

And now for something different...

Submitted by member Helen Vaughan who gives us some gardening insight on her native country of New Zealand.

"I think New Zealand is a paradise for gardeners, having a generally temperate but windy climate, with minimal 'downtime' in winter. Many plants grown as annuals here in Metro Vancouver are perennials in New Zealand. For example, fuschis, arctotis, cerinthe, cannas, succulents and chrysanthemums, plus plants such as dahlias don't need lifting for winter. But, lawns need mowing all year- everything has its downside!

For many years New Zealand gardens had a very English look to them- roses and lots of flowers, but recently native plants have increased in popularity.

I have seen many NZ natives growing in Vancouver eg- hebe, some carex, acaena, raoulia, libertia, astelia and flaxes. These plants evolved in isolation over millions of years and today 80% occur only in NZ. The majority of natives are evergreen, mainly dispersed by hundreds of native birds.

There are other interesting features that make New Zealand plants unique. Many are dioecious- having separate male and female plants. Many are also divaricating- growing in a tangle. This may have evolved for protection from wind or from native birds- in particular the moa which was 6-8 feet tall and ground dwelling, but is now extinct.

I am really enjoying experiencing 'proper' seasons in Canada- the colours of autumn, particularly maples, and seeing cheerful blossoms and bulbs after a grey, damp winter. I also enjoy the lack of wind which often battered my garden in NZ."

This link has photos of some NZ native plants.

<http://www.gardens.co.uk/Natives.cfm>

Thanks Helen for sharing!

Send me your secrets!

Send to Cheryl Fiddis @ ecfiddis@telus.net
We would love to have more members share their 'secrets' and garden thoughts. Don't be shy!

Thank You's...

BRAGS would like to take a moment to recognize our transplant from New Zealand, Helen Vaughan. New to Canada in 2003, Helen joined BRAGS and immediately began assisting our refreshments committee. She has fully taken over this role for the past 3 – 4 years. When the rest of us arrive at the monthly BRAGS meetings, we socialize with each other until the meeting starts while Helen faithfully gets the coffee perking, the tables set, and the goodies ready for the break. Our 2009 BRAGS Picnic was also hosted by Helen at her home and garden...an event we hope to see again in 2011! Thank You Helen for being such a valuable BRAGS member!

Meet Our Treasurer!

Sage Advice

By Kim Taylor

At the end of each work day, my father would change out of his suit and into his comfortable farm clothes. He would put his hoe on his shoulder, and disappear into the forest of beans, peas and asparagus.

Eventually, I would find him weeding a row of vegetables or hilling potatoes. As a child, I always had a question to ask or a story to tell. My father would patiently listen to me, as he quietly tended to his garden. Each evening, when he hung up his hoe, he would say to me, "it is important that you have a good hobby to enjoy as an adult".

I didn't really understand the beauty of my father's message, until I acquired a community garden plot.

On my days off from work, I love the thought that I do not have to wear restrictive office clothing. I can dress for the garden- loose shirt, shorts, and no shoes. Sometimes I enjoy wearing gumboots, because I love to splash through the puddles on the way to my garden plot.

Once I walk into my garden, all of my burdens are trapped in a spider's web at the gate. For a concentrated period of time, my focus is to tend to my garden and to visit with my neighbours.

I plant alyssum to attract hover flies; I remove slugs that are eating my lettuce; I plant scarlet runner beans, because I know the hummingbirds find the red flowers irresistible; and I create a tapestry of vegetables and flowers that, hopefully, both people and insects find pleasurable. In the midst of my gardening time, I am always overjoyed to be interrupted by a fellow gardener who wishes to share with me a favorite flower, an elegant vegetable or a triumphant tale about defeating a pest in the garden. Time in my garden is suspended; I am free.

When the day in my plot is done, I pick-up my burdens that are waiting at my garden gate and I return for home. The burdens, however, always seem easier to solve and weigh less from when the day began, because my father had the foresight to provide me with an invaluable garden tip.

Thank you Kim for such a heartwarming story!

BRAGS Membership

Annual membership cost \$12. Members share various gardening interests and enjoy 10% discount of regularly priced items at Garden Works by presenting their membership cards. Have you considered asking a friend or neighbour to join our club?

Upcoming Meetings

May 4, 2011

Gary Lewis of Phoenix Perennials will entertain us with:

"Weird & Wonderful Plants of the World:

Botanically Intriguing Options for your garden".

Gary will be bringing an exciting assortment of plants from the nursery, so be prepared to do some shopping! Payment by cash is preferred, but VISA/MC can also be accepted.

June 1, 2011

Wendy Leroux of Botanus Inc. will help us:

"Create a Summer Bulb Spectacular"!

Create an amazing floral display this summer and for years to come. A selection of bulbs, bare roots, lilies, hostas and various perennials will be available for purchase (Cash only please). Members are encouraged to bring their own bags to be 'eco' friendly.

September 7, 2011

To wrap up the summer season, an interactive evening with members sharing their garden tips, successes and failures is planned. Come prepared with pictures if you have any, or something from your garden to show and discuss.

All meetings start at 7 pm, at the Burnaby Village Museum, - Main Building, 2nd floor.

It's centrally located and there is ample parking.

Refreshments are served. All are welcome.

Don't forget to bring your own mug to be eco-friendly and save a Styrofoam cup!

**BRAGS
2011 EXECUTIVE**

President

Verna Adamson
604-294-5550

Vice-President

Lanny Hui
604-415-8287

Treasurer

Kim Taylor
60435-0728

Secretary

Linda Cholette
604-298-9059

Past President

Judy Wellington
604-434-8287

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STANDING COMMITTEES

Membership

Anne Forsyth
604-298-6350

Nominations

Judy Wellington

Publicity

Lanny Hui
604-415-4564

Rhododendron Festival

Wendy Thompson
604-420-6513
June Dodson
604-939-2597

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OTHER COMMITTEES

Garden Tour

Vacant

Plant Sale

Lanny Hui

Newsletter

Cheryl Fiddis
604-435-2801

Anne & David Forsyth
604-298-6350

Welcome

Faye Kilpatrick
604-434-5921

Sheila Chowdhury
604-298-1196

Raffle

Joy Makepeace-Smith
604-433-5869

Refreshments

Helen Vaughan
604-299-2014

Speakers

Rosemarie Daviduk
604-431-6207

Website

David Forsyth
604-298-6350

Out and About

**May 1st, Sunday 9:30 – 4pm
23rd Annual Burnaby Rhododendron Festival
Shadbolt Centre for the Arts**

Don't miss the event of the year! If you are not able to volunteer at the event, be sure to come and show your support.

Free admission. Suitable for all family members.

May 19th, Thursday , all day long

Customer Appreciation Day at all Gardenworks locations.
15% Discount!

Free Garden Clinics for Adults at Gardenworks

Visit www.gardenworks.ca for more details!

Here's a sample few...

May 5, Thursday @ 6:30pm (Lougheed)

Paint Your Garden

May 7, Saturday @ 12:00 noon (Lougheed)

Moss and Other Hanging Baskets

May 14, Saturday @ 12:00 noon (Lougheed)

Container Arrangements and Arranging Containers

May 14, Saturday @ 1pm (Lougheed)

Living Walls

And something special...

May 8, Sunday, Mother's Day!

Time to remember all those special Mothers by celebrating Mother's Day!

BRAGS Picnic! (Date to be advised...)

This year we plan to once again hold the BRAGS picnic at the end of the summer. And as in 2009, Helen Vaughan has generously offered to host our picnic, by opening up her garden and home. Please plan to bring a dish to share, a chair, 'eco' friendly cup, plate, cutlery, cloth napkin...

Coffee, tea and juice will be provided. No Pets please!

