



Bermuda Botanical Society

P.O. Box HM 834, Hamilton HM CX, Bermuda
Tel: (441) 236-5291 • Fax (441) 236-8970 • Email: bdabotanical@logic.bm

AUGUST NEWSLETTER 2009 PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Now it's hot and humid. As you need to be hydrated, so does the garden and this includes the compost; without the moisture the living microorganisms can't do their job. In this heat it is just amazing how fast your garden waste will breakdown.

At the AGM in May, we had Neville Richardson, the Curator, speak to us on what he hopes for the Botanical Gardens. He mentioned relying more on volunteers and it seems this summer we have had a number of young people helping with labeling and organizing many things. Botany Camp was another well attended camp with some great activities and outings.

Recently we had Andrew Hudson step down as Treasurer, due to work commitments. We thank him for implementing a number of things, a new computer, new procedures and better controls. Our Assistant Treasurer, Samantha Broomfield, who has overseen the 2008 audit which is nearly finished, has continued to improve our controls with two signatures on every cheque. We welcome Samantha as Andrew's replacement.

This newsletter is a little early so there is time to come in to the shop as a number of items are on sale before we do inventory count on August 30. Remember members have their 10% discount, for some items it will be more.

The trip to Nonsuch Island was over subscribed and went very well; many thanks

to Helle Patterson and David Wingate. We hope to have another excursion next June.

Our Plant Sale will be early this year, so why not pot up some of your favourite plants to share with other keen gardeners and make a little for the Society. Likewise, we are planning to have a different Fall Festival this year, a little later than usual: Sunday, November 8th, for a Guy Fawkes theme. In addition, we are hoping other organizations will join us so that young and old will come and appreciate the gardens.

Remember to water on hot days.

Bill Ingham
President



Yellow-crowned night heron on Nonsuch

SUMMER DELIGHTS

by Tour Guide

This time I should first apologize for a disturbing mistake in the last newsletter. The riddle there was not correct. I wrote *Clerodendron*, instead of *Philodendron*. The riddle as it should be, together with the answer, follows here.

What is between two Clerodendra gigantea and one Ficus urbaniana?

The answer is an elephant. Clerodendron giganteum (plural: Clerodendra gigantea) is the Elephant's Ear, and Ficus Urbaniana is the Elephant's tail.

I would now like to take you on a walk or, if you prefer, a bicycle ride around the Island. I do a fair bit of walking and often I am struck by a cloud of fragrance, the same happens when riding my bike. There is so much fragrance around the Island that it is nice to know where it all comes from.

One of my favourites is the Oleander. This is the summer fragrance par excellence. The oleander gets into full flower late in the spring and especially when there is a dry spell, as we have had this year in May and June. The result was an abundance of oleander flowers. They smell a bit of vanilla, which is actually the fruit of an orchid. I have never smelled the flowers of the vanilla orchid. Orchids are more known by the beauty of their flowers than by their fragrance. There are a few exceptions. One of them is a tiny orchid that one finds high in the Swiss Alps. It is *Nigritella rhellicani*. The Swiss call it "Männertreu", which translates to something like "Men's Faithfulness". It has indeed the most appealing fragrance. I would recognize it out of a hundred different ones. Yes, fragrance does fascinate men, there is no doubt about that.

But I digress... now we are in the middle of the summer, or rather the end, and fragrance is still around us, day and night. One of the strongest is that of Fiddlewood (*Citharexylum fruticosum*). The fragrance of it has been likened to the smell of lilacs. It has been flowering for weeks now, that is, for weeks there have been trees in flower, as they do not all flower at the same time. Often the flowers

are not in sight, but then you find hundreds of the small fiddlewood flowers on the ground telling the story. The smell is sweet, but less attractive than that of the Oleander.

A fragrance that is somewhat similar comes from the wild, or Sickle-shaped Asparagus (*Asparagus falcatus*). It is stronger and I would say a bit vulgar, but that may be because I hate that plant so much as an intruder in my garden. In Bermuda it is listed as an invasive species. (falcatus means sickle-shaped, which refers to the wicked thorns)

Another summer bloomer is the Frangipani or rather Plumeria (*Plumeria rubra*). Its fragrance is so strong that even a small tree can have a stupefying effect. A single flower can be too much for many people and sniffing it may cause a headache. The molecules that carry the fragrance go, as it were, straight to the brain. In my experience only hyacinths are worse. It is interesting to compare the different Plumerias one finds in Bermuda for perfume. It seems that the white ones have a weaker smell than others.

This was just a short daytime excursion. The night brings quite a few very strong, if not overwhelming, fragrances. To name just a few: Lady of the Night (*Brunfelsia americana*) and Jasmine, which comes in quite a few varieties. During the day you have to go and sniff the flowers, but after sundown the fragrance will come to you. My advice here is: do not get too close!



Plumeria rubra

HUMMINGBIRDS

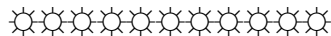
by Lisa Greene

“Hummingbirds dart from flower to flower, draining each blossom of its nectar. But new research suggests that they are not just zooming around recklessly – they’re on a tight schedule. Flowers refill with nectar every few hours, so hummingbirds would be smart to remember where and when they’ve already eaten. Researchers working at a field station in Alberta, Canada, filled eight flower-shaped feeders with a shot of sugar water every 10 or 20 minutes. Rufous hummingbirds bellied up to each feeder at about the time it was refilled, showing they could keep track of eight different food sources – a useful skill for fueling such buzzing exuberance.” Extracted from the Smithsonian, May 2006

The hummingbird that you are most likely to see in Bermuda is the ruby-throated hummingbird which has been recorded in Bermuda several times over the years in October and also in March.

Hummingbirds are attracted to red and they also need plants that supply a lot of nectar in their flowers, but they are *not* attracted to fragrance. If you want to attract hummingbirds to your Bermuda garden, here are a few options to try – in no particular order: red honeysuckle (*Lonicera sempervirens*), bee balm (*Monarda didyma*), sage (*Salvia officinalis*), scarlet sage (*Salvia splendens* and *S. coccinea*) Chinese hat plant (*Holmskiolida sanguinea*) nasturtium (*Tropaeolum*), four o’clocks (*Mirabilis* spp.) flame vine (*Pyrostegia venusta* – once known as *P. ignea*), abelia (*Abelia grandiflora*), bottlebrush (*Callistemon* spp.) trumpet vine (*Campsis radicans*), impatiens (*Impatiens balsamina*), shrimp plant (*Justicia brandegeana*), lantana (*Lantana camara*), cigar plant (*Cuphea ignea*), and odontonema (*Odontonema strictum*).

Hummingbirds will also pluck insects from spider webs, so leave webs intact in your garden as another source of food.



AROUND THE ISLAND:

Flowering or fruiting now and worth a look:

African tulip tree – *Spathodea campanulata*

Baygrape – *Coccoloba uvifera*

Avocado – *Persea americana*

Allamanda – *Allamanda cathartica*

Sweet clematis – *Clematis flammula*
(naturalized and a nuisance)

Scarlet cordia – *Cordia sebestena*

Hibiscus – *Hibiscus rosa-sinensis*

Beach naupaka – *Scaevola sericea* (invasive)

Peaches – *Prunus persica*

Corallita – *Antigonon leptopus*

Madeira vine - *Anredera baselloides*

If you’re not sure what these plants look like and you have access to the internet, do an *image* search on Google – put the name of the plant in quotation marks.

Lisa Greene is the author of the Bermuda’s Flora (Vols. 1 & 2).

UNUSUAL PLANTS FOR YOUR GARDEN

FREE SEEDLINGS AVAILABLE FOR YOU TO TRY

Calabash (*Crescentia cujete*). Makes an unusual and striking tree. The dried fruit shell can be used for making bowls, boat bailers, bluebird boxes, lanterns, etc..

Pride of Barbados (*Caesalpinia pulcherrima*). This is the common orange-flowered variety making a bush resembling a miniature Poinciana. Blooms all summer in full sun & reasonable soil. Blooming is probably enhanced by snipping off the seed pods as they form.

Tobacco (*Nicotiana glauca*). Grown from seed collected by Lisa Greene and is possibly descended from the original heirloom variety grown by Bermuda's early settlers. Tobacco as a cash crop failed in Bermuda but if the plant has survived in the wild here for 400 years, the failure of the crop was probably not the plant's fault!



Tobacco seedling

"Costa Rica Lime" Descended from seed obtained in Costa Rica where the fruit is very popular. The antecedents of this citrus are unknown but I suspect it is probably a **Rangpur**, aka Lemandarin, originating in India from a hybrid of Calamondin Orange and Lemon. When ripe, the fruit has orange skin and orange flesh but is acidic with a distinctive aroma.

A squeeze of this fruit makes the ultimate gin-and-tonic. This is only my opinion, but it is based on extensive personal research! Actually, my opinion is backed up by the fact that, in 2006, the makers of Tanqueray Gin brought out a version called Tanqueray Rangpur Gin. Rangpur fruit, ginger and bay leaves are added during the final distillation process to give a distinct lime flavour.

The fruit would probably also make good marmalade or could be used in any situation calling for lemon or lime.

The young tree seems to do well as a container grown plant and can set fruit in its second year. The fruit ripens in late fall and, like most citrus, the fruit keeps for some months if left on the tree.

Anyone who would like to try any these plants, please call me at 293-0128.

Nigel Chudleigh

I propagate plants to donate to several plants sales each year, including the Bot. Soc. one in November, and get through about 250 pots annually. My stockpile of old pots is now exhausted. If anyone has any used pots, especially the 1-gallon black plastic variety, which they don't need, I would appreciate having them.

Better to recycle those old pots by passing them on to me than to send them in the trash for incineration at Tynes Bay!

I would be happy to collect pots if called at 293-0128 or they could be left for me at the Visitors' Centre.

TREASURER'S UPDATE

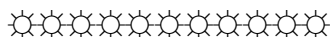
The last few months have been very productive for the finance team – we have managed to implement new controls for making payments and the recording of the daily sales more efficient. We have also got set up with internet banking, which is going to make it easier going forward to make & review payments.

We are still currently underway with the 2008 audit due to some additional work that needs to be performed at the request of PwC. However with the new accounting system (Quickbooks)

being implemented from 1 Sept, we should be in good shape for the 2009 audit.

I will look to make further improvements to the accounting function and internal controls over the next six months and will keep you all posted.

Samantha Bromfield
Treasurer



FROM THE VISITORS' CENTRE

It has now been just over six months ago since I took up the position in the Visitors' Centre as the Café Manager.

For those of you I have not yet had the pleasure of meeting I would like to tell you a little bit about myself. I have been living and working in Bermuda for the last thirteen years having originally come over from Scotland and for the duration of that time I was working in the Hospitality Industry in various restaurants around the Island.

Having had for a long time the desire to try something different I was delighted when the opportunity presented itself for me to join the Botanical Society and to become more involved in the community.

My days in the Visitors Centre only require me to be here in the mornings so I was able to pursue another goal of mine which was to work with children so my afternoons are spent at Harrington Sound where I accepted a position with the Afterschool Programme.

The past six months have been challenging and rewarding both at the same time and I would like to thank the volunteers for their continued support. I appreciate each and every one of you. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Neville Richardson, Steve Burgess and of course Lyn Vaughan for their guidance and support.

I would like to end by reminding you all that the Visitors' Centre can be booked depending on availability for private functions. So if you are planning an event then give us a call.

Lesley Stovell

******August 31 is the date that the new Post Office regulations come into effect. The main reason for this early newsletter is to urge you to ensure we have your correct mailing address. That way, no newsletters will go undelivered.******

NONSUCH ISLAND TRIP

by Paul L.S. Harney

It was just after 1:30pm on a warm sunny day Sunday July 5th when we boarded the state-of-the-art BAMZ boat. There were 23 passengers and two crew, all bound for the magnificent nature reserve island called Nonsuch.

As we anchored roughly 100 yards off shore in 20 feet of turquoise waters Dr David Wingate joined us in a small outboard. Dr. Wingate transported a few older passengers but the rest of us swam ashore.

Within 15 minutes we were standing in the shade of hand hewn cliffs from days-gone-by and listening to the modern history of this intriguing uninhabited land mass.

Dr Wingate led us along tree-shaded pathways which meandered through the upland forest of native and endemic species which he had planted over 4 decades during his tenure as resident caretaker and scientist of Nonsuch Island.

We saw many healthy specimens of Olive Wood, Junipers, Darrell's Fleabane, Palmettos, Southern Hackberry, Snowberry and so on. All the plants were growing in natural conditions and thriving. It was great to see.



Paul on Nonsuch Island



Longtail chick in nest

The highlight of our journey for me was to photograph a Longtail bird's chick sitting all fluffy and grey in its cliffside nest some 40-50 feet above the water and overlooking Castle Harbour.

I had waited 40 years to visit this special piece of protected land and having David Wingate as our personal tour guide was a sheer delight.

We returned safely to King's Wharf just after 5pm that same day.

Thanks to Helle for arranging the excursion. It was well worth the few dollars which we all gave towards fuel plus cold lunch and drink.

Photos supplied by Paul Harney

NONSUCH ISLAND SCENES



Dr David Wingate leading the way through the palmetto forest



Olivewood and palmetto forest



Bay grape with fruit

Photos by Paul Harney

FROM THE VISITORS' CENTRE

by Lyn Vaughan, Manager



Photo by Lyn Vaughan

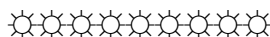
View from the patio at the Visitors' Centre, Botanical Gardens, Berry Hill Road, Paget Bermuda! What a wonderful place to be! Please come and enjoy our space.

Our visitors, both local and overseas love the ambience, the gifts, the coffee, the tea and the

friendly, informative people. They rave over our tour guides and the gardens.

Every day, the view from the patio offers an inspiring view of green and blue. Walking in the grounds, we see wonderful plants at the moment, such as sunflowers, ornamental millet, and amaranthus, which give joy with their unusual shapes and colours.

Regularly, we are brought unusual fruits and seeds, which we put on display with our reference books open at the page describing them. At the moment, we have dragon's eye and sausage fruit on our desk. Visit to find out what they are and what they look like. Check regularly for new plants of interest in the Gardens and at the Centre.

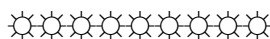


ENVIROTALK

Envirotalk, the publication from the Ministry of the Environment re-launched with the Spring 2009 issue. Prior to Spring 2009, Envirotalk was last published in July 2005 and was known as the Monthly Bulletin prior to April 2002. Envirotalk's primary purpose is to keep the public informed of the latest developments in agricultural, environmental and conservation

initiatives, though features such as the popular planting calendar and recipes have continued.

If you would like to subscribe to the publication please contact Alison Green at agreen@gov.bm or Tel: 239-2310. Please indicate if you would prefer a hard copy subscription or an e-subscription.



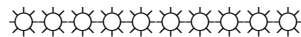
UPCOMING PLANT SALE

The Society's annual plant sale is to be held on Saturday 24th. October 2009. Please mark your calendars.

This is one of our main fund raisers. All members are urged to assist by providing plants. Start potting up your favourite, or unusual, plants now.

Many plants self-propagate by seed, sucker, clumping etc.. So it's often just a case of digging them up, potting them and growing them on to saleable size.

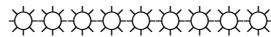
Or, for even more fun, propagate from scratch by means of cuttings, collected seed, layering etc.



WEBSITE UPDATE

We are working with Rick Hawke of 3264 Group (and BBS member) to set up a website for the Society. Our url is <http://www.botanical.bm>, but we are also registered as <http://www.bermudabotanical.com>
<http://www.bermudabotanical.net>
<http://www.bermudabotanical.org>

Keep you eyes on our space. Very soon we hope to offer you a wide variety of features, including photo galleries in which to display your plant pictures.



CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| Sept. 18 | Star-gazing in the Botanical Gardens.
7:30 pm. |
| Oct. 12 | Bermuda Botanical Society Plant Sale.
8:30 am Members. 9:00 am general public. Jack King Building, Botanical Gardens. |
| Nov. 2 | Deadline for next Newsletter. |
| Nov. 8 | Fall Festival.
Visitors' Centre and Botanical Gardens. |

Photos in newsletter by Helle Patterson unless credited otherwise.



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ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Our Goals: To encourage & support the botanical sciences within the community & promote further development of the Botanical Gardens and Arboretum.

Your membership contribution is important to us. It helps the Society to further our goals. We support the following programmes:

- **BOTANY CAMP** A summer camp where children learn about growing plants and how important they are in our lives.
- **SCHOLARSHIP FUND** To assist Bermuda's horticultural students.
- **LECTURES, WORKSHOPS & TOURS** A winter/spring programme on botanical themes to educate and inform our members and guests.

As a member of the Society, you will receive the following benefits:

- **QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER** with news of the Society and advance notice of events.
- **DISCOUNT** on lectures and tours.
- **10% DISCOUNT** on merchandise from the Visitors' Centre Gift Shop (membership card required).
- **MEMBERS' DISCOUNT** at Brighton Nursery (membership card required).

PLEASE SHOW YOUR SUPPORT & RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP BY COMPLETING THE FORM BELOW. THANK YOU!

1) PERSONAL DETAILS

New Member:

Renewal:

Name: Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss (please print) _____

Mailing Address: (required only for new members or change of address) _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Do you wish to receive your newsletter by e-mail? YES NO

2) FEES & DONATIONS (Please tick relevant boxes)

\$5 SENIOR

\$500 LIFE MEMBERSHIP

\$5 JUNIOR

\$1,000 CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP

\$10 INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP PERSONAL DONATION AMOUNT: \$ _____

FAMILY MEMBERSHIP

TOTAL AMOUNT PAID: \$ _____

3) PAYMENT METHOD (Please tick one box & complete payment details if paying by card)

CASH ENCLOSED

CHEQUE ENCLOSED (Please make payable to the Bermuda Botanical Society)

CREDIT/DEBIT CARD (Visa/MasterCard only)

NAME ON CARD: _____ CARD NUMBER: _____

EXPIRY DATE: _____ SIGNATURE: _____

Questions? Please call Lyn Vaughan on 236-5291.

FOR OUR RECORDS:

Payment Rec'd: _____ (register button #7) Date card issued _____ Entered in D/B _____

For Credit/Debit payment print receipt & send to member with membership card.



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VOLUNTEER APPLICATION FORM

Please Print

Full Name _____

Address _____

Post Code _____

Date of Birth _____ Name of School (if a student) _____

I am interested in the following:

Home Phone Number _____ Cell Phone Number _____

Work Phone Number _____ Emergency Phone Number _____

Contact Person _____

Relationship _____

Signature _____

If under 18 – Signature of Parent/Guardian _____

Becoming a Botanical Society Volunteer offers opportunities to:

Learn about Bermuda. Train to be a Tour Guide.

Assist in the upkeep/maintenance of the Garden areas. (Green thumb NOT required!)

Interact with the public/visitors. Make new friends and meet interesting people.

We need volunteers for:

Manning the refreshment counter at the Visitors' Centre.

Manning the gift shop at the Visitors' Centre.

Tour Guides.

Assisting at Special Functions.

Why not come for a visit, bring a friend, and meet the Manager of the Visitors' Centre?