chief illustrator for the British Columbia Museum in Victoria.



**Common Salsify (*Tragopogon porrifolius*)**  
**Watercolour**  
**J. Fenwick Lansdown**



**Shaggy Mane (*Coprinus comatus*)**  
**Airbrush**  
**Francis Lyman Beebe**

This silkscreen rendering of *Arbutus menziesii* by Peggy Tupper (1920 -) is a good representation of her work. The 'Madrone', found on Vancouver Island and the Gulf is at the end of its range here in B.C.



Pacific Madrone (*Arbutus menziesii*)  
Silkscreen  
Peggy Tupper

Caren Heine (1958 -) is the daughter of well known Vancouver Island artist Harry Heine and renowned in her own right. This watercolour is of a group of plants growing in the Cache Creek area. Her depiction of the Pacific Dogwood (*Cornus nutallii*) was used for the Canada Mint's year 2000 \$350 gold coin.



Western bracken, Nootka rose,  
Yorkshire Fog, Wild carrot, Licorice fern  
Watercolour  
Caren Heine

## Lyn Noble Alan Tracey

Lyn Noble is a long-time member of our club. She is renowned for her exquisite watercolour artwork depicting North American wildflowers. Her work has been shown in such places as the Royal Horticultural Society in London, the San Francisco Strybing Arboretum, Nanjing Botanical Garden and Horticultural Society of New York, to mention a few. Her paintings are of live plants. The frontispiece depicts her painting of a B.C. endemic plant, *Trillium hibbersonii*. The following page displays a few of her other paintings of plants native to B.C.

