

June in the Garden

Summer is here and every day in the garden is a real treat. June can be a rainy month but the colours are intensified on an overcast day. As you walk into the garden the pond at the entrance is ringed with colour as the early summer perennials are at their best. The iris, rodgersia, ornamental rhubarb, persicaria and primroses are all fighting for your attention.

Rosa × *odorata* ‘Mutabilis’ is on your right as you walk down the main path, Asian Way which circles the perimeter of the David C. Lam Asian Garden. This is a very carefree rose, pest and disease free and it will flower until winter. A little further along the path look up and you will see the beautiful *Rosa filipes*. It is a wonderful climber up to 10m with many white cup shaped flowers in each corymbs. Keep your eyes open for other rose species throughout the Asian Garden. As you continue, you will see more rodgersia and primula on both sides of the path. On the left side, *Iris chrysographes* is the deepest purple almost black bloom with a bright yellow splash of colour on each fall.

If you carry on through the Asian Garden look for our new trail signs. The trails are named for “plant hunters” who went to Asia and brought plants and seeds into cultivation in Europe. Most of the trails bear the same name as previously but some have new names.

There are several *Davidia involucrata* (handkerchief tree) in flower with their large white bracts. Keep following the path along the edge of the pond and beyond. There is one just before you turn right to go along the lower Asian Way. Further along the lower path you will find *Acer griseum* (paperbark maple) on your right and a few steps more brings you to a charming rose with small pink flowers all along its arching stems, *Rosa elegantula* ‘Persetosa’, that the British call the three penny bit rose.

The Food Garden is filling up as the plants put on lots of growth. The rhubarb seems to grow as you look at it. It is a great place to see how the

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different cultivars perform as each one is named on the white labels. Our volunteers harvest the produce once a week for the Salvation Army.

It is not quite a secret garden but the Physic Garden surrounded by the yew hedge *Taxus baccata* is hidden from view. This enclosed garden is always peaceful and a bowl of warmth on a cool day. It is at its peak in June with many of the perennials in bloom Achillea, delphinium, roses and Salvia. Take time to read the plant labels and sit on the benches

The Alpine Garden has many plants in flower with the bright yellow flowers of *Spartium junceum* (Figure 12) immediately catching your eye in the African section. The *Dierama sp.* (angels fishing wand) (Figure 13) has pale pink flowers that gently move in the breeze. Behind the *Dierama* are *Kniphofia sp.* (red hot poker) and *Moraea spathulata*, a tall yellow iris like flower. The bright orange red flowers nearby are *Phygelius aequalis* and *Phygelius capensis*. The hummingbirds seem to have trouble foraging from *Phygelius capensis* because the flowers point inward and the birds have trouble getting their beaks into the flower.

The lavender growing near the top of the African section is *Lavandula stoechas* with bracts that stick up like rabbit ears. The small shrubs with large papery white or pink flowers are *Cistus sp.*

The European section is ablaze with low mounds of pink from the short-lived perennial *Erinus alpinus* (alpine liverwort). Just behind the contorted hazel snug against the rocks in the European section is *Scilla peruviana* a native to the Mediterranean not Peru as the name suggests. The large flower head is cone shape and the small flowers are a beautiful blue with the buds at the centre almost black they are so dark.

When you come back through the tunnel end your walk by taking the path straight in front of you, then turning right over the little bridge. On your right is a large shrub *Neillia tibetica* with attractive 7cm racemes of pink flowers.



Photo: Daniel Mosquin

Figure 12. *Spartium junceum*. UBC Accession #32088-0526-1995.



Photo: Daniel Mosquin

Figure 13. *Dierama* sp. in the E.H. Lohbrunner Alpine Garden. UBC Accession #22062-0073-1987*.