



**Fredericton Botanic Garden
Association Newsletter**

**Bulletin du Jardin botanique
de Fredericton**

Vol 28 No 1

Spring 2016

We are comfortably into the New Year, the days are getting longer and the seed catalogues are arriving. At the Fredericton Botanic Garden planning is underway for our annual Spring Fair, Plant Sale and Raffle; some plant and seed orders are already placed.

The Annual General Meeting, this year on Saturday February 20, is also an important date in our calendar. This is the opportunity for the board of trustees to report to the membership and for you to elect a new board. It is also one of the opportunities for you as a member to have your say in how you would like to see us move forward in the goal of developing the Garden. I hope you will be able to join us – your participation is important.

Following the business meeting, member Steve Stehouwer, an expert on everything to do with seeds, is going to share some of his knowledge with us in a presentation on “The Hidden World of Seeds” – in describing the various ways seeds get from the plant to the seed package, Steve can be relied on to surprise us with his insights. Last year our silent auction was a great success and it returns with a range of valuable items and services for you to bid on. If you wish to submit an item to the auction please contact us (details elsewhere in this Newsletter). And to sustain us during the afternoon there will be some refreshments.

The meeting should be an exciting and upbeat event to formally start our new year. I look forward to seeing many of you there.

Richard Tarn
Chair, Board of Directors

Annual General Meeting

Silent Auction

Speaker: Steve Stehouwer

The Hidden World of Seeds

Saturday, February 20, 1:00 pm

Unitarian Fellowship, 874 York Street

Talk in the Garden

Thursday, February 18, 7:00 pm

Fredericton Botanic Garden Resource Centre

10 Cameron Court

History Blossoms:

Some Choice Heritage Clippings

from New Brunswick's Archival Collections

Speaker: Joanna Aiton Kerr

Seedy Saturday

With Steve Stehouwer

Saturday, March 12, 1:00 – 3:00 pm

FBGA Resource Centre, Cameron Court

Talk in the Garden

Thursday, March 17, 7:00 pm

Fredericton Botanic Garden Resource Centre

10 Cameron Court

Urban Farming: Indoor Worm Farming

Speaker: Gisele Belyea

Talk in the Garden

Thursday, April 21, 7:00 pm

Fredericton Botanic Garden Resource Centre

10 Cameron Court

All About Rhubarb!

Speakers: George Scott and Marg Routledge

Spring Fair and Plant Sale

Entrance Garden

Sunday, May 29, noon – 3:30 pm



Science in the Garden

What's in a (Latin) name?

By Steve Heard (Professor, Biology, UNB).

Our Garden has hundreds of plant species – many planted, and many more growing wild. That's just the tip of the botanical iceberg though – there are about 400,000 plant species on Earth. Keeping track of these is a big challenge, and of course the first step is to give them all names.

Like all organisms, plants have two sets of names – “common” names and “scientific” (or “Latin”) names. Common names (sunflower, speedwell, daylily) are easy to use and often intuitive, but they're imprecise: it's routine for a plant species to carry several common names, and for a single name to be applied to several or even many species. Scientific names (*Helianthus annuus*, *Veronica spicata*, *Hemerocallis fulva*) exist to avoid that imprecision: each species has just one scientific name, and each name applies to just one species. That's why you'll hear botanists bandying these names about, and you'll see them on our signage, in gardening books, and in the scientific literature.

But non-scientists are often baffled by scientific names. They're unfamiliar, long, and often difficult to pronounce and spell (After 20 years working with the moth *Gnorimoschema gallaesolidaginis*, I still stumble over its name). But don't let that stop you from engaging with them, because a little investment in understanding a scientific name often returns a pleasant surprise. Once you dig into the etymology, you'll find scientific names can be fascinating and sometimes lyrical, and they can alert you to things about our plants you might not have noticed or known.

Scientific names are usually Greek or Latin in origin (and normally have spelling and grammar Latinized, which is why we call them “Latin” names even if their original roots are Greek or Sanskrit or Aleut). When a new species is formally described in the scientific literature, its discoverer coins a name and describes the reasoning behind it. Most scientific names refer to one of three things: a characteristic of the species being named, a place in which it lives, or a person the discoverer wishes to honour.

We have examples of all three in our Garden. For

plant characteristics, think of our daylilies: the genus *Hemerocallis* comes from Greek *hemera* (day) + *kallis* (beauty). *Rhododendron* means “rose tree”, and our coneflowers' genus name *Echinacea* refers to their flowers' spiny central disks (from *echinus* for sea urchin). For places, we have the lovely but underappreciated “weed” daisy fleabane: *Erigeron philadelphicus*. But my favourite name in the Garden might belong to our magnolias.

The genus *Magnolia* is named for the 17th century French botanist Pierre Magnol. He was medically trained, but in his soul a botanist, and he struggled against religious oppression (as a Protestant in Catholic France) to pursue a botanical career. Magnol was the first to organize known plants into groupings similar in ecology and anatomy (a full 50 years ahead of the much more famous Carl Linnaeus). In doing so, he started us down the road to our modern understanding of plant relationships: for example, petunias, tomatoes, and potatoes are together in the family Solanaceae; roses and apples in the Rosaceae; and daffodils and garlic in the Amaryllidaceae. This is handy for organizing and learning plant diversity, of course – but ultimately it's far more important than that. Although Magnol didn't know it (and would likely have had religious objections if he did), his organizational system was one of our first steps toward realizing that all plants and all life on Earth, have a common evolutionary origin and shared evolutionary history. It's that evolutionary history that accounts for our ability to organize them into genera, families, and so on – we



Magnolia blossoms CC0 via pixabay.com



group daffodils with garlic because they share features, and they share features because they're close kin that have diverged relatively recently; daffodils and hemlock trees, on the other hand, are much more distant relatives. This fact is the foundation of all modern biology, and every spring the blossoms on our *Magnolia* trees celebrate Magnol's contribution.

What's in a Latin name? Botany, geography, history; and above all, stories. Explore our Garden, and explore our Garden's names.



Bust of Pierre Magnol CC BY-SA 3.0
by Albertvillanovadelmoral via wikimedia.org

Silent Auction

As is the custom, we are asking members for donations to the silent auction.

We are looking for a diversity of interesting and enticing items that will generate much frenzied bidding. Since space is quite limited, we would appreciate quality items only.

If you can offer a service, that would be very welcome, or a more concrete item, please call Wendy Bourque @ 450-3904 or Nancy Beltrandi @ 459-8004.

Correction: The weight of the "Rhodo" sculpture is 10,000 lbs. An incorrect weight was given in the Winter 2015 Newsletter.

Seedy Saturday

With Steve Stehouwer
Saturday, March 12, 1:00 – 3:00 pm
FBGA Resource Centre,
10 Cameron Court (off Hanwell Road)

It's the time of year again when we start getting ready for the fast approaching growing season and we start to buy seeds and gardening supplies in preparation. With current times of fiscal restraint on all fronts, we are offering you an opportunity to save some of your hard earned money.

Seedy Saturday again will offer hundreds of interesting kinds of seed for free for an entry fee of only \$2.00.

There will be seeds donated by local vendors, fellow FBGA members and Steve Stehouwer's collection of personally collected seed. There will be seeds of annuals, perennials, alpine plants, house plants, vines, herbs and vegetables. Steve will also be offering a collection of pepper seeds, including some of the hottest ones on the planet.

Donations from members of either their own clean collected seed or some store bought packets are welcome to boost the selection. If you have any questions please contact Steve by phone at 457-1007 or by e-mail at annette.steve@rogers.com.

The Fredericton Botanic Garden Association Newsletter is published four times a year by the Fredericton Botanic Garden Association, Inc. The FBGA is a registered charitable organization for tax purposes.

The objectives of the FBGA are to guide the establishment of the Fredericton Botanic Garden and to foster an awareness and appreciation of plants.

To obtain information on membership and to become involved in FBGA activities please contact us: **506-452-9269 PO Box 57, Stn. A, Fredericton, NB E3B 4Y2 or fbga@nb.aibn.com**
Web: www.frederictonbotanicgarden.com

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