



The Garden Master News



Newsletter of the Atlantic Master Gardeners Association

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GREETINGS FROM: DALHOUSIE AGRICULTURAL CAMPUS!

This year was the 10th offering of our annual Summer School. We had 12 participants representing all of the Atlantic Provinces and even a few from Ontario.



Planning and revisions are underway for the October start. One of the significant changes will be the campus-wide move from the Moodle learning management system to Blackboard. Students will still have access to help both through the Helpdesk and mghelp@dal.ca. The concepts are the same, but the layout and navigation might take some getting used to by those who are former Moodle users.

The website (<http://www.dal.ca/faculty/agriculture/extended-learning/programs-courses/master-gardener-training/maintaining-the-garden.html>) is continually being updated as clarifications are identified and more information is needed. If you have suggestions for the website, please let me know at: joy.galloway-jones@dal.ca.

As the seasons change and evolve, so do the processes and procedures here on campus. Enjoy the remainder of the summer and the crispness of fall and we'll see you online.

All the best,
Joy Galloway-Jones
Extended Learning,
Dalhousie Faculty of Agriculture





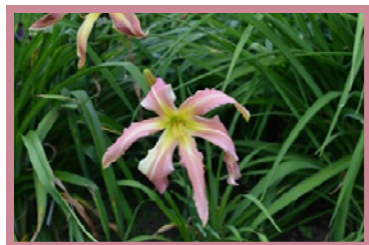
PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

- BY **Heather Connors-Dunphy**
AMGA President

Hello AMGA Members

I just gathered up the last branches from Arthur. The Fredericton area was particularly hard hit. Arthur managed to beat down a lot of perennials, but most have bloomed, despite being bedraggled. There are still piles of brush everywhere and traffic in any direction usually includes at least one tree removal truck.

On a lighter note, the day lilies are blooming very late this year. Normally they are over by the end of July and today they are still going strong. We visited Canning Daylilies in mid July and brought home a few more.. not that they were needed.. but you have to feed the addiction!



The Association had a very good first annual Conference and Workshop. All the events were well attended. The change in format was a success.

We had twenty registrants for the workshop and good attendance at the AGM, dinner and Plant Exchange.

Congratulations to the new graduates and to those who certified for the first time; also to the 20 people who certified for another year. We awarded five hundred hour pins to Anita Sulley and Carol Goodwin.

You will see the President's AGM report elsewhere so I won't repeat it here.

In brief:

Your Executive met six times in the last year, we instituted and actioned the Conference and Workshop format, we had an audit of the books of account done, and updated the ways members can renew their memberships and pay for things from the AMGA. We asked the approval of members on some by law changes.

These included a three year term for Officers. Accordingly you will notice no change to Officers in the 2014-15 year. Lynn Brooks is leading a committee to bring in a new slate of Officer nominees for the 2015-16 year.

The Executive had a brief meeting after Graduation/ Certification and set out the following as items to be progressed this year:

Improving communication and enhancing member involvement

Workshop Topic 2015 (as decided by members at the AGM) City Farms and Food Gardens

Other MG training opportunities

Search for an Events Co-ordinator and a Webmaster

The schedule for upcoming Executive Meetings is:
October 5, December 7, February 8, April 12 and June 3.

Hearty thanks to those on the Executive for their efforts and to members for their support during the year.

Happy gardening
Heather



AMGA NEWS

One of the Highlights of the First Annual AMGA Conference was the Master Gardener Graduation!



Proud 2014 Graduates are shown above, L to R Aileen Reid, Linda Hachez, Keri Winsor, Brenda Bailey and Tracey Smith.

In addition to Graduation, the following Graduates received AMGA Certification: Dick Bird, Sarah Burchell, Linda Hachez, Karen Jones, Kevin Long Aileen Reid and Keri Winsor.

As Master Gardeners, we are all fully aware of the hours of hard work that are symbolized by each of these Presentations.

Congratulations to All!

FROM OUR MEMBERS

Jean Evong writes:

I have 12 different kinds of Rudbeckia and counting. I am a little crazy about them and each morning they greet me with 12 different smiles. I have been growing them for a few years and they now all reseeded. They are very carefree and require little maintenance. In the fall and winter, they provide food for the birds and in return, they spread the seeds for me. I will have to go back through my garden journals to see exactly which ones they are.



I would be interested in seeing what other kind of Rudbekias other gardeners are growing.



CHALLENGE AND RESILIENCE

- by Janet Elsie

A cool reluctant spring after a prolonged winter posed some interesting challenges for the gardening season 2014. When the first garden inspections began, the extent of the winter damage became apparent. In some gardens damage to snow laden or ice encrusted trees and shrubs left broken hearts as well as severely damaged previously coddled specimens. In other areas, hungry deer emerged looking for food eating bark and shrubbery above the snow line and again as the first signs of green began to show. In my garden the maze of little tunnels appearing in the snow as I looked down into the back garden area made me concerned and curious as to what I may be faced with during the coming spring.

The majority of damage done in my garden occurred because of a hungry housing unit of red backed voles, eating away all winter beneath the snow. Their favorites being the fleshy tap roots of the Yucca 'Adam's Needle' and Baptista Australis 'False Indigo'. Other plants of choice were the root systems of Hostas and Japanese Forest grass. They also ate in circular fashion around each of shrubs in the rose garden. Then for spite they sheared off four mature clematis and a climbing Joseph's Coat rose in the garden by the deck. The clematis were planted to provide vertical accent and bloom around the area from late May to early September. But despite this damage, the first shoot of my blue Agapanthus emerging after all this, the hardest of it's six winters in my zone 5b garden lifted my spirits considerably.

So, it began, cleanup of the dead plant material and

vines to estimate the extent of the damage. The Yucca had already lost it's two companions to voles three winters previously, with only one sending up three small shoots to begin again. The clematis had only a few four inch sticks protruding above the root zone. How would they fare? I was fairly sure the root systems had not been damaged but I did not know how well they would recover and I certainly did not expect any bloom especially from the early varieties 'Asao' and 'Nelly Moser'. I knew the late August bloomer was most likely to follow it's regular pattern.

Decisions:

As I looked at the Yucca with the deep circular gouges around the crown of the plant, I debated whether or not to move it to a less visual part of the garden or let it be. I decided to give it the summer months and if it did not respond, return it to the earth via the compost heap in the fall. Then be patient and wait!

The clematis needed to start all over again so a healthy helping of compost went around the base of each variety. Then be patient and wait

Damaged Hosta crowns and foliage removed. The one or two remaining shoots were moved to nursery positions, other hosta divided, soil rejuvenated and divisions put into the same locations to fill the design gaps. The same procedure occurred with the Japanese Forest grass.

The roses were also treated to helpings of compost and other amendments. Then be patient and wait.

The large 'False Indigo' needed division and the

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CHALLENGE AND RESILIENCE

(Continued from page 6)

surrounding area redesigned. Guess what , no division needed, just the fun of redesigning the new space and an opportunity to rejuvenate the soil in that area of the garden.

Results:

The Yucca shoots finally began to emerge at the end of a very cool spring. Now there is at least a 12" diameter of new growth. The question is how long will it be before it once more will send up it's beautiful spike of white blooms. I've been growing root cuttings of yucca for 10 years that have not as yet flowered.

The clematis have grown back dark green and vibrant to their full height in a few short weeks 'Asao' the early bloomer produced only a couple of flowers in August. 'Nelly Moser' which was paired with 'Warsaw Nike' produced a surprising and beautiful result. It's regular pattern is for Nellie to bloom in late June and then Warsaw Nike to follow later in July. This year they bloomed at the same time, late July into August. A striking color palette together!



Three of the roses did not survive while the others had a lot of large damaged branches that did not show green. The visual structure of each was so compromised that I made the decision to cut each back to about 6". Each have sent out approx. two feet of new growth and all

produced some bloom.

The very cool spring, with most days until June 25th reaching only the mid-teens went overnight to 26 degrees celsius and remained there with day after day of sunshine.

This produced an interesting bloom cycle. Late spring and early summer bloom occurring simultaneously instead of slowly transitioning from one into the other. It reminded me of viewing the Reford gardens in Metis Quebec with their long winters and short summers inducing everything to bloom seemingly at the same time.



Lessons learned:

Don't freak out! Don't panic! There is rarely only damage and loss in nature. Above all be patient. Plants and shrubs that could easily have been ripped out and assigned to compost heaps have recovered beautifully. The garden and our natural environments are extremely resilient and renewal will follow. In our private gardens we have the privilege of assisting this process with good cultural practices and enjoying the results. The scent of summer phlox and the chirp of the crickets signal the final weeks of another fascinating garden season. One of my favorite quotes is from Marjorie Harris. "There may be life before gardening, but what other life is there, once a garden possesses your soul?"

THE HANGING GARDENS OF MARQUEYSSAC

- by Johanne Robertson

I had the chance to visit beautiful gardens in France this spring and here is the first one we toured "The Hanging Gardens of Marqueyssac", here is a description of this magnificent garden.

The gardens of Marqueyssac, listed as a National Historical Monument are situated in Vezac, France; it is a private estate that was born from the history of a family from the 17th century. After extensive restoration work, Marqueyssac was opened to the public in 1997. Today it is the most visited garden in the region of Aquitaine.

The garden overlooks and unveils an exceptional panoramic view the entire Dordogne Valley from its chalky cliffs. The paths are organized into three circuits that lead to the Belvedere, 800 meters from the chateau. The belvedere at 130 meters above the river gives an exceptional view of the valley with its castles and some of the most beautiful villages of France.



VIEW OF LA ROQUE GAGEAC

The site offers more than six kilometers of shaded paths bordered by 150,000 hand-pruned box trees a hundred years old, the whole embellished with belvederes, waterways, rockeries and grassy clearings.

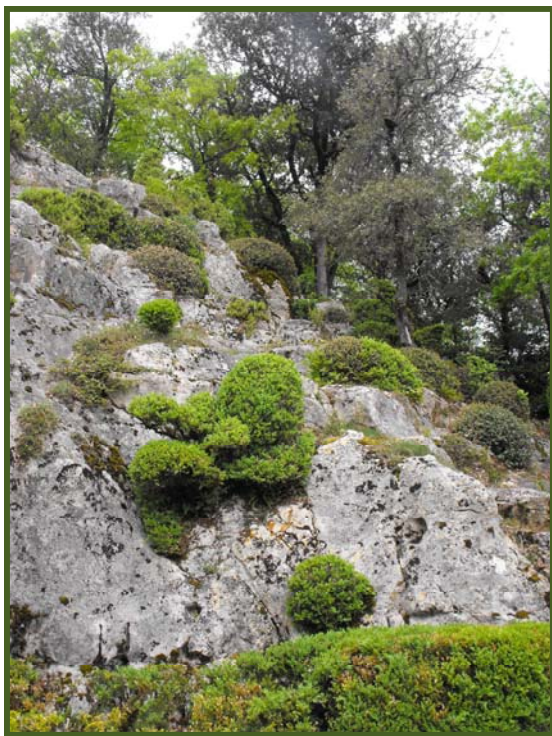


ONE OF MANY PATHS

Boxwoods are omnipresent in the park. Planted throughout, they constitute the main theme of the walks. They form a network, imposing themselves on the entire estate like the bearers of order, the principal directors of unruly nature. The dense and evergreen foliage of boxwoods gives the gardens an unchanging aspect throughout the seasons. They also lend themselves to pruning, thus enabling the creation of very even groupings and complex vegetal forms: topiary art. It is for these qualities that for centuries and more specifically since the Italian gardens of Renaissance, boxwoods have been widely planted in gardens.

The Common Boxwoods *Buxus sempervirens*, are adapted to calcareous soil, are resistant to dryness but are also capable of growing in undergrowth. The gardens are pruned twice a year, once at the end of spring and again at the end of autumn. The hedges in undergrowth are only pruned once a year because growth slows in the shade.

The cliff exposed to the south is very sunny. This cliff accumulates heat during the day, and then releases it, warming the vegetation up again at night. During winter, haze and fog rising up from the river encircle the plants and shelter them against the frost. The southern side of the park is filled with Holm Oaks *Quercus ilex*, Durmast Oaks *Quercus petraea*, Montpellier Maples *Acer monspessulanum* and arbutuses...These species, typical of the Mediterranean region like boxwoods, show very distinct adaptations to dryness. During summer, the song of the cicadas rounds out the southern French atmosphere of this side of the garden.



CHALKY CLIFFS

In contrast, on the more humid northern side grows an Atlantic type of vegetation, represented essentially by Hornbeams *Carpinus betulus*, maples, oaks and Robinia False Acacias *Robinia pseudoacacia*. From the belvedere, the southern side of the park with its numerous Holm Oaks with dark foliage and tormented shapes appears much darker than the northern side. This characteristic of the sunny slopes in the region of Sarlat is responsible for the origin of its name Perigord Noir.

In its current form, the chateau is a late 18th century luxury residence, built on the eve of the French Revolution. Constructed with great simplicity, Marqueyssac displays a remarkable roof made from material typical of the region: limestone slabs (lauze) or stone tiles. The roof weighs more than 300 tons.



REPAIRS TO THE STONE ROOF

If ever you are in the area make sure to visit the Hanging Gardens.

NAME THAT PLANT

The Mystery plant featured in the Winter and spring Newsletters was correctly identified by Michael Branscombe.



This is ***Rubus odoratus*** – aka Thimbleberry, Flowering Maple, Purple Flowering Raspberry, Fragrant Raspberry, Virginia Raspberry, Framboisier du Canada.

You can find this unique wild raspberry growing in the woods and moist meadows of Atlantic Canada, Quebec and Ontario. Although this native shrub is not familiar to many Maritimers today, its history as a useful and attractive plant goes back several hundred years. Its popularity spread to Europe long ago, where it has been an important ornamental garden plant ever since. It's easy to see why – *Rubus odoratus* is a raspberry like no other! Several outstanding features make this species unique . . .

- large, bright green to yellow-green “maple leaf” foliage is attractive from spring to fall
 - intensely coloured purplish-pink, fragrant, rose-like flowers bloom from June to September
 - cup-shaped berries are not tasty to all humans, but they are a real treat for many wild species
 - hollow canes are thornless, and they provide a much needed winter habitat for bees•
- it becomes a 4-season plant, if you also enjoy the ever-changing sculpture when snow and ice form on

the tangled canes.

Rubus odoratus is tough, easy to grow, and adaptable to a range of conditions – but it does spread quickly into dense thickets, so it must be sited with caution. For many gardeners, the reward is worth the effort: a fragrant hedge winding down a long driveway, a splash of colour glowing in the shade, a living fence blocking wind and munching animals. And when it's left to grow naturally in the wild woods and meadows, it's a welcome surprise to come upon this unique raspberry!

Read more about *Rubus odoratus*:

The Canadian Native Plant Database:

<http://nativeplants.evergreen.ca/search/view-plant.php?ID=00592>

Plants For A Future:

<http://www.pfaf.org/user/Plant.aspx?LatinName=Rubus+odoratus>

- by Rochelle Oxford

New Mystery Plant



Do you know
this tree?

Send your guess to:
suesturt@bellaliant.net

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