

## WEEKLY UPDATE – OCTOBER 1 – OCTOBER 8, 2016

“Chestnuts in their spiky cases, squashy medlars, pink sorbs and tart-tasting sorb apples – the autumn drives before it a profusion of modest fruits which one does not pick, but which fall into one’s hands, which wait patiently at the foot of the tree until man deigns to collect them.”

Colette (1873-1954), *Earthly Paradise*

Although sunny today (Thursday), fall is definitely in the air as the guiding season winds down. There is very little to report.

1. A visitor noted that the touchscreen in the Visitor Center needs to be updated as it presently reads “Welcome to Spring in the garden”!
2. The September Self-Guided Tour was popular; there were no copies left and the new October offering had not yet arrived.
3. The Franklin and medlar trees have flowers.
4. The *Begonia grandis* with their pink and white flowers along with the striking leaf colour, green on top and red underneath, are very beautiful right now.
5. The ginger plant has only one or two flowering spikes left.

### Guide Goings On

1. Thursday, October 6 – Gardener’s Walk with Cynthia Sayre, Curator of Collections at the garden with a focus on collection-related issues.
1. Thursday, October 13 – Guide/Education Business Meeting  
The speaker will be Lyn Grants, a teacher of History and Natural History and a UBC FOG. Her topic, with its intriguing title, will be “Where is New Holland? And Who was Ferdinand Bauer?”

### 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.  
The Opening Reception will be on October 2 from 1:00pm-4:00pm.

### Garden Clippings

1. Correction: Peter Wohlleben, the author of *The Hidden Life of Trees*, will be at the Writers’ Festival on Tuesday, October 18, **NOT** October 11.

2. The host for Peter Wohlleben's discussion will be John Vaillant, author of *The Golden Spruce*. Brian C. sends some additional information about the tree based on his personal experience.

"The Golden Spruce was a very large Sitka Spruce that grew on the north island in the Queen Charlotte Islands. The spruce had a very prominent colour mutation of gold. Fortunately, I had the opportunity to view the tree on the ground immediately across the river from where the tree stood and immediately above the tree *via* small aircraft. The viewing opportunity was provided while I was taking a geneticist to see the tree. Fortunately, our visit to the tree predated the occasion when a fellow, who apparently disliked the world, took it upon himself to fell the tree. If not for him, the tree would still happily exist.

It has been said that the tree could not be reproduced *via* rooted cutting. That is, in fact, not true. The tree has been successfully reproduced. The myth that the colour could not be reproduced was started by someone who got tired of providing cuttings for reproduction purposes. It was a very large tree, from which obtaining cuttings was difficult. Hence the creation of the myth."

3. Thank you to Malcolm H. who sent out two interesting articles which you can access at [www.bbc.com](http://www.bbc.com). The first one is entitled "Nobody can really tell you what a flower is" and the second one is "Meet the man on a mission to save carnivorous plants". Both articles make for interesting and informative reading and are accompanied by beautiful photographs.

### **Tree Highlight – *Dipteronia sinensis* – Chinese Money Maple**

Two weeks ago, I mentioned the garden's only specimen of *Dipteronia sinensis* in bed 121D by the Waterfall and suggested that the dense clusters of rounded samaras were worth pointing out to visitors. Although the VanDusen Seed Collectors sell the seeds on its website, this tree, itself, is somewhat overlooked.

*D. sinensis*, also commonly called the Chinese money maple and, in France, l'érable d'or et d'argent, is a deciduous flowering tree in the soapberry or Sapindaceae family. *Dipteronia* is a genus of two living and one fossil species. It takes its name from the Greek – "di" meaning "double" and "pteron" meaning "wing" or "feather". And each seed has two wings which are rounded and thin like coins. It is endemic to mainland China and it is related to the Acer genus.

It was discovered in China by Augustine Henry in 1888, but it wasn't until 1900 that Ernest H. "Chinese" Wilson sent samples back to the Veitch Nursery in England.

The leaves are pinnate and opposite; as an ornamental shrub or tree, it is notable for its interesting foliage and the visual display of the seeds in late summer and fall.

Fossils of the extinct species, *D. browni*, have been discovered in the Eocene Klondike Formation near the town of Republic in north-central Washington state and, in BC, in early Eocene sites in Driftwood Canyon Provincial Park in the Bulkley River Valley and, closer to home, in the McAbee Fossil Beds east of Cache Creek.

*D. sinensis* is currently on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.

Try to see it now in the garden as its loaded branches arch beautifully across the path; it is much more attractive and just as interesting as the Deadman's Fingers tree.

Comments, correction, questions etc. can be sent to [pkbuchanan@shaw.ca](mailto:pkbuchanan@shaw.ca)  
Also take a few minutes to check out [www.ericanotebook.com](http://www.ericanotebook.com) for lots of useful material to inform your guiding practice.

HAVE A GREAT WEEK OF GUIDING!!

"The scarlet of the maples can shake me like a cry  
Of bugles going by.  
And my lonely spirit thrills  
To see the frosty asters like smoke upon the hills."  
William Bliss Carmen (1861-1929), "A Vagabond's Song"