



Anchorage Chapter



Volume 11, Issue 8

ALASKA MASTER GARDENERS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER August 2009



Message From the President Beth Schlaubaugh

Last month we celebrated the independence of our country with celebrations in every state. We are also in a unique position to be celebrating the 50th anniversary of our state joining the union. There are many great stories in our history both as a state and as a nation including how each state has chosen to celebrate the beautiful flowers and flowering plants that grow there by making one an official state flower.

As individual states evolved, boundaries were explored and the beautiful fauna and flora that resided there was recognized. The citizenry of those states chose flowers and plants that represented not only the states but they chose plants that they believed encompassed the characteristics of its people.

While many of the state flowers can be grown in a garden, some were chosen because they naturally blanket the land which chose it. The most recent declaration was by Oklahoma where in 2004 the legislature designated the 'Oklahoma' rose as the official flower. This rose was bred at Oklahoma State University by Swim and Weeks of Weeks' Roses' fame.

The state flowers are a symphony of color and shape yet some states have chosen the same flower but call them by different names. For example, the state flower of North Carolina is the Flowering Dogwood while Virginia calls the same plant (Cornus florida) American Dogwood. Some Official state flowers have fallen out of favor and been changed. Alabama originally chose the goldenrod in 1927 but later changed to the Camellia in the fall of 1959. A further statute in June of 1999 clarified the Official state flower as Camellia japonica. The state of Maine chose the Eastern White pine cone and tassel for its beauty though it's not a flower at all!

Although those that have entered their blooms in flower shows may disagree, generally we do not think of flowers as political issues. In the course of our nation's history however, the choosing of the official state flower has sparked much discourse and debate. In 1892 the state of Washington was among one of the last to officially name its state flower. It held a special election allowing only women to choose the state flower. There were hundreds of suggestions but after more than 15,000 voted the Coast Rhododendron was chosen by 53%. Within two decades women gained the vote across our nation.

Flowers leading the way!

The state flower of Wyoming, the Indian Paintbrush, met with such firm resistance that it was almost not chosen. During the earlier years of the twentieth century the school children of Wyoming had chosen the Fringed Gentian, which served in an unofficial capacity. However, by 1916 the state still had not officially designated a flower and the Wyoming Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution thought that they should. They chose the Indian Paintbrush and found a sponsor to enter the bill into legislation. The debate ensued being led by leading Botanist Dr. Aven Nelson, of the University of Wyoming in opposition, and Wyoming's first woman attorney, Dr. Grace Hebard, Head of the Department of Political Economy in favor. The end result: on January 31, 1917 the state of Wyoming, made the Indian paintbrush (*Castilleja linariaefolia*) the official state flower of Wyoming.

Alaska's official State flower & floral emblem has an even more unique story. The story begins nearly one hundred years ago near the turn of the last century. Our nation was on the move - gold had been found in Alaska. In 1907, the "Pioneers of Alaska" lodge was formed. It was limited to men who had come to Alaska before January 1, 1900. The next year two other lodges merged with the "Pioneers" to form the "Grand Igloo." A clause in the constitution of the Grand Igloo declared, that: "The official flower of the Pioneers of Alaska shall be the Alaska For-get-me-not." The forget-me-not was on its way to becoming the official state flower and floral emblem of Alaska. Soon the Grand Igloo's Women Auxiliaries adopted the forget-me-not as their official emblem too.

Then in 1912, the United States Congress passed the second Organic Act that authorized Alaska to form a territorial government with limited powers. The Alaska Territorial Legislature met for the first time in 1913. In 1917 a bill was introduced that proposed that the Forget-me-not become the official floral emblem of the Territory. The bill was accompanied by the following poem written by Esther Birdsall Darling.

Continued on page 4

Mid Summer AMGA Tours By Jane Baldwin

June 29th - Sandy Ehrenman (MG). Sandy & husband have created a river bed water feature that empties into a pool they built themselves. A path skirts the yard through perennial plantings, which were done in unique small sharp pebbly gravel - uniform size in a mix of black, white and neutral tans - very attractive. But don't go looking for the source since Sandy bought up surplus bags of a special order and mixed her own colors - using the brighter colors for dry river wash type accents. A moose antler planter brought a nice bright color spot to her deck.

July 6th. Bonnie Lembo (MG). Bonnie follows an organic growing regiment in her kitchen garden, herbs, perennial beds and containers. The front approach to Bonnie's home is grassless, and one is greeted by a large bed of white fireweed in full bloom edged with half buried bicycle wheels, paths through various perennial plantings, and a kiwi arbor nicely scaled in size and height. Through the garden gate to the back gardens were a fenced kitchen garden, perennial plantings and color spot pots on the back steps. Bonnie's yard is bird friendly and bird attracting, with swallows in houses helping with mosquitoes. Notable was Bonnie's potting bench 'garden central' area, so organized with garden implements tidily hanging and best of all a garden glove organizer!

MGs also visited the back yard of Bonnie's neighbor, Linda Duck. Through the back gate we entered another hidden Anchorage garden! Linda also gardens organically: no weeds and no visible sign of garden pests either in her perennials and veggie plantings. Linda has an extremely pleasant large side bed of evergreens and has very effectively mixed colors, textures and sizes. She has a gorgeous and sizeable yew in the mix that I haven't seen in other gardens visited.

July 13th. Good gardener Dana Klinkhart's yard was filled with big, lush and healthy plantings that showed no impact from our dry summer, definitely a testament to Dana's gardening secrets which must include lots of water, compost with healthy amounts of the seaweed Dana collects and a lot of TLC. So many varied and oh, so healthy plants. (Did you see the size of those delphinium stocks?) Dana has a lot of nice touches (several water features, garden shed, etc.) that make her yard seem very comfortable and usable.

A visit to Dana's over-the-back-fence neighbor Nancy found yet another secret backyard garden - meandering paths with nice use of recycled concrete as stepping stones among the perennial, shrubs and trees. An especially welcomed touch were lots of plant labels. Time and attention evident here, too.

MGs next visited nearby JoAnne Banta's yard. Do you suppose there's a climate niche in the lower Huffman area that lets plants do so well or is it a concentration of talented and dedicated gardeners? I think the latter. JoAnne has effectively dealt with some topo features (drainage, slopes, etc.) that might discourage some. Beds of perennials and veggies, along with some pretty nice garden art, too.

Next MGs visited Amelia & John Walsh's upper Huffman gardens. Whether it's a visit in early spring, mid summer or later makes no difference: something is always

happening in Amelia's gardens. Yet another gardener who lavishes time, attention and TLC which is always reflected in her plantings.

July 15th. Many MGs missed a great chance to see a lot of hardy rose varieties in bloom at the Centennial Rose Garden. Alaska Rose Society members were on hand to provide their expertise and advice - a missed opportunity for great rose growing info.

July 20th. MGs will remember that Christine Bingham presented an excellent AMGA program on Ornamental Grasses in May. A visit to Christine's gardens did not disappoint! A variety of ornamental grasses, along with trees and shrubs, mulched with gravel front Christine's home. Her back gardens were full of trees, shrubs, perennials, more ornamental grass, raised vegetable beds, a children's wooden play house/climbing structure with fenced sandbox, and large bold color planted pots on the deck. It was a serene yard with a mix of color, texture and growth types - all to scale for a relatively small back yard. Nice eye, Christine. The use of spruce cones as mulch in the bed beneath the spruce tree was a neat touch.

Up the road a bit, Eva Hancock's garden was a new garden 5 or so years ago and it was nice to see how the garden has matured. Eva has espaliered apple and cherry trees, berries, raised veggie beds, along with many perennial plantings. Eva, too, has nicely conquered some topo features that could prove daunting. The iron gate to Eva's back yard was a custom design by local artist Jacob Thomas.

Nearby Linda McCarthy Beckworth's back yard features a natural central oasis path through the original spruce grove. Beneath the trees it doesn't seem like one is in a residential neighborhood with manicured front lawns! Linda's plantings skirt the perimeter of the natural island with perennial beds, fenced veggie beds, several solar powered water features, including bird baths and lots of unique and fun garden art.

Follow up: Landscaping on a Budget

July 16th. Remember that Herb presented the AMGA program in February on Making Do-Landscaping on a Budget which he ended with the announcement, "And now I'm getting married and you're all invited to the wedding". MG Linda Slack and MG Herb Spencer were married by MG Ski Olsonoski at an MG monthly meeting! In July Herb and Linda (Slack) Spencer invited MGs to see the progress they've made in developing their landscape 'on a budget'. To deal with their sloping backyard, Herb has created some retaining walls from recycled concrete. Herb reports that he put a query for recycled concrete on Craig's list and within a very short time had several responses. They've built a garden bridge and dry river bed edged with several perennial beds in front. They have put in a green house, built a raised veggie protected with greenhouse siding for hotter weather plants, and are doing a number of veggies in containers. Garden art includes many birdhouses, painted as small town buildings.

Master Gardener Focus: Troy and Lori Zaumseil By Cheryl Chapman



Jeff Heys, US Fish & Wildlife Service, present the Zaumseils with the CNIPM (Committee for Noxious & Invasive Plant Management) award for Outstanding Contributions last October. Photo by Trish Wurtz, USFS.

Somebody ought to write a book about unprovoked rudeness as a motivator. The power of the pissed off can hardly be overestimated.

The curtain goes up on Master Gardeners Troy and Lori Zaumseil; an outlaw plant in their back yard; that same plant, this time container-grown, from a big box store; the regional manager's contemptuous brush-off; calls; letters; community council presentations; speeches; involvement with lawmakers and officials from the municipality to the state to the U.S. Congress; formation of a nonprofit to help save Alaska from the havoc noxious weeds that have wreaked in the Lower 48; active promotion of coordinated programs among all entities in Alaska concerned with noxious weeds; hands-and-knees volunteer weed pulls - and voila, suddenly - after three years of hard work -- the state's a different place.

"These aren't your father's dandelions," says Troy. "These aren't nuisance weeds. These are noxious weeds. If they're not stopped, they irreversibly change three things for the worse: the ecology, the environment and the economy."

Their first bad boy, Canada thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), is so harmful it's on Page 1 of the USDA's booklet "Selected Invasive Plants of Alaska." Lori and Troy had pocketed a free copy at the Alaska State Fair (the Cooperative Extension Service has them). Canada thistle's a colonizer from roots and millions of tiny seeds lofted by the wind. It thrives in pastures, woods, ditches, river banks and roadsides. Wet or dry, hot or cold, Canada thistle doesn't care, and the only thing it loves is another Canada thistle. They produce toxins that kill every other plant around them. They are so scratchy that nobody wants to camp in them or hike through them; nothing can eat them, and they destroy all other forage, meaning hard times for Alaska moose; and they can infect the skin of people or animals trying to push through.

A Zaumseil song explains how their grass-roots weed campaign got going. Troy opens, Lori takes the second

verse in their presentations to community groups, and if you're lucky enough to catch them, you can sing along to the tune from "The Beverly Hillbillies":

Come and listen to a story about invasive plants
Went to the Fair, started learning by chance
Then one day, I was walking by the fence
And up from the ground popped *Cirsium arvense* - This-
tle, that is. Canada thistle.

Well the next thing you know, we're stompin' round the
town
Senators and congressmen and meetings in the round
Said "We need a law and we ain't gonna quit"
So we loaded up the laptop and threw a royal fit - Grand
mal, hissy fit.

The song leaves a little out. The part about how Lori and Troy worked their way up a big box store food chain about the Canada thistle in their 4-inch pot of sweet corn, until the Northwest Region manager snapped, "Short of calling the Division of Agriculture, what would you have me do?" and hung up on Lori. The part about how Lori then called the state Division of Agriculture herself, to find that, No. 1, Canada thistle is among the noxious weeds illegal in Alaska; No. 2, the department had a mandate to prosecute; and No. 3, the department had no money or manpower to do any such thing.

"We had no idea our 4-inch pot was a crime scene," says Lori. "We realized that to fight this, we'd need the Legislature, so we got together a list of every community council we could find and every legislator and every Alaska member of Congress and started letting people know that there was a huge problem, and if it wasn't stopped, it was going to destroy our Alaska way of life. And that isn't overstating things."

Community councils mobilized, and Republican Rep. Craig Johnson of Anchorage pushed to help so effectively that House Bill 330 passed the Legislature unanimously in January 2008. Gov. Sarah Palin signed it at an Invasive Weeds Awareness Fair in Anchorage. The law authorizes a statewide coordinator for noxious weed, invasive plant and agricultural pest management and education. It also brings together all entities with a dog in the weed fight to develop a strategic plan, and makes a start toward limiting economic loss and other adverse effects due to the spread of noxious weeds.

Locally, the Zaumseils founded the nonprofit group CANWIN, short for Citizens Against Noxious Weeds Invading the North ("A nonprofit making a difference one weed at a time"). The Web site, www.weedwar.org, is a good one to bookmark. CANWIN was one of the first members of the Anchorage Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA), an energetic umbrella group including federal, state and local land managers as well as private citizens, all working together to protect Alaska from invasive, noxious weeds. The state Department of Transportation is the latest member, and the Iditarod is thinking about joining. Those bales of straw for the dogs can carry weed seeds.

"Transportation of all sorts is a vector for weeds to work their way into Alaska," Troy says. "There's a big stand of orange hawkweed (*Hieracium aurantiacum*) at the International Airport, and it's a constant battle to

Continued on page 6

Cilantro Surprise Trials at ABG By Julie Riley

Because of cilantro's tendency to bolt, I've been recommending 'Santo' for years since Pat Leary gave us plants to try in the Alaska Botanical Garden herb garden.

'Santo' was a wonderful improvement over the species and the cultivar 'Slo-bolt'. After giving a presentation on herbs in Fairbanks, then Tanana Valley MG President Virginia Damron suggested I try 'Jantar'. To my surprise, Johnny's Selected Seeds offered a number of different cilantro cultivars and I decided to try a bunch of them.

In May five different cultivars (of 5 pots each) were planted in the ABG nursery. 'Jantar', the cultivar I was so excited, about did not germinate. Of the other four, 'Santo', 'Santo' monogerm, 'Delfino', and 'Xiang Cai', 'Santo' (and 'Santo' monogerm) was still the best when it came to not bolting although it wasn't far behind the other two cultivars.

Cilantro seed is actually a capsule that contains two seeds. A Puerto Rican friend, who first introduced me to the pungent herb over 25 years ago, advised it best to crush the seed before planting. I'm a slow learner and have never done this before. Monogerm seed is already crushed so the seed germinates faster. Now after growing both regular and monogerm seed, I'll be getting out the rolling pin to crush those little capsules that are hard as rock if the seed company has not done it for me.

The big surprise in my cilantro bolting trial was TASTE. Master Gardeners and ABG Herb Garden volunteers Margaret Love, Erna Rousey, Michele Semerad and Mary Shier unanimously decided 'Delfino' has the best taste. 'Xiang Cia' came in second in the flavor department and 'Santo' was described as being bitter and having an after-taste. Another discovery was that 'Delfino' looks different than the others. Its ferny foliage is almost dill-like in texture.

My advice on which cilantro to grow—'Delfino' for mild flavor, 'Santo' for later bolting and 'Jantar' for comparison.

President's Message cont. from page 1

So in thinking for an emblem
For this Empire of the North
We will choose this azure flower
That the golden days bring forth,
For we want men to remember
That Alaska came to stay
Though she slept unknown for ages
And awakened in a day.
So although they say we're living
In the land that God forgot,
We'll recall Alaska to them
With our blue Forget-me-not.

The Legislature heartily approved, the Territorial Governor signed the legislation into law on April 28, 1917 making the forget-me-not the official floral emblem of the Alaska Territory. The following was found written in the margin of the bill.

A little flower blossoms forth
On every hill and dale,
The emblem of the Pioneers
Upon the rugged trail;

The Pioneers have asked it
And we could deny them not;
So the emblem of Alaska
Is the blue Forget-me-not.

When Alaska entered the Union in 1959, the forget-me-not was adopted as the official State flower and floral emblem of the 49th state.

Whether chosen by school children or legislators, the beautiful plants that have been chosen to represent our nation and the individual states are a national treasure. As we continue to celebrate this 50th anniversary of our great state I leave you all with a gift. Please find the time to visit this website; it is well worth your time.

<http://www.jacquelawson.com/viewcard.asp?code=1221321706636&source=jl999>

Statistics for this article were found on Wikipedia and at Plantcare.com.

Strange Fungus Facts Linda McCarthy Beckworth



Fungus was one of the topics at the Alaska Botanical Garden 2009 Garden Fair. Here are some interesting facts about fungi that I've run across lately:

A fungus is an eukaryotic organism that is a member of the kingdom Fungi. Fungi have a worldwide distribution; most are largely invisible to the naked eye and grow in a wide range of habitats, including deserts, hypersaline environments, the deep sea, on rocks, and in extremely low and high temperatures. Fungi, along with bacteria, are the primary decomposers of organic matter in most if not all terrestrial ecosystems worldwide. The first organisms which had features typical of fungi date back to the Proterozoic eon, some 1,200 million years ago.

Wood ear, a tree fungus used to make moo shu pork, is supposed to be a great blood thinner.

A specimen of the fungus *Armillaria ostoyae*, originating from a single fertilized spore, covers some 2,200 acres in the Malheur National Forest in eastern Oregon, making it the largest organism in the world.

Yeasts, molds, and mushrooms are examples of fungi.

Fungi have long been used as a direct source of food, such as mushrooms and truffles, and in fermentation of various food products, such as wine, beer, and soy sauce. More recently, fungi are being used as sources for antibiotics used in medicine and various enzymes, such as cellulases, pectinases, and proteases, important for industrial use or as active ingredients of detergents.

The fungal kingdom has been estimated to contain about 1.5 million species. Around 70,000 species have been formally described by taxonomists, but the true dimension of fungal diversity is still unknown.

Fungi are more closely related to animals than to plants.

No one seems to know the origins of the phrase "There's a fungus among us."



Central Peninsula Master Gardener News By Rosemary Kimball

Where to start for the month of July? We must talk about the weather which was lovely, lovely! The first week of the month the temperatures climbed into the low 80s and got too hot to work in the garden. That heat called for rhubarb juice or otherwise on the shaded deck. It also helped the potatoes, knocked back to ankle high by the June 25th frost, start to recover.

I took a walkabout of MG Kathy Wartinbee's gardens and she had a very unusual red columbine. Absolutely no spurs on the flower and there was no inside frilly to it... skirt but no petticoat. It was isolated so I'm hoping for seeds from her.

Sitting on the sunny deck for morning coffee we can look at a flower garden gone to weeds. The weeds are trollius which makes it just fine. I started out with a few named varieties: Be Mine, a yellow-orange and bright orange bi-colored flower, creamy Alabaster, both from White Flower Farm years ago, and the standard europaeus. Since that time, the birds and bees have done their work and I've ended up with a pastel bi-color and one plant with the europaeus yellow with the growth pattern and later bloom time of the Alabaster. And, lots and lots of orange flowers. At the end of July, we look at a sea of orange. In the fenced garden I have a yellow trollius, tall as I am, that blooms at the end of July. Ironically, I got the seed from the North American Rock Garden seed exchange. Rock garden material it is not!

July, with its warmth, was also a month of weeds. Kathy calls hers "ground cover" and I call mine "green manure". I did solve a lot of my weed problems in the lower garden by taking the lawnmower down and mowing my poa annua and I now have a very nice lawn, easy to walk on barefooted, as you come into the area.

At the end of one of my flower rows in the garden, I had a real nice-looking geum (I thought) growing. I was surprised because geums and I parted company a few years ago because I didn't like their sprawling habit. This one looked so nice that I kept it to see what color it was. It wasn't. It was simply a Norwegian cinquefoil grown on good ground. Out it went and into its place went a pink geranium from Lorri Abel's.

The cleanest greenhouses I saw on the local garden club Open Gardens last summer had praying mantises in it for bug control. I learned a lot about those animals this summer. It takes three weeks at 70 degrees for the mantises to hatch according to the directions. My aphids were already present and becoming abundant when I hung the egg case up behind a tomato. Now came the hard part...how many aphids does one keep "on hand" to have as food when the mantises hatch? There must be something for them to eat or they will eat each other and there go the profits. I don't know how

they reach a balance, but a week after they hatched I had no aphids in the greenhouse and I have to search hard to find a mantis. The one I finally found the other day wasn't much bigger than hatch size but I'm sure happy with the results. Next year I'll grow peppers and eggplant in the greenhouse which are wonderful aphid attracters. The mantises are cheap and there is no hazardous waste disposal needed.

Hare-y garden predators abound this summer. The population has exploded and we're seeing road kill for the first time in many years. MG Donna Franzmann who lives close to town had a hare in her garden doing dinner and the next day she found a pile of furry lynx scat in the garden. That's heartening but she can't figure out how the cat got into her net-fenced garden.

Unfortunately we also have bears and one dug under the wire fencing and my ducks became breakfast. How I am going to miss their eggs! If you haven't had a duck egg custard, you haven't lived right. The yard is so quiet and boring without their nattering and bathing in their ducky puddle. The rock garden plant I got from Jaime Rodriguez is starting to grow back without their interference, but I sure miss chasing them off.

Cabbage Lore Linda McCarthy Beckworth

Alaskans are known for growing large cabbages. Mine never reach award winning weight but they do make a tasty slaw. Did you know this about our favorite crucifer?

^The cultivated cabbage is derived from a leafy plant called the wild mustard plant, native to the Mediterranean region, where it is common along the seacoast. Also called sea cabbage and wild cabbage, it was known to the ancient Greeks and Romans; Cato the Elder praised this vegetable for its medicinal properties, declaring that "the cabbage surpasses all other vegetables." The English name derives from the Normanno-Picard caboche (head), perhaps from boche (swelling, bump). Cabbage was developed by ongoing artificial selection for suppression of the internode length.

*The cabbage is a popular cultivar of the species *Brassica oleracea* Linne (Capitata Group) of the Family Brassicaceae (or Cruciferae), and is used as a leafy green vegetable. It is a herbaceous, biennial, dicotyledonous flowering plant distinguished by a short stem upon which is crowded a mass of leaves, usually green but in some varieties red or purplish, which while immature form a characteristic compact, globular cluster (cabbage head).

*The plant is also called head cabbage or heading cabbage, and in Scotland a bowkail, from its rounded shape. The Scots call its stalk a castock, and the English call its head a loaf.

*The word 'cabbage' is slang for money, 'cabbagehead' is slang for idiot, and 'cabbaging' means stealing or pilfering or lazing about.

*In 1532 French satirist Francois Rabelais wrote "Happy are those who plant cabbages."

*In 1894 Mark Twain wrote "Cauliflower is nothing but cabbage with a college education."

*Baseball legend Babe Ruth wore a cabbage leaf under his baseball cap to keep cool during games, changing the moist leaf every two innings.

*The United States is 9th in the world's production of cabbage. China is first followed by India, Russia, and South Korea.



Bird Chatter

- A smiling Jane Baldwin was seen in the Anchorage Daily News on July 2 standing among the primroses that she and Mary Jo Burns had on display at the Alaska Botanical Garden Fair.

- "Your mind is a garden, your thoughts are the seeds, you'll harvest either flowers or weeds"—quote printed on a sea bean that Julie Riley received for her birthday.

- MG Cheryl Simpson is moving to Arizona. Her garden and yard, famed for its unique rock wall, has been featured on many garden tours.

- Fairbanks MG Melody Springer gets a prize for 'adaptive reuse'. She has turned her old dog kennels into beautiful vegetable gardens. A colorfully painted 'cat house' is now home to garden tools.

- VISTA volunteer Liz Morris will be starting a position with the Anchorage CES horticulture program on Sept 1. SPECIAL THANKS to MG Janice Berry who alerted Julie Riley to the possibility of applying for a VISTA volunteer through RurAL CAP.

- Campfire kids, enrolled in a special nutrition program with Children's Lunchbox, grew a fabulous garden at the Fairview Community Garden site. In six weeks they harvested collards, arugula, radishes, parsley, lettuce and broccoli with Janice Berry's help.

- Campfire kids from Lousac Manor are still gardening at the C Street Community Gardens thanks to Dustin Solberg.

- A message titled "Teens Need Bikes for Gardening" brought responses from Noel Nelson, Annie Nevaldine, Cheryl Simpson and Joette Storm. Originally from Congo via Uganda the young men now have bicycles to get them to the refuge garden in Mountain View. They are selling their produce on Wednesday at the Northway Mall Farmers' Market and at a new market at University Center on Saturdays from 10 am - 4 pm.



Black Slug from Cordova - Photo scanned from handout prepared by Charlie Knight, State Division of Ag. for recent CES slug survey class.

WANTED: A few good slug pictures

Charlie Knight, of the Fairbanks office of the State Div. of Agriculture, is coordinating slug and snail surveys in Alaska in an effort to gather information on the different kinds of slugs now found in Alaska. Some exotic slugs have been moving north. Slugs are not regulated pests, but may be of increasing concern as the slugs appear to be moving out into agricultural areas and into native vegetation where the resulting impacts aren't fully known. Since gardeners are becoming quite proficient with their digital cameras, Charlie said he would welcome receiving good slug pictures, with dates and locations noted. Some indication of size would be good, too. One savvy gardener placed a quarter for size reference next to the slugs when she took their picture. Pictures can be sent to Charlie at <charles.knight@alaska.gov>.

First Detection in Alaska of Green Alder Sawfly

Fairbanks Extension Agent Michele Hebert reports that Alaska has a new (or recently discovered) sawfly pest of alder. Dr. James Kruse, Interior Alaska Forest Entomologist, USDA Forest Service submitted the insect to the Western Region Pest Detection Network for confirmation that it was *Monsoma pulveratum*. David Smith at the Smithsonian concurred. *Monsoma pulveratum* is from Europe, North Africa and the Near East (Turkey and Caucasus). Dr. Kruse dubbed it 'green alder sawfly' for lack of any other common name. The first North American record of the insect came from Newfoundland in the 1990s.



The sawfly's common name comes from the saw blade-like appearance of its ovipositor. Females use their ovipositor to cut into plants where they lay their eggs. Large populations can cause economic damage in cultivated areas and forests. The larvae are easily mistaken for true caterpillars, but since they are not, *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt) is not an effective control.

Master Gardener Focus: Zaumseils cont. from page 3

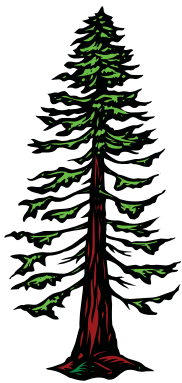
keep the purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*) eradicated. "The loosestrife fills wetlands and waterways and changes the sedimentation tables, and the salmon leave."



This past Christmas, Troy and Lori won the 'Christmas in the Tropics' decorated tree at the Sheraton, and swapped their tickets to Cabo San Lucas for two tickets to Washington, D.C., in February, to speak during National Invasive Weeds Awareness Week. They met with Rep. Don Young and Sens. Lisa Murkowski and Mark Begich, and got positive responses from all three. The focus nationally now is on a measure by Senate Democratic leader Harry Reid of Nevada, the 100th Meridian Bill, which allows states to borrow from a revolving loan fund to battle invasive noxious weeds.

"Alaska is driving this cause," Troy says. "We have the most to lose, and right now we're at the time when this problem is easiest to solve."

"I think we've been able to do so much because we're private citizens and haven't ever been political," says Lori. "We had no idea what we couldn't do. I just ask: Would you? Could you? It's important. When your cause is genuine and your heart is sincere, you get through."



Water Your Trees, Please
Nickel LaFleur
Certified Arborist
Anchorage TREErific member

With all the wonderful warm weather we've had in South Central Alaska this summer, it's important to remain diligent in keeping up with your watering chores - especially when it comes to recently planted shrubs and trees.

After looking at grass that is the color of straw, I visualize the roots of newly planted trees and shrubs and cringe thinking about the competition for the moisture that must be going on underground. The first three years of a tree and/or shrub's life is most important in the establishment of its root structure. Keeping the ground moist so the absorbing root hairs can do their job is key to the health of that tree. The easiest method I've found is to wind a soaker hose around the base of the tree out past the drip-line and leave the water trickling in the area all night long.

Also, look for pest damage. The spruce and larch sawfly have been spotted and need to be squished. Unlike aphids that cannot climb back into a tree after getting knocked out with a spray of water, the sawfly needs more than water to knock back their population. The use of dish soap and/or insecticidal spray mixed with water and sprayed on the tree has definitely helped me reduce the number of sawfly on trees I oversee.

Do your shrubs and trees a favor and spray them down with water at least weekly - knock off those pests and get that volcanic ash off them at the same time. Your trees will thank you for it.

For more information on caring for your trees and shrubs, go to www.TreesAreGood.com or email us at www.TREErificAnchorage@yahoo.com with your questions or concerns on tree care. Anchorage TREErific is a community group with a mission to "enrich our community through the planting, caring and promotion of trees"

**Needed: Flower Bed Contractor
 for Chester Park Cooperative**

We have several flower beds around the property; two in particular, have been very nice in the past. We lost the experience and labor of a 30 year Master Gardener a year ago and it shows. I'm in desperate need of a Master Gardener willing to act as our flower bed contractor and help make us gorgeous again. We run senior housing facilities and our grounds are extremely important to our residents. The property in question is Chester Park Cooperative, located at 2020 Muldoon Road in Anchorage. I can be reached at the email address above or by phone at 333-8844 or 360-8861

Wade Metzger, Administrator, Chester Park Coop.

Container Veggies

Annie Nevaldine is collecting pictures of container growing vegetables this summer.

If you have, or know of someone who has, vegetables growing in containers this season and are willing to have them photographed, please contact Annie at alzina@acsalaska.net or at 333-2100.

Garden Event Calendar

August 13, Thursday, 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm

Mushroom Walk at the Alaska Botanical Garden (ABG), with local expert Diane Pleninger, meet at Shop-in-the-Garden. Cost \$5 for non-ABG members, 4601 Campbell Airstrip Road, www.alaskabg.org

August 14 - 16, Friday - Sunday

Home and Improvement & Remodeling Show, Sullivan Arena, look for garden club displays including Master Gardeners, 562-7721

August 27, Thursday, 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm

Mushroom Walk at the Alaska Botanical Garden (ABG), with local expert Diane Pleninger, meet at Shop-in-the-Garden. Cost \$5 for non-ABG members, 4601 Campbell Airstrip Road, Anchorage, www.alaskabg.org

August 17, Monday, 7:00 pm

AMGA Tour:

1. Upper Hillside Gardens: Perennials & Rock Garden; Madge Oswald, 12001 Audubon Dr. For info, call 345-5144
2. Hillside Garden; Alla Khadjinova, 9301 Nettleton Dr. For info, call 346-1711

August 27 - September 7

Alaska State Fair, Palmer, "We're Thowin' a Party: Bring on the Fun!", first flower and crops entries, August 26, 12:00 - 9:00 pm, second flower and crops entries, September 2, 12:00 - 9:00 pm, includes Junior Giant Zucchini Contest for children ages 6-12 and 13-17, prizes awarded to entries with the heaviest weights, sponsored by the Wild-flower Garden Club in Anchorage, www.alaskastatefair.org

August 25, Tuesday, 3:00 pm - 5:00 pm

Citizen Weed Warriors Event at Chester Creek Nature Trail (purple loosestrife). Meet at the 19th Ave parking lot trail access. For details, contact Wade Collins, Volunteer Coordinator, Anchorage Parks & Recreation, CollinsWA@muni.org or 343-4460

September 1, Tuesday, 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Central Peninsula Garden Club meeting, "Historic Gardens & Farms of the Central Kenai Peninsula", held at Cook Inlet Aquaculture Building on Kalifornsky Beach Road, Kenai. For more information, 283-4632, 398-8669 or mmkn@ptialaska.net

September 3, Thursday, 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Anchorage Garden Club meeting, "Plants of the Bering Glacier", presenter Marilyn Barker, Pioneer School House lower level, 437 E 3rd Ave. For information 566-0539 or www.alaskagardenclubs.org/anchoragegardenclub

September 4, Friday, 6:00 pm

14th Annual Giant Cabbage Weigh-Off, sponsored by the Alaska Division of Agriculture, Alaskan Grown program. Also includes the Max Sherrod Junior Cabbage competition open to kids 12 and under, sponsored by Valley Radio 99.7. Registration deadline to enter competition is August 21, 4:30 pm, Alaska State Fairgrounds, Palmer, www.alaskastatefair.org



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 [new mailing address]
 Anchorage, AK 99516

Phone: 345-4099

Email: amga@gci.net

AMGA Web Site: www.alaskamastergardeners.org

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

For information about membership or upcoming programs, contact:
Cooperative Extension Office
2221 E. Northern Lights Blvd.
Anchorage, AK 99508
Phone: 786-6300
Fax: 786-6312



Inside this issue....

Message From the President
Mid Summer AMGA Tours
Master Gardener Focus: Troy and Lori Zaumseil
Cilantro Surprise Trials at ABG
Strange Fungus Facts
Central Peninsula Master Gardener News
Cabbage Lore
Bird Chatter
First Detection in Alaska of Green Alder Sawfly
Water Your Trees, Please



A moose antler planter brought a nice bright color spot to Sandy Ehrenman's deck during the June 29th Master Gardener Tour. See article on page 2.
Photo by Jane Baldwin

Alaska Master Gardeners Association, Inc.
Anchorage Chapter
University of Alaska Cooperative Extension
P.O. Box 221403
Anchorage, Alaska 99522-1403

Non Profit Organization
US Postage Paid
Permit #107
Anchorage, Alaska