



Anchorage Chapter



Volume 13, Issue 8

ALASKA MASTER GARDENERS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER August 2011



Message From Jane

I don't want to think about August. It signals the beginning of the end of gardening season and I feel like I just got started. I've begun the process of digging and dividing perennials (especially primulas and iris). This creates a space crunch which triggers moving other plants to make room for the divisions.

Reminder: MG PLANT SWAP on August 15th. A good reason for all of us to take a look at our perennials that may need to be divided!

I'm still puzzling over the past winter, spring and strange summer. Lilac blooms around town seemed much sparser than normal. My mock orange flowering is sparser than usual - blooming mostly at the top instead of their normal top to bottom. I lost three Canadian hardy roses over the winter. The remaining 2 or 3 hardy roses are totally infested for the 3rd summer with the dreaded "rose slug" and I dug them out last week. I experienced some winter loss of other perennials here and there, like the large bulbs in several lily clumps, but the younger bulbs survived. A number of my perennials seem smaller than usual this summer. How did the rest of you fare this year?

Summer project: Container vegetables, leaves, and a driveway. Problem: No garden space for veggies. Solution: Switched to containers. Problem: containers too small and difficult to keep watered. Solution: switch to larger containers - 18 gallon storage bins with drainage holes added. Problem: containers expensive to buy. Solution: garage sales (plan ahead for next year, still lots of garage sale season left). Problem: Takes a lot of soil to fill an 18 gallon container and expensive if bought by the bag. Solution: Fill the container to about 18-20" with damp leaves, uncompleted compost and a few handfuls of steer manure and add about 4" of soil to the top reusing soil from previous annual pots. If no reusable soil, use a couple of bags of the least expensive potting or garden soil available. Problem: No good full sun exposure in my backyard. Solution: Set up container gardener in driveway with good sun and extra warmth from driveway blacktop.

The broccoli has been harvested and now I'm working on side shoots. Next year I will add a second container with staggered planting. Kale: six varieties with on-going harvesting - next year, not so many kinds. There is also the on-going green bush bean harvesting. Small



heads of cauliflower are forming. Outside tomato 'Stupice' has produced a number of ripe tomatoes, none of which has made it to a salad because I eat them on the spot. Four large pots of potatoes planted entirely in leaves are doing well.

Celery in 3 lb coffee cans (painted red) is doing well, although containers are small for them and plants are very deep green and strong flavored (will dice and freeze for winter soups & stews). Added very late (about June 20th): a pot of corn and a long plastic container intended for storing long wrapping paper rolls planted with beets - they're growing well, but whether there is enough season left is debatable - but I should at least have beet greens to use. Strangely I completely forgot about planting any peas, lettuce, radishes or green onions - but there is always next year.

I'm also hoping I don't catch a new obsession: miniature scale gardens and landscaping! I was fascinated by last week's tour of Sean Monico's G-gauge (1/29th actual size) model train set up in his backyard. For me the potential for obsession is not so much with the model train, but with the to-scale gardening and landscaping. What a fun challenge to search out plant species that would lend themselves to G-gauge scale landscaping. I can just imagine how much fun it would be to search for dwarf species, learn some bonsai skills, and "repurpose" rock garden and/or native plants to pose as examples of full size plants in creating themed miniature landscapes. I loved Sean's use of blue-eyed grass clipped to look like Iris setosa.

Photo by Jane B.

Treasurer's Report

Checking Bal. 5/30/11	662.13
Expenses	507.14
Total Checking Bal. 6/25	154.99
July Expenses	328.89
Transfer from Savings	2000.00
Checking Bal. 7/26/11	1826.00



July Garden Tours

By Pat Anderson, Jane Baldwin, Gina Docherty, Annie Nevaldine

July 11th - Verna Pratt's Mid Summer Garden Tour:

A few raindrops didn't deter master gardeners from enjoying Verna's summer garden. The Meconopsis' were very tall and loaded with vibrant blue flowers. The "Citronella" lily with its narrow, grassy leaves on the deck was just about to burst into flame, and the vegetables on the roof both in and out of the greenhouse were tremendous. In the corner of her rock garden was the beautiful pink-edged crenulated sedum. Almost hidden under the arbor was a viburnum, which resembled a hydrangea with a big white head. The silvery-leaved silver-berry shrub seemed to glow phosphorescently in the overcast light as if lit from inside. And only Verna could get away with growing (on purpose) a variety of horsetail in her pond.



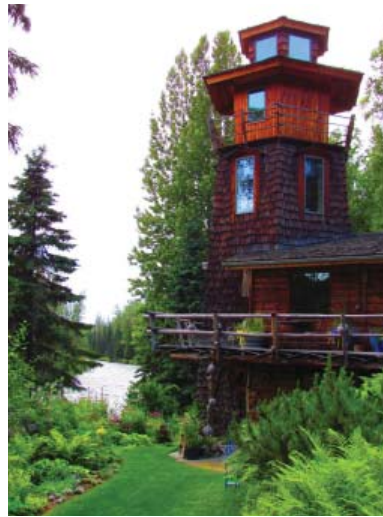
barrow where veggies happily grow.

Each house window was adorned with beautifully decorated window boxes filled with flowers and 'spillers' of all kinds. There are perennials and annuals in every flower bed around the house; behind there is a summer-visitor building with three bedrooms. The patio overlooks a fabulous view of Sleeping-Lady and Cook Inlet, with the noisy Peter's Creek

within ear-range. Lush large and small perennials are thoughtfully tagged; some notable plants were Culver's Root and Fragrant Lacey Dianthus. Garden artworks were re-purposed spring horses, collections of tools, water features, plus a large life-like turtle their son

created, to name just a few.

This amazing property located on a cliff's edge which is so beautifully landscaped and filled with art, was enjoyed and appreciated by all the Master Gardener's who went on the tour.



2. Lighthouse Garden at the Brusehabers' in Eagle River

Master Gardener Susan Brusehaber's Lighthouse home, located above Eagle River, has beautifully landscaped areas leading to viewings of the rushing flow. One view area featured a unique upside-down large wooden boat on strong beams that formed a canopy, with seating and plants underneath for conversation or contemplation. On the property a large well tended vegetable and fruit garden was enjoyed on the way to a quiet pond surrounded by delphiniums, where Susan's dog delighted in dipping. One of the garden rows was raised with bottles, rocks and soil where strawberries were growing profusely. The greenhouse is

extraordinary and is incorporated into a building that has huge skylights and window walls that let in the sun. There were ripe "Cobra" tomatoes and hanging cucumbers growing in abundance, with a very unusual, efficient style of growing. On the floor there is a colorfully tiled drain. There are smaller gardens of veggies and plants, as well as perennials, annuals, and selected trees. Let us not forget the outhouse which has three etched glass windows, and a barrel of flowers outside! The man of the house was busy attending to his smokehouse where he was placing recently caught Red Salmon. Thankful and grateful Master Gardeners left this nautical-themed home and extensive gardens enriched by what they experienced.



July 25th
1. Catherine Renfro's mid-town garden was charming - so charming that two weeks ago her son and his bride were married there. A large lawn with a central bed filled with primulas,

Continued on page 4

Master Gardener Focus: Madge Oswald

Madge Oswald purely loves garage sales.

The deck chairs on the Oswald lawn are garage-sale treasures. The pink pig in the vegetable garden came from a garage sale. Madge loaded up the copper bird-bath at a garage sale and packed it to the house, which, for that matter, is itself a garage-sale purchase.

"A friend was helping the lady who lived here with her Labor Day weekend garage sale in 1998," says Madge, "And she mentioned the house was included. We moved in on March 28, 1999."

The Oswald home is high enough on the Hillside to float above clouds on its acre and a half - of compacted clay -- but the land slopes, so extra water keeps going, and with planning, trenching, soil amendments, rocks big and small, the occasional bulldozer and the usual blisters and aches, dreams and disappointments, the Oswalds have made their garage-sale find into a showplace.

"Sometimes we look out our windows and see people just walking around the gardens, looking at them," Madge says.

The looking can take hours. Last year's remodel moved the home's entrance from back to front, and the drive now curls past sweeps of raised beds, what will be a log sauna, John Oswald's woodworking shop, a combo greenhouse/garden shed with a beehive perched on the roof, and on this Monday, the heady perfume of peonies.

Bees adore the sweet peonies. There are about 80 remaining from the original peony purchase of 100 - coral, yellow, red, white, light, dark and mid-pink, white flecked with red, a big red fern-leaf peony with petals like satin - and "I've counted as many as five bees per flower," says Madge. All the plants survived, though she's given away about 20 of them.

"Madge is one of the most generous gardeners you'll ever meet," says fellow Master Gardener Gina Docherty. "She's got that shovel-generosity."

Madge was among those who brought the Gold Medal Peony Collection to the Alaska Botanical Garden off Campbell Airstrip Road in 2009, when local plantsman Dave Taplin dispersed his collection. Along with peony fanciers Judy and Larry Wilmarth, Jane Baldwin, Elise Huggins, Scott Brawler, Lacey Ott, Debbie Hinchey, Constance Morgan, members of the Wildflower Garden Club and the Anchorage Garden Club, help from Nine Star Enterprises, Conoco Phillips, BP Exploration and others, Madge dug out and potted plants, prepared a big bed in the ABG's East Garden and settled 40-some-odd different peonies into their new homes, where they thrive and bloom to this day.

At the Oswald place, cobblestone paths lead from garden to garden, and Madge and John can tell the tale of every stone - green ones, brown ones, gray and cream - from Willow Creek, Kings River, Denali, the beach in Homer, "every road system in Alaska."

Sculptural boulders surround raised rock gardens of choice plants (Madge is treasurer of the Alaska Rock Garden Society) that replaced knotty thickets of elderberry and alder, though not without a fight.

"I set out 440 4-inch pots of rock garden plants in the

back bed at one time," says Madge. "I know. I was so exhausted when I finished that I didn't have the energy to do anything but sit there and count."

Fellow rock gardener Verna Pratt came calling soon after "and she told me I had too many and they were too close together," Madge says. "She was right - but I love those little plants."

Husband John designed and built the tall vegetable garden fence in his shop to keep moose out of Oswald spinach, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cardoons, carrots and beets, and put up a Hansel-and-Gretel garden shed from salvaged materials in the middle. The fence protects his baby apple trees, and as his collection increases, Madge says, vegetable space will shrink. Potatoes are hilled up outside the fence (moose don't care for potatoes), along with a salad blend of lettuce, tatsoi, an Egyptian walking onion, which supervision keeps sedentary, and creeping Irish moss, which is creeping to beat the band.

Moose, however, do enjoy the clematis and will fall to their knees to get their noses under protective netting, Madge has found. Trollius, Lady's Mantle, peonies and iris, not so much: A standout here is "Flight of Butterflies" Siberian iris, delicate blue traced on cream. Art ladybugs from a studio in Berea, Ky., colonize a rocky edge. There used to be more "but they succumbed to the leaf blower," Madge says.

A long stone retaining wall edges the walk to the pond garden. John Oswald built the wall himself, one rock at a time, then hung a mirror on the vegetable garden fence at its feet so he could see it from the house. Every window of the house overlooks gardens. The Oswalds have comfortable chairs inside, north, south, east and west, to watch their gardens change through the seasons and the years.

"I don't know if I'd do all this work if I couldn't see it from my house," Madge says.

This marks Madge's 10th year as a Master Gardener, and her 13th since she retired from the Anchorage School District after 27 years as a special education teacher in her native Georgia, Ohio and Alaska. In 1998 she also began to quilt, launching with a challenging appliqué of fancy roosters, and is working now on a daunting Susan Garman design of sailing ships, "Ladies of the Sea," which has a complex border of trailing vines and flowers, rather like her rock gardens.

"Everybody I know is either a gardener or a quilter or both," she says.

Right now mini hostas are a preoccupation and a raised bed at the entry holds many of the little things: "Limey Lisa," "Cat's Eye," "Frosted Mouse Ears," "Cracker Crumbs," "Tiny Tears," "Cheatin' Heart," "Pandora's Box," "Blue Lollipop" and "Spartan Arrow." They mingle with dwarf ferns, among them Fragrant Shield Fern (*Dryopteris fragrans*), Rusty Woodsia (*Woodsia ilvensis*) and Parsley Fern (*Allosorus crispus*).

"From the time I was a child on a north Georgia farm, I've never not had something growing," says Madge.

Wolf Creek Oat Drops (Potato Cookies)

Submitted by Greg & Kathy Kalal

- 1 potato, unpeeled, shredded & chopped
- 1 TBS lemon juice
- 1/2 cup butter or margarine
- 3/4 cup brown sugar
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 1 tsp finely shredded lemon or orange peel
- 1 3/4 cup all purpose flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1/4 tsp each baking soda & salt
- 2 cups quick cooking rolled oats
- 3/4 cup dried tart cherries or raisins

In a small bowl, combine potato & lemon juice; toss to mix. Set aside. In a large mixing bowl, beat butter & sugars with an electric mixer until fluffy. Beat in egg, vanilla and lemon peel until well blended. Add flour, baking powder, baking soda & salt; beat well. Stir in shredded potato mixture, oats, & cherries; mix well. Drop by rounded teaspoons, 2 inches apart, onto greased cookie sheet. Bake at 375° for about 12 minutes, or until edges start to brown. Remove cookies to wire rack to cool. Makes 48 cookies.

Nutritional info per serving: calories 83; protein 1g; carbs 12g; fat 3g; cholesterol 12 mg; sodium 60 mg; fiber 0.5g.

This was a big hit at the Neighborhoods USA potluck done by the Master Gardeners.

This is from Bon Appétit via Kathy Wartinbee

Rhubarb Chutney

yield: Makes about 4 cups

Ingredients

- 1 cup plus 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1/2 cup red wine vinegar
- 1 1/2 cinnamon sticks
- 1 1/2 tablespoons minced fresh ginger
- 1 1/2 teaspoons grated orange peel
- 1/2 teaspoon (scant) ground cardamom
- 4 1/2 cups coarsely chopped rhubarb (from 1 3/4 pounds rhubarb)
- 3/4 cup dried currants
- 4 green onions, chopped

Preparation

Stir first 6 ingredients in heavy large saucepan over medium heat until sugar dissolves and mixture boils. Add rhubarb, currants, and green onions; bring to boil. Reduce heat and simmer until rhubarb is tender but not falling apart, about 4 minutes. Cool to room temperature. Discard cinnamon. Cover and refrigerate chutney until cold, at least 1 hour. (Can be made up to 2 days ahead. Keep refrigerated.) Bring to room temperature before serving.



July Garden Tours...cont.

from page 3 peonies, and colorful exotic perennials framed by a tall hop-covered arbor invites visitors to wander through. Clematis' adorned trellises, a Kiwi vine grew up the

house and thoughtful artwork was carefully placed throughout. Catherine's collection of large woodland type primula bloomed in a range of yellow, gold, orange, apricot and copper colors. Their flowering stocks were tall and Catherine admits to treating these primroses to lots and lots of water. In a partial shady nook near the house, the Mock Orange was at its peak loaded with tons of fragrant flowers that were multiplied by reflection in a large strategically-placed mirror. One hated to leave this little oasis, but the train was calling...

2. Sean Monico's Train Garden



All aboard the train to the garden of Sean Monico, who has created an entire little world in his backyard, in miniature. The front yard greeted one with vibrant colors, mostly from perennials and a little help from a mass marigold planting, with borders of sweet-smelling white alyssum, and a beautiful deck, all ready for entertaining. Peonies, delphinium, and buphtalmum figured prominently. In the back yard, a "G-gauge" train

system winds around a carefully planted and designed woodland. Tiny trees, shrubs, groundcovers and flowering plants are miniature rock garden species or trimmed and pruned to scale to recreate a mountain alpine landscape, complete with waterfall and pond with goldfish and a miniature boat on the shore. Trestles and bridges with a train station, a replica of the White Pass Railroad station in reverse, were all hand crafted by Sean. There were little people waiting for the train, as well as people in the train and Alaskan wildlife placed throughout. The 'big people' (master gardeners) had a very delightful evening for sure!

PAGE 4

Photos by G.Docherty



Central Peninsula Master Gardener News By Rosemary Kimball

Hey, This is July-going-into-August. It's a season just like chocolate is a food group. And Gina wants words from the best and easiest fishing close to Anchorage?

Dream on, woman.

I head down to the garden at 10 AM to let the ducks out into the weed-filled freedom of the (former) garden. There is one mouthy duck (only the females quack) that starts berating me for taking so long as soon as she hears the door shut. With the 'foul' fowls living on the front deck sleeping on the caribou horns or on the tarped cut off saw, I can't spray for weeds. Can't spray down in the garden for weed control because of the ducks. That ought to delight Nickel as we go round and round about chemical use.

We still have a hare-y problem on the peninsula. I asked MG Mark White, our neighbor, what his tally was and he said 29...but Mark wrote that Teena Garay, on the bluff in Homer, said her husband has killed 90 some, and "even fixed a flashlight on his rifle and she would drive down the lane while he searched from the car. I can't top that". Every since I got our .22 operational I haven't seen another one! Got this from Kathy Wartinbee about their problem, "Rabbit stew or recycle the buggers into the ecosystem? Mostly we recycle ... we are down over 20 rabbits and there seems to be a never ending supply of them. They truly multiply like rabbits. Early in the spring we discovered most of the fruit trees were girdled above the tree guards. Phil Meyer and Dan Elliot have given us wonderful fruit trees to replace those that were severely damaged. Most of the other trees are recovering but it will be many years before they return to where they were. The fence surrounding the trees has been beefed up to repel rabbits as well as moose."

This is a strange year for me in Sterling. Took MG Margaret Simon down to check on the red currants I was going to give her this fall and there weren't enough to stick in your ear. Checked out the honey berries and it was the same story there. I was thinking because of the six bee hives Mark has on his upper deck that there would have been fruit galore. Then it dawned on me that I hadn't heard the hover flies which are our main pollinator this spring nor seen more than an occasional bee. But we haven't had any carpenter ants parading around the house, nor leaf rollers in the birch tree outside the kitchen window. Go figure.

Our weed patch out front which is solid trollius is in full flower at the end of July. I used to have the dwarf trollius but they parted company with me several years ago. I went out by the rock garden and there were two little ones, blooming! Then there were four. Dug some up for a friend and there were dozens. The secret to planting trollius from seed is to plant it absolutely fresh..like plant what you picked yesterday, today. I have two Alabasters and one Be Mine (bicolor from White Flower Farm) and they are busy hybridizing with the rest of them and I'm getting really neat flower colors.

MG Barb Jewell is back at her daughter's house in Seattle weeding. She went to a nephew's wedding in Rio and toured down there at the botanical garden. She

brought me back the neatest trowel from the garden, narrow blade and with a bend to the blade which makes it so convenient to use. Back in Soldotna she's seeing zucchini which is making up for the busted crop last year.

MG Margaret Simon, our gold standard gardener, wrote, "After all the work--I'm trying to smell the roses! Fresh salads, steamed greens with oyster sauce, BLT's, radish sandwiches--you get the idea". That's why we have gardens, isn't it?

MG Marion Nelson is up to her neck organizing a major field trip for the Garden Club down as far as Anchor Point and points in between. She's arranged hoop house tours down here. She has no sloth in her background!



And this final advice, don't ever go into the duck pen, barefoot, after a rain.

Growing Gentians By Gina Docherty



Ahh.. the color blue - who doesn't enjoy it? There is sky blue, blue poppies, forget-me-not blue, cornflower blue - all of these shades can be found in the gentian family. Some have stripes, some fringes; some are even white, yellow or even red. But the gentian blue is the color that draws one to the plant.

A few notes from Wikipedia:

Gentiana is a genus of flowering plants belonging to the Gentian family (Gentianaceae), with about 400 species, and is considered a large genus.

Gentians are alpine plants, occurring in temperate regions of Asia, Europe and the Americas. Some species also occur in northwest Africa, eastern Australia and New Zealand. They consist of annual, biennial and perennial plants. Some are evergreen, others are not.

The name is a tribute to Gentius, an Illyrian king (from somewhere around Yugoslavia and Albania) who was thought to have found out that the herbs had tonic properties.

With that out of the way, let's just say that some gentians are easier to grow than others, but most have similar requirements. And if you buy a gentian, chances are down the line the tag will disappear and you have no idea what type of gentian you have; unless of course, you have a file cabinet memory like some people. (You know who you are...)

One way to classify Gentians is how Doretta Klaber does in her book, *Gentians For Your Garden*, M. Barrows and Company, NY, 1964. This is an old book with intricate drawings by the author, mostly in black and white. But the author has a 'no-nonsense' style of writing that is reassuring to the novice grower. There are very few books available on gentians, as I found out. Doretta classifies gentians by their blooming period, Spring, Summer or Fall. This might not be the best way, as most gentians overlap these periods, but it's a handy way to think of these plants.



Bird Chatter

--You know it's been a dry summer in Anchorage when you find yourself watering your water garden. Aren't they supposed to be maintenance free?

--Heard from a local gardener that she planted a birch tree upside down, green branches in the ground, roots in air. She says it makes a lovely rack to hang all her flower baskets on, and got the idea from Juneau's Botanical Garden.

--According to Camille Williams, there are 3 train gardens in Anchorage.

-- Willow, alder, birch and blueberries are being defoliated by Bruce spanworm and Autumnal moth caterpillars. For a detailed account, go to the Anchorage CES website at www.uaf.edu/ces/anchorage and click on 'download an update' under "Geometrid Moth Infestation".

-- Anchorage Floral, owned by Adrian Dube, purchases cut-flowers grown in the Mat-Su Valley for her arrangements. Adrian came close to completing the Master Gardener course.

-- If you need to complete hours for your Advanced Master Gardener certification, consider helping to staff the CES information center in the 4-H building at the Alaska State Fair in Palmer or answer gardening questions at the Spenard Farmers.

-- Julie Riley has returned from two weeks off-contract only to leave again August 7 for a week to attend the National Association of County Agricultural Agents meeting in Kansas.

-- Do you still have Purple loosestrife in your garden? Get the plants replaced with another perennial for FREE. Visit the Division of Agriculture's website at www.plants.alaska.gov and click on the "Replace your Loosestrife" sign to find out how.

-- The Spenard Farmers Market is participating in a pilot project to accept food stamps. This is the only farmers market where one can buy fruits, vegetables, seafood, bread and honey with a Quest Card.

-- At her goodbye party Dora Wainwright received many greetings from Master Gardeners wishing her well. Gifts included a couple of umbrellas (She's moving to Juneau.) and a beautiful primrose appliquéd picture created by Gina Docherty.

-- Camille Williams is planning an underwater arrangement for her Anchorage Garden Club Flower Show entry at the Alaska Botanical Garden, Aug 6 & 7.

-- Alaska Agriculture Appreciation Day with milking demonstrations, kids' activities, tours of research fields and more is scheduled for Thursday, August 11 at the Palmer Center for Sustainable Living, 1509 S. Georgeson Dr. Call 746-9450 if you'd like more information.

-- The Alaska Community Forestry Program celebrates its 20th Anniversary on August 12. For a schedule of activities at Kincaid Park Chalet and to RSVP, contact Patricia.joyner@alaska.gov by 8/10 noon.

--An Oak Park, Michigan, resident was facing 93 days in jail for growing a vegetable garden in her front yard this summer. She had replaced her lawn with raised beds after it was ruined by a sewage problem. The city code stated that all unpaved areas must be planted in 'grass or ground cover, shrubbery or other 'suitable' live plant material. Apparently, the question was "Are cabbages, peppers, tomatoes and cucumbers 'suitable' for the front lawn? The front yard gardener stood her ground and eventually won the case. Common sense prevails again. Hooray for guerilla gardeners!

Growing Gentians.... cont. from page 5

Spring Gentians

A few examples of Spring Gentians are in the *G. acaulis* group, which is a really just collection of species, varieties and hybrids. The *acaulis* type gentian can be found with the name *augustifolia*, *alpina*, or *dinarica*; or perhaps *G. Clusii*, *excisa*, *Kochiana*, *latifolia*, *occidentalis*, *vulgaris*. The author recommends a growing medium of 2 parts loam, 1 part leafmold, and 1 part sand. She adds dried cow manure and small quantities of bone meal and wood ashes, and plenty of stone chips within the soil and as a heavy top dressing around the plant. They need protection from hot sun by either a large rock, a small shrub or shade from a tree.

Summer Gentians

There are many groups of gentians in this bloom period. The nicest summer gentians are *septemfida* and its relatives. Some *decumbens* are nice, but also have some 'dowdy cousins' described by the author. Not all gentians are considered beautiful, or desirable. A few summer gentians with familiar names are *algida* (Alaska version is called *G. gelida* - similar versions of this variety are called *GG. Frigida*, or *Przewalskii*), *alpina*, *asclepiadea* (Willow gentian), *cruciata*, *dahurica* ("a poor relation"), *gracilipes*, etc. Summer gentians are usually easy to grow, but have different cultural needs. Growing requirements include moist, well-drained (sloping) positions, part shade, gritty soil.

The New Zealand gentians are white flowered gentians. They do better in a milder climate. The author stated: "I don't consider a real garden one in which you have to nursemaid your plants."

Fall Gentians

These are the Himalayan gentians. According to Ms.Klaber, there are only five 'good' species of these in commerce: *GG. Farreri*, *hexaphylla*, *ornata*, *sinoronata*, and *veitchiorum*. These mostly belong to the *frigida* group. These types benefit by being moved about for a change of soil every year or two. As other gentians, they require a rocky, sandy, peaty soil, partial sun, and a generous top dressing of stones and lots of water. There are other classifications of gentians in this chapter as well, including the American Gentians, fall blooming Japanese Gentians, Himalayan hybrids.

Like Primula, Gentians hybridize freely. Often the seeds are from the true species, but also may be hybridized either by nature or the hand of man, so that you can only say that it is 'a seedling' of a particular plant.

Most gentians can be grown in the home garden with some proper site preparation. It is certainly worth a try. And as the author says, "Don't get discouraged! Even if you're not sure of the name, you'll love the flower".

AUGUST 2011 AMGAA Field Trips

For tour reminders, directions & details and possible changes or updates:

(1) If you have joined the AMGAA google group website, you should receive the tour reminders by email.

(2) If you have NOT joined the group website, you can read the tour reminder postings on the group website at: <http://groups.google.com/group/AkMGAA>

Click on "View this group in the new Google Groups". Scroll down to read garden tour reminder postings.

August 1:

High Tech Container Gardening, Rick Abbott/Hope Wing; 7pm; 19660 Villages Scenic Pkwy, Potter Valley.

August 3:

(Note this is a WEDNESDAY, not a Monday,) 7 pm.; Richard Sanders, 8241 Barnett Drive

August 8:

Endless Summer Hydrangea Hedge & Raised Beds; Kathi Moon, 7pm; 2171 Belmont Dr.

August 15:

(1) MG Tailgate Plant Swap, 5:45pm to 7:15 pm, CES Parking Lot (no building access)

(2) Planned Landscape/Exciting Hardscape Features; Kristin Ryan; 7:30 pm, 319 E. 11th Ave.

August 22:

7 pm., Pacific View Community Gardens, 220 Pacific View Drive
8 pm, LouAnn & Steve Hennig, 321 Kayak Drive (Ocean view area)

August 29:

Glory of the Blooms, A Season in a Garden; 7pm; Verna Pratt, 7446 E. 20th Ave

Alaska State Fair Help Needed

If you have Master Gardener hours to complete, please consider staffing the Cooperative Extension Service booth in the 4-H Building at the Palmer fair. The job comes with a fair ticket and a parking pass. Deb Blaylock is doing the scheduling and can be reached at the Palmer CES office at 907.745.3360 or matsu.ces@alaska.edu. Remember to coddle the plants you plan to enter.

Alaska Food Preservation Class

Learn how to savor and save the goodness of Alaska's natural bounty. If you'd like to learn how to preserve your food at home safely while retaining high quality, the UAF Anchorage Cooperative Extension Service series will teach you how.

Thursday, August 18: Canning Fish and Meat

Thursday, September 1: Jams and Jellies

Thursday, September 15: Sauerkraut, Pickles & Relish

Thursday, October 6: Drying & Freezing

Thursday, October 20: Sausage, Jerky & Smoking

Thursday, November 17: Cheese Making

Time: 5:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m.

Location: Sons of Norway Viking Hall,
8141 Briarwood St.

Fee: \$25 per individual class

Pre-registration Required. Class size limited.

Call 786-6300

Garden Event Calendar

August 4, Thursday 7:00 pm

Preserving Fruits (& Vegetables) of Our Garden Labors, Anchorage Garden Club, Carol Ross, Master Gardener, Pioneer School House, 437 E. 3rd Avenue, Anchorage 566-0539

August 5, Friday 6:30 pm-8:30 pm

Alaska Botanical Garden special guest presentation by world-renowned plantsman Dan Hinkley about his plant exploration travels & new and exceptional plants appropriate for Alaskan gardens, shade gardens and others. Cost \$15/person, ABG members \$10/person, 4601 Campbell Airstrip Road 770-3692

August 6-7, Saturday & Sunday

Anchorage Garden Club 68th Annual Flower Show, 2011 theme is "Mystical Garden Creatures". Horticulture & flower design exhibits, Alaska Botanical Gardens, 4601 Campbell Airstrip Road 770-3692. Admission to the Garden is free Call 566-0539 for exhibit entry information.

August 6-7, Saturday & Sunday

Homer Garden Club Gardener's Week-End. E-mail brenda@gardensby-brenda.com for tickets and program.

August 19, 20 & 21, Thursday, Friday & Saturday

Alaska Peony Growers Summer Conference. National and international speakers, tours of commercial peony farms in Kasilof, Soldotna, Sterling and Homer. Early arrivals reception at the Seaside Lodge-Driftwood Inn, Homer, August 18, 4-9 pm, for registration details check the Alaska Peony Growers Association website, www.alaskapeonies.org

August 20, Saturday 11:00 am-5:00 pm

Plastic Pot Recycling Day, sponsored by the Alaska Botanical Gardens and ALPR. Bring types 2, 5 & 7 plastic pots to the Benny Benson School parking lot, 4601 Campbell Airstrip Road 770-3692

August 25-September 25

Alaska State Fair, Palmer. www.alaskastatefair.org

September 1, Thursday 7:00 pm

Overwintering Dahlias & Other Tender Perennials, Anchorage Garden Club meeting, presentation by Sandy Potvin, Municipal Greenhouse, Pioneer School House, 437 E. 3rd Avenue, Anchorage 566-0539

September 8, Thursday 10:00 am

The Culture of Gardening, Wildflower Garden Club meeting, presentation by Julie Riley, Horticulturist, UAF Cooperative Extension Service, Central Lutheran Church, 1420 Cordova Street, Anchorage, 786-6300

September 10, Saturday 10:00 am-4:00 pm

3rd Annual Harvest Day at the Alaska Botanical Garden, \$5pp/\$10 family, 4601 Campbell Airstrip Road 770-3692. Free entry with donation of 3 cans food or bags of garden produce



The Anchorage Chapter of the Alaska Master Gardeners Association welcomes letters, opinions, articles, ideas and inquiries. Contact the editor, Gina Docherty, at:

Mail: 14051 Fejes Road

Anchorage, AK 99516

Phone: 345-4099

Email: amga@alaska.net (NEW EMAIL)

AMGA Web Site: www.alaskamastergardeners.org

(The Newsletter will be on-line in living color!)

To send concerns or information to the AMGA directly, mail to:
AMGA

P.O. Box 221403

Anchorage, AK 99522-1403

If you have questions or want to make address or email corrections, please contact Sandra Harrington at: dsharr@ptialaska.net

For information about membership or upcoming programs, contact:
Cooperative Extension Office
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Anchorage, AK 99501
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Fax: 786-6312



Inside this issue....

Message From Jane
July Garden Tours
Master Gardener Focus: Madge Oswald
Wolf Creek Oat Drops (Potato Cookies) Recipe
Rhubarb Chutney Recipe
Central Peninsula Master Gardener News
Growing Gentians
Bird Chatter
August AMGAA Field Trips
Alaska State Fair Help Needed
Alaska Food Preservation Class
Garden Event Calendar



Madge Oswald in her lovely rock garden.
Madge is featured in the "MG Focus" article
on page 3.

Photo by John Oswald

Alaska Master Gardeners Association, Inc.
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