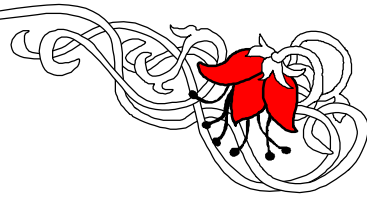


Anchorage Chapter



Volume 4, Issue 11

ALASKA MASTER GARDENERS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

October 2002

MASTER GARDENERS ON HOLIDAY By Mary Shier

Have you every wondered what it would be like to contact other Master Gardeners at your holiday destination? To see what is done there that is different from your area? Perhaps you are hesitant because you think you might be imposing on the locals. Just remember: they are Master Gardeners too. And are we not willing to share and open our gardens to viewing by others - especially other Master Gardeners?

Recently I received a call from a gal in South Carolina. She and a group of ladies would be visiting the Anchorage area as part of their tour to Alaska. Since a few of them were MG's, she wondered if there were MG's locally who would be willing to share info and show their gardens. I couldn't help myself and offered to show them around on their day here. She was so excited to find a contact and places to see while in the area. But I wondered what I was going to show them.

Do you know what it takes to see gardens here? First off, it really does help if you have permission of the homeowners before tromping all over their property! I called several people to ask for their involvement before I got lucky - I was so fortunate in the generosity of a few MG's coming forth and opening their gardens for these out of state visitors. Several other master gardeners volunteered their time and vehicles to tour them around that afternoon.

What fun we had visiting these gardens and showing off what we can do here in Alaska that the Lower 48 cannot do. We also included a number of "drive by's" which demonstrated a variety of garden designs as well as a stop at ABG. They were very impressed with what we can grow, the brilliance of color here and the friendliness of local gardeners. It turned out to be the highlight of their trip to Alaska and this was exclaimed many times at the end of the day. I might add that it was also a highlight for the locals involved as I heard later, "What a good time we had! Anytime you need tour drivers again I'll be glad to assist."

Please consider contacting Master Gardeners in whatever town you may visit in the future and don't blow it off. Follow through, open the door to communications with others and broaden your horizons. You'll be glad you did.

My special thanks to Madge Oswald, Mel Monsen, and Carmel Tysver for opening their gardens and to Madge Oswald, Alice Lynch and Cliona Gross for being tour guides.



GARDENING WORD SEARCH

TREES AND SHRUBS

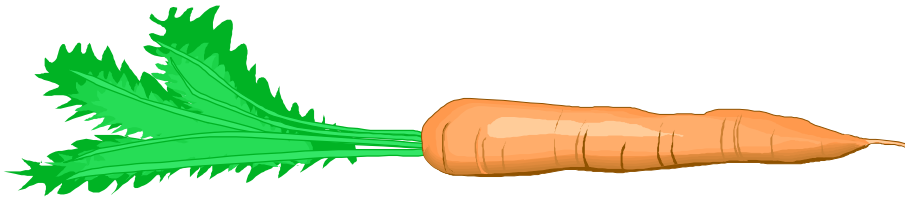
SUBMITTED BY JUDY CHRISTIANSON

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A	E	C	O	T	W	I	C	L	S	S	E	R	P	Y	C

Amur maple, autumn spire, azalea, barberry, beech, birch, cherry, cotoneaster, currant, cypress, daphne, dogwood, euonymus, forsythia, froebeli, hemlock, holly, honeysuckle, hydrangea, juniper, larch, lilac, maple, may day, mugo pine, oak, olive, plum, pussy willow, rhodendron, rose, spirea, spruce, sumac, yew

"All gardeners know better than other gardeners." – Chinese Proverb





CARROTS FOR VALUABLE VITAMIN A

[Reprinted with permission from Texas A&M University web site}
<http://plantanswers.tamu.edu/publications/vegetabletravelers/carrot.html>

The carrot (*Daucus carota*) gets its name from the French word *carotte*, which in turn comes from the Latin *carota*. It has been known since ancient times and is believed to have originated in Afghanistan and adjacent areas.

A wide diversity of forms unknown in America is found in middle Asia and also in Asia Minor. Apparently some primitive forms were carried to Asia Minor far back in prehistoric times, and many distinct kinds were later developed there. Among the kinds strange to us in America are some with purplish-red roots, colored like garden beets, and some with fuzzy light-gray leaves.

Our common carrot is called the Mediterranean type, because it has long been known in Mediterranean countries and was probably developed there from kinds carried from Asia Minor. In the Far East is still another form, the Japanese carrot, that is commonly three feet long or more.

Mothers Say, "Eat Your Carrots, Junior"

As is true of a number of other vegetables, it seems that the first interest in carrots as food developed from their supposed medicinal value. Greek agriculturists and physicians around the first century of our era wrote of carrots and their value as a stomach tonic.

Are we amused now by the ancients' attaching such medical importance to the carrot? Why should we be? In America in the past 25 to 30 years the humble carrot has risen from an obscure root, considered mainly as a delicacy for horses, to a position of genuine importance as human food.

How did it happen? Our doctors and nutrition experts made us believe carrots are "good for us"; we know that varieties with a deep orange color are rich in carotene, or provitamin A, found also in other yellow vegetables and in green leaves. Vitamin A is found in such foods of animal origin as fish-liver oils, butter, and egg yolks.

Perhaps the ancient Greeks were the real discoverers of the benefit of carrots in the diet. However, they did not know the reasons and lacked the teaching facilities used to induce us to eat our carrots.

The carrot was certainly cultivated in the Mediterranean area before the Christian Era, but it was not important as a food until much later. There is a long gap of about 900 years between the writings of the Greeks and Romans of the first to third centuries and the next clear records about the carrot.

By the 13th century carrots were being grown in fields, orchards, gardens, and vineyards in Germany and France. At that time the plant was known also in China, where it was supposed to have come from Persia.

By the 16th century nearly all the botanists and writers on gardening, all over Europe, were familiar with the carrot and were describing many kinds, including red and purple kinds in France, yellow and red kinds in England. About 1600, in England, carrots were common enough to be grown as a farm crop as well as in small garden plots.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4



"CARROTS" CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

Carrots Arrived Before the Mayflower

European voyagers carried the carrot to America soon after discovery of the New World, as is shown by Sir John Hawkins's reference to it on Margarita Island, off the coast of Venezuela, in 1565. It was grown by the struggling colonists of the first permanent English settlement in the New World, at Jamestown, Virginia, in 1609.

Twenty years later the Pilgrims, or some of those who followed them closely, were growing it in Massachusetts. The Pilgrims themselves may have introduced it there. Before the middle of the 17th century it was known in Brazil.

Even the American Indians rather promptly took up carrot culture. In forays against the Iroquois in upper New York State in 1779, Gen. John Sullivan's forces destroyed stores of carrots as well as parsnips. The story is told that children of the Flathead tribe in Oregon liked carrots so well that they could not resist stealing them from the fields, although they resisted stealing other things.

The carrots having spherical roots and tapering roots have long been known, but the cylindrical stump-rooted sorts are of rather recent development, first grown in America about 60 years ago.

All varieties of importance in this country are deep orange in color, although yellow and even white kinds are known. Some of the deep-colored varieties are erroneously referred to as "red." This error has even crept into the name of a currently popular variety, Red Cored Chantenay, which is a rich orange color, not red. It is interesting, however, that pure carotene, which makes carrots yellow or orange, appears red.

In addition to the large quantities marketed fresh, we now find carrots canned, and even frozen, especially in an attractive mixture with green garden peas. During the war many thousands of tons were dehydrated and shipped overseas in sealed metal containers in an atmosphere of carbon dioxide or nitrogen to prevent loss of carotene.



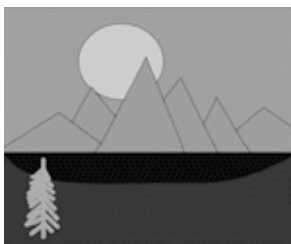
SIBERIAN IRIS

BY JUDY CHRISTIANSON

I have had a Siberian iris for 4 years and not one bloom. It has had plenty of sun, plenty of good soil, and good moisture in the bed where it began in my yard. But nothing — a couple more leaves and a bit taller every year.

After taking a final look at the beds last fall, I decided to put Asiatic lilies in its place. I dug it up and stuck it in a pot. A couple days later, I remembered it was still in the pot. I already had too many plants heeled in the garden, so I planted it in the shade garden, thinking I would figure out where it could go in the spring. And of course spring came and I was busy. It got taller than it had ever been and finally buds appeared. I was delighted. It was white and looked great with the marginated hostas, ligularias, ribbon grass, sedge and thalictrum. The iris is presently 3 times the size it was last year.

Ruthless gardening at its best.



CENTRAL PENINSULA MG NEWS

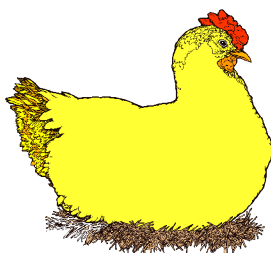
BY ROSEMARY KIMBALL

Parts of September can be just too much! The excess started with a day early for the AMGA meeting in September. I took a friend who's a gardener 'wannabe' around to Gina's, Mary's and Carmel Tysver's gardens. By the time I got her home her head was reeling and mine wasn't far behind! I was particularly impressed with Mary's composting system and got the plans from her. (I'm already planning a compost system manufacturing party next spring for at least three of us.) Then there was the pleasure of the Monday night meeting in Anchorage...which was followed a few days later by the pleasure of our Central Peninsula group at the Thai restaurant in Kenai. Good food, good company, good conversation! Our ramrod, Janice, was on a roll! Our first speaker will be in February and talk about gardening under lights. That's about the time that people's plants start to look winter ratty. March will feature a miniseries of three programs of different methods of composting. Our final presentation in April is Garden Art. Nice too, was the fact we raked in another warm body in Rhoda Turinsky to come to our meetings as soon as she gets to the Peninsula. We had 7 people at our meeting this time which is good for us. We also caught an innocent bystander, formerly of Salt Lake City, who came in for takeout, eavesdropped, and came over to find out more. Enthusiasm is contagious. I'm beginning to feel a lot better about gardening next year.

After this summer I didn't want to see another cabbage or pea plant (or 53 chickens to butcher!) ever again. One good feature of the chickens is what comes out of them periodically, and that mixed with the straw bedding and a friend's grass clippings has given me the compost pile of my dreams—150°F and cooking. It makes me utter the gardeners' battle cry—"Wait until next year!"

The city of Soldotna has taken over Pioneer Park and will even hire a body to weed again next year! They've installed a nice sprinkler system in the center bed. We're hoping they have bodies to wrap the trees which are really looking nice. You can see our wrapping system by going to the AMGA web site and you will also see our (former) park ramrod directing the operation.

Winter still hasn't come. We've had only one 20°F night and the rest of the time it has been in the high 40's at night. Things aren't real dead—yet. I am of two minds about climate change. Right now I'm enjoying it because we can still work out doors...so I'm off, off, and away



+



=

compost!!!



Bird Chatter

* This is too late but just had to tell you that I learned "Never to plant Alyssum in a Shade Garden"!!!! And to never throw a "Dead Rose Bush" away. I set it aside thinking it was dead and it now has grown and has blossoms on it. Nice surprise!! It was one we got from the Rose Society.

* remontant (ri-MON-tant): adjective
Blooming more often than once in a season.

* The GardenWeb has a new "Far North Forum" for us far north people. Check it out:
www.gardenweb.com
Tom Throop

"When the world wearies and society fails to satisfy,
There is always the garden."
— Minnie Aumonier

Gardening Trivia

From <http://gardeningtips.org/trivia.shtml>

POPPIES

There are over 100 species of true poppies, most of them native to Mediterranean regions.

The Himalayan Blue Poppy or the Tibetan Poppy, is a native of China and Tibet where it grows naturally in alpine meadows.

Most poppies have begun by cross-breeding from four basic species. Two perennials -the Iceland and the Oriental and two annuals -the Corn poppy, and the Opium poppy.

Heroin & morphine is derived from the opium poppy, *Papaver Somniferum*, which means the poppy that brings sleep. When the fruits are cut, the liquid that comes from the fruits, dries into a brown opium residue. It is illegal to grow in many areas.

Membership News

It was decided at the last AMGA Board Meeting that due to the rising costs of overhead expenses for the group, the price of membership will be raised by \$5 per year. There has not been an increase in dues since the founding of AMGA in 1986. This is also in line with other groups in our area.

Payment must be received by January 31st, 2003, to have members' information included in the Annual Directory. There is considerable work in getting the Directory published, and a time table must be adhered to in order to get them out in a timely fashion.

The Directory is a handy little book, with meeting dates, educational offerings, and member contact information.



A printable renewal form can also be found on line from the AMGA web site: corecom.net/~gardener

Editor's Note

For those of you who have email and are on the AMGA mailing list, you may have received a warning regarding a virus on the editor's computer. As you already know, this turned out to be a HOAX! The 'necessary' file is now long gone, and so far, nothing adverse has occurred. Your editor's computer recently lost its virus protection, and was vulnerable to Virus Warnings.... Since then, she has reinstalled the virus protection software, and is again safe (hopefully!). Please accept her humble apology if this caused anyone any anxiety. She hopes she has learned to investigate before panicking.

On another note, thanks to all who have contributed to the newsletter lately. It's going to be a long winter, so those of you who have been thinking about submitting something, please feel free to do so. Even suggestions for topics could lead to asking someone about something which might produce an interesting article. The editor is game for any ideas or assistance.



Alaska Master Gardeners Association

Gardening Calendar

For information about membership or upcoming programs, contact:

Alaska Cooperative Extension
2221 E. Northern Lights Blvd.
Anchorage, AK 99508

Phone: 786-6300
Fax Line: 786-6312

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

Mail: 4006 DeArmoun Road
Anchorage, AK 99516
Phone: 345-4099
Email: gardener@corecom.net

AMGA Web Site: www.corecom.net/~gardener

October 3

Anchorage Garden Club: "Plant Taxonomy" by Debbie Hinchey; 7:30 p.m., Pioneer School House basement, corner of Third & Eagle, contact 566-0539

October 21

AMGA Meeting: "Copper in the Garden" by David Deitz; 7 p.m., CES rm. 130, Carlton Trust Bldg, 2221 E. Northern Lights Blvd. Contact 345-1562

November 7

Anchorage Garden Club: "Making Anchorage More Livable Through the Landscaping of Public Spaces - Looking at the Park Strip, Midtown Park, Fairview and other Public Places" by Elise Huggins; 7:30 p.m., Pioneer School House basement, corner of Third & Eagle, contact 566-0539

November 18

AMGA Meeting: "Video of Abkidgz Garden Restoration" by Erma MacMillan; 7 p.m., CES rm. 130, Carlton Trust Bldg, 2221 E. Northern Lights Blvd. Contact 345-1562

November 19-20

Anchorage Garden Club: 42nd Annual Holiday Flower Show at Wells Fargo Bank, C Street & Northern Lights - Open to the public for entering

Alaska Master Gardeners' 2003 Annual Membership

Renewal New Changes No changes
 \$15.00 voting (has completed Master Gardeners' course)
 \$15.00 non-voting

Please complete the following information as you want it to appear in the Annual Directory. To be included in the directory, payment must be received by January 31, 2003.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip+4: _____

Telephones: Day: _____ Evening: _____

Message: _____ Cell: _____ Fax: _____

Email address: _____

Mail this form and payment to:

AMGA
PO BOX 221403
Anchorage AK 99522-1403

Date Paid: _____
Check No.: _____
or Cash : _____



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