



Bonner County Gardeners Association Education ~ Community Service ~ Camaraderie

February 2014

Please contribute to *The Garden Gate*. Informational articles, garden tips, announcements, and digital photos are welcome. For questions or comments please email lauriebrown54@gmail.com When emailing, please put "MG" in the subject line.



Kingdom: Plantae
Order: Fabales
Family: Fabaceae
Genus: *Lupinus*
Species: Over 200 (*Lupinus argenteus* is native to Bonner County)

Lupines are legumes. Legumes are host to Rhizobium bacteria that live in nodules attached to their roots. The bacteria absorb nitrogen gas from the air found in the surrounding soil and converts it into ammonium that the plants utilizes. In return, the plants share carbohydrates with the Rhizobium bacteria. Extra ammonium is shared with neighboring plants. This adaption, plus a deep tap root, allows lupines to tolerate harsh infertile soils and sites.

On May 18, 1980 Mount St. Helens volcano erupted and blanketed vast areas in deep volcanic ash. A lone Prairie Lupine, *Lupinus lepidus* var. *lobbii*, was the first plant to reappear on these devastated slopes. Due to the symbiotic relationship with Rhizobium bacteria, the Prairie lupine was able to produce enough nutrients to survive, produce seed that disperse with explosive force, create colonies, and begin the process of improving the surrounding soil. Once established these tough native wildflowers attract insects, herbivores, windblown organic debris, and eventually other plants.

Long ago, before the arrival of the white people, a Comanche maiden named She-Who-Is-Alone lived in Texas during a severe and prolonged drought. Swia (She-Who-Is-Alone) lost her whole family to the famine created by the drought. Without rain many more tribe members would be lost.

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President's Message

Lupines are one of my favorite flowering plants. The name lupine derives from the Latin word lupus which means *wolf-like*. The genus name *Lupinus* was selected because, before scientific research proved otherwise, it was commonly believed that lupine plants ravenously devoured the nutrients in the soil like a pack of wolves.

To encourage the return of the rains, each tribe member was asked to offer their most valued possession to the Great Spirit. Swia's most valued possession was a doll her grandmother made especially for her. The doll was made of softened buffalo skin with blue feathers woven into its hair.

Swia knew what she had to do and headed outside to the fire. She kissed her doll and chanted, "O Great Spirit, here is my doll. It is the only thing I have. It is very special. Please send the rain." Swia then dropped her doll into the blazing fire and watched until the last ember grew cold.

When Swia woke the next morning, she was greeted by the site of the surrounding landscape covered in rich blue flowers; the color of her doll's hair feathers. Everyone in the village rejoiced, for they knew this was a sign from the Great Spirit. Soon it started to rain, the drought ended, and Swia was honored for her sacrifice. Every spring, the Great Spirit covers this part of the world with beautiful blue flowers known as (Texas) bluebonnets, *Lupinus texensis*.

Bonner County enjoys a native lupine, *Lupinus argenteus* also known as Silvery Lupine. These attractive plants grow well in most soil types, preferring their feet dry to moderately moist. The violet/blue flowers bloom between May and July. These native beauties possess the same ability, as their other North American native cousins, to live in nutrient poor soils and difficult sites. They adapt well to wild flower gardens and areas left unmown.

Lupines are tough plants, yet their seedlings roots are very sensitive and easily damaged. When self-sown the plants do fine. The issue arises when transplanted from nursery containers. Their palmate shaped leaves collect shimmering drops of water at their centers after a watering from the sky or sprinkler. The flowers draw in a large variety of pollinators. Bumblebees are especially fond of these flowers.

In Europe, especially in the Mediterranean area, some types of lupines are grown for animal forage and also for human consumption. Our North American lupines, unlike their European cousins, contain toxic alkaloids that are dangerous and sometimes deadly to sheep and cattle, especially in the spring when the alkaloids are at their highest concentration.

Here at Our Place I planted a flat of hybrid Russell lupines many years ago. I allowed the plants to go

to seed. All these years later, I am surprised by the variety of flower colors produced from seeds many generations removed from the original plants. The lupines are a short-lived perennial in my gardens; 3 to 5 years on average. I took the following picture in 2011. As You can see, it was a very good lupine year!

A special bonus this month – the full Snow Moon fall on Valentine's Day! Jan



Lupinus argenteus Silver Lupin

February Gardening To Do List

From Backyard Gardeners located at:
http://www.backyardgardener.com/Gardening_Montzonesep01.html



Zone 3

- Order seeds
- Cut back on feeding houseplants (do not feed dormant houseplants)

- Water cymbidiums weekly until they bloom
- Sow seeds for tender perennials

Zone 4

- Order seeds
- Sow seeds indoors for hardy spring-blooming plants
- Cut back on feeding houseplants (do not feed dormant houseplants)
- Sow seeds for cool-weather vegetables
- Sow frost-tolerant perennials indoors

Zone 5

- Order seeds
- Sow seeds for hardy spring-blooming plants
- Cut back on feeding houseplants (do not feed dormant houseplants)
- Sow seeds for cool-weather vegetables
- Sow frost-tolerant perennials indoors



BCGA Membership Meeting February 5, 2013

Present: Ann Warwick, Gail Swan, Jon Bair, Howard Fennimore, Robert Baker, Butterfly Burke, Kathryn Chase, Bob Blair, Gray Henderson, Janae Dale, Penny Barton, Penny Goodman, Jan Wilfert,

Mikey Haven, Deborah Steffen, Barbara Pressler, Sandra Gevurtz, Jenna Bertus, and Patti Pietron.

President Jan Wilfert brought the meeting to order at 8:45 am. After welcoming new class member Robert Baker to the meeting, Jan presented flowers to Penny Goodman, for outstanding volunteer service. Howard Fennimore will receive a fitting gift for his service to the organization, as well.

A motion to accept the January minutes was made by Janae Dale, Bob Blair seconded. Motion passed.

Treasurer's Report: Current Balance: \$3760.66. Bob Blair, treasurer, had some concerns about the accuracy of his monthly report, due to entries added after the report had been posted. Gray Henderson made a motion that, for accurate reporting purposes, that the books be close on the last day of each month. Motion seconded by Janae Dale. Motion passed.

Founder Emeritus Status: Welcome Zoe Bolton to Founder Emeritus Status! Zoe was President and Chairperson overseeing the creation of the BCGA infrastructure during our transition from the University of Idaho to becoming an independent organization. A motion was proposed, seconded and passed to pronounce Zoe Bolton Founder Emeritus. This makes Zoe a member for life, with no fees or dues for membership or events.

Between Meetings: Thanks to Bob Blair for creating covers for the electronic cords in the office. Thanks to Penny Barton for purchasing an industrial strength hole punch. Need for hot plate was discussed. (Next day, Robert Baker donated one).

Bob Blair paid Meyer's Sport Tees for 15 more sets of BCGA logo transfers. Members may have one set of transfers for free. Subsequent transfers will cost \$15. The logo looks great on any garment or other item.

The Events Center has been reserved for our December 13, 2014 Holiday Party. The 2013 party had 51 attendees; 30 were members.

Phone books have been contacted with our new address. The phone books contacted were; Frontier, Hibu, The Local Pages, and Sandpoint Online.

Beanstalk Bench: The Art Commission viewed the proposed Beanstalk Bench model on 1-23-2014.

Approval by the Sandpoint Parks Department, the Arts Commission, and City Council is required for the project to move forward. All three voted yes. It is hoped that the bench will be installed at Farmin Park before the first Farmers Market on May 3.

May Garden Sale Event: Mikey Haven, chair. Tentative dates for this event are Friday and Saturday May 9th and 10th. This event will be held in the Bonner Mall Parking lot adjacent to Sears. Arrangements for indoor sales in case of inclement weather are being discussed. Members are urged to start plants for this event. Vegetable starts were the most popular items at last year's sale.

Home Horticulture Series: Janae Dale has heroically assembled an outstanding roster of eight classes for the spring series. The classes will begin in March. All are on Wednesday evenings from 6 to 8 pm.

Home and Garden Show: Ann Warwick, chair, announced the dates of the annual Panhandle Building Contractors Association Home and Garden Show—April 12 and 13. BCGA has a booth there in which we offer mini classes to the public. We will need volunteers to present on topics of interest to gardeners, and volunteers to man the booth at two hour intervals. Details are forthcoming.

Membership Course: Penny Barton has done a beautiful job of organizing the 2014 membership course. We have 11 new class members, and the course is progressing very well.

Beauty of a Beast: Thanks to Bob Blair, Howard Fennimore, Jenna and David Bertus, and John Dale, the BEAST is now residing at Bob Blair and Cindy Hayes' home. It is for sale for \$600. The shed is well built and water proof—make an offer and this Beauty of a Beast can be yours!

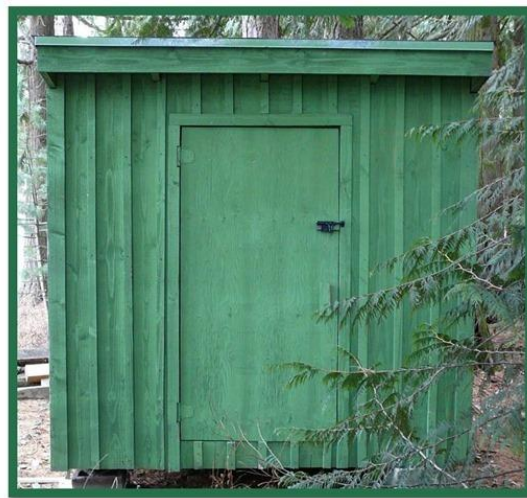
Potlucks: We had a good potluck and hike at Bob Blair and Cindy Hayes's home on January 25. The next potluck is planned for Saturday, February 22 at Deborah and Charlie Steffen's home. Anyone wishing to schedule a 2014 Potluck please contact Ann Warwick.

Office Space Use: The idea of subletting the office space was discussed. Due to a number of legal concerns, the decision was No.

Meeting adjourned @ 10:35 am

BCGA Garden Shed

For Sale
Beauty of a Beast
BCGA Gardening Shed
Built in 2005
By Don Childress, John Dale, and Ed Swan
Using Quality Materials
\$600.00 or Best Offer
dalejanae@gmail.com



Read about Beauty of a Beast's History **By Janae Dale**

Several years ago, when the BCMGA office was located at the Extension Office next to the Bonner County Fairgrounds, we had a small office space. Those members who worked in the plant clinic will recall how very small this space was! We had no room for storing materials we needed for our projects. Don Childress offered to build a shed for storage to be placed behind the building. Don, Ed Swan and John Dale got together and constructed the shed. The shed served us well, and when we moved our office to the Business Center, we took the shed with us.

Now that we have move into our new office at the Ponderay Events Center, we have lots of space for storage in the office itself and in the downstairs area behind the stairs. There is no space outside the Event Center building to put the shed , so the

decision was made to sell it. The asking price is \$600.00. If you are interested, please contact Janae at dalejanae@gmail.com

If you would like to the shed out up-close and personal, Bob Blair has graciously allowed us to store it at his place, at 330 East Bronx Road. Please call him first if you want to stop and take a look.



Lupin Russell hybrid 'Masterpiece'

BCGA T-shirts and More!

Get a BCGA logo on a shirt of your choice! It's easy! Go to Meyer's Sport-Tees T-shirt store in the Bonner Mall across from Penney's. You can purchase a shirt of your choice in the store, or take in your own garment. Ask them to put the BCGA logo on the garment. You can get a small one and a large one free of charge. If you wish to have more, please pay the BCGA \$10 for each additional set, but there is no charge for the first set. Decorate a long sleeved winter shirt for wearing now, or add it to a short sleeved or sleeveless garment. Spring is coming! Jan Wilfert has had a small one added to a square of fabric, and used the square to decorate her purse/tote. Be creative!

Fender's Blue Butterfly

Jan Wilfert sent me an interesting link that she came across while researching lupins. In the Willamette Valley Refuge Complex, Kincaid's lupin, an endangered species, is host to the equally endangered Fender's blue Butterfly. Go to http://www.fws.gov/refuges/mediatipsheet/May_2010/04.html to see how the refuge staff are trying to

make life easier for this tiny beauty and its host plant.

2014 Potluck Scheduling

Have you attended a BCGA potluck? They are a great opportunity to socialize with fellow members, to explore each other's garden ideas, and, of course, to eat good food. In the beginning, we had potlucks only during the growing season, so we could learn from one another's experiments and established gardening practices. After the first year, we started having potlucks during the fall and winter as well, with a bonfire or snowshoe hiking. Now, we generally have a potluck about once a month.

We are currently scheduling the potluck events for 2014. Bob Blair and Cindy Hayes hosted a snowshoe hike at their home in January, and Deborah and Charlie Steffen have a potluck scheduled for February 22. The rest of the year is blank, so far.

If you would like to host a potluck, please call or email Ann Warwick to discuss a date. It is best if we schedule potlucks several weeks in advance to allow everyone enough notice, and we will try to keep individual events a couple weeks apart to avoid confusion. If you have a particular month when you would like to show off your garden, seek group advice for improving some aspect of your landscape or just relax with friends in your own environment, look at your calendar and we can rough out a date. We'll schedule events as requests occur.

Don't be shy—we are not a critical bunch!



Janae Dale presents a Howard Fennimore basket to teacher Sarah Evans. Photo by Gray Henderson.

2014 Spring Home Horticulture Workshop Series
Registration Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

March 19 Starting Plants by Laurie Brown

March 26 Get to Know Your Soil by Gray Henderson

April 2 Insects in the Garden by Bob Wilson

April 9 Spring Extenders by Bonnie Pick

April 16 Cold Climate Composting by Ann Warwick & Janae Dale

April 30 Growing Tomatoes in Bonner County by Mikey Haven

May 7 Cooking With Spring Greens by Vicky Johnson

May 14 The Simple Herb Garden by Kit Cooley

Classes \$10 Each per Person

We would appreciate no children under 12

Please make checks payable & return to:

Bonner County Gardeners Association

401 Bonner Mall Way

Suite F

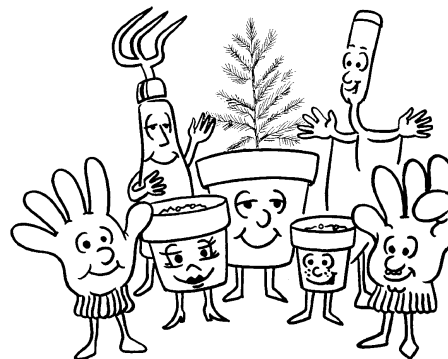
Ponderay, Idaho 83852

Or pay on-line with Pay-Pal

@ www.bcgardeners.org

**We are unable to provide credits, refunds
or transfers for any classes**

2014 Spring Home Horticulture
Workshop Series



Presented and Coordinated by
Bonner County Gardeners Association
Classes are held Wed eve's from 6pm – 8pm
at the Ponderay Event Center
401 Bonner Mall Way, Ste E, Ponderay, Idaho

Directions can be found at www.bcgardeners.org

Email inquiries to bcgardeners@gmail.com

Or call message line: 265-2070

Visit us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/bcgardeners>

Dates and Topics

March 19 Starting Plants (or Plant Parenthood) Presented by Laurie Brown

Start plants from seeds & cuttings, divisions, & layering; includes hard to start perennials, shrubs & trees & growing plants from stems, roots & even leaves

March 26 Get to Know Your Soil Presented by Gray Henderson

This class will examine how you can determine the type of soil in your garden &

how it's properties influence plant growth; you will learn how to use the Bonner County Soil Survey to determine the strengths & limitations of your soil; soil testing & interpretation of the results will be discussed

April 2 Insects in the Garden Presented by Bob Wilson

Not all insects you find in the garden are devouring your plants. Some are good & many are inconsequential. We will cover identification, biology & management of several garden insects

April 9 Spring Extenders Presented by Bonnie Pick

Tried & true stand-bys & some new ideas for an earlier start to your gardening season; Cold frames, greenhouses, winter sowing & starting seeds indoors; alternatives to spending a lot on seedlings

April 16 Cold Climate Composting Presented by Ann Warwick & Janae Dale

Learn the elements of composting, & how to produce valuable garden amendments from home & garden waste; step by step instructions for creating & maintaining bins or piles; discussion of worm bin composting included

April 30 Growing Tomatoes in Bonner County Presented by Mikey Haven

When to start seeds & transplant, how to prune, water & harvest; also, soil temps, how to protect, varieties & much more; receive 1 heirloom & 1 hybrid tomato start to take home & compare in your own garden

May 7 Cooking With Spring Greens Presented by Vicky Johnson

Learn exciting new ways to enjoy your early spring garden harvest: eat fresh, juicing, grilling, stir fry, baked, soups; as always, all recipes will be tasted & enjoyed in class

May 14 The Simple Herb Garden Presented by Kit Cooley

Growing your own herbs can be easy & rewarding; cultivate, harvest & preserve herbs for both culinary & medicinal use; explore a handful of plants that do well in N Idaho & some of the most popular for both food & medicine

***Directions to Event Center can be found at
www.bcgardeners.org***

Fees cover the cost of venue, publications, materials, and the support of non-profit activities of the Bonner County Gardeners Association.

We are unable to provide credits, refunds or transfers for any classes



Bonner County Gardeners Association

Classes are \$10 Each per Person

All classes will be held Wed eve's from 6 pm – 8 pm
at the Ponderay Event Center
401 Bonner Mall Way, Suite E, Ponderay, Idaho

ALL CLASSES WILL START PROMPTLY @ 6pm;
Check-in STARTS @ 5:30;
PLEASE BE ON TIME

Please check the classes you wish to attend and send with check to Bonner County Gardeners Association
401 Bonner Mall Way
Suite F
Ponderay, Id., 83852

You may also bring your registration form & check to this address

You can pay on-line with a credit card via "Pay-Pal at

www.bcgardeners.org