



Message from the President

Stephen Heard

It's springtime in the Garden – or at least, it will be soon. We hope you've been able to visit throughout the winter – although we do understand that not everyone is eager for the Garden at twenty below. But spring is different, right? As it warms up, you'll see more of your friends and neighbours in the Garden. When you visit, I suggest that you look for the signs of spring. But look further than just crocuses and robins, because watching for more subtle signs pays off. Later in this newsletter, you'll find a piece on one of those subtle signs: the inconspicuous flowers on many of our trees. There are others, though. Notice "sap fluxes": sap running from broken branches or cracks in trees that gives away the movement of sap inside. Look for the tunnels of voles and other animals under the snow, revealed as that snow melts. Finally: while you won't see it in the Garden, one final sign of spring is that we've planted the first seeds for the tomatoes, peppers, and herbs we'll offer for your own garden, at our Spring Plant Sale. More about that on pages 4-5.

As always, there's a lot going on, both in the Garden and behind the scenes. Read on for more, and get in touch any time to ask us how you can help.



Seedy Saturday

March 19, 1-4 pm
Fredericton Botanic Garden

Join us for Seedy Saturday March 19, 1-4 pm at the Resource Centre and Greenhouses, 10 Cameron Court.

- \$2 / family for members,
- \$5 / family for non-members
- Free to children/students

Hundreds of perennial seeds as well as annual, herb and vegetable seeds available. Everyone is invited to bring seeds to swap, but you do not have to bring seeds in order to attend.

Steve Stehouwer and other FBGA members will be available to answer your seed starting and garden questions.



FBGA Membership

A Garden membership provides ongoing support to the maintenance of the Fredericton Botanic Garden.

After 30 years with no increases, membership rates will be increasing May 1, 2022 by \$10 in each category.

- Individual \$30/year
- Senior/Student \$25/year
- Family \$45/year

In addition to free admission to most FBGA events and access to our Lending Library, members receive a 10% discount in the Garden Gift Shop, and a 10% discount at the following local garden centers:

- Co-Op Country Store (Northside)
- Corn Hill Nurseries
- Curries Greenhouses
- Kent Garden Center
- Scott's Nursery
- Wetmore's Nursery

Join or renew online at frederictonbotanicgarden.com/membership

Paper forms are also available from the link above and at the Resource Centre.

Gift memberships are also available.



Thank you for your support!

Science in the Garden

Look up! Important Roles for Some of our Earliest Spring Flowers

Steve Heard (Professor, Biology, UNB)

For most people, the word “flower” conjures up a mental image of a tulip, or a daisy, or a rhododendron, or a magnolia – something big, showy, and colourful. That’s my first mental picture too – so I always have to think twice, because not all flowers are like that. Lots of plants have small, inconspicuous flowers – grasses, for example, or notoriously, ragweed. These are some of our earliest blooming spring flowers – and we can see them, if we remember to look up, and closely.

Flowering trees, you see, aren’t just magnolias and cherries. *All* our broadleaf trees flower – it’s just that on most of them, the flowers are small, and it takes a close look to recognize the structures we’re familiar with from other flowers.



Male pussywillow flowers (the European *Salix caprea*) © T. Kebert CC BY-SA 3.0

Pussywillows, for instance, are the flowers of the willow *Salix discolor*; the first to appear are the male flowers, and after a while, yellow stamens protrude from the soft silvery fuzz, dropping pollen and giving away the game. But pussywillows are far from alone. Look



closely at a birch or oak catkins and you'll see it's a string of tiny flowers; and on maples or ashes, the first buds to burst produce not leaves but clusters of greenish to purplish flowers just a few millimetre across. Once you get used to recognizing these as flowers, you'll realize there are millions of them in each acre of woods and on every city block.

A rule of thumb biologists often use is that big, colourful flowers are showy because they need to attract their pollinators, while inconspicuous, greenish or brownish flowers indicate wind pollination. It's a pretty good rule, but like most rules of thumbs in our complex world, it misses some interesting angles. Some of our trees, like pussywillows, lean primarily on bees and flies to move their pollen. Most of the others are indeed wind pollinated, at least in part. That means they need to produce very large quantities of pollen (to the discomfort of allergy sufferers). But with all that pollen available, early in the spring when not much else is flowering, bees and flies come to the offered buffet. Tree pollen can be a critical resource that sustains bees early in the season. That's true both for honeybees (which aren't native to North America, but are a valuable form of agriculture) and – probably more importantly – for our wild bees. Many of the insects we see later in the season, working industriously to pollinate crops, gardens, and wild plants, couldn't be there without the nutritional boost from the early-spring blooms of maples and birches and more.

But it's not all just about the bees. As you would probably expect, when insects *collect* pollen, they also tend to *transfer* it from flower to flower. For some tree species, insect pollination can be a significant supplement to wind pollination– and the trees produce nectar to sweeten the deal for the insects. Red maple (*Acer rubrum*) flowers, for example, produce enough nectar to be noticeably sticky, and insect visitation plays a major role in their pollination. So are maples wind-pollinated or insect-pollinated? The answer is 'yes'; their biology resists being pigeonholed into either box. Our natural world is complicated, which is one reason it's so much fun to observe.



Male silver maple flowers (*Acer saccharinum*) © Fungus Guy CC BY-SA 3.0

So very soon, when spring comes to our area and buds begin to break, don't just look for crocuses and snowdrops. Look up, at our trees, and see some of the season's first flowers. Look closely, and see the stamens and pistils that produce and receive pollen. Look carefully, and see insects breaking their long winter fasts. Sure, crocuses are a welcome dash of colour as the snow recedes; but for me, a blooming maple is the real sign of spring.



Photo credit: Jim Goltz



2022 Plant Sale Preview

Our Spring Plant Sale will again begin with pre-orders followed by an in-person Plant Sale May 28-29 in front of the greenhouses at 10 Cameron Court. There will be a wonderful selection of perennials, herbs and vegetables, as well as some annuals and shrubs. A full list will be [available on our website](#) in mid-May. In the meantime, feast your eyes on these teasers.



Peach Lemonade Rose



Sorbet Peony



Jewel Desert Garnet Ice Plant



Lavender Hidcote Blue



Sedum lineare Sea Urchin



Bayberry

Pre-order/Pick Up Information

Orders will be accepted by:

- Email (fredbotanicgarden@gmail.com) from May 24 - May 25
- Phone (506-452-9269) from Tuesday, May 24, 9 am through Wednesday May 25, 4 pm

We'll process your order, then call or email you to arrange payment and a pickup time for you Thursday, May 26 or Friday, May 27.

In-person Plant Sale May 28-29

Resource Center/Greenhouses, 10 Cameron Court off Hanwell Rd.

- Saturday, May 28, 10 am—2 pm
- Sunday - May 29, 12 noon—4 pm





Snowwhite Cherry Tomatoes



Black Hungarian Peppers

Aunt Molly's Ground Cherries

Honey Tomatoes



Candy Stripe Creeping Phlox



Prince of Orange Crocosmia



September Charm Anemone



Lavender Blue Baby Daylily



Coneflowers in many colours

Help with the Plant Sale

The Plant Sale is the Garden's largest fundraiser of the year. Help make this year's sale a success! In addition to the week of the Plant Sale when many hands make light work, we need help with watering, potting up, and labeling plants in the days ahead. Please email fredbotanicgarden@gmail.com if you are able to assist.



Plant Sale Donations

We love receiving donations of plant divisions or starts from your garden. Please contact the Plant Sale Committee at fredbotanicgarden@gmail.com to arrange the best time to bring your plants to the greenhouses. Also, let us know if you are able to help divide or transport plants for others.



Getting to Know Your Board Members

Marg Routledge

By Tess Madigan



Marg Routledge has served as a Board Member for the Fredericton Botanic Garden Association since 2016. She is currently serving her 3rd term. I recently had the pleasure to chat with Marg about her life, adventures, passions and interests. Did you know that she has skated with Barbara Ann Scott, went to high school with

Paul Anka, danced with Chef Michael Smith and is fluent in Spanish?

Marg was born and raised in Ottawa. She embarked on her first solo trip at 17, boarding a train and a passenger ferry to begin her Bachelor of Science in Home Economics at Acadia University in Wolfville, NS. Little did she know that she would never return to live in the city she loved, the Nation's capital, but would come to call New Brunswick home.

In 1960, she accepted a job travelling throughout the province as the 4H Club Girls Work Supervisor for the NB Department of Agriculture (Home Economic Branch). It was at a 4H Rally where she met her husband, Mike, an agrologist who hailed from the farming community of New Jerusalem, NB. Together they raised 2 daughters and shared a very fulfilling life until his death in 1991.

In 1965, with 2 children under the age of 4 in tow, Marg and Mike moved to Guyana where they spent 2 years living amongst the Amerindians at Kumaka on the Moruka River - a full day's travel by train, road and numerous boats and ferries to the nearest city, Georgetown. Mike worked on a land development scheme for the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). Marg's face lights up as she recalls this adventure - "one of the bravest things she's ever done" - from living in a house built on 9-foot stilts to

avoid the snakes and wet conditions during the rainy seasons, to eating a life's worth of canned ham and Connor's Brothers' sardines, growing a lush garden with an abundance of produce including peanuts, bananas and black-eyed peas; even contracting hepatitis which required many months long convalescence.

The family returned to settle into an active life in Fredericton, NB, where they all became involved in figure skating. Marg coached, judged tests and competitions, and directed the summer skating school. Mike and Marg continued to grow herbs, flowers, vegetables and fruit trees. She maintains a love for tropical flowering plants from her time spent in the tropics.

In 1977 she went back to school for a Masters in Education, which she completed while living in Guatemala when Mike accepted a two-year (1978-80) assignment working on a rural-urban reconstruction project following the devastating 1976 earthquake. Again, Marg's face lights up as she recalls those years immersed in community work with the locals, and travelling around Guatemala especially to her favourite spot, Lake Atitlán.

Upon their return to Canada, Marg worked as an adult educator teaching a variety of courses including Food Science, gourmet cooking, and homemaker courses at both UNB and Community Colleges. Her Mike' was one of the founding members of the Fredericton Botanic Garden in 1989 and they enjoyed a couple of years visiting a number of Botanical Gardens in far away places. When asked which is her favourite, she says it is a toss up between the beautiful lush Royal Botanic Garden in Sydney, Australia and the tidy neatness of Alice Spring's Olive Pink Botanic Garden. Marg's daughter, Nancy, lives on a hobby farm in Queensland, Australia, which has led Marg to travel down under nine times so far.

After a number of years in the eighties and early nineties working as both a recipe developer and food stylist, Marg co-authored a popular Maritime cookbook,



New Maritimes Seasonal Cooking, with her long-time friend, Donna Young, in 1996. While serving on the Board of the Beaverbrook Art Gallery she produced another cookbook, *Openings, Recipes for Art*, a fundraiser to commemorate the BAG's 50-year anniversary in 2009.

Marg has been an active member of the Fredericton



Marg with her daughters, Cheryl and Nancy, at Mike's Memorial Bench

Botanic Garden since its conception. This has allowed her to share her lifelong passion and interest in plants and gardening, while simultaneously bringing Mike's vision of a beautiful, shared Botanic Garden space within the City of Fredericton closer to its reality. She has been a constant asset at plant sales, in recruiting new members and giving Talks in the Garden about herb gardens and cooking. After having served on various professional, community, sports and church boards, Marg decided to join the Fredericton Botanic Garden Board. She can not recommend volunteering enough to anyone who is in good health and has some time to share – in giving she says she has received much fulfillment.

Strategic Partners Grant

The Fredericton Botanic Garden Association has received a Strategic Partners Capital Grant from the City of Fredericton to purchase a vehicle, and trailer, and build a fenced area for storing the vehicle and trailer.



This will save hours that have been spent moving dirt, plants, and weeds by wheelbarrow

Fredericton Botanic Garden
Le Jardin Botanique de Fredericton

Pop Up Play
Cocou les curieux

Science East
Teenth Tuesdays
9:30-11:30 am
September 14 - May 17



Orchid Care: Tending to my Babies

John Welling

Anyone that knows me knows I love me some orchids! I got interested in them when I started crafting them from copper & tin (Botanicals). Needless to say, I have a few orchids in the house. These are some general care tips for your Phalaenopsis Orchids I have had luck with.

Most Phalaenopsis are easy to grow making them popular. You can usually find a good selection of Phalas at your local Nurseries, store garden centers, or chain grocery stores.



When happy they can be in bloom for months and months! Mine tend to bloom during the winter months which I don't mind at all.

I find that northeast to southeast exposure is best. No direct sun as they may burn, and keep away from drafts during the winter months. I've had very good luck with

watering and misting once a week. I water on Sundays and fertilize once a month (I do it the last Sunday of each month). I do not fertilize any orchid that is in bloom. I find it shortens the bloom time and I try not to mist the blooms when present as well.

Phalas also don't mind being root bound, but do require repotting about every 3 years or so if healthy. When I do this, I water them first, then loosen the roots, moss, and bark, and snip away any dead roots. Add in some new moss and bark with the old and repot in a slightly larger pot. I find the clay ones with the waterproof tray underneath work best.

After it's repotted I give it a good watering allowing the water to run out before putting it in the tray. I find this lessens the chance of shock.

Happy Orchiding!

Is that a thing? Can we make it a thing?

I added it to my dictionary just in case.

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The Fredericton Botanic Garden Association Newsletter is published by the Fredericton Botanic Garden Association, Inc. The FBGA is a registered charitable organization. The objectives of the FBGA are to guide the establishment of the Fredericton Botanic Garden and to foster an awareness and appreciation of plants. For information on membership and to become involved, please contact us:

fredbotanicgarden@gmail.com

(506) 452-9269
10 Cameron Court
Fredericton, NB E3B 2R9

<http://frederictonbotanicgarden.com>

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