



Bermuda Botanical Society

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NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER 2021

FROM THE EDITOR: Lisa Greene.

The Annual General Meeting was held on Saturday, Nov. 20th at Horticultural Hall. At the meeting, the following were elected as members of the Executive Committee:

Mrs. Jennifer Flood
Lallitah Durgah
Marijke Peterich
Lara du Plessis

Mr. Peter Lee
Christine Watlington
Marlie Powell
Gary Taylor

George Peterich stood down from the Committee. His contributions to the Society over the years were gratefully acknowledged by Jennifer Flood. As someone associated with the Society since its beginning, I was asked to say a few additional words:

Curious George.

George is curious (or maybe a more appropriate word would be inquisitive) about everything – and I mean *everything* natural history from - fungi to well, I will just focus on his *plant*-related interests.

I am grateful that George and Marijke decided to move their young family to Bermuda in 1983. The Botanical Society has benefited – and in fact, he has been a friend to Bermuda in probably more ways than we will ever realize.

The things important to George are his family, travel, the arts and – as I said before - Natural History - *and*, in my experience, plants in particular! I don't remember the time exactly when I first met George, but I'm pretty sure it was in my early days of working in the Botanical Gardens (I started there in 1983). George would show up with questions or to point something out. I learned a lot because of that!

George always had time for plants – plant history, plants of the world, plant names and origins, edible plants ... as evidenced by the *many* articles (sometimes under the byline “tumbleweed”



George Peterich, flanked by J. Flood & L. Greene.

cont.

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and “tour guide”) - and Trivia for the newsletter - (he wrote no. 35 in September 2021, but I suspect there were more and that we got mixed up on the numbering system over the years.)

In 2010 George had a project to identify trees - many were identified.

George has served as President (2004/5 at least) and as a general member of the executive committee and has also been a long-serving member of the Scholarship Committee.

He has been a dedicated tour guide in the Botanical Gardens for *many* years and volunteered in numerous other capacities such as at the Fall Festival and leading walks for members - including the City of Hamilton and Par-la-ville Park. To top it all off, he has hosted many of our annual Christmas tea with his wife Marijke.

The Red Powder Puff – *Calliandra haematocephala*

Wendy McLeod

This is one of the few shrubs in glorious full bloom in January. It's not a common plant in Bermuda but it should be. It first came to my attention with its bright red blooms at Christmas and when I walked over to it, it was literally buzzing with bees. I decided that I must have one and eventually sourced it from Sousa's Garden Center.

I quickly discovered that *Calliandra* is drought tolerant, fast growing with a spreading shape, and also reasonably wind tolerant. It's very showy with a multitude of blossoms between November to April. It can grow into a sizable tree in a sheltered location but most that I have seen are large shrub to small tree sized.



Wendy McLeod



Lisa Greene

The bright red fuzzy "flowers" are actually made up of stamens and can grow to 3 inches or larger. The powder puffs are long-lasting and will cover the tree from Christmas to April. They bloom sequentially up the long drooping branches. It's also interesting to see that the compound leaves fold up at night.

Calliandra haematocephala originates in Bolivia and prefers a tropical or subtropical climate. It was classed as a member of the pea family and the seeds do look very much like long pea pods. It is currently in the Mimosa family. Propagation is by seed, air layering and cuttings. I have not had good luck with cutting and now just buy the plant at Sousa's in a 1 gallon pot.

There are some good examples of the Red Powder Puff around Hamilton – one at the NE corner of Victoria Park, another at the SW side of the harbour walk at PLV Park. They are just starting to come into bloom now and will be in full bloom in January. I can highly recommend this hardy, fast growing shrub which is a stunner in your garden over the winter months.

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FROM THE PRESIDENT:

Jennifer Flood

The 70 for 70 Queen's Canopy project grew a life of its own. Originally envisaged as the planting of 2 or 3 cedars at Government House, it turned into a restoration woodland! Thanks to Alison Copeland who, with Jacob Hawkins, as project managers, successfully oversaw the planting of over 70 endemic and native trees at Government House, that replaced a tangle of invasives such as Mexican Pepper and Chinese Fan Palm.



Melanie Burrows with Cedarbridge students

A. Copeland

A number of volunteers gave trees, The Garden Club of Bermuda provided financial support, volunteers of all ages including HE The Governor and her children turned out to help with the planting. Alison's guidance and support throughout ensured the success of this project. Hope you all saw the coverage in both Bernews and the Royal Gazette. Many thanks to Felicity Holmes and family (her grandchildren) for visiting Nonsuch and securing over 100 olivewood seedlings that they have continued to carefully nurture for future planting.

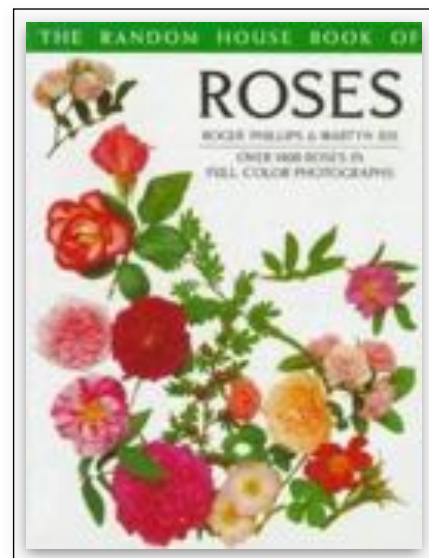
Next tree plantings will take place in 2022, at Walsingham, the original Bermuda site of the Queen's Green Canopy, and at Eve's Pond. We are presently working with Bermuda College to see if trees can be added there. Volunteers for these projects are welcome!

Roger Phillips 1932 - 2021

Marijke Peterich

Roger Phillips died, aged 88, this week. In 1975 he began his life's work photographing plants in particular edible wild plants and mushrooms. He worked often with botanist Martin Rix. He published many books but became really well-known after the television series "The Quest for the Rose". Everyone then knew the red spectacted Roger.

The Rose Society invited him to Bermuda in 1995, where he gave a wonderful lecture on his adventures in China. This prompted George and me to follow in his footsteps and join an expedition organized by plant and mushrooms expert Piet Bakker, from the Netherlands, on a trip to China. We were 3 French, 2 Dutch botanists, 3 Bermudians (us and Molly White).



Roger Phillips gardened in Eccleston Square in London and you can still see there the roses and plants he collected from all over the world. He will be remembered for his very clear photographs of plants, which will allow you to identify them without difficulty.

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BURRS

George Peterich

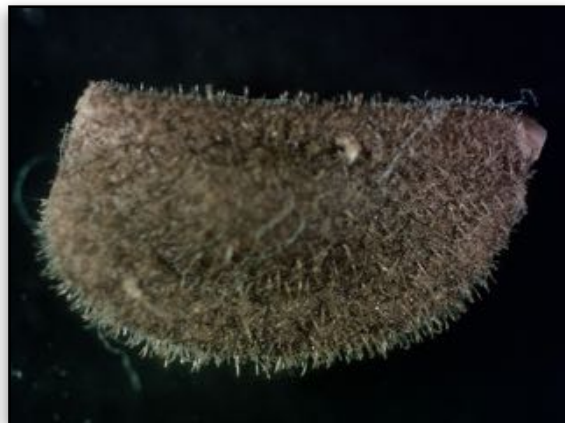
Thinking about the ways how plants spread their seeds, one wonders how such a diversity came about. It is hard to understand that this happened without being intended from the beginning. The evolution theory tells us that what we observe has come into being by a continuous stream of random events. This means that words like design and solution do not fit into the theory of evolution.

But there is another way to look at the marvels of nature: the pragmatic way. A good example would be burrs. Burrs are spread, away from the mother plant, by being attached to the fur of animals, and as we humans know, by getting attached to our clothes, even to our shoelaces.

Sometime in the 20th century, there was a man in Switzerland, who was bothered by burrs on his dog and his clothes and took a good look at them. His name is Georges de Mestral.

What he saw were of course the burrs of the European Burdock plant, *Arctium lappa*. The small hooks on the burrs can be clearly seen, and he had the idea, that it would be worthwhile to copy this, because he could imagine practical use of it as a fastener.

The thought of making two different materials, one cloth with tiny loops and another with tiny hooks, The loops were easy – cloth like that existed already, but the hooks took much longer to produce and had to be in large quantities on a strip of material. Finding a way to do that took many years, but he persisted and eventually succeeded. He named the new product Velcro (the name is composed from the French words *velours* and *crochet*, meaning



velvet and hook). The commercial success also took long. It is worth it to read the whole story - you can find it on the Internet. Only after it went to the

TRIVIUM 36 - About burrs

By George Peterich

The plants of the article about burrs are all in different families.

Burdock: Asteraceae

Burr Bush: Malvaceae

May Weed: Apiaceae, and

Trefoil: Fabaceae

Just another example of the marvels of evolution!

TRIVIUM 37 - Exotic fruit

By George Peterich

Have you ever tasted a nice ripe gooseberry? They are delicious, and if you know the taste, you'll know why the Chinese Gooseberry got its name, though it looks quite different.

If you don't know what a Chinese gooseberry is, that is because it was renamed by some smart marketing specialists in New Zealand who thought the fruit would sell much better with the name Kiwi fruit. The fruit had been produced in New Zealand for almost 50 years without much success, but the new name was a hit. The scientific name is *Actinidia deliciosa*.

If you look up gooseberry on the Internet you may come across the Cape Gooseberry, a totally unrelated fruit as revealed by its scientific name *Physalis peruviana*. It is of course from Peru, and not from the Cape (I wrote about that in a previous newsletter).



Painting of the real Gooseberry (*Ribes uva-crispa*) by the Dutch painter Adriaen Coorte, ca. 1700

VARNISH TREE: *Koelreuteria paniculata*, family Sapindaceae

Christine Watlington



Known as the Chinese Rain tree OR Shrimp Tree, native to Eastern Asia From Fiji, now distributed and grown in Central Europe as a street tree. (Introduced 1747). Late summer flowers, three lobed lantern-like seed pods each pod has a black seed (similar to balloon vine) very distinctive yellow pinkish cases turning bright salmon colour protecting the seed in Autumn time.

Leaflets serrated narrow ovate rich green turning yellow pinkish.

Note...has been used to cure conjunctivitis and also to make a pale yellow dye.

All parts of plant poisonous to cattle horses etc. Should not be planted near animal grazing.

Note the bark drips and fruit drops making a stain on walkways. Having said that, it is beautiful if planted in the right site/location.

It is hardy and durable not much affected by rain and storms.

The milky juice can be used for varnish or lacquer.

Most people first think the seed is a bract (modified leaf) but not so. A bract is a protection for a flower, sitting just below flowers such as one sees in Bougainvillea.

L. Greene

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Hodsdon House Visit - November 28, 2021

text and photos Marlie Powell

On a sunny Sunday, following many days of heavy rain, BBS members and friends were treated to a lovely tour at Hodsdon House. Wendy McLeod and her husband purchased the home on Harbour Road 5 years ago and have worked passionately renovating the home and converting the extensive grounds.

The vegetable garden or “vegport” utilizes raised beds supported by corrugated metal and a repurposed carport frame with netting. Fruit trees including several peach trees and a favourite lime tree, as well as endemics and a variety of ornamentals edge the front garden on the Harbour Road side. Masses of unwanted hedgerows were pulled up and a huge tree removed to increase usable space and let in more sunshine. This also allowed strong winds to gust across the property where Wendy has been careful to leave an open grassy area. There are Bermuda stone walls and planters, a screened-in orchid house, as well as a variety of bulbs. Wendy shared her “no dig” method of controlling weeds and penchant for plants to do “double duty” growing passion flower vines over the olivewoods and Juliette tomato vines on the peach trees.

The expansive, sloping north lawn is mostly grassy with mature palmettos and cedars rimming the water’s edge. A beehive is nestled into the landscape. Hodsdon House enjoys stunning views of Hamilton across the harbour.

We all enjoyed iced green tea and delicious homemade banana bread after the tour. Wendy sent us home with seeds, seedlings and fruit. A few of us purchased orchids—there are still some available!



It was a wonderful, informative tour. We were particularly impressed by Wendy’s boundless energy and attention to environmental concerns.

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Fresh Spring Rolls with Dipping Sauce

Vegan, Gluten-Free, Wheat-free ~ Choose local organic ingredients for best results

Prep Time = 15 minutes

Ingredients:

1 pkg Asian rice wrappers

1 avocado, sliced

1/2 c of a mixture of sliced or julienned fresh vegetables per wrapper. Suggest any favourites such as carrots, lettuce, spinach, beet leaves, red cabbage, cucumbers, sweet bell peppers, purslane, garlic chives, etc.

Method:

1. Prepare vegetables and place in separate small bowls
2. Place a single rice wrapper in shallow dish of water until softened
3. Lift soft wrapper out of water and place on cotton tea towel to absorb drips
4. Place small amount of avocado and variety of vegetables (about 1/2 c) on wrapper
5. Roll up, tucking ends in when about half rolled. Wrapper is a bit sticky and should stay together quite well.
6. Slice across or on the diagonal and stand up on end on serving dish.
7. Enjoy with dipping sauce.

Dipping Sauces:

Peanut Sauce – Mix together 3/4 c creamy peanut butter, 1/4 c rice vinegar, 1/3 c tamari/soy sauce, 3 tbsp honey, 1/2 tsp ground ginger, add water or coconut milk as needed

Hoisin Sauce – Mix together 1/2 c hoisin sauce, 4 tsp each of sugar, fresh lime juice, water

Makes a nice, nutritious family-style meal when fresh local vegetables are plentiful, and we might be looking for a lighter option during the holiday season. Also fun for children to make and pack for lunches (salad cream, dressing or sauce can be incorporated into roll instead of providing separate dipping sauce).

In a pinch any bottled salad dressings on hand will work. Be sure to finely slice or shred harder vegetables like carrots so they don't puncture the wrapper. If avocado is not available, wrapper will still work. The variations are endless!

Contributed by Marlie & Jocelyn Powell, Vegan/Vegetarian chefs at Kingston House B&B
KingstonHouse@BBBermuda.com

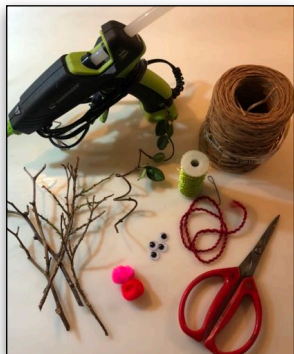


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Children's Corner

text and photos by Felicity Holmes

You can make lots of things just from twigs! Here's how to make a Twig Reindeer



What you need:

Go for a walk, collect 2 small twigs that look like antlers and 1 piece of vine

Glue gun or craft glue

String

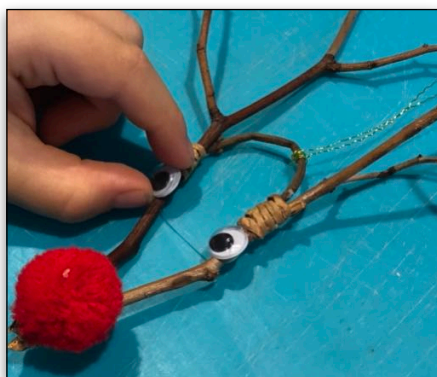
Wiggle eyes

Small red pompom or button for nose



Glue 2 twigs ends so they look like a V. Wrap with string, Then attach the curved vine further up the stem the same way.

Glue on the pompom nose and eyes. Tie on wire, wool or ribbon to make a hanger. Hang and enjoy!



Tree Tales Contest winners!

Marlie Powell

Arthur Cooper was the top winner in our 20/21 Botanical Gardens Tree Tales contest. He submitted a detailed answer to the question about what things can be made from the Bermuda Palmetto. He read his answer to the members at our AGM and did a little Q&A. His prize was a gift certificate, potted succulent and junior membership. Other prize winners were Juliette and Charlie Law, who also received memberships and potted succulents.



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