



Fredericton Botanic Garden Association Newsletter

Bulletin du Jardin Botanique de Fredericton

Vol 20 No 2

Spring 2008

President's Message

Jacques Paynter

Hi to all and I hope you will enjoy this Spring edition of the FBGA newsletter. As incoming President my first order of business is to extend a hearty thanks to Bill Seabrook for his many effective years at the helm that oversaw some significant advances in the scope, vision and physical character of the garden. Fortunately Bill will continue his association with the Board and the Garden for several years to come. Thanks also to "retiring" Board members George Bastin and Carmen Stuart. A warm welcome to incoming Board members Vice-President Aaron Savage and Valerie Hillier.

Last year culminated in the formal ceremony to open the Entrance Garden at the Prospect Street parking lot. This well-attended event served to initiate awareness regarding the Garden's development master plan and heighten public knowledge of FBGA activities. The Garden's Honourary Patron, Lieutenant Governor Herménégilde Chiasson, delivered the key note address and other dignitaries present included City Councillors, MPs, provincial Cabinet Ministers and MLAs. The event marked the generous donation of the Fredericton Community Foundation, which allowed the Entrance Garden to become a reality.

After a prodigious winter the blanket of snow on the Garden has finally melted and thoughts and efforts are turning to the tasks for the year ahead. The Board has approved many plans for physical work to be carried out this summer, including our major initiatives: the Memorial Grove and the Rose Garden.

In January we initiated a capital fund raising campaign with the ambitious goal of raising \$1.5 million over the next five years. The intent is to generate sufficient monies to support the Garden's master plan implementation as well as establish an endowment fund that would provide for ongoing operations and maintenance. We have enlisted the assistance of GO-2 Solutions Inc. to focus on leadership contributions and naming opportunities.

So, come take a walk in the garden or participate in our many activities, including the Plant Sale, Treasured Garden Tours, Talks in the Garden and other fun and informative seminars.



Site Development Committee

Richard Tarn

Summer in the Garden

Most plants and shrubs in the Garden appear to have survived the winter in great condition. With no frost in the ground there is no delay as everything begins to grow again.

This promises to be an active season. It is year one in a planned five year development of the Rose Garden. The first task is the review and updating of the construction drawings prepared in 1997. Once that is complete we will know how much on-site work should be accomplished this year. Plans are also in preparation to complete the landscaping of the area around the large pond. This will include new plantings and changes to existing plantings to create a better

integration of the features of this area. Also, plantings are being planned around the holding pond below the Entrance Garden to introduce colour and draw visitors on to the rest of the Garden.

Two students, Hillary Waterhouse and Stephen Gillis, have been hired by the Association to work in the Garden this summer with City employee Jamie Adamson. When you see them, please speak with them and welcome them into the Botanic Garden family. They will start by cleaning and tidying up the Garden after the winter, and carrying out whatever repair and maintenance is required on paths, beds, lawns and waterways.

Volunteer activities

Members are again invited to volunteer their time to help in the Botanic Garden on Wednesday evenings in June. There will be work to do in several parts of the Garden and information will be provided on plants and their management. Details will be provided to members by e-mail and on the FBGA website at the end of May.

Events in the Garden

**20th Anniversary Plant Sale
and Raffle
May 25**

12:00 noon to 4:00 pm
Boyce Farmers Market,
George St.

**Treasured Garden Tour
July 5**



Membership

FBGA Membership committee
Nancy Beltrandi, Janis Boston, and
Lucy Dyer

Spring gardening season is finally here! When shopping for garden supplies, seeds or plants do not forget to ask for your 10% discount (as a member of FBGA) before a purchase is rung up at participating garden supply outlets, such as Capital Landscape, Cornhill Nursery, Co-op Country Store, Currie's Greenhouses, Green Village, Kent Garden Centre, Scott's, and Wetmore's. We would like to express our sincere appreciation to these suppliers who have made your membership more valuable. We have approached another garden supply outlet about a discount— check at the Membership booth at the plant sale for an update.

The Membership Committee welcomes two new members - Linda Glassford and Deolinda Cardoso who have recently joined. Come to the Membership Booth at the Plant Sale and meet us.

We are planning to set up our "Botanic Boutique" at the Plant Sale, and will have some garden-related items for sale - some at reduced prices. We have a good stock of forest green T-shirts with the Garden's logo in a range of sizes up to XXXL - get yours this spring. Lapel pins were introduced some years ago, and will be available again this year. If you do not yet have one, be sure to look at them. We have some attractive gardeners' utility belts, colourful tote bags, some note cards based on beautiful garden photographs, and more. Come and browse our "Botanic Boutique" while you are at the Plant Sale.

And do not forget that the Plant Sale is a convenient time to renew your membership for an additional year. Visit our Membership Booth. Please consider giving a friend a gift membership this spring.



Designing with Grasses

Brian Parker

The April 24 "Talks in the Garden" drew a crowd of several hundred in a lively discussion about grasses in general and on the varieties selected for the Plant Sale. In response to that lecture I was asked to write something for this newsletter and after some thought decided that a focus on designing with grasses would be most appropriate. The following is a very brief outline of things to remember when incorporating grasses into your landscape.

A little background.

Grasses are a diverse group of plants (monocots) that inhabit just about every type of environment except the deepest shade of the forest. One has only to look at images of grasses in their natural environment to draw inspiration for designing with grasses in the home landscape. Some of the most popular grass species used in the landscape include; Miscanthus, Calamagrostis, Fescue and Elymus. Each species has a number of varieties selected, usually differing in size and colour. Other grasses used in the landscape, though some perhaps to a lesser degree in our area include; Bambusa, Deschampsia, Heliotrichon and Sesleria...to name a few. Often included in discussions on true grasses are the grass look-a-likes such as Carex and Sedge, Juncaceae and Cyperaceae respectively.

One item you may notice as you review various grass catalogues is that grasses are divided into the following general categories, based on growth habit and form. Grasses are defined as either warm season or cool season plants and are either clumping or running in habit. Combine those qualities with being either perennial or annual and you can see where some research helps to make the correct choice. Be aware also that what is often noted as a perennial species is just that, in Florida...in northern climes many perennial species are just not hardy and function as short lived perennials or annuals. Fountain and Pampas grasses will act like this.

The Grasses

When you decide to include grasses into your landscape the first decision to make is where you want to put them. Research grass varieties to understand their growing requirements, do they prefer sun or shade, cool or warm, wet or dry, and what type of soil suits them best? Very generally, most grasses seem to adapt quite well to the typical residential environment and actually seem to tolerate a fair degree of extremes when it comes to the above conditions. The most important item to remember is that the initial establishment period is the most difficult for the plants. Pot grown plants should have the roots fill the pot and the entire pot contents should come out with the grass. The grasses available at the Plant Sale will be either field grown divisions or plugs. Potted up for the sale, they would be best served if left in the pots until the end of summer or until the roots fill the pot, and then planted in the fall.

The following "grasses" are those selected for the sale

- Achnatherum calamagrostis
- Calamagrostis x acutiflora 'Avalanche'
- Carex flagellifera
- Deschampsia cespitosa 'Goldtau'
- Deschampsia cespitosa 'Northern Lights'
- Elymus magellanicus
- Festuca mairei
- Festuca idahoensis 'Siskiyou Blue'
- Helictotrichon sempervirens
- Juncus effusus 'Goldstrike'
- Sesleria heufleriana

All the above grasses are cool season, clumping varieties. In designing with grasses three simple characteristics will allow you to make decisions on where and how to place your grasses.

Size, Form and Colour

The basic tools you will work with when locating your grasses are their size, form and colour. Those attributes will allow you to make decisions on the location of your grasses in relation to their neighbouring plants. Large, tall grasses are often used as specimens, either as the backdrop to other varieties



or front and centre as a focal point to a bed. A general rule of thumb is that for a specimen, one or three plants be used. Odd number plants are the rule and once you start planting five, seven etc. you are leaving the realm of specimen and getting into mass planting.

The following example of **Spear Grass**, *Achnatherum calamagrostis*, shows a small grouping, probably three, acting as a focal point in a mixed bed. The ultimate 100 cm height allows this grass to be used at the rear of smaller beds or as shown as a focal point for the mid to front of a bed. In this example an even larger grass is behind the Spear Grass.



Spear Grass



Avalanche Variegated Feather Reed Grass

Avalanche Variegated Feather Reed Grass, *Calamagrostis x acutiflora* 'Avalanche' is a striking, vertically variegated grass that can be used as a specimen or for mass planting. A mature height of 130 cm allows 'Avalanche' to be used at the back of a large bed or as a backdrop for shrubs or perennials.

Weeping Brown Sedge, *Carex flagellifera*, shows both distinct form and colour with its mop headed, brown growth. Due to its relatively small stature, 75 cm mature height, this is a plant that deserves to be at the front of the border. It could be used as either a specimen (or specimen group) or as a massed planting or edging.



Weeping Brown Sedge

Gold Dew Tufted Hair Grass, *Deschampsia cespitosa* 'Goldtau' is a small, mounding grass that would be best displayed as a mass planting or as a single specimen in a small garden. With a clump height of 60 cm matched by an equal height at the flowering stage, Tufted Hair Grass offers a fine textured display that would contrast well with light coloured and coarse textured foliage plants. The gold in this plant is the colour of the seed heads.



Gold Dew Tufted Hair Grass

Northern Lights Tufted Hair Grass, *Deschampsia cespitosa*, is a highly ornamental grass useful as a mass planting or edging. Similar to 'Goldtau' in form and size with the added dimension of variegated foliage.



Northern Lights Tufted Hair Grass

Blue Wheatgrass, *Elymus magellanicus*, is said to be one of the bluest of grasses and as such may create a location nightmare for the grower. Used as a specimen (in limited numbers) with coloured foliage plants, (purples, dark red or blue-greens), Blue Wheatgrass will be a magnet for the eyes. Use as a focal point near the front of the bed to draw the eye through the garden.



Blue Wheatgrass



Atlas Fescue, *Festuca mairei*, is the largest fescue and while slow to establish, this low maintenance specimen is worth the wait. One hundred and twenty-five cm in flower, the graceful form of the plant complements just about any garden style.



Atlas Fescue

Siskiyou Blue Idaho Blue, *Festuca idahoensis*, displays a very strong blue grey foliage that arches to the ground. Use as a small specimen group or individual with contrasting coloured foliage or textured plants. The fine texture allows larger textured foliage plants to be contrasted against it. Does well in poor soil and could be used effectively in a rock garden.



Siskiyou Blue Idaho Blue

Blue Oat Grass, *Helictotrichon sempervirens*, is an imposing sight with its wide spreading dense mound and 100 cm high flowers. Could be used as an edger or in mass plantings with plants of contrasting colour and texture.



Blue Oat Grass

Goldstrike Rush, *Juncus effusus* 'Goldstrike', is an option for the wet garden though the plant is highly adaptable to drier conditions. The foliage's bright gold colour and upright form provide a welcome bright spot in the perennial bed, look to combine with dark coloured foliage and flowers. Essentially evergreen, the flowers emerge from the side of the stems.



Goldstrike Rush

Blue-green Moor Grass, *Sesleria heufferiana*, is a large, 40-100 cm, plant with a blue grey colour and medium coarse texture. Early blooming, it combines well with spring bulbs. Use as an edger or small mass planting at the front or middle of a bed.



Blue-green Moor Grass

The Partners

Partners for grasses are many and as different as the user can imagine. One common theme for plant combinations is that many of the following list of plants are from the compositae family. Coneflower, Brown Eyed Susan, Yarrow, Joe Pye Weed are just a few of the plants that have been used with the above grasses. Experiment with your own choices but you should be safe with a selection of the following after a little research.

- Achillea,
- Allium sphaerocephalum,
- Aster,
- Artemesia,
- Astilbe,
- Bergenia,
- Boltonia asteroides 'Snowbank',
- C. muskingumensis 'Oehme',
- Calamagrostis epigejos,
- Calamagrostis 'Karl Foerster',
- Carex muskingumensis
- Centranthus rubra (Jupiter's Beard),
- Crambe cordifolia



Daylilies,
 Cotinus coggygia (purple smoke bush),
 Rosa glauca,
 Crocus,
 Erigeron,
 Eupatorium hyssopifolium,
 Evergreens,
 Heuchera,
 Iris,
 Juncus effusus 'Spiralis',
 Miscanthus purpurascens,
 Monarda,
 Narcissus,
 Nepeta,
 Penstemon,
 Phlox,
 Primula,
 Roses,
 Rudbeckia,
 Sedum,
 Sorghastrum nutans 'Indian Steel',
 Spodiopogon sibericus,
 Stachys,
 Veronicastrum
 Zauschneria,

As a last word...all the grasses selected are suitable for pot culture and a number of combinations could be possible between the different varieties. So be brave and try out a few grasses this year.....you might get hooked.



Thank you so much!

The FBGA 's tenth Silent Auction, along with the Annual General Meeting, was held at the Marysville Heritage Centre again this year on February 9, 2008. We were pleased to have Roger Smith as our guest speaker this year. The title of his presentation was "Nature Photography with Surprises". The "surprises" were very beautiful, as well as being interesting and intriguing.

We want to thank the many members and friends who attended. Your presence was greatly appreciated, and very valuable. It was nice to see many members of the community attending as well. This year we realized \$1,564.00 (plus what is still outstanding). This money will be used towards building our Garden.

We also want to thank all the people who donated the delicious refreshments and all those who provided such a great array of items for us to bid on. Each year seems to get better and better. Thank you very much to:

Jane and Bill Seabrook, Nancy Beltrandi, Mary Pugh, Genevieve Laloux, Jo Lynam, Pat Mason, Marie Wilcox, George and Annette Strunz, Graham Allen, Bill Walker, Juliet Davis, John and Joyce Astle, Avis Bruce, Katherine Crawford, Isabel and Dugald Richford, Carol Bray, Capital Credit Union, Betty Ponder, Gordon and Rose Burke, City of Fredericton, Jane Tarn, Mary Lou Beckett, Minnie Foss, Sacha and Dino Gatto, Norah Davidson-Wright, Angelica Gloss, Carol Wakeham, Rudy Stocek, George Flanders, Carol Peacock, Cecile Albert, Helen Rufelds, Caroline Atkinson, Charlie Fullarton, Diane Hanson, Brian Parker, Joyce Richardson, Minnie Foss, Wendy Bourque, Jack MacDougall, Marg Routledge, Betty Barker, Miriam Sifton, Bill Hall, Janet Phillips, Barb Cowan, and all those who remain anonymous but who gave generously. Thank you.

Last, but not least, a big thank you to the "Waterhouse Trio" who turned out to be a really dynamic "Duo". Thank you so much Rafael Khoury and Cameron MacLean for making your beautiful best of a difficult situation. We hope to have you back again and promise to give you our full attention and time.

Thank you Mary Pugh for providing your large pressed sparkling white table cloths again this year.

Thank you to, and thank you from the crew behind the scenes. Graham Allen, Wayne and Mary Lou Beckett, Nancy Beltrandi, Nadia Khoury, Bill and Jane Seabrook, and Carol Peacock.



BIOLOGY COURSE FOR UNB'S INTERSESSION 2008

VASCULAR PLANTS OF NEW BRUNSWICK (3cr.) BIOL 1846

Details:

- Sun., June 8 – Sat., June 14 (7 days – all day including most evenings), Fredericton campus, UNB.
- The course is offered through the College of Extended Learning <http://extend.unb.ca/>.
- Normal course fees will apply.
- Food and accommodation not included – see on campus summer housing options.
- Instructors: Gart Bishop (B and B Botanical) and Bev Benedict (Connell Memorial Herbarium - UNB).

Course Content:

- A mixture of lecture, field work and lab work will be involved.
- Visits will be made to at least six different habitats including: tolerant hardwood forest, bog, river/aquatic, mixed wood forest, coastal and disturbed.
- Emphasis will be placed on the vascular plants and plant families found in these typical NB habitats and on providing the tools and knowledge necessary for the identification of all vascular plants found in NB.

For more information contact:
 Bev Benedict 452-6205/453-4582 or
 email plants@unb.ca

Membership Privileges include:

Newsletters and advance notice by email of all events

10 % discount at:

**Capital Landscape and City Designers, Co-op Country Store (Northside),
 Corn Hill Nursery, Currie's Greenhouses, Green Village, Kent Garden Centre,
 Scott's Nursery, Wetmore's Landscaping, Sod and Nursery**



20th Anniversary Plant Sale

Ruth Muldrew Co-chair

It is hard to believe that a few short weeks ago, we were dealing with 15-foot snowbanks and it felt like Spring would never arrive. Now that bulbs and perennials are emerging from the ground, it is time to turn our attention to a Fredericton Spring tradition - the Botanic Garden Plant Sale. This is the 20th Anniversary of the plant sale. From humble beginnings in the parking lot at Odell Park, the sale has grown to one of the largest in Eastern Canada. This year's sale will be held on Sunday, May 25 at the Boyce Farmer's Market.

Throughout the winter and Spring, your Botanic Garden Plant Sale committee has been hard at work making plans and ordering feature plants. This year, we will have an outstanding selection of ornamental grasses, one of the hottest gardening trends for 2008. As well, there will be a collection of select perennials including iris, hosta, veronica, and a dozen new varieties of designer daylilies. New this year for the vegetable gardener is a selection of heritage tomatoes.

Although our feature plants are of great interest to plant sale patrons, our major source of plants is donations from our membership. We depend on your plant donations to make this sale a success. We are glad to accept thinnings and divisions from your gardens from now until the sale. Please consider getting your plants in early, so that they can be potted up and looking their best by May 25. We are more than glad to receive all your donations, but remember that information adds value! Colour, height, and especially cultivar name all allow us to present a plant as a higher value item and reap more rewards from your generous donations.

We really need these plants - your donations represent our largest revenue source at the sale. Please leave your plants by the Resource Centre greenhouse off Cameron Court.

The annual raffle is another part of our event that raises a significant sum of money for the Botanic Garden. By now you will have received a book of tickets for wonderful prizes. Once again Charlie Fullarton has crafted a white ash garden bench and chair for the first prize and Bill Seabrook has produced the second prize of a pair of cedar Adirondack chairs. We also have a special 20th Anniversary prize

of a special edition Bigfoot Mountain Bike, valued at \$1000.00. We encourage you to support the garden by selling these tickets to your friends and acquaintances. This year, tickets must be returned to us by Saturday, May 24. Tickets and cash can be dropped off at our table at the Boyce Farmers' Market each Saturdays in May.

First Prize



Second Prize



20th Anniversary prize of a special edition NORCO Bigfoot Mountain Bike

We need volunteers to help set up the market on Saturday, May 24 and to work the day of the sale at the market. This is a great opportunity to meet old friends or make new ones, and to talk gardening with other enthusiasts. On Saturday, help is needed from 2:00 pm onwards to set-up at the Market and for transporting the plants from the Resource Centre. Helpers are welcome to stay for the celebratory pizza party. On Sunday, the doors to the sale open at 12:00 noon. It is important that all of our volunteers arrive no later than 11:30 am. We need volunteers to help with sales, advise customers, carry plants, and staff the checkouts. We hope that those of you who have helped in previous years will be back and that new members will consider joining us.

The Fredericton Botanic Garden 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

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The Arthritis Society | La Société de l'arthrite

Included with the electronic version of the Newsletter is a brochure from the New Brunswick Arthritis Society on "Tips for Gardening with Arthritis".

The brochure may also be found on the resource page of our website www.frederictonbotanicgarden.com

or available upon request by notifying the FBGA Resource Center at 452-9269

