

Sechelt Garden Club Newsletter

www.secheltgardenclub.blogspot.com

April 2010

President: June Meyer
Vice President: Charmaine Harris
Secretary: Chris Blackman
Treasurer: Lorraine Blakeman
Newsletter: Sandra Friedman
Membership: Mary Rowles
Other Directors: Judy Marusiak, Larry Musser, Moira Leishman
Members at Large: Nattanya Wardel

Next Meeting: **Monday, April 26 at 7:30pm** in the **Seaside Centre**

Catherine Abbott will speak about the nitty gritty of growing vegetables. She is an expert organic vegetable gardener and is the author of *The Everything Grow Your Own Vegetables Book*. She created her website www.your-vegetable-gardening-helper.com to share her vegetable gardening experience, knowledge and best kept secrets with first time vegetable gardener not sure where to start as well as experienced grower looking for new tips. She also operates a home delivery service delivering certified organic produce and produce to Sunshine Coast residents. Check out her website before you come to the April meeting. It is one of the best and most comprehensive I've seen.

Garden Club Business

Membership: Welcome new members Linda Maxwell and Don Newman. Please pick up your name tag if you haven't already done so. *Time is running out for paying your dues. After the April meeting you won't be able to get your discount at the nurseries and you won't receive your newsletter.*

Rental of Equipment: For information about our rental policy and fees for our slide projector and digital Power Point projector, contact equipment manager: Myron Marusiak.

The May Tour has 3 spaces left!

Date: Tuesday, May 11

Time: 7:15 am from Extra Foods to 6:30 pm

Cost: \$20

To sign up and pay for the trip contact Nattanya Wardel

Bid on a Greenhouse in our Silent Auction

We will be holding a silent auction for a Springhouse greenhouse valued at \$260. Bids will start at \$50 and you can bid at our April meeting and at the Plant Sale on May 8.

The Springhouse is a portable greenhouse that is 6 1/2 feet high and 6 feet wide and deep. This self-erecting, walk-in green house is set up in 5 minutes, and the 100% Gro-Tech water-proof material has two vents as screen covered doors, which when closed, provide optimum high humidity levels desirable for a superior growing environment. Stakes and high wind tie downs are included in your "Springhouse" so that it will remain securely in place. The greenhouse comes in a pack, which when opened, allows the structure to spring into shape.

You can see the greenhouse at www.flowerhouses.com/products/greenhouses/Springhouse.htm

Worms for Sale: Six-year-old Daemon Green is selling worms for \$5 a container. Go up Tyson Rd. In Wilson Creek and turn right at the first driveway. The worms are at the stall on your left.



Carrot Committee

Got Powdery Mildew? Get Milk! By Arzeena Hamir

Less than 3 years ago, researchers in South America discovered a new alternative to controlling powdery mildew. Wagner Bettiol, a scientist from Brazil, found that weekly sprays of milk controlled powdery mildew in zucchini just as effectively as synthetic fungicides such as fenarimol or benomyl. Not only was milk found to be effective at controlling the disease, it also acted as a foliar fertilizer, boosting the plant's immune system.

Powdery mildew in the cucurbit family is caused by the organism *Sphaerotheca fuliginea*. It is a serious disease that occurs worldwide. While scientists aren't 100% sure how milk works to control this disease it seems that milk is a natural germicide. In addition, it contains several naturally occurring salts and amino acids that are taken up by the plant. From previous experiments using sodium bicarbonate, potassium phosphate, and other salts, researchers have found that the disease is sensitive to these salts. It is possible then, that milk boosts the plant's immune system to prevent the disease.

In his experiments with zucchini plants, Bettiol found that a weekly spray of milk at a concentration of at least 10% (1 part milk to 9 parts water) significantly reduced the severity of powdery mildew infection on the plants by 90%. While the milk in Bettiol's experiments was straight from the cow, research in New Zealand found that using skim milk was just as effective and because skim milk has no fat contact means that there is less chance of any odours. While some gardeners may be tempted to increase the concentration of milk for more control, once concentrations rise above 30%, an innocuous fungus began to grow on the plants. Arzeena Hamir is an agronomist and writer for Organic Living Newsletter. She was also a speaker at the B.C. Council of Garden Clubs meeting in March.

Plant Sale Apprentice Needed

We need your help to keep the Sechelt Garden Club going. Apprentice with Nattanya Wardel and learn how to organize and run the plant sale. Whether you are a beginner or an experienced gardener you will learn a tremendous amount from a very patient teacher. All you need is curiosity, a willingness to learn, an ability to ask questions and a sense of humour. Please contact Nattanya Wardel at 885-2271 nwardel@telus.net

Want and Share:

Plants to Share:		
Yellow Phygellus	Sharon Jones	
Parsley	Nancy Fabbro	
Plants Wanted		
Horseradish	Harold Eglinski	
Black Helleborus	Carla Knight	

APRIL Gardening 'TO DO' List

- Divide up primroses and polyanthus after flowering.
- Stake perennials that need it and mulch perennials of not already done.
- Rose pruning should be completed by now. Mulch with mushroom manure, manure or well-rotted compost.
- Shear winter flowering heathers after flowering.
- Continue planting trees and shrubs.
- Check vines growing on the house to make sure they are not invading window frames or working their way under gutters and shingles.
- April 1-15, plant early potatoes, green onion, bulb onion, kohlrabi, cabbage and leeks.
- April 16-30, sow beets, carrots, Swiss chard, broccoli, cauliflower, parsnip, kale and lettuce.
- Sow zucchini, cucumbers and tomatoes in a sunny window or cold frame.
- Plant new strawberry plants.
- Start planting water plants in pool.

(From *The Twelve Month Gardener*, Stevens, Hungerford, Fancourt-Smith, Mitchell and Buffam)

Plants of Distinction

by Bill Terry

Blue Heaven www.meconopsis.ca



Mlokosewitschi or Molly the Witch Peony



peony. obovata alba,

Today on the radio, I heard a famous BC nurseryman talking about all the new introductions . You can have zebra stripes, polka dots, doubles, frills, all the freaks you fancy. Most of these will be nine-day wonders, and very likely weak and short-lived.

As a gardener, the older I get, the more I appreciate the simple things in life: species --plants and flowers as nature made them -- or at least first generation hybrids, genetically not far removed from the wild parents.

In the case of bulbs, such as tulips and narcissus, species ('botanical') forms will last in your garden for ever, naturalizing through offsets or self-sown seed. This applies also to many charming groundcovers, such as scilla (*s. siberica*) and hardy cyclamen, (e.g. *hederifolium* and *coum*). It applies to peonies. I have many, both tree peonies and herbaceous, all easily grown from seed -- and they're all species, or very nearly so.

Pictured here is the only yellow, herbaceous peony, fondly known as "Molly the Witch" (from its unpronounceable botanical name, *mlokosewitschi*). The other is *p. obovata alba*, which has no common name -- but don't let that put you off. Both have large, up-facing flowers, are free of disease (another advantage of species), form neat clumps and have much prettier and colourful foliage than most cultivars. They are very reliable and distinctive perennials. The seed heads, when ripe, are also decorative, like red or black smarties. Collect them, put them in a pot outside and watch for new seedlings next spring.

Dates to Remember:

April 25, Sunday: is the trip to **Ron Knight's Caron Gardens** in Pender Harbour. We will be visiting John Marion's garden in Halfmoon Bay on the way. To sign up please call June Meyer.

April 25, Sunday: walk with Tony Greenfield in the Sunshine Coast Botanical Garden, 9:00 am, 5941 Mason Road. Fee by donation (\$5-\$20)

May 1, Saturday, 11:00 – 4:00 Caron Gardens' Annual Rhododendron Festival. 4622 Beaumont Road, Pender Harbour. There will be Master Gardeners on site, a flower show featuring rare and unusual rhododendron trusses, a half kilometre of paths to stroll along, garden tours, and seminars. Admissions and refreshments are free. More details and a printable map may be found at: www3.telus.net/rcknight

May 8, Saturday Sechelt Garden Club Plant Sale. Seaside Centre, 10-12. Come and bring your friends and shop, shop, shop!