

# THE NATURAL GARDENER NEWSLETTER

May, lovely May has finally arrived and hopefully with it WARM weather. Apparently this past April was the coldest April ever on record. I believe it. Boy was it cold. Of course this has meant that all the plants in the garden are about 3 weeks behind and so are all the things that need to be done in the garden. Well, now we can get out there and finish our clean up, start moving plants and filling in all the spots where plants used to grow but had succumbed to the nasty winter and spring we had. Personally I lost more than I expected including my lovely Italian Cypress, my beautiful Arisaema Ringens (it completely rotted out), my cypripedium and several more. I guess I'll just have to console myself by getting some new plants to replace them.

Now that May is here the heirloom tomatoes should be arriving sometime around Mothers Day, weather permitting. Also arriving around that time will be the beautiful hanging baskets I get each year from the city of New Westminster greenhouses and of course the annuals will also be in so you can start putting together your summer planters. The nursery is filling up rapidly with all kinds of plant goodies like Echeveria, Miniature Conifers, Roses, Hostas and Clematis. Speaking of clematis, The Natural Gardener will be featuring the beautiful Evison Clematis series. These clematis were hybridized by Raymond Evison and he chose them for their hardiness, disease resistance, flower size and long blooming time. They really are stunning. These are well established plants in 2 gallon pots so you know you will get a great show this year.

There's lots to talk about this month including the Plant of the Month, more great Plants for Your Garden, Garden Tours, Evison Clematis, Organic Vegetable Gardening and of course the To Do List.

Enjoy!

Bob



Hosta 'Captain Kirk'

## Evison Clematis

The exceptional clematis plants and vines produced by Raymond Evison Clematis are the result of over 40 years of dedicated work in searching, breeding and cultivation. Developed in partnership with Poulsen Roser, they undergo 10 years of trial and assessment to guarantee reliable, free flowering and top performing clematis that represent truly modern flowering plants your garden. Easy to prune, just cut them back to 12" (30cm) above the ground. The Natural Gardener is pleased to be carrying some of Mr. Evison's newest & best cultivars. Here are the clematis we have in the nursery right now:

### Angelique

Angelique blooms from spring to late summer and reaches a height of only 4 feet making it ideal for container growing. This lovely clematis prefers to grow in part shade, ideally morning sun and afternoon shade.



### Cezanne

As with Angelique, Cezanne grows about 4 feet tall, blooms all spring and summer and as you can see is very floriferous. Beautiful!



### Chevalier

This beauty is extremely free flowering and will bloom right into fall. It grows to 6 feet.



### Franziska Maria

Franziska Maria is a stunning double flowered clematis that blooms until fall and reaches a height of 8 feet.



### Shimmer

Shimmer is one of the newest from Mr. Evison. Its flowers can be 8" across and it grow to 8 feet.



## ORGANIC VEGETABLE GARDENING

A successful organic vegetable garden starts out with a plan. Planning your garden is one of the most important parts of vegetable gardening, and it's quite simple.

1. Decide what you want to grow.
2. Determine how much space you have.
3. Take a sheet of paper and draw a small scale model of your garden plot, and decide where the vegetables will go.
4. Make sure your organic vegetable garden is located in a sunny, well-drained location.
5. Provide great soil.

### SOIL

Soil is the most important component of your vegetable garden. If you are just starting out and you are creating a new vegetable bed, about three weeks before planting follow these simple steps:

1. Remove any sod
2. **Double dig the bed.** Double digging is a method of deep soil preparation in which soil is loosened to a depth of 2 feet and amended with compost and/or manure and organic fertilizer.
3. Add lots and lots of compost and/or well rotted manure.
4. Add organic fertilizer such as Gaia Green or Organique.

If you have an existing vegetable bed, about three weeks before planting do as follows:

1. Turn over the soil with a garden fork. Make sure you stand on a board while digging to prevent compaction of your soil.
2. Add lots and lots of compost and/or well rotted manure and turning it over into the bed.
3. Add organic fertilizer such as Gaia Green or Raingrow.

Just a note. If you are growing **carrots** they don't require much in the way of fertilizer or compost. If they get too much fertilizer they can become hairy. They also require a finer soil than the rest of your vegetables so make sure the soil you are growing the carrots in is quite fine before planting.

### LIGHT

Vegetables require a lot of sun to do well. Your vegetable garden should be situated in an area of the yard that receives at least **6 to 8 hours** of sun per day.

### WATERING

A deep watering of your garden once a week is the most beneficial way to water your garden. By soaking the soil deeply you encourage your vegetables roots to go down into the soil. If you water frequently but lightly you encourage the roots to stay near the surface where they are more susceptible to drying out. If you can, setting up a drip irrigation system with a timer is the most efficient way of watering your garden and conserving water.

If there is an extended period of hot, dry weather you may need to water deeply two or three times a week.

## **MANURE**

Manure is probably the best source of fertilizer and organic matter for the organic gardener. Use manure that has been aged for at least 30 days, or composted. One thing to remember is that manure is not always a complete well-balanced fertilizer. It is best to incorporate a complete organic fertilizer after adding the manure.

### **How much manure should you apply to your vegetable garden?**

If you are using cow, horse or mushroom manure apply 25 lbs of manure per 100 square feet.

If you are using poultry, sheep or llama manure apply 12 lbs of manure per 100 square feet.

## **LAYOUT OF YOUR VEGETABLE BED**

Take the time to plan where you want your vegetable garden to go remembering to situate it in the sunniest part of your yard. Once you have decided on the perfect spot you can grow your vegetables in rows, in raised beds or you can apply the principle of Square Foot Gardening.

### **Planting in rows**

Planting in rows is the most common way to grow your vegetables. It is neat, tidy and easy to plant. When planting in rows remember to leave enough space between each row for you to walk between them and to allow you to crouch down to do any weeding or harvesting. Orient your rows north south so you can maximize the amount of sun your vegetables get.

### **Planting in raised beds**

Planting in raised beds is one of the better ways of growing your vegetables because the soil warms quicker allowing you to plant earlier, remains warm longer allowing you to grow longer and this method also provides better drainage. You can accomplish a raised bed vegetable garden by simply mounding the soil or by actually enclosing the soil in untreated wood frames, stone blocks, or concrete. When you design the raised beds I recommend that they be only 3 to 4 feet wide. IF your bed is against a fence or wall it should only be 2 feet wide. That way you can access all the vegetables in the bed easily and the soil will warm a bit faster.

The depth of your raised bed should be somewhere between 8 and 12 inches for optimal growth and production.

Now that you have decided on the location, which crops and how many of each you are going to grow, it's time to decide where they best fit in the garden.

The tall crops such as peas, beans and corn, should be planted on the north side of the vegetable garden. In this way they will not shade the rest of the vegetable crops.

In the centre of the vegetable garden area, plant the medium sized crops such as cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli, tomatoes, squash, pumpkins and other mediums sized crops.

Then at the very southern end of the garden is where the low growing crops like radishes, carrots, beets, lettuce, onions and other low growing ones are planted.

Whenever possible, the rows in the vegetable garden should run north and south, for best sun exposure and air circulation. If the rows run east and west the first row tends to shade the second row, the second row the third and so forth...

By taking a little time in planning the layout of your vegetable garden now, before planting, your chances of harvesting a more bountiful yield this summer and fall are greatly increased. .

## Square Foot Planting

Square foot planting is an innovative, efficient way of gardening that provides easy access to your plants, incorporates companion planting and reduces the amount of time you need to spend weeding and looking after your vegetables.

**1 - LAYOUT.** Always think in squares: lay out 4 foot by 4 foot planting areas with wide walkways between them.

**2 - BOXES.** Build garden box frames no wider than 4 feet and 8 – 12 inches deep. The length is not as important, but a recommended size for your first time is one frame 4 foot by 4 foot. You can, of course, go smaller. A 2 foot by 2 foot works great on patios and 3 foot by 3 foot box is ideal for kids. Frames can be made from almost any material except treated wood, which has toxic chemicals that might leach into the soil. 1 by 6 or 2 by 6 lumber is ideal, and comes in 8-foot lengths. Most lumber yards will cut it in half at little or no cost. Exact dimensions are not critical. Deck screws work best to fasten the boards together. Rotate or alternate corners to end up with a square inside.

**3 - AISLES.** If you plan to have more than one garden box, separate them by 2 or 3 feet to form walkways.

**4 - SOIL.** Fill frame with a good outdoor soil mix with compost and/or manure added to it along with an organic fertilizer.

**5 - GRID.** On top of each frame place a permanent grid that divides the box into one foot squares. The grid is the unique feature that makes the whole system work so well. To show you why the grid is so important, do this little demonstration: Look at your 4 foot by 4 foot box with the grid on and imagine up to 16 different crops. What you see before you is a neat and attractive, well organized garden, that will be easy to manage.

Now remove the grid. Could you organize and manage this space without dividing it up into squares? Besides, without the grid you will be tempted to plant in rows, which is a poor use of space.

Grids can be made from nearly any material; wood, plastic strips, old venetian blinds, etc. Use screws or rivets to attach them where they cross. On a 4 foot by 4 foot frame, the grid divides the frame into 16 easy-to-manage spaces, for up to 16 different crops. Leave the grid in place all season. The grid can be cut long enough to fit across the top of the box or cut shorter to lay on the soil inside the box.

**6 - CARE.** Since you will NEVER walk on or depress the growing soil, don't make the frames any wider than 4 feet (2 feet, if only one side is accessible). Any wider makes it too difficult to reach in to tend the plants.

**7 - SELECT.** Depending on the mature size of the plant, grow 1, 4, 9, or 16 equally spaced plants per square foot. If the seed packet recommends plant spacing be 12 inches apart, plant one plant per square foot. If 6 inch spacing; 4 per square foot. If 4 inch spacing; 9 per square foot. If 3 inch spacing; 16 per square foot.

**8 - PLANT.** Plant one or two seeds in each spot by making a shallow hole with your finger. Cover, but do not pack the soil. Thinning is all but eliminated. Seeds are not wasted. Extra seeds can be stored cool and dry in your refrigerator.

Don't over-plant. Plant only as much of any one crop as you will use. This 4 foot by 4 foot box will grow more than a conventional garden that is 8 foot by 10 foot.

**9 - WATER.** Water only as much as each plant needs. Water often, especially at first, and on very hot dry days, If possible, water by hand ( uses a lot less water )with a cup from a sun-warmed bucket of water. Warm water helps the soil warm up in early and late season.

**10 - HARVEST.** Harvest continually and when a crop in one square is gone, remove some of the soil and add some new compost and plant a new different crop in that square.

**Despite the gardener's best intentions, Nature will improvise. ~Michael P. Garafalo**

## MOTHERS DAY

On Sunday, May 8<sup>th</sup> we get to celebrate how wonderful and special our Moms are. If you want to get that special plant or garden gift for your Mom, The Natural Gardener has some unique and interesting plants and garden gifts for you to choose from.

For the garden we have a choice selection of absolutely beautiful hanging baskets, perfect perennials and some terrific trees & shrubs. If you like Gingko Biloba trees we have both the beautiful Autumn Gold and the very unique California Sunset & Chi Chi. In addition there is the lovely Magnolia 'Galaxy' that has rich purple flowers. In roses we are carrying 'Michel Trudeau', 'Winchester Cathedral', 'Mutabilis', 'Night Owl' and more.

In the store we have gnomes, fairies, garden angels, garden goddesses, Lawrence Ruskins hummingbird feeders, Mason Bee houses and a gorgeous selection of beautiful orchids.

**A Very Happy Mothers Day to all you Gardening Mom's from all of us here at The Natural Gardener.**

**I love my mother as the trees love water and sunshine - she helps me grow, prosper, and reach great heights. ~Adabella Radici**

## MAY TO DO LIST

While it may be a busy time in the garden it is mostly the fun stuff, planting your purchases and watching them grow rather than a lot of cleanup. So have fun and take time to enjoy the fruits of your labours. I hear a glass of wine helps.

- Set out annuals
- Plant summer-flowering bulbs
- Plant balled-and-burlapped and container fruit trees
- Feed houseplants that are growing or blooming
- Plant or repair warm-season lawns
- Plant ornamental grasses
- Plant fall-blooming perennials
- Prune tender deciduous shrubs and vines
- Prune spring-flowering shrubs and vines during or just after bloom
- Sow seeds for warm-season vegetables
- Plant seedlings of warm-season vegetables including tomatoes
- Keep on top of the weeding. A little work now will make for a more enjoyable summer
- Make sure your plants are well watered, especially those in containers. They dry out faster than you would think
- Don't forget to mulch to keep down weeds and conserve moisture
- Houseplants can be moved outdoors now. Well, maybe more towards the end of the month. Do it gradually to prevent them from getting sunburned

## MORE PLANTS FOR YOU

Saruma henryi

This is a rare, wonderful perennial for the shade garden. With its velvety leaves and soft yellow flowers it is sublime in the garden. It reaches a height of 2 feet.



From Proven Winners Bloomerang blooms in spring and then again throughout the summer. It does go through a rest period in the heat of the summer, then flowers until fall.



Dicentra Valentine

I've mentioned this dicentra before but it bears repeating. It is new this year and has plum-green foliage and dark red flowers with white tips. Stunning!



Hydrangea Cityline Vienna

Part of the new city series, Vienna is a dwarf hydrangea only reaching a height of 2 feet. This makes it perfect for containers and small garden areas. And the flowers are beautiful.



Lilac Bloomerang Purple

## GARDEN TOURS 2011

I love taking people on garden tours and sharing with them some of my favourite gardens to visit and learn from. This year I have the great good fortune to be adding some new gardens to my already wonderful regularly visited gardens. We will be visiting Dorina Palmer's amazing Point Grey Road garden, Margot Ketchum's fascinating and beautiful West Vancouver garden and David & Wendy Sellar's beautiful rock & alpine garden in South Surrey. In addition I am very fortunate to have booked a date to see the stunning Elizabeth Miller Garden in Seattle. It's been a couple of years since we were last there and I'm very excited to be returning there this year. There is a new addition to the tour. We are going to be going to Bowen Island to visit the gardens of John & Katherine Lawrence and Barbara Reid in June. You won't want to miss that one.

### The Glen Patterson Roof Top Garden – SOLD OUT

Glen has one of the most beautiful roof top gardens I have ever seen and we are very privileged to have the opportunity to view it. Glen had an extensive garden at his home in West Vancouver filled with many unusual and rare trees and shrubs and when he moved to his condo on Coal Harbour he brought some of them with him. He used them as the focal features for his garden and by using Tufa rock for the bones of the garden he has created a plant lovers dream garden. There are hundreds of cultivars and species plants throughout his 800 square foot garden and everywhere you look are more plant treasures to admire. This tour will sell out fast so don't hesitate to book.

**Date: Thursday, May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2011**

Time: 6pm

Location: will be announce just prior to the tour

Cost: \$15.00

**The tour should last approximately 1 1/2 hour. After the tour complimentary wine and appetizers will be provided for you to enjoy.**

### The David & Wendy Sellars Garden

Wendy and David Sellars started their garden 24 years ago on an undeveloped one acre lot. Working with a clean slate, they shaped the sloping site to create topographic interest and developed a waterfall, stream and ponds. Species rhododendrons, unusual rhodo hybrids and specimen trees such as *Davidia involucrata* and *Magnolia denudata* form the garden plant structure. A rock garden on a high bank built with local glacial boulders and featuring cliffs formed with large tufa blocks extends along the front garden. Plants likely to be in flower include *Edraianthus serpyllifolius*, *Lewisia tweedyi*, *Helichrysum sessiloides*, *Aquilegia bertolonii*, *Androsace studiosorum*, *Androsace villosa*, *Meconopsis betonicifolia*, *Penstemon rupicola* and many Silver Saxifrages.

If you would be interested in a tufa garden planting demonstration please let me know. David is kindly willing to share his expertise with us if we have enough people.

**Date: Sunday, May 15, 2011**

Time: 1:00 pm

Location: will be announced just prior to the tour

Cost: \$15.00

**The tour should last approximately 1 1/2 hours. After the tour complimentary wine and appetizers will be provided for you to enjoy.**

### The Susan Koelink Garden – SOLD OUT

Susan Koelink is once again generously sharing her wonderful garden with us. The hardscaping was designed by Ron Rule but the plantings are all Susan. There are choice plants everywhere you look and wonderful surprises around every corner. This is the first time we are touring Susan's garden in mid spring with all the lovely spring flowering plants out in full beauty. Susan's garden has been featured in several garden magazines and was included on the Ballet BC Home & Garden Tour in 2006. Not to be missed.

**Date: Thursday, May 19, 2011**

Time: 6:00 pm

Location: will be announced just prior to the tour

Cost: \$15.00

**The tour should last approximately 1 1/2 hours. After the tour complimentary wine and appetizers will be provided for you to enjoy.**

### The Dorina Palmer Garden – SOLD OUT

Dorina Palmers Point Grey Road garden started life way back in 1960 when Dorina and her husband bought the home. There wasn't much in the garden then except a few shrubs and trees including a Japanese Maple and a Lilac Tree that are still there. Over the years Dorina added slowly to the garden while her kids were growing up. Once they were gone she joined a garden club and then the garden started to take off. Now it is an established garden with wonderful plant surprises everywhere. Dorina's garden was featured in the September 2009 issue of Gardens West magazine and will be featured in GardenWise magazine this spring. A garden not to be missed.

**Date: Thursday, May 26th, 2011**

Time: 6:00 pm

Location: will be announced just prior to the tour

Cost: \$15.00

**The tour should last approximately 1 1/2 hours. After the tour complimentary wine and appetizers will be provided for you to enjoy.**

### The Katharine Nicol Garden

The Katharine Nicol Garden's hardscaping was also designed by Ron Rule but the plantings are all Katharine. In addition to her wonderful selection of perennials, trees and shrubs Katharine has also created a kitchen garden that supplies her family with vegetables all summer long.

**Date: Thursday, June 2, 2011**

Time: 6:00pm

Location: will be announced just prior to the tour

Cost: \$15.00

**The tour should last approximately 1 1/2 hours. After the tour complimentary wine and appetizers will be provided for you to enjoy.**

### Abkhazi Garden and Lily Maxwell Garden

We will be visiting two of Victoria's most beautiful gardens this year. The Abkhazi Garden is located a short distance from Government House in Victoria and the Lily Maxwell garden is a private garden located down from the Abkhazi Garden close to the water. Here is a description of the two gardens:

## Abkhazi Garden

The Abkhazi Garden is an exquisite heritage home and garden. Prince and Princess Abkhazi began creating their garden in 1946. This was the year they married and settled in Victoria, after living separate lives touched by both privilege and tragedy. They immediately began to develop their one-acre property, and continued to maintain and improve the garden throughout their lives together.

The garden is very discreet from the street, with only hints of what exists beyond the hornbeam hedge. What the visitor does find is a garden that embraces a natural landscape that is unique to Victoria. The garden is blessed with dramatic glaciated rocky slopes, magnificent native Garry oaks and gorgeous vistas. The garden is designed to make the most of these remarkable features and it is the Abkhazis' response to their landscape that qualifies it as a stunning example of West Coast design. The garden flows around the rock, taking advantage of deeper pockets of soil for conifers, Japanese maples and rhododendrons that over the last 50 years have grown to an impressive maturity. Carpets of naturalized bulbs, choice alpiners and woodland companions provide interest throughout the year to the discerning plantsman, but it is the overall design that leaves the greatest impression.

The Abkhazis worked together on their creation for over 40 years, referring to it as "their child". After their deaths the Garden changed hands, and in February 2000, The Land Conservancy purchased the property to save it from becoming a townhouse development.

I have had the privilege of visiting this garden several times and it is a real joy to explore. They have rhododendrons that are nearly 100 years old and are more tree-like than shrubby. It was a unique experience to wander among them. This is definitely a must see garden. Please visit their website <http://www.conservancy.bc.ca/content.asp?sectionack=abkhazi> for more detailed information about the garden.

## Lily Maxwell Garden

Lily Maxwell is a Garden Designer with a beautiful home and garden located in the Oak Bay area of Victoria. Lily's property slowly slopes down to the road in front of her house and commands a lovely view of the water. But it is the plants that draw your attention. In the front yard she has created sweeping garden beds anchored with shrubs and trees and filled with interesting, rare and unusual perennials. The east side of the house has a sweet little garden area that links the front yard to the back. In the back yard, gravel paths meander through the garden beds Lily has created. Here again a variety of trees and shrubs provide structure in the garden with perennials providing colour and interest. Lily's garden is toured by many garden groups throughout the year and you are really going to enjoy seeing what she has created.

### **Date: Sunday, June 5, 2011**

Time: We will meet at The Natural Gardener at 7:30am to catch the 9:00am ferry to Swartz Bay arriving at The Abkhazi Gardens at 11:00am. We will leave the Abkhazi Gardens at 12:30pm and tour the Lily Maxwell Garden. From Lily's garden we are going to Richard Mosselman's garden. Richard and his partner have created a wonderful small garden that I know we will all find inspiring. We will catch the 5pm ferry and should be back at The Natural Gardener by 7:30pm

Cost: \$95.00 includes ferry, gas and tours of both gardens.

## The Lawrence's Garden and Barbara Reid Garden

### **The Lawrence Garden**

The Lawrence's property is located on the East coast of Bowen Island with views to the North, East and South. Nestled on a 100 ft cliff the house and gardens are exposed to buffeting by winds from the SE and by the cold Squamish winter winds from the North.

The garden extends over two building lots. The development of the garden on the more northerly lot was started in November of 2003. The bigger, more southerly lot, was landscaped in November 2009, after the demolition of a large 10000 ft structure brought to the Island from Expo.

The garden you will see on this lot was landscaped over a three-month period in the fall of 2009. The first plantings went into the ground in November 2009.

The entire property with one small exception is unfenced. The Island is currently over-run with deer. All their plantings have to be 'deer resistant,' a term which defies a definitive definition as what might be poison on one side of the Island is lettuce on another!

Water is a scarce resource during the summer months on Bowen. Home consumption is restricted to 140 gallons a day. They currently store 9000 gallons of water and have plans to add more. The newer garden has an irrigation system.

The combined properties extend over three acres. Currently we are developing beach access and rest areas from which visitors can take in the magnificent sweep of the coastal mountains and the wild life of Howe Sound. If you are lucky you may be blessed with a sighting of killer whales, dolphins, or rafts of thousands of scoter and barrow's golden eye ducks!

### **The Barbara Reid Garden**

Barbara Reid's home and garden are located at the very end of Arbutus Point Road on Bowen Island with stunning views of the water. Her garden is a mixture of shade and sun with plant treasures located throughout the garden. It is interesting to see how the garden style changes as you move from shade to sun and back to shade. Because the garden is on an exposed point some of the garden areas have to contain tough plants that can take drought and heat. I think you will find this a fascinating garden to tour through.

After the tour, for those who would like, we will be having dinner at Tuscany Restaurant and catching the 7:20pm ferry to Horseshoe Bay

#### **Date: Sunday, June 12, 2011**

Departure Time from The Natural Gardener: 9:00am sharp

Departure Time from Horseshoe Bay: 10:05am

Arrive at the Lawrence Garden by 11:00am. Tour garden and have lunch on site. Then head off to Barbara Reid's garden.

Departure Time from Bowen Island if not having dinner: 5:15pm

Departure Time from Bowen Island if having dinner: 7:20pm

Cost: \$45.00 includes Tour cost and Ferry cost. Dinner is at your cost.

### **The Margot Ketchum Garden – SOLD OUT**

A couple of years ago I had the opportunity and great pleasure of visiting Margot's Garden and was blown away by the lushness and richness of her plants. Everywhere I looked there were plant treasures, both big and small. The property, which Margot purchased in the mid 90's was a mess when she first bought it but by sheer hard work and imagination she has transformed it into a garden of Eden. There is a pond in the front yard with a small bridge over it and the backyard is a shade gardeners paradise. Margot's garden has been featured in GardenWise magazine and she gets numerous requests each year to tour her garden. This is another garden you are not going to want to miss.

#### **Date: Thursday, June 16th, 2011**

Time: 6:00 pm

Location: will be announced just prior to the tour

Cost: \$15.00

**The tour should last approximately 1 1/2 hours. After the tour complimentary wine and appetizers will be provided for you to enjoy.**

### **The Lisa O'Donnell Garden – SOLD OUT**

The Lisa O'Donnell Garden is a plant collectors dream. Lisa has created an amazing collection of plants, trees and shrubs and one of the most extensive collections of dwarf & miniature conifers

I've ever seen. Lisa's garden has been featured in several garden magazines during the past few years. Come and be inspired.

**Date: Thursday, June 23rd, 2011**

Time: 6:00 pm

Location: will be announced just prior to the tour

Cost: \$15.00

**The tour should last approximately 1 1/2 hours. After the tour complimentary wine and appetizers will be provided for you to enjoy.**

## **THE ELIZABETH MILLAR GARDEN – SOLD OUT**

The Miller Botanical Garden is located just north of Seattle. It was the private home and garden of Elizabeth and Pendleton Miller. The garden is known for its exceptional collection of fine trees and shrubs in addition to an expansive collection of woodland herbaceous perennials. The Millers purchased the five-acre piece of land north of the Seattle city limits on a bluff above Puget Sound in 1948. The site commands spectacular views of Puget Sound and the Olympic Peninsula, and offers unique microclimates for growing plants. There are over 4,000 taxa, or different kinds of plants, in the three acres of this uniquely landscaped garden.

The Miller Botanical Garden is still a private garden and is available for tours only on Wednesdays & Thursdays from March until November with a maximum of 500 people each year so I was thrilled to be able to actually book a date and share with you this fascinating and very special garden. For more information on the Miller Botanical Garden please visit their website at [www.millergarden.org](http://www.millergarden.org).

**Date: Wednesday, June 29, 2011**

Depart Vancouver from The Natural Gardener at 8:30 am

Arrive at The Miller Botanical Garden at 12:45 pm

Tour starts at 1:00pm

Tour ends at 3:00pm

Depart for Vancouver at 3:15 pm

Arrive in Vancouver at 7:15 pm

Cost: \$40.00 includes car, gas & tour

## **THE CLAUDE LEDOUX & ADRIAN MICHIELSEN GARDEN – SOLD OUT**

Claude is the Parks Horticultural Manager for the city of New Westminster so you can just imagine what his garden is like. Both the front garden and the back garden are beautifully laid out and full of some of the most interesting plants you'll ever see. The hardscaping Claude and Adrian have done is also quite something. This is definitely a garden worth travelling to New Westminster for.

**Date: Saturday, July 9, 2011**

Time: 1:00pm

Location: will be announced just prior to the tour.

Cost: \$15.00



Part of Lily Maxwell's front garden

## PLANT OF THE MONTH

### **Pittosporum tenuifolium 'Gold Star'**

Pittosporum are wonderful, evergreen shrubs that I think look very elegant in the garden. 'Gold Star' is especially lovely with its touch of variegation and chartreuse, wavy new leaves. It is a smaller growing pittosporum with interesting yellow leaf tips that become variegated as they mature. Gold Star produces small flowers when mature, and gives off a beautiful scent that all Pittosporums are famous for. It has a naturally very bushy and tidy form and is cold hardy and happy in most situations. I would plant it in an area of good drainage and a little protection from winter wind.

Zone: 7

Light: Full sun

Soil: Moist, but well –drained

Height: 4 feet but takes pruning very well

Spread: 6 feet



**Let us be grateful to people who make us happy, they are the charming gardeners who make our souls blossom. ~Marcel Proust**

### **BOTANICAL LATIN**

On our continuing quest to understand what the heck the latin names of our favourite plants mean here is the next word of the month:

**Officinalis** – meaning medicinal. Example: Rosemary officinalis.

**I have been writing a garden blog and wanted to remind you to check it out at [blog.thenatural-gardener.com](http://blog.thenatural-gardener.com)**



**We are also on . You can find us at The Natural Gardener Garden Store.**

May 2011

There we have another issue of the newsletter for you. I tried not to make it too long as I know you would rather be out in your garden rather than inside reading about gardening. I hope this is a great month of gardening for you and remember to take time to just sit in your garden and enjoy what you are creating.

Happy Gardening!

Bob



Trillium 'Volcano'. If only I could find a supplier of this fantastic trillium.