



The RHODOTELLER

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Coming Events

2 October 2007 – Executive Meeting

This month's executive meeting will be held at the home of Harry and Gwen Wright, 769 Chaster Road, Courtenay.

Executive Meeting begins at 2:00 p.m.

9 October 2007 – Regular Monthly Meeting

Program: Robert Argall... *Spring and Fall Bulbs.*

Bulbs for color, bulbs for companions plants to Rhododendrons, bulbs for enhancing our gardens in the shoulder seasons. Bulbs...bulbs...bulbs. Robert will be enlightening us with his wealth of knowledge on various varieties of Spring and Fall bulbs, both old and new.

A bonus presentation will be Robert's slides from his recent trip to northern England and France. A little birdie told me there may be several famous gardens for your viewing pleasure.



President's View

(by Harry Wright)

First order of business is to extend my thanks to Vice President Dave Crucq for filling the chair at the meetings during my absence, and a great job he did I hear!

It is perfectly obvious that summer has come and gone. Those lazy days for barbequing, garden lounging with Mai Tais, and heading off on numerous garden tours are past. Fall is here and it brings with it a new season full of nature's brightest colors and harvests abundant with fruits and vegetables.

Many chores need to be tended to before winter sets in; cuttings taken, tubers stored, seeds collected and tender plants taken in out of the cold, to name a few. Don't forget to step back and look around while doing these chores and take in the marvelous fall foliage this year. Our summer rains have given us a splendid fall show!

NORTH ISLAND RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

2006/2007 Executive:

President

Harry Wright.... 338-8345

Vice-President

Dave Crucq 339-7845

Past President:

Paul Wurz 287-4301

Secretary

Diana Scott 338-0208

Treasurer

Don Law 339-2735

Director: Ways & Means

Dave Godfrey .. 335-0717

Director: Membership

Brian Staton 337-5228

Director: Publicity

Chris Aldred 335-3231

Director: Newsletter/Library

Noni Godfrey ... 335-0717

.....Nonigod@shaw.ca

Social Committee:

Evelyn Wright.. 339-7493

Revenue Table Committee:

Louise Casson.. 334-2331

Historian:

Lois Clyde..... 337-5754

The club meets the second
Tuesday of the month
(except May through August)
at the United Church
Comox Avenue,
Comox 7:30 p.m.



But as with every other year, winter will be here soon and we will be able to rest from all our labors (or at least cut drastically down) and be able to do some quiet planning over this last season of our garden's cycle. Soon we will be chomping at the bit to get back into our gardening routine, digging and planting and starting the cycle all over again.

Members of our chapter interested in forming a hybridization and propagation group with members of the MARS and Nanaimo chapters are asked to let me know as soon as possible. Plans are underway to form a Vancouver Island group, and meetings/workshops will start this fall.

As director for the CV Rhodo Garden, I will be calling one more fall work party for the gardens to "raise some rockets and pull some weeds." The date and time of the work party will be announced at the October meeting.

President Harry.



Member's Notes

(by Dave Godfrey)

Another season of chapter meetings began on Tuesday, September 11th. With President Harry Wright, and wife Gwen, on holidays in New Brunswick, Vice President Dave Crucq took the chair and opened the meeting by welcoming everyone in attendance. On behalf of the executive, Dave welcomed Louise Casson to the executive, as she takes over the Revenue Table duties. Dave also thanked Joan Walsh and Tiffany Wyles for their service with the revenue table over the past year, and Bernice Morrison for her help on the social committee.

There were 33 in attendance, including 5 guests, one of whom (Dany Fortin) became our newest member. Welcome to the club, Dany.

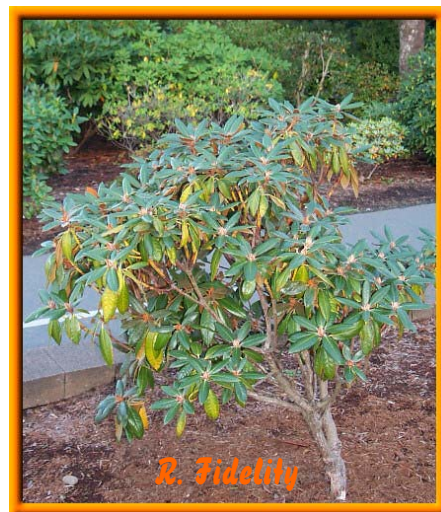
Following the business portion of the meeting, VP Dave began a question and answer session by presenting several damaged rhodo leaves which he explained the causes for. This created some lively discussion on a variety of gardening problems, with many suggested remedies given by some of our more experienced members.

Long standing member, Bernie Guyader was our guest speaker for the evening with his slide presentation of "Paradise Close to Home." The colorful show demonstrated the vast variety of alpine plants found on scenic Mt. Washington in the Strathcona Provincial Park. In addition to his interests in the genus rhododendron, Bernie has had a particular interest in alpine plants. For more than 25 years, Bernie has propagated and bonsai'd many alpine and rock garden plants, specializing in gentians and lewisias. Bernie's presentation encouraged many in attendance to visit the alpine meadows found on Mt. Washington. But as Bernie cautioned, regardless of the time of year,

dress appropriately and take a small amount of food and water for the outing.



Following Bernie's presentation, draws were made for the rhodo raffle with Roberts Smith winning a Gibson beauty called "Brianna", named after Ken & Dot Gibson's granddaughter. The door prize of a potted grass, *carrex buchananii*, was won by Dave Godfrey.



Special thanks are given to Mo Fidell for her donation of the rhododendron "Fidelity" which has been relocated to the new BOVI bed in our Comox Valley Rhododendron Garden. Thanks also go out to "Triple D Developments" (Dave Crucq, Dave Godfrey and Don Law) for transplant work and cleanup at the gardens on September 13th. The gardens look in great shape for the fall, but a good weeding could be used, in particular for bed #6 (the stump bed.) So if anyone has some spare time while the weather remains nice, please feel free to stop by and pull a few weeds.

The October meeting of the MARS chapter in Qualicum will be held in conjunction with the Nanaimo Chapter on Thursday, Oct. 11th. The guest speaker for their combined meeting will be Dennis Bottemiller, who will be speaking on propagating rhododendrons (and anything else) by cuttings. NIRS members are invited to attend, and

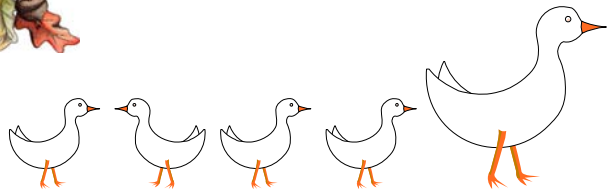
billets may be provided if needed. Nanaimo chapter meetings are held in Room 20 of the Beban Park Recreation Centre on Bowen Road in Nanaimo beginning at 7:30 PM. Those wishing accommodations should contact President Chris Southwick at csouthwick@shaw.ca ASAP.

Harry and Gwen Wright traveled with Bernie and Gloria Guyader to Eugene, Oregon for the ARS Western Region Fall Conference on the weekend of September 21st to 23rd. They then spent a week touring around northern California. We hope to have a report on the conference, and maybe a photo or two, for the next newsletter.

HAPPY HALLOWEEN * HAPPY HALLOWEEN * HAPPY HALLOWEEN * HAPPY



FROM THE MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN:



Membership renewals are required by the November 13th meeting to ensure this year's membership with ARS and to receive your copy of the ARS Journal!

All individual memberships, (which can include husband and wives) are \$35.00 Canadian.

All Associate memberships are \$10.00 Canadian.

All cheques should be made out to N.I.R.S. and either brought to the next meeting or mailed to Brian Staton at:

N.I.R.S.
Attn: Brian Staton
P.O. Box 3183
Courtenay, B.C.
V9N 5N4



HAPPY HALLOWEEN * HAPPY HALLOWEEN * HAPPY HALLOWEEN * HAPPY

Fall for Rhododendrons

by Norman Todd (early 1990's)

In the gardens of coastal British Columbia the best time to plant broad leaf shrubs and trees is the fall. In October and November, the soil is still warm, the autumn rains have begun, and conditions are the best for the development of new roots. By planting in the fall, plants will become established before the burgeoning demands of spring signal the roots to send more nutrients for swelling blossoms and expanding leaves.

As long as the ground is not frozen the roots of the broad leaf evergreens are purposefully working. To the human eye there does not seem to be much going on above soil level but the plant is still photosynthesizing. Sugars and starches are being manufactured from the nutrients the searching roots are pumping up to the leaves.

When a plant is dug up and replanted, or taken from a container and put in the ground, the roots are always



disturbed. To assist them to grow into soil in their new environment, the roots of a potted plant must be teased apart quite vigorously so that they can make intimate contact with the welcoming environment of the new, freshly prepared home. For rhododendrons this means an open, friable soil with a high content of organic matter, located in a well-drained site. Rhododendrons hate standing in water: they drown. Their roots need loose, airy, humusy soil around them.

One of the best and easiest ways to give them this open soil and the right acidity is to incorporate bark mulch. Up to 50% of the mix in the planting soil can be bark mulch – not too coarse and not dust either. Many people like to use peat moss, but much of the moss available today is so fine that if it ever dries out, it is very difficult to moisten it again. Furthermore, peat moss breaks down far more quickly than bark mulch. The number one cardinal rule for growing rhododendrons is that the roots must never go dry.

If your soil is a black humus-rich loam, you are fortunate indeed and no amendment may be necessary. You can plant the rhododendron as deeply as it was in the pot. But if the natural soil is a heavy clay, then 8 to 12 cm of coarse sand should be dug in to a depth of 30 cm before the addition of the bark mulch. Composted leaves, preferably oak, can be used instead of bark mulch. If the soil is heavy clay, you can plant very shallowly, bringing the amended soil higher than the soil level at which the plant was previously growing. Mixing some fertilizer in the planting hole is beneficial. Avoid using animal manures that are less than a year old. An excellent fertilizer you can make yourself is a mix of ground meals: 4 parts of canola, 4 of alfalfa, 4 of blood, 1 of bone and 1 of kelp plus 2 of dolomite lime and 1 of rock phosphate.

Most of the rhododendrons we grow are hybrids. Hybrids result when two or more of the plants found growing in the 'wild' – the species – have been combined by cross-pollination. Most of the species that have been used to make these popular hybrids come from climates that have relatively dry winters and high summer rainfall. In the Victoria area, we have the reverse. One of the consequences of our persistent winter rainfall is that the nutrients that are at the surface of the soil get leached downwards quite quickly. Rhododendrons, which are very shallow-rooted can in fact be starved in our winter because all the goodness goes past them before they can catch their fair share. If the roots can't supply the nourishment, then the plant will draw from its stored reserves – its rainy day account, leaving less for production of flowers and foliage. The regime that I follow is to feed sparingly with a chemical fertilizer (10-8-6 with all the minor elements), five times a year. I start in November and feed every two months with the last feed on Canada Day. Rhododendrons are not gross feeders, but they do like three meals a day – light ones in the winter, heavier ones in the spring.

Choosing the right variety for the right spot is important. There are now more than 23,000 registered hybrids. This is a daunting number but, from its very size, you can be sure that the right plant for your particular location can be found. Some need almost no direct sun, some need full sun, some will grow to be trees and some will never be more than 2 cm high, some will bloom in December and some will bloom as late as



August, some are deciduous, most are evergreen. Colours range through the entire spectrum except for the pure gentian blue. Even that is now a possibility with our increased understanding of genetics.

One of the convenient characteristics of rhododendrons is that because they're shallow-rooted they are very portable. For gardeners who would really like their plants to come with wheels so that they can move things around until their concept of horticultural artistic perfection is reached, rhododendrons come quite close to being ideal. They can be moved at any time of the year. The huge majority are planted in the spring and they do very well. The very best time, however, for gardeners in our area is the fall.

(This article was discovered in the VRS archives, undated, but probably first published in the early 1990's. It is both timeless and timely.)

Small Gardens

DO YOU HAVE ONE? Then look up rather than over - for there are many lovely climbing plants that look well or bloom in late fall, winter and early spring. Not all of these are reliably hardy here, unless you live near salt water and/or down close to Union Bay.

Clematis cirrhosa var. balearica flowers by November, one evergreen cultivar 'Freckles' blooms from late Oct. to Feb. These are generally frost-hardy or even fully hardy in a protected spot. 'Jingle Bells' and 'Wisley Cream' are evergreen, and bloom from Jan. to March.

Look for Pileostegia (or Schizophragma) viburnoides, hardy to -5C, blooms late summer and autumn with masses of tiny "fuzzy" white flowers.

Clematis armandii likes a south-facing wall and prefers some shelter. Give it lots of space. Large white flowers, or look for pink-tinted 'Apple-blossom'.

Jasmines - the perfumed white-flowered varieties are not hardy here, but several yellow ones are: J. nudiflorum, not a real climber, needs to be trained, blooms Nov. to Feb. Look for J. humile, yellow fragrant flowers, semi-hardy, and the cultivar 'Revolutum' is fully hardy.

Celastrus orbiculare, semi to fully-hardy, needs male and female plants, twines to 36 ft. When the leaves have fallen, the fruits show. With a yellow surface, they open up to an orange and scarlet interior, to look like yellow-petalled bright orange berries.

Clematis tangutica 'Bill McKenzie' blooms in fall, and the fluffy seedheads last until spring. This one is frost-hardy only.

A Callused palm and dirty fingernails precede a Green Thumb...

2008 International Rhododendron Conference

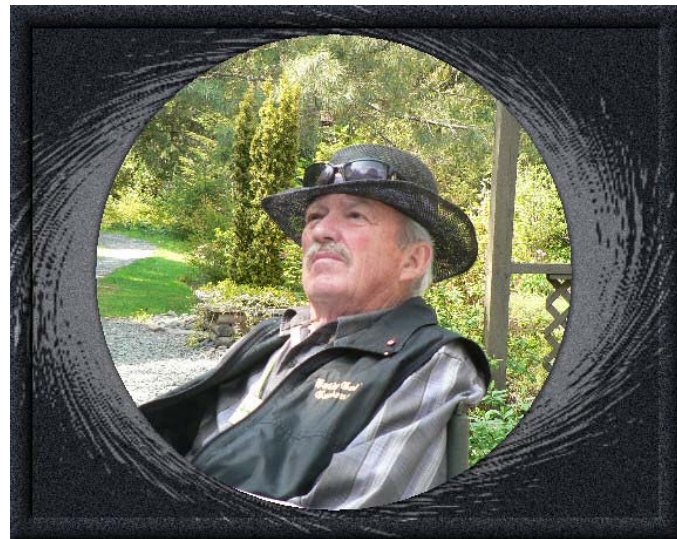
Thinking of a trip to Scotland next May? The International Rhododendron Conference jointly hosted by the Scottish Rhododendron Society and the Royal Botanic Garden will be held May 7th to 11th, 2008, in Edinburgh, Scotland. If you love rhododendrons and azaleas, are enthralled by entertaining speakers, magnificent gardens and enjoy a friendly social atmosphere, then this is an event for you.

Celebrating the Silver Jubilee of the Scottish Rhododendron Society, the conference will feature sessions on the discovery of new rhododendrons, developments in rhododendron hybridization, and recent work on propagation, pests and diseases, and companion plants. Featured speakers will be Dr. Mike Robinson, Steve Hootman, Peter Cox, Dr. David Chamberlain and Dr. R. Milne, just to name a few.

For more information on this exciting conference and all that it offers, go to: www.scottishrhodos.co.uk Updates will appear regularly in 2007 and 2008.

Bio of Harry Wright

Harry Wright's love of gardening comes from his New Brunswick parents, who loved working the soil. His father grew vegetables in the garden, while his mother enjoyed growing plants that could be enjoyed by sight and fragrance. Harry knows that his love for the landscape was taught to him by his mother.



During his years in the RCAF, Harry began his own landscape business and started a 3 year course in General Horticulture from the University of Guelph; completing the course in 1970. While stationed at CFB Comox B.C. in 1972, Harry took his release and went full time into landscape maintenance, discovering that west coast living had to include Rhododendrons.



In 1979, Harry and Gwen bought and developed a 1.5 acre lot in Courtenay, which was to become their "Haida Gold Gardens." Then in 1982, Harry became the Parks Foreman for the City of Courtenay. As a member of the Comox Valley Horticultural Society, in 1984, Harry helped form the "North Island Rhododendron Society" (NIRS) and continues to be actively involved with the executive today. Harry started doing some hybridizing in the late 80's, as this seemed to be less labour intensive than landscaping, and much more rewarding.

In addition to hybridizing the Royal 'Courtenay' series, Harry has also developed 'Iona Cee', a sister seedling to 'Courtenay Queen' & 'Courtenay Princess', very similar to Haida Gold. Named for BC's Lieutenant Governor Iona Campagnolo, it was registered in 2006 by Bill Dale.

Haida Gold Gardens is now over 25 years old and has more than 500 residents; some plants he used to walk around, he now walks under. In Harry's words "Someone started putting in more resting areas, so we can enjoy the wild life and our favourite plants the "RHODODENDRONS."

Garden Chatter Natter and Notes

Fall is a good time to take a look around the garden and make notes on what should be moved, or even dug out, if a plant is not really earning its keep. Often a move to another garden - or a different place in your garden - will make a plant put out extra effort. It may be sitting in too much shade, or not getting the right amount of water, or disliking the soil you offer. Take it out - throw it into the compost, or offer it to a neighbour, or take it to the next plant sale. Sometimes it is necessary to be hard-hearted. Of course, it often happens that a lily, for instance, that is supposed to grow to 3' suddenly takes off and is 9", beautiful, but no longer suitable for that particular spot. No need to feel guilty, just warn the new owner that it is a monster.

FINE GARDENING magazine always has some useful hints. Here are some from several issues. Wrap foam pipe insulation around metal parts of the wheelbarrow that touch the ground, to avoid scratching cement work or harming a plant. "Hens & Chicks" are handy for marking the spots where bulbs are planted. Plants with white or pale mauve flowers, or silvery foliage, look wonderful just before nightfall. Especially of the garden is highlighted with candles or electric lights. Even in the woods, with no extra light, the mauve Rhodo flowers seem to glow.



Compost is also an efficient weed suppresser. Seeds need light to germinate so if they are covered with compost, they have little chance. As the compost breaks down, it must be replaced with more; meantime it is easy to pull the odd new sprout as you check your flower beds. Do you have a luggage carrier not in use? It makes a handy wheeled conveyance for carrying bags of mulch or fertilizer around, with a bungee cord to hold bags in place. Some dogs like to dig, and if you bury scraps of hardware cloth around your rhodo stems, they will soon lose interest in digging up the plants. *Note by MP: However, don't leave the hardware cloth in place for more than one season - I was digging a hole for a lily the other day, and found a piece of netting about 6" down, with some roots twined in and out of it!*

Discounts for Members

Show your new 2008 NIRS Membership card before items are rung up and receive a discount at the following retailers:

- Arrowsmith Greenhouse Nursery in Coombs
- Art Knapp's Plantland, Courtenay
- Bees & Blooms Nursery, Courtenay
- Black Creek Farm & Feed Supply
- Campbell River Garden Centre
(not seed or bulbs)
- Comox Valley Ornamental Concrete, Knight Rd.
- Growing Concern in Black Creek (seasonal)
- Just 'n Tyme Greenhouse Supply, Courtenay
- Paradise Plants Nursery, Courtenay
- River Meadows Farms, Courtenay
- Shar-Kare Campbell River & Courtenay
- The Plant Collector Nursery on Waveland Rd.

Check newsletter regularly
for additions to this list.



Planting or Moving Shrubs

Gardens West, Sept. 2007 copy, has a useful article by Carol Hall, on moving plants when it is necessary. "Even in the most carefully planned gardens it is inevitable that a shrub or small tree should be moved. Perhaps it's about to outgrow its space, or it is getting too much shade (or sun), or just looks out of place where it is, but it would look perfect over by the perennial bed..."

Gardeners are likely to get enthusiastic about major moves around the garden, but early fall is also a good time to do this work. The soil is still warm, and if (like this year) there has been a little rain, dampening the soil and sprinkling the leaves, so plants will be enjoying the season and not trying to put out new growth. In our local zones, 7-8 generally, we should be able to move plants until the middle of October. (Many years, we can work until at least the middle of November, or even later. Then we get a sudden shock, like in the fall of 2006).

Plants that bloom in the fall should not be moved until spring. Shrubs and small trees that are borderline hardy in your zone, should be moved in spring only. Ornamental grasses and bamboos also prefer a spring move. Some of the carex tribe don't mind a fall move, but grasses such as Pampas and bamboos should be left until spring. (Note by MP - too bad I didn't read the above until I had moved several grasses and a bamboo - will keep you posted on this.

Several exceptions are listed. Magnolias do not appreciate moving at any time. Their flesh, brittle roots object. Established vines, heaths and heathers, and roses have extensive root systems and hate being moved. Don't! unless there is a bulldozer sitting waiting to do something. Better to plant a new one in the fall so the roots can get established before severe weather.

If a shrub or small tree has been in the ground for up to 3 years, it probably can be transplanted, but plants more than 3 years old should not. Perennials and bulbs have different growth habits so this advice does not apply to them.

Exceptions include Rhodos and camellias, who have dense fibrous roots so that even if some wide-ranging get chopped, the roots near the trunk will keep the plant going. Just trim the broken roots, and tidy up straggling stems.

Among the narrow-leaved evergreens, spruces should never be moved, cedars (*Thuja*) and yews (*Taxus*) are very easy to move in fall, and all other conifers prefer a fall move, so their roots will have settled in before the heat and dryness of mid-summer. Hardy broad-leaved evergreens are best moved in fall, but less-hardy ones like *Ceanothus* and *escallonia* should be left until spring. Hardier deciduous shrubs that bloom before June such as *forsythia*. Lilac and *spiraea*, can be moved in spring, but hydrangeas, which bloom later in summer or fall, should be moved in spring only. Though that author doesn't mention it, my opinion is that this all refers to moving plants from one place in the garden to another, NOT to planting items from pots.



Silver plants grow coverings of silky down or wax to survive, even thrive, in drought, extreme heat, searing wind, even salt spray, and some look beautiful even in winter, though I have noticed they do not appreciate our wet winters. Be sure they have excellent drainage.

There are several plants commonly called "Dusty Miller". so be sure to read the labels. Some are annuals, and some perennial. *Centaurea cineraria* 'Colchester White' is an outstanding one of these. It is wise to pull off a few stems in August and pot them up; over winter them in a frost-free place, "just in case".

Have you tried *Brunnera macrophylla* 'Jack Frost'? What a beauty. Mine is on the edge of a pool, where it gets full sun until late afternoon. Its leaves are small in spring when the dainty blue forget-me-not flowers bloom, then they expand to large silver heart-shaped leaves with green veins which last until late fall. The slugs and deer ignore these plants.

"Powis Castle" *Artemisia* looks lovely for months, but dislikes the fall rains. It needs to be cut back in late winter. *Pulmonaria* 'Excalibur' is an almost completely silver lungwort (*Pulmonaria*) that really lights up a shady spot. "White Nancy" deadnettle (*Lamium maculatum*) makes a dainty edging to a bed. It needs to be cut back in midsummer, to grow on again, and I find it prefers to be in shade in this garden.

I love grasses, and a favorite is "Blue Oat Grass", *Helictotrichen sempervirens*, which looks lovely year-round. You should not cut this one to the ground in late winter, just pull the dead foliage out, and cut off the beige flower stems. Divide and replant every few years. I did not do this: that is probably why I lost mine after 5 years. I'll try again.





Snippets From Sayward

A Sad September Song (by Rose-Marie Silkens)

My gardening roots are as much agricultural as horticultural, and the nurturing of a quality orchard has long been an important part of my life. When I took over the care of our Sayward property after my father's death in 1975, one of my goals was to find good fruit tree stock to replace the trees he had planted. These were poor specimens but had been the best he was able to find locally in the 1960's.

I was living in Victoria, and a UVic colleague and fellow gardening enthusiast, Chet Lambertson, introduced me to Ted and Margo Smith. They had a small fruit and nut tree nursery on Wilkinson Road, with a surprisingly large selection. The Smiths took great pains to help me select those that would do well in Sayward, and taught me a great deal about caring for an orchard.

I planted 25 varieties of apples, pears, plums, cherries and nuts in the course of the next five years. With the exception of one of the Spanish chestnuts, all the trees thrived, and became very productive. There were some wonderful varieties, some very hard to find now.

Of course, every fall brought visits from bears, but that was seldom a problem. I was sure to pick each variety as it ripened, and only the Northern Spy caused any anxiety. It needed frost for flavour but to beat the bears, I often had to pick it early.

I'm using the past tense, because a few weeks ago saw the end of the orchard. Over the last decade, the combination of increasing numbers of bears and huge crops of apples has made it almost impossible to harvest the fruit. For one thing, the bears have been coming earlier than they used to. This year a large bear tore apart a Wealthy apple tree in mid-August, long before the apples were ripe.

Large trees, each with a minimum of 100 pounds of apples, are a lot of work to pick when it's a "must finish before dark" job. Picking all the apple crop early meant a lot of spoilage after storage, not to mention inferior quality fruit.

If I were younger, I would put a fence with an electrified wire around the perimeter of the property. But it is nearly 4 acres, with a creek, and

two driveways that would need gates, so the cost would be very steep for the number of years I can reasonably expect to be here.

So a few weeks ago, neighbours with a power saw and backhoe came to help me destroy my orchard. Dale and Andrea insisted that all the stumps be dug and all the wood and branches taken to the brush pile before they left, as they knew how distressed I would be, and wanted to help reduce the shock.

I did leave the cherries, nuts and early plum, and two pear trees. The Bartlett was loaded and not ready for harvest yet. The day before I planned to pick, the bear got it too. He's a big fellow, and he pulled most of the tree to the ground.

I did have to do something by way of revenge. He missed a few pears that were on the ground, and into them I pushed as many hot chili peppers as I could. The next morning they were gone. I'm going to pick the Bosc pears today (far too early), just in case this bear likes the Cajun style fruit.

A postscript - the Smith's Nursery disappeared under developers' bulldozers years ago, and a large townhouse complex now stands on the site.




by Diana Scott

Blackberries

Ah, those yummy Himalayan Blackberries! It's kind of a love-hate relationship for me. I love the berries, picking them for fresh eating and freezing for later use. However, they don't like to stay in a nice tidy, manageable clump! I'm always on the lookout for those prickly vines popping up in my beds, planted by birds, or traveling along established blackberry roots. I've spent many a winter day digging out nodules and dragging long tangles off to the chipper. In some areas the thorny masses are so dense that I'm convinced the brambles surrounding the castle of Sleeping Beauty must have been Himalayan Blackberry! How did this tasty fruit get so out of hand? How did it get here in the first place??

In the May 1998 edition of the *Coastal Grower*, Darlene White wrote a very interesting article about Luther Burbank, the Father of American Gardening. Burbank, born in Massachusetts in 1849 is regarded as one of the great plant breeders. He didn't patent a single plant throughout his lifetime, but it is estimated that he created over 800 new plants. Among his creations are the Burbank potato



(widely known as Idaho bakers), the Shasta daisy, Calla lily hybrids, Santa Rosa plums, Elephant Garlic, Tower of Gold Kniphofia, and Himalaya Giant Blackberry!

According to White, Burbank selected this vigorous, heavy bearer from seedlings of Indian parentage. (Further research indicates that it may have originated in Armenia.) Quoting White: "It was highly successful in California, Washington and British Columbia – where it was trialed as a base fruit for the fruit wine industry in the Victoria area during the 1920's (Loganberries were the main fruit.). Chances are, if you have 'wild' blackberries gracing your property, they are Himalayan. Its fruit makes wonderful pies, desserts and a passable dry, red wine."

Well, those blackberries are certainly doing well here on the coast! In the late summer it is not uncommon to see people along the roadsides with buckets, harvesting the yummy fruit. My current favourite pie recipe was given to me by Maureen Shipton from Greystone B&B, one of our 2007 Garden Tour hosts. It is simple and delicious. I know you'll love it too!

Blackberry Sour Cream Pie (Mo Shipton)

4 cups blackberries (fresh or frozen – not thawed)
Pastry for 9" pie shell 1 cup sugar
1/3 cup flour 1 cup sour cream

Topping:

1/4 cup flour 1/4 cup brown sugar
1/8th cup butter

Arrange blackberries in unbaked pie shell.

Mix sugar, 1/3 cup flour and sour cream together until well mixed, and pour evenly over fruit. Combine topping ingredients, and sprinkle over filling. Bake 450 degrees for 15 mins. Reduce heat to 350 and bake another 30 mins. (might need longer, fruit should be tender and filling bubbling). Chill before serving. YUM!



Caramel Peach Pie. (Chris Aldred)

Make your favorite pie pastry. (enough for a double crust pie)
Line a 9inch pie plate.

Combine in a small saucepan:

3/4 C lightly packed brown sugar 1/2 C all purpose flour
1/3 C butter or margarine 3tbsp corn syrup
1tbsp lemon juice

Cook until all sugar is dissolved (stirring constantly) Cool slightly. Arrange fresh peach slices in the pastry base, and pour the sugar mixture over them. Cut strips from the remaining pastry, and form a lattice style topping on the pie. Bake on lower rack of oven -400F for 35 mins, or until peaches are just tender.

This recipe can be made with canned peaches. Delicious!



Kiwi Jam (Chris Aldred)



14 kiwi fruits juice of 2 limes
3 1/2 cups sugar.

Peel and chop 10 kiwi fruits, and put into a saucepan together with the lime juice. Simmer gently until fruit softens and liquid is reduced. Remove from heat and add sugar, stirring until it dissolves. Bring back to a boil, stirring constantly until jam sets.

Peel and chop remaining kiwis and stir into jam before bottling in sterilized jars.

Makes about 4 cups.

Brandied blue cheese, walnut and pear crostini.

(Sophisticated looking appetizer)

4 oz blue cheese, crumbled 2tbsp butter
2tbsp brandy 1/4 cup coarsely
chopped walnuts

1 ripe pear, thinly sliced 16 baguette slices

Bring cheese and butter to room temperature, and mash with a fork until smooth. Stir in brandy and walnuts. Place baguette slices on a cookie sheet, and toast one side under broiler. Turn baguette slices over. Place one slice of pear on each piece of bread, top with a teaspoonful of blue cheese mixture.

Broil about 4-5 inches from broiler for about 2mins, or until cheese melts and is bubbly.

Serve immediately. Wonderful!

Basil for Money,
Sage for Good Health,
Nettles for Healing,
Patchouli for Wealth;
Rose for all Love
But Cumin for Lust,
Catnip for Vision,
And Violets for Trust;
Oak for Protection,
Hyssop makes Pure,
And lest I forget,
Rosemary makes sure.

...unknown author

