



Bermuda Botanical Society

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Merry
Christmas!

NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER 2008

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Autumn is here. The days are shorter and cooler, with no daylight saving.

The Fall Festival was a great success. Many thanks to the executive and many others who helped. Special thanks to Marijke Peterich who chaired the event. She displayed great organizational skills, creative talents with her road signs to publicize the event and a wonderful motivator who encouraged such a diverse group of people to participate. Her pumpkin soup was the best! As always, Lyn Vaughan was behind the scenes doing her part in assisting and making sure everything went well. Thanks to you also, Lyn.

We hope you are ready for our next big event, the Plant Sale. Please join us in the JJ Outerbridge building on Saturday, November 15th.

As has been mentioned in a couple of newsletters, we are in the midst of hiring a person to manage the Double Fantasy Café. We look forward to introducing this person in our next newsletter. It will be a comfort to have cover for Lyn when she will be on holiday in the future. I am sure Lyn will appreciate sharing the load.

Please remember us this Christmas season as the premier place to do your shopping. Buy Bermuda. We really do have some perfect gifts for the gardener, cat, dog or horse lover as well as many other interests. Parking is not a problem AND we give you a 10% members' discount which we has been increased to 25% on Timber Press books.

Bill Ingham
President

Fall Festival Results:

The avocado weighed 29.7 ozs. Winners: Khiari Harris and Seta Douglas.

The gumdrops numbered 239. Winner: Kristen Munt.

Marijke Peterich extends her thanks to all who volunteered at the Festival.

Please remember that the Society collects used postage stamps as a means of making a little money. Please help your society by saving the stamps from your Christmas mail (and year round) and bringing them to the Visitors' Centre. Thank you!



THE BEAUTY OF CHRISTMAS

Tour Guide

Back in the Old World it is the Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*) that through the centuries was most associated with Christmas. Actually, I believe that the word holly is the same as holy. The tree has been venerated since the Stone Age, that is, since the time of the heathens. This is perhaps because it is the only indigenous broadleaf tree in Europe that has green leaves in the winter. Incidentally, the heathens also venerated the Mistletoe, probably for similar reasons. The red berries of the Holly are prominent in this time of year. If you imagine this tree in the snow you have the three colours that we associate most with Christmas: green, red and white.

Here in Bermuda we have the Natal Plum (*Carissa macrocarpa*), that simultaneously has white flowers and red fruits. It comes from South Africa and the leaves are of the same dark green that we find on the Holly. The flowers are beautiful 5-pointed stars. One could think of the Star of Bethlehem. What is more, the Natal Plum gets its name from the Portuguese word for Christmas! This is because in 1486 the famous Portuguese explorer Vasco de Gama, who first rounded the southern tip of Africa, dropped anchor on Christmas Day in a beautiful spot and named it Natal.

South Africa has given us more to enjoy this time of the year. The Poinsettia (*Euphorbia pulcherrima*) has become the plant to have in the house at Christmas. The plants have brilliantly red flowers (which are really leaves) and when planted in the garden they will become shrubs that will continue to do so, always around Christmas and into the New Year. There are white and pink ones

too. Also from South Africa is the Candelabra Aloe (*aloe arborescens*). Its orange torches appear just before Christmas.

The Paper Whites will be flowering. In Holland the bulbs of these small daffodils will be put in gravel in pots in October and are kept in the house so that they will flower at Christmas. When we moved to Bermuda it was December and I was surprised to see them outside in full flower.

In our garden we have a Red Powder Puff bush. (*Calliandra haematocephala* – it belongs to the Mimosaceae). The flowers resemble the flowers of the Black Ebony, but much larger and red. The first flowers appear around Christmas and they keep coming all winter – a lovely sight. They are quite rare in Bermuda.

Now the orange flowers of the Cape Honeysuckle (*Tecoma capensis*) brighten many hedges and the Loquats (*Eriobotrya japonica* - they are of the Rose family) are beginning to flower. Soon they will be spreading their wonderful fragrance. Stop, look around, take a sniff and enjoy!

Merry Christmas!



ANNUAL CHRISTMAS CRAFT MARKET

Jameka Kelly
Assistant Park Planner

Twenty-five craft vendors are taking part in this year's 3rd Annual Christmas Craft Market and Plant Display taking place in the Jack King building at Botanical Gardens. The market is organized and hosted by the Department of Parks.

The range of possible gift ideas is extensive. The majority of crafts are handmade, unique or original pieces and range from Christmas cards and stockings, a variety of indoor and outdoor plants, sea glass, beaded and ethnic jewelry, festive candles, cedar products, baked goods, knitted and crocheted products, Bermuda honey products, ceramics, gift baskets, natural body products and oils, and one of a kind Christmas tree decorations and ornaments.



There is also a vendor who sells homemade organic soup every week. Another vendor will be selling hot beverages and snacks.

The plant display will feature indoor plants, poinsettias and Christmas trees.

The featured entertainment for the market this year will be performances by school choirs and bands.

A raffle takes place on the final night with 15 exciting prizes to be won.

The market takes place every Thursday night from 6:00pm – 8:00pm starting on November 20, 2008 and ending on December 18, 2008. The market is fun-filled and family oriented. This is an event not to be missed.

Come and celebrate with us!!



Volunteering for the Bermuda Botanical Society

Having received an application to volunteer through the Centre on Philanthropy but a little suspicious, Lyn Vaughan wrote back: 'If you are Bermudian or a normal resident of Bermuda, we would be happy to have your help, but if you are not located on our island ... we will not be able to accept ...'. She was amused to receive the following acknowledgment:

'i am not from bermuda. blessings of light to you anyhow. Im sure it is beautimus peace and light julia' (Spellings and grammar Julia's own.)

Lyn thinks we might be able to use her to promote Bermuda out there!

THE FAR-FLUNG ADVENTURES OF BBS'S DOUBLE FANTASY MERCHANDISE!

Thanks to Lyn Vaughan, Manager of the Visitors' Centre, John Lennon fans in faraway Japan are now proudly sporting the Bermuda Botanical Society's Double Fantasy t-shirts, and recently the following e-mail arrived from Yoko Hansen:

We are a non-profitable & voluntary group based in Japan, whose members are mainly John Lennon fans. According to the myth, John Lennon's last album was named after the flower he saw at the Botanical Gardens in Bermuda, and we started searching for this elusive flower about 20 months ago. Our aim, when we succeed in finding or recovering this flower, is to start up a campaign for "Love & Peace" and make this flower the symbol of this cause. For example, our first phase of this campaign would be to encourage local children to plant the "Double Fantasy" bulbs at every elementary school all over Japan.



Let's try them on! Small, Medium & Large from left to right.



The parcel has arrived! Our captain, Shingo Yagyu (the guy in the middle) and his staff.



Sending them out to other members all over Japan. All Shingo's staff are working hard!

PS from Botanical Gardens – the Fantasy freesias have been found!

From the Gift Shop (i):

TIMBER PRESS SPECIAL!

See www.timberpress.com

Ask Lyn Vaughan to check inventory for the book you want, or order and pay US price *only*.



START GROWING VEGETABLES NOW

Frances Eddy

There are so many reasons in 2008 to be retrieving lost vegetable gardening skills – the high cost of food, the economic crunch, global warming (contributed significantly to by conventional agriculture), toxic chemicals in food that causes life threatening illnesses, ignorance about the nutritional content of foods and where they come from, obesity due to fatty diets and not enough exercise, loss of top soil worldwide due to lack of organic matter in the soils causing erosion, countries beginning to close their doors to export, and the list goes on.

Organic farming and gardening practices have been slowly coming back, rejuvenated by new environmental knowledge, and gaining momentum as the demand for organic food grows. The economic downturn may, however, put a damper on organic production and sales as people begin to cut back on expenses. Rent, utilities, insurance, taxes, etc. are not areas in the budget that are flexible but food is and it is likely that this is where people will cut back --all the more reason to grow our own vegetables to keep the family healthy while we go through this period of uncertainty.

Actually, life comes without certainty so to ensure continuity in gardening skills for generations to come we must not wait for our children to do it. Let us begin. Start with a small bed, say 4 feet wide by 4 feet long and learn what it takes to grow a garden then

increase the length gradually according to space availability.

There are many approaches to organic gardening, not all of which have sustainability as their goal. However, there is a great deal of information on the internet on how to grow your own food, so much so that it might be confusing. A gardening course may be useful to get started, then rely on the internet for the finer details.

GROW BIOINTENSIVE (the caps are the trade mark) is a method that I have been using since the late 70's when I discovered a brochure on it in the Camden library when I was an apprentice with the then Bermuda Dept. of Agriculture and I have been teaching it since 2000. It is a carefully designed method based on over 30 years of research which has as its primary goal to build soil with food production as a secondary objective. I like that it addresses all the environmental and health concerns mentioned above and it is the easiest and most natural method I know.

Next GROW BIOINTENSIVE course dates:
9-11 am **Sundays November 9th to December 7th 2008.**

Saturdays January 3rd to 31st

Cost: \$125.00 (incl. textbook, *How to Grow More Vegetables*, 7th edition).

Contact: franceseddy@logic.bm2238-0059-

GUAVA FROM THE PHILIPPINES

Helle Patterson

The Biostation-that-was, now BIOS (Bermuda Institute of Ocean Sciences), has a rich array of unusual flora, making the grounds fascinating to explore, and when I was Education Officer there between 1996-2003 I was constantly asked to identify one or another of them.

Being very much a novice when it came to plants, I would take photos and e-mail them to Lisa Greene, to David Wingate, to Sarah Vallis, to Jeremy Madeiros, and I would pore over Britton's Flora of Bermuda and Flora of the Bahamas, and every plant book which fell into my hands. What started as a necessity became a challenge and a passion.

One of the Biostation's Bermudian graduate interns earned money to pay her fees by mapping the grounds for me and listing all the plants, by location if not by name (this is quite an endeavour, considering that the grounds cover approximately 15 acres). I would then try to identify every plant.

The project took quite a while to complete. There were a hundred varieties of plants, mainly trees and shrubs, and some were so unique in Bermuda that no absolute conclusion could be reached. (Can anyone definitively identify a Pohutukawa?)

Then, just as I was finally ready put out a CD listing all the flora and linking them to their locations, three events occurred: (i) some trees had to be relocated, others destroyed altogether, to make room for a new wing; (ii) gardener Raymond Ray brought back seeds from the Philippines and planted various seedlings such as star apple and jackfruit, and (iii) Hurricane Fabian wiped out a few others.

The star apple is a sizable tree, and has produced fruit for several years now, the

jackfruit has disappeared (I think, but have not confirmed), and no one gave thought to a low-growing shrub with loquat-type leaves, until last month we found it full of large fruit that none of us could identify.

It took a call to Ray to confirm that this was indeed a guava, with fruit the size of smallish apples, green of skin and pale in flesh.



Note the segmented skin ...



The fruit is 9 ins in circumference and 3½ ins long. Prolonged search on the Internet has not 'borne fruit' – can anyone identify this particular species of *Psidium*?

David Wingate, Lisa Greene, Sarah Vallis, Helge Wingate and I would dearly love to know the answer!

AROUND THE ISLAND

Lisa Greene

In January 2007, I wrote about the Balsam pear (*Momordica charantia*). I was introduced to this weed by a friend who had it in her garden but didn't know what it was. I asked David Wingate about it and he told me that he had seen it in Paget Marsh in the 1990's. Since that article in 2007, I have had reports of it in Devonshire, Smiths and, most recently, in a second location in Warwick.

Balsam pear has yellow flowers about one inch across, deeply lobed leaves, and warty, orange-yellow fruit from one to eight inches long that split open to reveal red, pulpy seeds. (If you're not sure what this or other plants in this article look like, and you have access to the internet, do an *image* search on Google – put the name of the plant in quotation marks.)

Have you seen this plant? If you have, I'd very much like to hear from you so that I can track its spread. Please call me at 293-4464 x 123.

There are loads of plants flowering now. Keep an eye out for:

Mexican sunflower (*Tithonia*) - a mass of flowers at the time of writing, Loquat, Everlasting cassia, Coralita, Fiddlewood (bearing its second crop of flowers), and Carob (*Ceratonia siliqua*). Tamarind (*Tamarindus indicus*), was the feature of an article in the last newsletter – did you see the tree in the City Hall car park flowering in October?

The following plants are bearing fruit:

Date palm (*Phoenix dactylifera*) – there are several lovely specimens on Front Street on the dock between the Bird Cage and the Ferry Terminal.

Balloon vine (*Cardiospermum grandiflorum* I believe) - draped like a piece of fabric over a lot of Devonshire.

Mexican pepper – fruit are starting to turn red. Now is the time to see which you have in your garden. If you remove the female plants then there will be fewer berries to sprout in your garden!

Creeping fig (*Ficus pumila*) – they're easy to see on the west side of Botanical Society's Visitors' Centre.

Spanish or West Indian cedar (*Cedrella odorata*) – the fruit, when crushed smell like very unpleasant. There is one in the south west corner of the Shrub Border, Botanical Gardens.

Golden rain trees (*Koelreuteria paniculata*) are looking spectacular with their rose-pink seed pods. The trees are becoming a weed because they self-seed so easily!



Golden Rain Tree

Mahogany trees and Pride of India are covered in fruit.

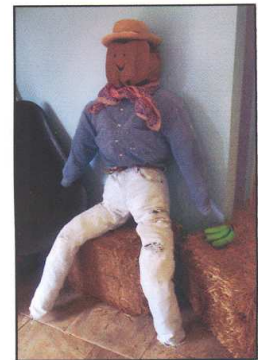
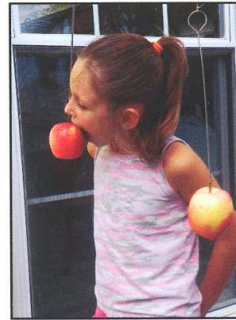
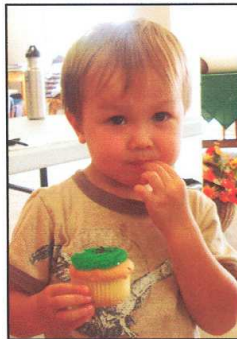
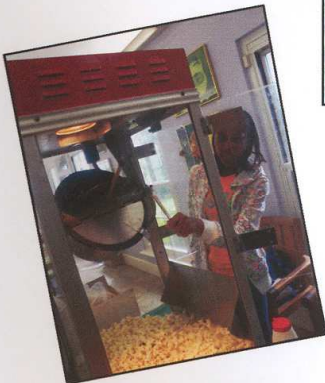
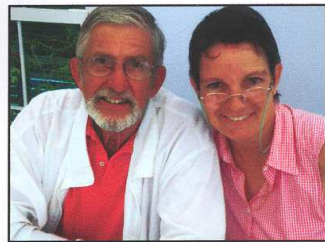
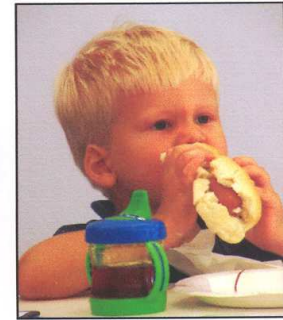
The dragon tree (*Dracena draco*) – a fine specimen can be seen at the Crawl Post Office.

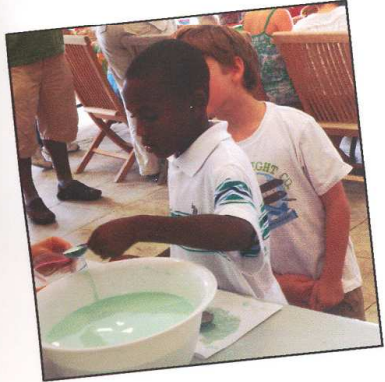
Avocado trees bore a bumper crop of fruit this year.

Lisa Greene is the author of the Bermuda's Flora (Vols. 1 & 2). Both volumes are available at the Visitors' Centre Gift Shop.



*Bermuda Botanical Society
FALL FESTIVAL 2008*





FROM THE GIFT SHOP (ii)

Natural Leigh
Hand crafted in Devon
Truly natural toiletries
Beautiful Gift Hamper
for the Bride
Handbag Giftware
Indulgences Gift Box
Gardener's Gift box
Classical Gift Bag
Rose & Lavender Pot
Pourri

 Celebrate Autumn
 in Bermuda
 Decorate your table with
 items in
 a pretty fall leaf pattern
 or fall colour
 stripes. Prices \$1-
 \$12.50. 25% off.

MORE EMMA

We have just received
 a new
 shipment of mugs &
 other
 goodies from Emma.
 Come
 quick or they are gone.

GARDEN GIFTS

Whimsical Simon
Drew &
Alan Titchmarsh
designs.
Plus the Famous
sheds
& slugs of history.
Listen
to a Garden Radio
- Raindrops Keep
Falling on my head.

Unusual Watering
Cans!

The Bug-Free Mug!

New from Ulster

Weavers

Tea cosies & Egg

Cosies

Tea Towels & Hand

Towels

Oven mitts & Oven
 Gloves

Dogs, Cats, Chickens,
 Pigs!

Our Friends @

Badger

Greetings from the
 Badger mines! Badger
 has begun shipping
 USDA Certified Organic
 body care products.
 Great news! All the
 same good balms & two
 new mind balms are on
 the way. Better packing
 for the environment,
 better price for us, by
 using recycled
 cardboard. Balms - Lg -
 \$10; Sm - \$5.



**Don't Forget the
 Children!**

We have Games, Finger
 Puppets,
 Zoo, Pet, Jungle Animal
 Key Rings.
 Books, bags, pencils,
 crayons etc.

More Garden Needs on
the way.

Trugs, Presto Buckets,
Gloves!

TWO BAD MICE Gift
Cards

Boxed Bone China
Mugs

Pkts of Announcement
Cards

(Party, It's a Boy!,
Address Change.)

Dunoon Floral & Funny
Mugs

Textile Heritage Cross-stitch
Kits from Scotland

Abigail Mill Embroidery

Delicate Cards & Gifts

To delight everyone.

Gifts from Ahler!

Beautiful Gift Sets at \$45
 & \$60.

Pewter and enameled card
 cases,

Luggage tags, pillboxes, key
 rings,

Compacts, with matching
 emblems.

Dogs, Butterfly, Vintage
 Car etc.

Bermuda Made Gifts-
Support us.

Augustinovic Ornaments -
 \$7.95 - \$24

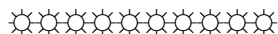
Bermuda Angels - \$15 -
 \$85

Bermuda Books-
 New&Old Favourites

Bermuda Cards-Semos,
Proctor, Jones
Bermuda Ceramics - \$15 -
\$170
Bermuda Needle Point &
Cross Stitch Kits
Bermuda DVDs-
Enviroshorts/Treasure Is.
Bouquet Garni Jams &
Chutneys
Deirdre Furtado Dolls

Marquardt Gifts - \$15 -
\$50
Madeiros Kitchen Sharks
etc, etc.
Nature's Sea Jewels - \$20
- \$125
Omax Ceramics - \$25 -
\$60
Sallie's Bermuda
Preserves

Special Cedar work for
sale – display
3/4 November till 17
December 2008.
Triangle Treasures Bda -
\$12.95 - \$24



Wangari Maathai won
the Nobel Peace Prize in
2004 for her dedication to
environmental

preservation both in her
native Kenya and around
the world. Starting in
1976, her grass-roots
efforts to plant trees and
end deforestation have
grown to larger issues such
as democracy and human
rights and have garnered
her both international
acclaim and imprisonment
and political suppression
from Kenyan dictators.

Emily Main, of the
National Geographic,
interviewed Ms. Maathai.
One of the questions was:
if you could ask everyone
to do just one thing, what
would it be? Here is her
answer – might we all be
inspired by it! Think about
planting, not just a tree but
a *fruiting* tree, and moving

one step closer to
sustainability and a better
environment.

*Planting a tree is still a
wonderful way to address
the issue of the
environment. I was very
surprised recently when I
heard from scientists that
20 percent of greenhouse
gases are coming from
deforestation and
degraded forests. That
amount is greater than all
the greenhouse gases
being emitted by transport
sector. While not all of us
are driving or flying or
burning coal or burning
gas, and while not all of us
can stop doing those
things, there is something
practical that we can do.
And that is plant a tree
and protect a tree that is
standing.*

*But I think that there are
many other things that
people can do. Think
about the 3 R's, "reduce,
reuse, recycle." The
Japanese have a concept
known as "mottainai," and
it means do not waste
resources. Be grateful, be
respectful.*

For more of the
interview with Wangai
Maathia:
<http://blogs.nationalgeographic.com/blogs/thegreenroom/2008/10/establishing-roots-wangari-maa.html>
and to learn more about
her Green Belt
Movement:
<http://greenbeltmovement.org>

Lisa Greene

ASSISTANCE SOUGHT!

Your Botanical Society is looking to build a website and seeks assistance from any volunteers who could get us started. Please contact Bill Ingham (bi57@northrock.bm) or Helle Patterson (helle@northrock.bm)



CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

- Nov. 15 **Plant sale.**
8:30 am Members, 9:00 am general public.
JJ Outerbridge Building, Botanical Gardens.
- Nov. 22 – Dec.18 **6:00 pm-8:00 pm Thursdays, Annual Christmas Craft Market.**
Jack King Building, Botanical Gardens.
- Dec. 3 **Botanical Society Christmas Party.**
6:00—8:00 pm, Visitors' Centre, Botanical Gardens.
- Jan. 25 *Herbal Remedies from Locally Grown Plants:* presentation by Nell
 Johnston and Lisa Greene.
Doors open 3:00 pm, talk 3:30 pm, Visitors' Centre, Bot. Gardens.
- Feb. 2 **Deadline for submissions to next Newsletter;** please e-mail to
 helle@northrock.bm
- Feb. 22 *Yunnan plant life:* presentation by George & Marijke Peterich.
Visitors' Centre, Botanical Gardens.