

the GAZETTE

BIRCHWOOD GARDEN CLUB

www.birchwoodgardenclub.org

CHARTERED 1931

October Topic: My Life in Other People's Gardens

Submitted by Tamara Hall

The Birchwood Garden Club will hold its October 2018 meeting on Wednesday, October 3 at 7:00 p.m. in the Whatcom Museum of History and Art. Our speaker for the evening will be Steve Lorton, nationally recognized gardening expert.

Steve brings his unique storytelling and experience at Sunset Magazine to his presentations. His tenure at Sunset began in 1972 and spans various positions from Staff Editor to NW Editor and Bureau Chief to his current recognition as Sunset's Ambassador.

In addition to his devotion to family and personal gardening pursuits, Steve keeps busy teaching classes on Creative Writing and Poetry at North Seattle Community College and his business, Lorton Communications.

He has been recognized for his important contributions and achievements by a number of organizations including Washington State's Master Gardener Program, the Washington Park Arboretum, and NHS as well as horticultural publications and television segments.

Steve is a treasure of knowledge and experience. We look forward to a very entertaining evening full of great gardening ideas and tips!

Vine Maple: Spectacular Fall Color

October is the prime time for the fiery display of the scarlet and tangerine foliage of our native vine maples (*Acer circinatum*). Every bit as decorative as Japanese maples, vine maples are hardier and have an added bonus of providing wildlife with food and shelter.

A wonderful small tree for the northwest garden, this durable native grows 10-15 feet. It has either single or multiple trunks and spreads wide, much like a vine. It likes moisture and will thrive in drought after established.



Flowers of wine-red and white form along the branches in the spring, contrasting with the red sheaths covering the yet-to-emerge leaves, giving a colorful show in the garden, especially along with the reddish new woody growth; soft green leaves follow.

In the fall, vine maples can take on a variety of vibrant color, from soft yellow in shady spots to eye-popping orange/red when sited in more sun.

Vine maple is an especially useful plant for smaller, urban gardens, even suitable for large containers. It achieves its mature size relatively quickly and can fill a niche in the woodland garden readily.

How About Fritillaries?

Fritillaries are less common spring-flowering bulbs that you plant in the fall as you would the more common daffodils and tulips. These bulbs grow well in moist soils so are especially well-suited to northwest gardens.

Perhaps the most common fritillary, one that you often can find at local garden stores, is the guinea hen flower (*Fritillaria meleagris*). It also is known as the checkered lily, due to the



purple and white checkered pattern of the flowers.

The checkered lily prefers cool, moist soil and can tolerate some wet soils. It prefers dappled shade but will tolerate sun. The bulbs are relatively small so need planting only three inches deep, and three inches or more apart.

It is most attractive when planted in groups of six or more. Above the very thin leaves, the flowers are single on stalks only about one foot high. They typically bloom profusely in early spring.

Fall Gardening Checklist

This month we welcome fall, celebrate the harvest, and gather pumpkins for Halloween. The days are shorter and nights are longer. There's lots to do in the garden before the start of our Northwest heavy rains and blustery winds.

October is the prime time for planting spring-flowering bulbs, such as tulips, daffodils, and hyacinths. It is also a good month to plant new trees and shrubs.

Prepare new beds now for planting next spring. The soil is easier to work in October and fall-prepared beds allow for earlier and easier planting in

spring. It is also a good time to replenish mulch in beds to provide winter protection for plants.

As frost browns perennial foliage, prune to the ground, except for mums, sedum, ornamental grasses, and plants that you want to leave for birds. When in doubt, let it be and prune at the end of winter before new growth appears.

Winterize aquatic gardens. Hardy water plants may remain in ponds as long as they don't freeze.

Rake or shred tree leaves, especially large ones like maple

and sycamore, to prevent them from matting down and smothering grass. You can slowly run over the leaves with a mulching mower, which chops them into small bits. These finely chopped leaves can be left on the lawn, where they will break down and add nutrients to the soil.

Now is an ideal time to start a compost pile if you don't already have one. The combination of spent plants from the garden, fallen leaves, and grass clippings from the final, shorter cut of the season make a perfect compost blend.

Welcome New Members

**Jim Doran, Susan and James Mancuso, Rob Olson,
Terry Selene, Judy Van Duzer, Carol Wilcox**

Snacks

This month's meeting snacks will be provided by Sandy Gurosko and Ira Penn.

Thank You

Plant of the Month: Harlequin Glorybower

(Clerodendrum trichotomum)

Prized for its lovely flowers and brightly colored fruit, Harlequin Glorybower is a deciduous large shrub or small tree of great ornamental interest. It is a wonderful addition to the late season garden when few other flowering shrubs offer color.

From midsummer to fall, large loose clusters of strongly fragrant white flowers, subtended by swallow-like pink calyces, are produced in the upper leaf axils. Grabbing the attention, they attract hummingbirds, butterflies, honeybees, and other pollinators.

The blossoms are followed by small metallic bright blue fruit adorned with constructing star-shaped red calyces. The fruit is attractive to fruit-eating birds such as cedar waxwings and robins.

The foliage of soft, ovate, dark green leaves, up to 5 inches long, is noted for its unique peanut this interesting tree make it glorious to grow (hence its common name Glorybower).



Growing a harlequin glorybower isn't difficult in USDA plant hardiness zones 7 through 11. It tolerates partial shade, but full sunlight brings out the most attractive, denser foliage and bigger flowers and berries. The plant adapts to well-drained soil,

but may be damaged if the ground is persistently soggy.

Harlequin glorybower can be aggressive and suckers generously, especially in cooler climates. Thus, care and control require frequent removal of suckers in spring or fall. It is virtually disease-free and pest-free.

The plant, which reaches heights of 10 to 15 feet, displays a loose, rather unkempt, rounded or oval shape. You can prune harlequin glorybower to a single trunk and train it to grow as a small tree, or allow it to grow more naturally as a shrub. The plant is also suitable for growing in a large container.

BGC DUES ARE NOW DUE!

If your name, address, phone number, or e-mail address has changed, please supply the correct information below. Otherwise, simply return this form with your dues payment (\$10 single or \$15 family) to: Birchwood Garden Club, P.O. Box 362, Bellingham, WA 98227-0362 or bring the form and payment to the next meeting.

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Please ensure that we have your "current" E-mail address!

Meeting Minutes

September 12, 2018

Submitted by Rhonda Rinn



President Ann Holland welcomed 47 members to the meeting. Minutes of the May 2018 meeting were approved.

At its annual meeting, the BGC Board decided that beginning at the September meeting, the order of the meeting would be changed. Our speakers will start first at 7:00, the meeting will follow with snacks and socializing last. This should help the speakers get out shortly after 8:00 and allow members to meet and socialize.

Our speaker tonight is Christina Pfeiffer, ISA Certified Arborist with over 35 yrs. Landscape management experience. Her information about pruning tips was very interesting and gave us inspiration for sprucing up our own gardens.

Old Business:

Thank you to all committee members for a successful year. Our annual plant sale in May netted the club \$1,633.97. Our club welcomed more members, gave more money to the community through donations and had enjoyable garden tours.

Sheri Lambert wanted to thank the person that suggested the Salmon Enhancement Association Center location as a tour. It was very informative and enjoyed by all. Please share with Sheri any locations/gardens that you think might be nice for members to tour next summer.

New Business:

The month of September is the month that club dues are due. Dues are \$10 for singles and \$15 for couples. Dues can be mailed to Jerry or paid directly to him tonight.

We will have a major library cleanup party this fall on Saturday, September 22nd from 9am to 12. A signup sheet was passed around. The cleanup will include pruning and moving of plants since the library wants us to open up the glass block wall to let more light into the stacks/walls. The parks department has been asked to provide help with debris removal. If you plan to help bring your tools of choice.

Thank you to Carol McBride and Sheri Lambert for our snacks this evening. As always, thank you to Sheri and Russ Lambert for their generous donation of coffee for our enjoyment.

The Birchwood Garden Club (BGC) is open to everyone in Whatcom and Skagit Counties who supports the objectives of the organization. BGC meets the first Wednesday of each month from September thru May. Annual membership is \$10 for an individual, \$15 for a family, due in September. Membership applications are available from the website: www.birchwoodgardenclub.org.

The Birchwood Garden Club Gazette is published monthly, September thru May, by the BGC. Articles, inquiries, letters to the editor, or other comments should be directed to the Editors, Ken and Stephanie Salzman, at the above address or via e-mail to: sasalzman@comcast.net

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CURRENT OFFICERS AND STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

President - Ann Holland
President Elect - Patti Salotti
Treasurer - Jerry McLean
Secretary - Rhonda Rinn
Garden Tours – Sheri Lambert & Carol McBride
Historian – Violet Hayes
Hospitality – Carol McBride
Library/Museum Gardens – Nancy McMasters
Membership – Judy Lewis
Newsletter – Ken & Stephanie Salzman
Plant Sale – Cheryl Haak
Programs – Tamara Hall
Publicity – Susan Metcalfe
Silent Auction – Sandy Gurosko
Sunshine – Cheryl Haak
Webmaster – Tom Sparks