





Volume 15, Issue 8

ALASKA MASTER GARDENERS ANCHORAGE NEWSLETTER

August 2013



A Nickel's Worth from President LaFleur

Whooo hooo! Can we be any luckier with the weather we had in July? I couldn't have asked for any better weather for my uncle's visit!!! And isn't it wonderful to enjoy what a month has done in the growth of the gardens? We live in the 'Land of the Midnight Sun' ---indeed.

But not only are our gardens thriving, so are the weeds! I noticed the bird vetch Vicia cracca and yellow sweet clover Melilotus officinalis in the Richardson Highway roadside ditches all the way from Valdez to Fairbanks, unfortunately. And because it 'looks pretty' (our State colors blue and yellow), people don't seem to be as be concerned about how it is moving along the road system as I believe they should be.

I live on one of our many miles of bike path in the Municipality of Anchorage and am picking the flowers off the bird vetch that is only steps away from the path. Please help me in that effort by pulling this weed - especially now, when it is flowering, and bag it up and send it to the garbage. Please don't discard it in your compost pile or mow it over while it is flowering as it only scatters the seeds. As Alaska Master Gardeners, let's do our part to be weed warriors!

This has been a summer of opportunity in our land-scape, hasn't it? Patience in waiting for long lived (and loved) perennials to show some life has been hard for me. The peonies were late in arriving and some didn't bother showing up at all. In spite of my digging up what I thought was a dead ladies mantle Alchemilla mollis, I noticed a small seedling growing instead. How did that happen? Anyone else besides me having a problem with white flies and/or aphids on annuals? With the warm weather and taking a vacation, I have to admit I haven't been as good of a pest scout as I should have been.

Have you noticed the slugs have arrived? Get out the slug killer - whatever your method might be. I have a small strawberry patch that I string up the strawberry plants up so they don't lay on the ground and in the path of the slimy slugs. I use a clothesline, eye hooks, bread ties and some sticks for supports in the bed and tuck the strawberry leaves and berries up. It's not foolproof but by keeping the berries off the ground and being vigilant in picking up the dead leaves/debris, I haven't had to use as much Sluggo bait. Do you have any secrets to share on eradicating slugs? If so, please send them to our editor Gina at AMGA@alaska.net so we may post

the ideas in our next newsletter.

It's an exciting time to live in Anchorage. As you know, we are working on the Eastside District Plan for 2020 and have an opportunity to get a park established in East Anchorage. The 2.57 acre parcel, where the old Alaska Greenhouse on Muldoon was, is being looked at on what the best usage of this property should be. On July 23rd, the Assembly decided to postpone their vote and send this Ordinance (AO2013-73) to the Parks and Recreation Board for input. The Parks & Recreation Board meets every 2nd Thursday, and they plan to hear this issue on Thursday, September 12th at 6pm at the Spenard Recreation Center. I trust they will see what a perfect place this is for a park and forward on their approval to the Assembly who will bring it up for a vote at their meeting on Tuesday, September 24th. An email to the Parks Board and Assembly with your support would definitely be appreciated.

Thanks to all the Master Gardeners who are sharing their gardens with us this summer. We are lucky to live here.

Treasurer's Report

Balances 5/31/2013

Checking S-88 Savings S-19 CD-112.1(ABG) CD-126(Education)	2960.84 12656.7 3363.14 3014.76
Revenue Interest	\$21995.48 17.12
Membership	40.18 \$57.30
Expense Awards Hospitality Operations Newsletter	25.00 300.00 246.00 294.00
6/30/2013	\$865.05
Checking S-88 Savings S-19 CD-112.1(ABG) CD-126(Education)	2135.97 12658.30 3369.03 3024.49



July Garden Tours Color Explosion By Barbara Baker

The warm weather in June brought our gardens out of hibernation and provided us with an amazing color display. The July 1 tour celebrated our senior community with visits to the Anchorage Senior Center, Chugach View and Manor, and the Anchorage Pioneer Home. Host, Master Gardener, Bonnie Tisler, and a small crew of master gardener volunteers care for the senior center gardens. The gardens contain plants donated by seniors and feature lovely perennial groupings and garden art. A memorial garden can be found on the east side and features a lovely bench from which to gaze at the flowers. A short walk to the east side of the center revealed a plaza surrounded by perennial gardens.



Cranberry red swing at the Anchorage Senior Center. Photo by B.Baker

What made this garden so special was the great cranberry red swing and chickadee fledges taking their first flights into the surrounding trees. Girl Scouts installed the bird houses last year as a service project.

Walking across the street to Chugach Manor, Elaine Hollier (from Alaska Housing) and resident, Nancy Suhrbur, hosted our tour of the 39 raised vegetable garden plots maintained by the residents. The gardens are mostly a delightful variety of salad greens and Asian vegetables and herbs. However, there was also a beautiful planting of wheat that swayed in the wind.



Pat Anderson, Sharon Davies, Julie Riley and Nancy Suhrbur talk over one of the many raised beds at the Chugach Manor. Photo by B.Baker

We finished the evening at the Pioneer Home, with tour Master Gardener tour hosts, Camille Williams, Jane Baldwin and Lynne Opstad, who planned and managed the gardens. Camille's design created waves of color in blue, fuschia and white; featuring cosmos, snapdragons, begonias, lobelia and alyssum. The evening also included the dedication of a garden bench to Master Gardeners' Judy Christianson and Mary Shier for their many



Judy Christianson and Mary Shier sitting in the new garden bench at the Pioneer Home. Photo by B.Baker

years of service in designing, planting and maintaining the gardens at the Home. Pioneer Home administrators, Rich Saville and Jerri Vansandt, also joined in on the celebration.

Our second tour of the Alaska Botancial Gardens (ABG) reminded all of us of what warm weather can mean for our summer gardens. Just six weeks later, the sleepy gardens of early June, were now bursting with color and emerald blankets of green. A colorful and yummy kitchen garden along with a whimsical moose topiary, greeted us, as we entered the garden. Wafts of peony



Garden art at the ABG - Photo by B.Baker

perfume followed us as we travelled along the paths. The redesigned rock garden and amphitheater was open. Lile's Garden had waves of color from all of the beautiful peonies and stunning perennials, unique trellises constructed of rebar and fascinating giant leafed plants for shady areas (which created a buzz among the crowd). Elise Huggins and Julianne McGinnis hosted our tour and emphasized the important contributions volunteers and community support have meant to the development of the gardens.

The crescendo of the July tours was Apollo Drive. Six families opened their homes to over eighty visitors.



Amy Olmstead's garden chalet Photo by B.Baker

So many extraordinary featurés make it impossible to highlight all of them. Here are just a few. Amy Olmstead's successful use of irrigation in her lush perennial gardens was adopted by many of her neighbors. She also has a charming potting chalet built by her father. Sweeping designs of perennials and annuals were beautifully mixed in the front beds of Pat Anderson's garden; the back yard held a lovely shade garden and spectacular kiwi plant. Camille Williams' home was filled with theme gardens containing perennials and annuals that could easily have taken the evening to fully explore. She combines her plantings with her own garden art,



Marge Olson's sloped garden. Photo by B.Baker



maple tree hidden in

house, a feeling of serenity overcomes the visitor. Multiple sitting areas, including a green-

house sitting room, invite

čil Merino, invited guests

inviting path included a unique moss garden and cleverly designed green house that incorporated a full grown tree.

the visitor to pause and contemplate the beauty

Elaine Junge's serene garden. Photo by B.Baker



Pat Anderson's lush garden. Photo by B. Baker

fountains and planters to create various themes from whimsy to grandeur. For gardeners facing the challenges of a sloped lot, Marge Olson's home demonstrates the creative possibilities available with terracing. Her garden contains plantings in beautiful arrays of perennials and shade loving plants, as well as a lovely variegated



Whimsical garden art in Camille Williams' garden. Photo by B.Baker



Tomato plants and brick pathway in Cecil Merino's garden. Photo by B.Baker

There's a Moose in My Garden: Designing Gardens in Alaska and the Far North By Brenda Adams \$35, University of Alaska Press

Reviewed by Fran Durner

Who didn't lose beaucoup plants after this winter and who isn't still, even in August, trying to decide what to do about it? One camp is still in mourning and the other is delighting in the chance to try something new. Or, perhaps you are new to gardening and don't know where to start.

Pick up garden designer Brenda Adams new book, "There's a Moose in My Garden, Designing Gardens in Alaska and the Far North", to inspire you to move forward. The first landscape design book on the Alaska hort scene since, oh, I don't know when; it is written specifically for cold-climate gardeners, whether you are new-on-the-scene or old garden hands.

Adams is a former president of the Homer Garden Club. She has deep credentials, having designed and implemented over 150 Alaska gardens (mostly in Homer) and has received several national kudos from the Perennial Plant Association. That's a big deal.

You can use this book as if you had a real-life mentor. Adams takes you virtually by the hand and gently guides you, step-by-step, in prose that is easy to read and understand, towards the garden you have always seen in your minds eye. It's as if you had a garden coach by your side.

Adams does a bang-up job in an area I'm all about: low-maintenance gardens. She provides a knowledgeable and comprehensive primer of plants that fare well in our northern areas. Ample color photos provide examples throughout the book.

You all know I love Homer. The overall scenery (how can you beat it?) is one of the reasons, but personal gardens in the 59th parallel are some of the background jewels that are rarely seen and appreciated. Homer is warmer in the winter and cooler in the summer than Anchorage and provides a yearlong challenge but spectacular rewards.

"There's a Moose in My Garden, Designing Gardens in Alaska and the Far North", by Brenda Adams, is officially due out in August and will be available at the Homer Bookstore during the Homer Gardeners Weekend, August 3-4. Brenda will be available during the weekend to personalize your book.

The Homer Gardeners Weekend takes place in Homer from August 3-4. Nationally known author and conservationist Rick Darke (don't you love that name?) will present "The Layered Land-scape and the New Wild Garden," at 6:30 on Saturday, August 3, at Islands and Oceans Visitors Center. The tour of six local gardens is from 11 a.m. - 5 p.m. on Sunday and culminates in a reception at the Bear Creek Winery from 5 p.m. until 6:30 p.m. with hors d'oeuvres, wine and door prizes. Tickets are available through Saturday at the Homer Bookstore and the Homer Chamber of Commerce and at the Islands and Oceans Visitor Center on the night of the talk. On Sunday they are available from 10 a.m. - noon in the parking lot of the Homer City Hall and at all the gardens.

Creating Garden Beds under a Tree By Amy Olmstead

In Alaska, one of our greatest garden attributes is trees, trees, and more trees. What gardener do you know that can resist the challenge and delight of planting a beautiful pallet of plants under said trees? If you follow a few choice steps you can easily plant to your heart's content, keep your trees happy and healthy and still have a lush forest of plants beneath.

Step 1: Know your tree's needs such as feeding and watering and meet those needs first. Learn how tolerant your tree is to having its roots disturbed.

Be careful when disturbing: Beeches, Black oak, Buckeyes, Cherries and plums, Dogwoods, Hemlocks Larches, Lindens, Pines, Red oaks, Scarlet Oaks, and Sugar maple

These Trees tolerate some disturbance: Hickories, Hornbeams, Redbuds, Red maples, River birches, Sourwood, Spruces, Swamp whit oak, Sycamore and White ashes

These trees are easy going about being disturbed: Arborvitae, Crab apples, Hawthorns, Honey locusts, Poplars, Silver maples, White oak and willows and of course cotton wood.

(Tolerances provided by Doris Taylor, Morton Arboretum)

Step 2: Choose plants that have similar water and food needs as well as shade level. Pick your plants wisely and choose ones that are well suited to the environment under a tree. Some possibilities include: Perennials: Black snakeroot, columbines, foamflowers, some grasses, lungworts, Siberian irises, primula, Trollius and hosta.

Step 3: If you have turf grass to remove, don't scrape it off and avoid using chemicals to kill it. Instead cover it with layers of newspaper to smother it and kill it. It may take more time but is less invasive to the tree and easier on your back!

Step 4: Choose plants that are smaller in size, 2 to 4 inch pots. They might take longer to fill in, but you will disturb your tree far less than attempting to plant a larger pot size.

Step 5: Begin planting 1 foot away from the base of the tree trunk. If you run into a root of medium or larger size, move your hole over a bit. Don't attempt to cut out the root. Your tree will be happier and your plant will have more room to grow. Amend the soil around the plants root ball with good compost to give it a great start. It will be competing with the trees roots for nutrients, so any extra booster that we can give it will help.

Step 6: Water well. Your plant is a tiny baby compared to a well-established tree and will be competing with the trees surface roots for water as well as nutrients. Water often and well while getting your plants established. Both tree and plant will be happy for the drink!



Central Peninsula Master Gardener News By Rosemary Kimball

August is a bittersweet month. The fireweed will bloom to the top and then it's only six weeks to freeze up. However, in the meantime... Gardens are going ape! Margaret Simon says she's just watching her garden grow and she gave me a jar of Cucumber marmalade...see below.



Kathy Wartinbee's rock garden -Photo by David Wartinbee



Fresh garden broccoli from Kathy Wartinbee's garden -Photo by KBW

Kathy Wartinbee took our new CES head Lydia Clayton around her yar'd. She has very nice rock gardens.' It's one of those gardens where you look, then copy. She also wrote, Not much to report here. The weeds are doing well, our company has been lots of fun, the fishing is fine but the catching slow. At the moment we are in the 'betweens'. The garden is growing, broccoli harvested as it comes, and the rest is waiting for things to get ripe. Time to kick

back and enjoy this terrific summer weather". She also added that she's been weeding all summer and it is now time for the weeds to grow.

Neighbor Mark's rock gardens are growing apace. He's put in a tremendous amount of work into his (unfenced) vegetable garden. However his cabbages, etc. are planted up in his dad's fenced garden. His martagon lilies that he started from seed years ago are multiplying like rabbits. I compared last year's picture which was very nice to this year's picture which was impressive! I need to

find his zucchini to make some pancakes...see below.

Barb Jewell wrote "To my delight the mock oranges that I planted a couple years ago are blooming and the moose left them alone. A friend stopped by and commented on how much I must enjoy my lawn furniture. Ha. They are yard art! Don't have time to lounge around and enjoy them and our nice weather. Between the aphid drippings, cottonwood fuzz and baby birds perching on the lawn furniture (and leaving "calling cards" she told me later), I'm feeling like a perpetual cleaning machine. But, the summer is great! I got stung by a wasp today (and mosquitos). And my car door stuck this morning

from aphid drippings". Now that is a problem I hadn't heard before!

And lastly, from our local curmudgeon, Don St.John, "Too hot... Too dry... Too much watering... When will it frost so all this insanity will end?"

And this as a postscript after our night of thunder, lightening and rain where he got two inches in his wagon: "Everything is perky and happy... no dragging hoses for a couple days... even the grass is greener and growing... damn now I'll have to mow this weekend."

You gotta love this guy!



KBW, Margaret Simon and Carol Bruni, a FL MG who has defected to AK, in M.Simon's Greenhouse in May. Photo by R. Kimball

Garden Recipes from Rosemary

This is a keeper that a friend made and saved me a jar:

Baked rhubarb/strawberry jam: http://yankee-kitchen-ninja.blogspot.com/2013/05/ roasted-strawberry-rhubarb-jam.html

ZUCCHINI PANCAKES

Shred some zucchini (I use the Cuisinart's julienne blade.)

Salt lightly and let drain until you get around to dealing with them. A half hour is minimum.

Add one or two eggs depending how much vegetable you have.

Add flour to make a nice mix and some pepper. Fry on both sides over medium high heat in some of the oil of your choice..bacon is nice but I use butter/olive oil. You don't need to use too much. They will disappear

You can add all sorts of stuff to the mix...herbs, sautéed onions.

CUCUMBER-CITRUS MARMALADE

1 gt. cukes peeled, de-seeded & cut in 1/2" chunks

1 thinly-sliced lime

1 thinly-sliced lemon

1 thinly-sliced small orange

1 cup water

1 pkg. powdered pectin

5 cups sugar

Use skin, pulp & juice of citrus, discarding only the seeds. Combine citrus & cuke with water and simmer 10-15 minutes, then let stand overnight so flavors will combine and citrus will tenderize. You should have 5 cups of mixture. Stir into it one package of powdered pectin and bring to a boil for two minutes. Add 5 cups of sugar (or exact same amount as citrus). Bring to a rolling boil and cook 4 minutes. Pour into jars and seal.



-- The Iceland vegetable gardeners that Annie and Julie met said they used June 15th as their try-to-get-plant-

га-ру аате.

-- The Iceland moss used in herbal tea is really a lichen.
-- The Nootka lupine, the same species that we have in Alaska, has been used to revegetate areas of Iceland following volcanic events. The lupine's solid cover and spread to areas where it was not planted, has resulted in concern over the plant's invasiveness.

-- The culinary herb's seen most often in Iceland gardens, landscapes and tea shops were angelica, lovage, caraway and sweet cicely. Currant hedges were seen on practically every block where people had yards.

-- Registered by DEC in Alaska for bed bug control: DON'T LET THE BEDBUGS BITE! GOOD NIGHT. Registration and Idea.

istration cancelled: Dropdead II.

-- Martha Galbreath once purchased 8 million peat pots from Ball Seed Company in which to grow willows for revegetating the pipeline. Ask her what was printed on the the crew's T-shirts.

-- Flea beetles are a new pest in Anchorage vegetable gardens as observed by Sherry Lee Bottoms, IPM Technician and Julie Riley. Has anyone else been plagued by

these creatures?

-- Thank you Mary Rydesky and Greg Kalal for your donations of seed potatoes to the refugee farmers' market garden and to Nickel LaFleur for the big, beautiful broccoli transplants that went to new community gardeners at Loussac Place. MG Fran Peckar has been stopping by Loussac Place once a week to help gardeners with their questions.

-- Alaska boasts 35 species of mosquitoes according to the Alaska Public Lands Information Center website.

Iceland has none.

-- Chickens are still hot. So hot that a picture of a band named the Sweeteners, debuting their new album at a local watering hole, included a photo of the group each

holding a chičken.

-- Here's an interesting little tidbit from Alaska State Statutes: Sec. 44.12.120. Alaska Public Gardens Day. Alaska Public Gardens Day is established on the Saturday immediately preceding Memorial Day each year to commemorate the state's public gardens and the role the gardens play in promoting environmental stewardship, the economy, a healthy food supply, education, plant conservation, recreation, and research.

-- Winter hit Sharon Davies garden hard, losing some of her favorite lilacs and most of her hostas. But, you would never have known that when she opened her garden for a tour and refreshments. The new plantings fit seamlessly into her garden scape creating a lovely collection of lilacs and hostas, along with her well established garden of perennials and trees. Guests enjoyed refreshments in her outdoor sun room, as we talked about the weird winter and wonderful summer we were experiencing.

Chipper Shredder for Hire

Loretta Mumford recently invested in a chipper / shredder that she is willing to bring to your yards for hire to run dry compost materials through. If you are interested, please contact her at home, 345-7269, or her cell, 242-3177. Leave a message and she will get back to you.

Julie Riley Honored for Work with Refugees

Our own Julie Riley was honored by Catholic Social Services on June 21 for her work with refugees to Alaska. For many, many years Julie has been active with refugees from several different countries by teaching them how to garden Alaska-style and how to market their produce (this year at the Spenard Farmers' Market). Congratulations to Julie for her long-term dedication and commitment to help these refugees integrate into and adjust to their new lives in Alaska. Julie provides a tremendous community service through this endeavor.

Planting Under Trees....continued from page 4

Step 7: Add mulch around the new plants, but keep it away from the base of the tree. This will help to hold moisture in, weeds out and will help feed both tree and plant as it decomposes. Reapply this top dressing annually, about 2-3 inches per year. Avoid fertilizing the first year, as it will encourage more green growth for the plant verses root growth as it gets established.

Step 8: Because of the nature of some trees, you may need to mulch heavily over your new plants to protect them from winter winds and cold if the trees braches prevent snow from accumulating and providing a natural cover. Choose your favorite mulch, leaves, pine branches, straw, and shovel some snow over it if winter winds threaten to blow it off. In early spring, remove it when you clean the rest of your beds.

Step 9: Enjoy your creation!!!

"Sunrise over Ocean Waves" at the Pioneer Home By Lynne Opstad

If you haven't been down to see the Pioneer Home gardens this summer you should make it a point to view them soon, as they are at their peak flowering now. The gardens were planned and designed by Camille Williams and Jane Baldwin.

Before beginning the design process Camille asked the residents what they wanted. Since many have diminished



Camille Williams directing the planting

eyesight and sense of smell, the answer was lots of color and fragrance and that's what they got. Lavatera, Snapdragons, Cosmos, Alyssum, Petunias and more come together in a wonderful feast for the eyes and nose.

The name of the garden design is "A sunrise simulating a blue ocean with waves of white capturing the pink colors of an early morning sunrise". Microsoft Visio was used to lay out each bed to conform with the garden sizes, give an accurate plant count and finalized the design concept. Jane and Camille amended the soil with a 32 bags of Whitneys steer manure and added some 16-32-

16 Alaskan fertilizer about 10 days before planting.

According to Camille- "We used 36 Twins Hot Pink Lavatera, a variety that is short but blooms fuller, 5 Silver Cup Lavatera and 3 white Lavatera of the taller variety. We used 116 Sonnet Pink Snapdragons; 122 Snow Crystals Alyssums were used to form the waves for the ocean of 288 upright Riviera Marine Blue Lobelia. The raised bed along the front of the building was made up of pink and white Lavatera with Babies Breath and Alyssum in the center and Hot Pink

Wave Petunia. The other raised bed has Summer Blue Delphiniums (butter fly), Lobelia and Hot Pink Petunias. The City of



MGs Barbara Baker and Joyce Smith planting

Anchorage supplied the 32 Sonata Carmine Cosmos used in the back bed. 18 Lupine were used in the center bed and the corner bed. We also mixed it up a little with Violas donated by the University of Alaska along with some other flowers in the back bed. The University also donated 36 Snapdragons. The flowers were planted with More Bloom B1 Root Boost and each plant was individually watered in." Camille donated the two hanging baskets by the front door.

Master Gardener volunteers Jane Baldwin, Julie Ginder, Joyce Smith, Mel Langdon, Susan Miller, Susan Saltmarsh, Janice Berry, Cammy Oechsli Taylor, Sharon Schlicht, Diane Blas, Marsha Burns, Joyce Palmer, Judy See, Anita Williams, Bobbe Siebert, Mari Wood, Barbara Baker, and Ginny Jacober planted and have been working



Jane Baldwin and Joyce Smith planting

hard all summer to maintain the gardens, resulting in a beautiful display that is being enjoyed by all.



Colorful raised bed planting at the Pioneer Home in June All Photos by Lynne Opstad

Garden Event Calendar

Monday, August 1st

Anchorage Garden Club - Growing an Alaskan Native Plant Pantry and Medicine Cabinet: Alaska Plant Materials Center's Ethnobotany Teaching Garden presented by Peggy Hunt - 7:00 PM, Pioneer School House - 437 E 3rd Avenue

August 3-4th

70th Annual Flower Show will be held at the Northway Mall. The show is open for viewing from 1-6pm on Saturday and Noon - 5pm on Sunday.

August 3-4th

Homer Garden Club - Gardener's Weekend - information at www.homergardenclub.org

Friday, August 5th

AMGA Summer Garden Tour - Downtown visitor center, green roof talk. See email for more information

August 12

AMGA tour: Green Connection - Living Plant Wall. Watch email for directions.

August 17

ABG & ALPAR Plastic Pot Recycling Day; plastic pots types 2, 5, & 7 - 11-3 p.m. Benny Benson Parking Lot

August 19

AMGA End of Summer Plant Swap & Potluck - Host Madge Oswald - 12001 Audobon Dr. - call 345-5144 or watch your email for directions.

August 22-Sept. 2

Alaska State Fair - visit www.alaskastatefair.org for more information

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

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Phone: 345-4099 Email: amga@alaska.net

AMGA Web Site: www.alaskamastergardeners.org (The Newsletter will be on-line in living color!)

AMGA Google Group:

https://groups.google.com/forum/?fromgroups#!forum/AkMGA

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 Jane Baldwin at: jbaldwin@alaska.net

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"Sunrise over Ocean Waves" is the theme of the Anchorage Pioneer home planting, created & maintained by Master Gardeners. The article on page 6 explains it all.

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