

WEEKLY UPDATE – OCTOBER 22 – 29, 2016

“October gave a party
The leaves by hundreds came –
The Chestnuts, Oaks and Maples,
And leaves of every name.
The sunshine spread a carpet
And everything was grand,
Miss Weather led the dancing,
Professor Wind the band.”

George Cooper (1840-1927), “October’s Party”

We didn’t “need a weatherman to know which way the wind blows” during last weekend’s raucous, noisy party! Besides closing the garden for the entire weekend, Friday’s wild wind brought down two massive branches off my Douglas fir, necessitating chainsaw action.

This will be the last “Weekly Update” of the regular 2016 guiding season although the Sunday guides will continue to offer tours during the winter and early spring when the garden reveals a quieter and more nuanced kind of beauty. If the number of visitors for whom both walking and driving guides provided tours is any indication, it has been another very successful season. There is very little to report.

1. Please remember to record your volunteer hours and submit them to Judy A.

There are many people to thank for making the 2016 guiding season so memorable.

1. Thanks to the gardeners for sharing their knowledge and expertise with us on the monthly garden walks and for being so willing to answer our many questions as we toured visitors around. That personal interaction adds so much to the visitor experience.
2. Thanks to all the guides who put so much energy, enthusiasm and expertise into the many guiding responsibilities: cart co-ordination, radio and cart maintenance, general maintenance and trolley repairs (the umbrella survived the season!), the researching and writing up of self-guided tours, organizing the gardeners’ walks and guide education presentations, and keeping track of our finances, to name a few of the tasks that kept us busy this past season, beyond the welcoming of visitors, and which contributed to the smooth running of the of the garden’s guide teams.
3. Thanks to all who sent along items for the “Weekly Update”. Your contributions, comments, questions and input were very much appreciated this past guiding season and will be welcomed even more next year. A special thanks to Malcolm H. who did such a wonderful job of producing the newsletter during July and much of August!

4. Thanks to Marilyn G. for her excellent work on the www.ericanotebook website. Lots of new material was added this year, making it an invaluable resource for guides.
5. Thanks to Liese G. and Angela W. who, during three years of joint editorship of the monthly *Gazette*, significantly expanded this publication by soliciting material from other writers as well as contributing their own items. We all benefitted a great deal from the inclusion of "Tidbits for Tours" and the summaries of the Education presentations. The *Gazette* will now be in the capable hands of Malcolm H. and maybe we can look forward to more of his very popular Mystery Plant segments.

If I have forgotten to acknowledge anyone, please accept my sincere apologies. Please let me know and I will respond appropriately in the first "WU" in 2017.

Guide Goings On

1. Thursday, November 10 – Guide Education Business Meeting
The speaker will be Gerry Gibbens, sharing "Stories From the Garden".
2. Thursday, December 8 - Guides Christmas Potluck
More details will be forthcoming from your captains.

Garden Goings On

1. The Signature of All Things – October 2-31 in the Discovery Room
An art exhibition inspired by Elizabeth Gilbert's botanical novel.
2. Dried Flower Arrangers' Show and Sale
Friday, October 28 – 1:00pm-4:00pm
Saturday, October 29 – 10:00am-4:00pm
Sunday, October 30 – 10:00am-4:00pm
HSBC Arrival Hall in the Visitor Center
3. Vancouver Mycological Society Annual Mushroom Show
Sunday, October 30 – 11:00am-4:00pm
Floral Hall and Cedar Room
Admission - \$3.00

Mushrooms are popping up everywhere, not only in the woodlands, but on urban lawns and boulevards as well. In the parking lot at VanDusen, the red *Amanita muscaria* of fairy tales and Smurfs cartoons are growing in amongst the rhododendrons. Because foraging for wild mushrooms such as chanterelles, porcini, pine mushrooms and morels has become increasingly popular, it is even more

important to be able to distinguish the tasty edible fungi from those that are toxic, especially in light of the recent death of a three-year-old toddler after the ingestion of *Amanita phalloides*, the “death cap” mushroom.

This week on the Sunshine Coast, the 8th Annual Sunshine Coast Mushroom Festival and the 17th Annual International Fungi & Fibre Symposium run back to back and feature foraging, cooking demonstrations, tastings, mushroom identification and the chemistry of dyeing. By the time you read this, it will be almost over, but there’s always next year!

Garden Clippings

1. In a footnote to Lyn Grants’ presentation, it is worth noting that Ferdinand Bauer had a brother, Franz (later known as Francis), whose career as a botanical artist was just as illustrious even though he never undertook any long sea voyages in search of new flora and fauna. He came to England in 1788 with his brother, where he was introduced to Sir Joseph Banks who secured him a job as the botanical illustrator at the Royal Botanic Garden at Kew. He remained there for the rest of his long life, eventually becoming a member of the Royal Society. He was officially appointed ‘Botanick Painter to His Majesty’, at that time, King George III. Curiously, no mention is made of Francis Bauer in Patrick O’Brian’s otherwise thorough and enlightening biography, *Joseph Banks: A Life*.

The two Bauer brothers also drew the majority of the plates for A. B. Lambert’s gorgeous book, *A description of the genus Pinus*, published in two volumes from 1803 to 1824. Besides detailed images of all things pine, it also includes larches, cedars and other members of the pine family.

Garden Gold and More!

“In autumn, don’t go to the jewelers to see gold; go to the parks.”
Mehmet Murat ildan (1965-present)

Even on the bleakest fall days here on the “wet” coast, the vibrant, multi-coloured foliage of our deciduous trees lights up streets and boulevards, parks and gardens. At VanDusen this past Thursday, the brilliant sunshine highlighted the spectacular golden leaves and needles of the trees’ autumn finery as the garden transitions into its winter garb. This was particularly evident in the Woodland Garden, the Eastern North American Garden and along the aptly named Autumn Stroll.

Most of the ginkgos are fully arrayed in their golden foliage and the needles of at least two of the bald cypresses have turned gold, their prelude to dropping. The leaves of the little Virginian witch hazels and witch alder (Hallowe’en trees?) are bright gold and, and like shining beacons, light the way along the mulched paths in

the ENAG. Even a cheeky little dandelion in the bee balm in the Heritage Rose Garden was taking part in this fall display, lifting its sunny head to the warm rays.

Not to be outdone, the bright red leaves of the sourwood tree and the red maples provided a vivid contrast to the garden's predominant golden tones. And, in a happy combination of gold and red, the leaves of the winged burning bush glowed in the sun. This is the most beautiful time in the garden and we should seize the opportunity to experience 'a season of peculiar and inexhaustible influence' as Jane Austen so eloquently described fall in *Persuasion*.

Enjoy a "spooktacular" Hallowe'en at home and here in the garden too where, in preparation for "Glow in the Garden" events, pallets of beautiful, bright orange pumpkins await their transformation into scary, ghoulish (or maybe not) creations.

And don't forget that Daylight Savings Time ends on November 6; fall back an hour!

Have a happy final week of guiding!!

"The sweet calm sunshine of October, now
Warms the low spot; upon its grassy mold
The purple oak-leaf falls; the birchen bough
Drops its bright spoil like arrow-heads of gold."
William Cullen Bryant (1794-1878), "October, 1866"