

WEEKLY UPDATE #7 – MAY 14 – MAY 21, 2017

The heavy rain of the past week has nearly finished the last of the cherry blossoms. What is new to see in the Garden during the coming week? Here are some plants to consider adding to your own selections. Many may be found in several other places as well as the ones mentioned.

PLANTS NOTED ON FRIDAY 12TH MAY, 2017

Wandering Tree

Chinese Honey Locust (*Gleditsia vestita*)

- This extremely spiky tree is no longer literally the 'high spot' of VanDusen. It has moved a few metres down the rise above the Stone Garden. It is now behind the Mount Fuji Fir (*Abies veitchii*) and is less dangerous to visitors.

Opening soon

Lilacs

- Several big lilac bushes are in Bed 140 (Below the Great Lawn Peony bed). Some of the lilacs in this bed are extremely fragrant and will be well worth a visit. Lilacs beside the Phyllis Bentall Garden steps are already open.

Laburnum

- The trees on the Laburnum Walk show buds of yellow flowers.

PawPaw (*Asimina triloba*)

- Bed 107A Eastern North America, by Doll's Eyes Baneberries. There are big buds alongside new leaves. PawPaw is North America's largest native fruit.

Alliums

- These bright, globular, ornamental onions are starting to burst open around the garden, notably the hundreds of *Allium hollandicum* 'Purple Sensation' in the beds around the Laburnum Walk.

Visible Now

Camas

- There are swathes of blue flowers across the 'grasses' mound (Suksdorf's large camas (*Camassia leichtlinii* ssp. *suksdorfii* 'Blauwe Donau')) and in the Garry Oak meadow (Leichtlin's camas, great camas (*Camassia leichtlinii*) – plus other camas).

Ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*)

- The bright red male cones make a striking contrast to the green needles. The one in Bed 55C, on the island at the Grotto end of the Black Garden, shows the male cones at head height behind the notice board.

Handkerchief or dove tree (*Davidia involucrata*)

- The dove tree at the bottom of the Rhododendron walk has a fine display of white bracts. There are more of these trees in the Garden. One is at the 'Maze' end of the Fern dell. Two more are in Bed 124, the bed facing the base of the waterfall. A *Davidia involucrata* var. *Vilmoriniana* is at the 'lower end' of this bed, on one side of the path leading up to the weeping ginkgo, just before the steps up to the 'dead man's fingers'.

Cobra Lily (*Arisaema griffithii*)

- If people look at the very wide hood of this cobra lily 'through' the tube/trunk, many see a remarkable resemblance to the head of an elephant! There are some of these at the base of Bed 123, on the corner opposite the *Davidia involucrata* var. *Vilmoriniana* in Bed 124 above. The 'head' is most striking in bright sunlight when the 'ears' are lit up.

Ferns

- Most ferns have fully unfurled and are at their best.
 - At the bottom of the Eastern North American Garden, are massed arrays of ostrich ferns. They appear as formidable army regiments.
 - On the Rhododendron Walk, they serve as a green backdrop to azaleas and other multi-coloured plants. Here the ferns are used as servants.
 - In the Fern Dell, there is a huge variety of intricately curved, dainty fronds, in many shades of green, brown and grey. Here the ferns are treated as individuals.

Still of Interest

Himalayan blue poppy (*Meconopsis betonicifolia*)

- More plants are now open in Bed 121E (Top of the Meconopsis Dell).

Scented Plants

- Korean Spice Viburnum (*Viburnum carlesii* 'Compactum')
By the big wooden 'Confidence' sculptures. Note the plants below the bush.
- Loderi Rhododendrons (*Rhododendron Loderii* 'King George', 'White', 'Pink Diamond', 'Superlative' and 'Venus').
Beds 90A, 90B, 90D (Behind Minotaur, around beds and along bark path).
- *Magnolia cavaleriei* var. *Platypetala*
Bed 48S Behind the bench facing the hydrangea collection on the Rhododendron Walk, near to the top of the Azalea Trail.

Events This Week

- Sat, May 20, 2017, 10 am - 4:30 pm
All British Field Meet ABFM 2017
Great Lawn - Note: Special pricing applies.¹
- Sat, May 20 and Sun, May 21, 2017, 10 am - 4:30 pm
Chinese Penjing Society of Canada - Exhibition and Sale
Floral Hall and Cedar Room - Note: Special pricing applies.²

Courses This Week³

- Wed, May 17, 2017, 6.30 - 9.00 pm
Grow Superfoods Anywhere (Claire Smith)
VanDusen Guides Classroom

Register online or call 604-718-5898 (Tue - Fri, 10 am - 4 pm)
Members receive 10% off the non-member price.

During Patti B's absence over the next few weeks, please send any comments, suggestions for future 'Weekly Update' topics, questions etc., to Malcolm:
malcolmjhunter@hotmail.co.uk

¹ <http://vandusengarden.org/events/abfm/>

² <http://vandusengarden.org/events/chinese-penjing-society-of-canada-exhibition-sale/>

³ For full details see: <http://vandusengarden.org/explore/events/#courses>