

WEEKLY UPDATE – JULY 2 – 9, 2017

“Fair was the morn today, the blossom’s scent
Floated across the fresh grass, and the bees
With low vexed song from rose to lily went...”

William Morris (1834-1896), *The Earthly Paradise*

Our fine weather is holding well and bringing more visitors to the garden. All of this sunshine made for an excellent and celebratory Canada Day long weekend; as a result, the “Weekly Update” is a few days late. There is very little to report.

1. My thanks to Marilyn G. for providing links for some of the items in the “Weekly Update” to appropriate sections on the Erica’s Notebook website.

Guide Goings On

1. Thursday, July 6 – Gardener’s Walk with Miguel Molina through the Canadian Heritage, Vegetable and Alma VanDusen Gardens.
Meet on the Plaza at 10:00am

Garden Goings On

1. ZimCarvings with Patrick Sephani and visiting artist Peter Kanaji
June 16 – September 30
Discovery Room and in the Garden
2. Works by Anna Milton
June 30 – September 27 in the Library
All are welcome to the Exhibition Opening on Saturday, July 8–2:00– 4:00pm

Garden Clippings

1. In the “Weekly Update” archives for 2015
July 10 -16 – *Silene*, Blue Coast redwood, Japanese Knotweed, a pernicious
Invasive

In the “Weekly Update” archives for 2016
July 9 – 16 – Hydrangeas

2. An article in the *Vancouver Sun* (Wednesday, June 28) entitled “B.C.’s official tree can be a red menace for workers” explored how Western redcedar dust, when inhaled over the years by the province’s forest industry workers, contributes to debilitating asthma. The dust contains a naturally occurring chemical called plicatic acid to which some people are allergic. Testing to find out whether an allergy exists in an individual is lengthy and uncomfortable; research is presently underway at UBC to find a simpler, easier blood test to

detect the asthma caused by the dust. The full article is in the front pocket of the Information Binder.

3. The fourth and final installment of Monty Don's "The Secret History of the British Garden" will air on Thursday, July 6 and explore "how the societal and economic shifts of the 20th century had a profound impact on gardening". After that, stay tuned for "Around the World in 80 Gardens".

The Mediterranean Garden

"... here's flowers for you,
Hot lavender, mints, savory, marjoram
The marigold that goes to bed with the sun,
And with him rises weeping; these are the flowers
Of middle summer."

William Shakespeare (1564-1616), *The Winter's Tale* (IV, iv)

Not all of these bloom in the Mediterranean Garden, but certainly the lavender and the mints do, along with thyme, rosemary, bay laurel, curry plants, yellow meadow rue, Sicilian honey garlic and a variety of sages including purple garden sage (*Salvia officinalis*), Jerusalem sage (*Phlomis fruticosa*) and the tall candelabrate stalks of sticky Jerusalem sage (*Phlomis russeliana*). These herbs are enjoying our spell of hot weather and brushing alongside them or stroking them releases their fragrances.

Other plants worth noting are the strawberry tree (*Arbutus unedo*) and the cardoons (*Cynara cardunculus*). Check the July 31-August 6, 2015 "Weekly Update" for more information.

The July, 2016 Plant Collection Records indicate that many varieties of rockroses grow in this area. Rockroses, in the Cistaceae family, are hardy, low-growing shrubs that inhabit dry, sunny habitats and grow well in poor soils. They renew well after wildfires.

Their flowers, usually short-lived, resemble old-fashioned single roses. They consist of 5 yellow, pink or white petals (sometimes 3). The foliage is also aromatic, making it a lovely complement to the herbs in this section. Look for the white blossoms of the laurel leaf rockrose (*Cistus laurifolius*) and the pale pink flowers of the hybrid *Cistus x skanbergii* as you walk along the path. They do well in coastal areas and are also deer resistant!

The Mediterranean Garden contains many examples of true *Cedrus*, including the Cedar of Lebanon (*Cedrus libani*), the blue Atlas cedar (*C. atlantica glauca*) and the Cyprus cedar (*C. brevifolia*) as well as some dwarf and weeping specimens. Because there is also a giant western redcedar just ahead on the path leading to the Southern Hemisphere Garden, this provides an excellent opportunity to point out that our beloved Western redcedar (*Thuja plicata*), B.C.'s provincial tree, is actually not a

cedar at all, but a member of the Cupressaceae family. The tree goes by many names including canoe cedar, Pacific red cedar, shingle wood and Arbor vitae or 'tree of life' as it certainly was for the First Nations people of the Pacific Northwest. For them, it was the all-in-one, go to total package, the cornerstone of aboriginal culture. All of its parts were used to serve people, birds and animals as homes and shelters, food sources, building materials sources, and as a medicine chest and first aid kit.

Although they are botanically different, both the Western redcedar and the Cedar of Lebanon share many similarities. Stay tuned for more details on this topic later in the month.

A huge Western redcedar once stood in Cathedral Grove on Vancouver Island. It was estimated to be over 700 years old, but, in 1972, a fire set by vandals destroyed this magnificent specimen. It now lies in the Giant's Grave, a self-dug grave created by the force of its own impact.

By the way, *The Winter's Tale* is one of this season's Bard on the Beach offerings.

As always, please send questions, comments, suggestions etc. to pkbuchanan@shaw.ca or write them down in the Information Binder. Your input is welcome and very much appreciated. Also don't forget to visit our excellent Library and www.ericanotebook.com for more information, inspiration and ideas.

Try to stay cool in these hot temperatures – hats, sunscreen, water!!

Have a great week of guiding!

“On long, serene midsummer days
Of ripening fruit and yellowed grain,
How sweetly, by dim woodland ways,
In tangled hedge or leafy lane,
Fair wild rose thickets, you unfold
Those pale pink stars with hearts of gold.”
Edgar Fawcett (1847-1904), “Wild Roses”