



Visit to Oslo Botanical Gardens

By Joan Andersen

We visited this wonderful place on a hot August day. Much of Norway had the hottest summer since 1947! There had been little or no rain all summer so many places in Norway were drought stressed. Norwegian summers usually include some rainy days so both plants and people are not used to this much heat. One of the side effects of such a hot summer was that all the plants bloomed earlier than usual.

This garden was the first scientific garden in Norway and was established over 200 years ago, in 1814. It's a huge place that was outside of the city when it was started. The city of Oslo has now surrounded it and the gardens are now a wonderful green space for all to enjoy. There is no admission fee for the gardens and lots of open space for children to run around and families to enjoy. Most people walk there or take Oslo's excellent public transportation.

The Botanical Gardens function as an Arboretum and there is a large collection of trees, shrubs and plants that are there for study and for people to enjoy. It is affiliated with the University of Oslo Natural History Museum, so their mission is research, education and plant conservation and making the public aware of plant diversity. Many of the plants are labeled and as a person who loves plants, I really liked that.

Before going to Norway, I checked online and found out that there is a free tour every Sunday afternoon. We joined the group and were so glad we did. Our tour guide was a dedicated volunteer who really knew her way around the

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Minnesota Seasons

By William Cook

You will be reading this in mid-winter, but as I write this it is November. However, it may be November but feels like mid-winter; there are several inches of snow on the ground, and the month is running ten degrees below average so far with several days around 20 degrees. But, this is happening before Thanksgiving, so do we consider this kind of weather autumn because it is November, or winter because of the temperatures? If you're willing to indulge me a bit, please follow me down the rabbit hole of my thoughts on the seasons here in Minnesota.

If you look up "winter" in the encyclopedia, you learn that it is the considered the coldest season of the year, and in the northern hemisphere it is judged to last from the winter solstice (December 21 or 22, when the days are longest) to the spring equinox (March 20 or 21, 12 hours each of day and night). Similarly, spring is thought to last from then to June 21 or 22 (the longest day), with summer following from then until the autumn equinox (September 20 or 21). Then autumn must last from late September until things start over again around December 22. These are the astronomical seasons, as defined by the geometry of the solar system and the procession of the earth around the sun.

But hold on a minute – do those dates really reflect the seasons as we experience them? This is not a novel thought; meteorologists and climatologists have thought about this for years, and concluded that there should be an adjusted meteorological definition of the seasons. Meteorological seasons are also three months long, but the timing is a bit different: winter is considered to be December 1 through February 28 (or 29), spring is March through May, summer June through August, and autumn September through November.

Intuitively, this fits better with the climate I know. January is usually the coldest month of the year, and February and December generally round out the coldest three. Meteorological winter includes most of December and excludes most of March; mid-December is more likely to be really cold than mid-March, so all of March gets to be spring. May is reliably spring-like, but we can argue about whether most of June should be summer (meteorological calendar) or spring (astronomical calendar). Early June can be chilly on occasion, but if we are picking three months for each season, June has to be summer. So that's a winner again for meteorology.

Under the astronomical calendar, the first three quarters of September is summer, while meteorologically it is autumn. I think if the trees are changing color it has to be autumn, so astronomy is incorrect again. October is autumn for sure, and



November has to be either way to have three season months. This brings us back to December, and year-round I choose to go with the meteorological calendar.

Which months are the ones that really throw the three-months-per-season pattern into doubt? For me, it's November, March and April. Depending on the year, November can be balmy and mostly in the 50s (autumn) or snowy and in the 20s and 30s (winter). Similarly March can be not as cold as January but clearly feel like winter (regular snow, lots of temperatures in the 30s), but can also shoot up to the 70s and never snow again. March definitely tips back and forth depending on the year. Some years (like 2018) the snowy weather continues into April. But any month that has tulip shoots coming up can't be pure winter, so April gets to be spring in my book.

These kinds of questions get more complicated when you start to move around; seasons vary tremendously from place to place. The four seasons in Minnesota are identifiably the same as the four seasons from when I lived in Kansas, but the timing of them is different. Beyond that, someplace like the low desert in Arizona also has four seasons, but they are not the same four seasons, unless you are willing to call sunny days in the 60s winter. And areas in the tropical rainforest might barely have any seasonal changes at all.

For me, I'm glad that I live here in Minnesota where there are four seasons, and they each last approximately three months on average meteorologically. I just start getting tired of one season, and then it's on to the next! I love the transitions, always knowing that everything will come around again next year. Do you agree, or do you think winter actually lasts six months? We are good Minnesotans, so it's always fun to talk about the weather.

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garden. We learned a lot about the history of the place and the plant collections.

The Rock Garden is a miniature mountain landscape complete with a waterfall and pond, with alpine plants from all over the world. The pond contained a native pink waterlily that was actually hardy in the Oslo area. In 2014, a new area was added called the Scandinavia Ridge to showcase alpine areas in Scandinavia using rocks and plants from that area. There is also a place called the Oslo Ridge that demonstrates plants that grow closer to home in the slopes surrounding Oslo fjord. Most alpine plants bloom in the spring but it was still nice to see the diverse collection of tough plants.

There is also a garden display of endangered plants and invasive species. As we find in our country, native Norwegian plants are under pressure from development, agriculture and grazing as well as being outcompeted by invasive species. Research is underway on what can be done to conserve native plants and preserve habitat for butterflies

and pollinators. Part of the mission of the Botanical Gardens is to preserve these native plants and educate the public about their importance.

We enjoyed a visit to the Herb Garden which is a large collection of plants historically used for food or medicine or for other purposes such as fiber or dyes. Great-Granny's Garden is a collection of historic plants that would have been grown in home gardens generations ago.

A Viking Garden was established in 2014 to explore what plants were used during the Viking age from about 800 to 1050. In their travels, Vikings were traders and brought many objects, plants, seeds, animals and fabrics back to Norway. Research is being done to learn about the plants of that era including what the people ate and what plants they used for other purposes such as clothing or household items. The entire exhibit is contained in a representation of a Viking ship.

As you can see, the mission of the Botanical Gardens is similar to our Minnesota Landscape Arboretum with an emphasis on research, education and beauty. The entire place is well suited to a family visit. We ended our day by getting something to eat at the garden cafe. We found a quiet place to sit and spotted our tour guide. We invited her to sit with us and enjoyed a long visit learning more about the gardens and the plants growing there. A perfect end to the day!

2019 Photo Contest

2018 winning photos will be on display at the following places:
November & December – Great River Regional Library, St Cloud

2019 Locations:

January – Paramount

February – Stearns History Museum

March – U.S. Bank St Cloud

April – CentraCare Health Plaza

May & June – Whitney Senior Center

July & August – River's Edge Convention Center

September – Waite Park Library

October – Quiet Oaks Hospice House

Start taking your photos now.

The gardens are beautiful in the winter too.





THANK YOU for the Root Beer Floats!

A big thank you from MCBS to all those whose contributions helped us provide root beer floats for Music in the Gardens concerts in 2018!

Donations for ingredients and supplies came from the following local businesses:

Kemps

Bernick

Coborn's

Dairy Queen on 25th

TriMark Strategic Equipment

We had invaluable help from numerous individuals: the garden staff who helped with setup and takedown, the District 742 InnStep Program students and Sally Koester, who wrapped all the spoons & straws and, of course, this year's volunteer root beer float servers:

Mary Margaret & Gene Bjorklun
Sandra & Ralph Carpenter
Ginny Clendenin
Chris & John Felsch
Judi Gay
Marlene & Bill Haider
Lorene Hark
Jack Kelly
Bev & Norm Koepp
Sally Koester
Kathy Matthies
Vera Peterson

Joyce Pohl
Bette Raffenberg
Nikki Rajala
Bruce Regan
Mary & Dan Rethmeier
Patsy Schelske
Lois Sjoberg
Susan Smith
Jan & Tom Stavros
Janelle Van Pinnon
Bill Vossler
Mari Walker

We're grateful to all of you, who make it possible for us to continue offering these popular treats to accompany the music enjoyed by so many concertgoers!



What's Up in the Gardens

By Joan Andersen

I visited with Nia Primus, Gardens Supervisor, to find out what she thought were some of the highlights of the 2018 season.

In addition to the new roof on the Gazebo, there is also a new deck on the Gift Shop. Unfortunately, there was a fire on a Saturday morning in September that started in the wiring leading to the air conditioner under the deck. Fortunately, it had rained heavily so the fire smoldered instead of flaming so only the deck was damaged. Work has now been completed on a new deck, and all that is needed is to wait until spring to stain the deck and repair the wiring to the air conditioner, which also survived the fire.

This was an excellent year for flowers in the Gardens. Plentiful rain and enough summer heat made them grow tall and bloom well. Then fall arrived and we have had unseasonably cold and wet weather. I asked if that meant that the season ended earlier than usual. Nia reported that the end of season care was carried out as usual. The most tender annuals are removed first –

they tend to suffer in cold, wet conditions anyway. Many cold tolerant annuals continue to bloom so they can stay in the Gardens a bit longer. Eventually they all have to go – even if they still look great. There is a schedule to clean out the beds before the last of the seasonal gardeners leave. This year they were done on November 2.

I asked Nia to share some of her favorite annuals from the 2018 season. To make this list, they need to have pretty flowers and grow and bloom well in our unpredictable weather. It is a plus if flowers don't need deadheading, but exceptions can be made for some desirable plants. Here are some of the standout plants:

Ageratum 'Bumble' series grows to 12" tall with a mounding habit and is covered with flowers in blue, rose, silver and white. The different colors were used in several gardens as well as containers.

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2018 Winners

Photography in the gardens



Best-of-Show
Zach Schroeder
"Silhouette of Life"

Best-of-Show

Zach Schroeder with *"Silhouette of Life"*

Youth Landscape

1st Place - Andrew Schroeder with *"Colorful Concoction"*
2nd Place - Avah Nyren with *"Princess of the Flower"*

Adult Hardscape

1st Place - Kimberly Hill with *"Fountain"*
2nd Place - Kimberly Hill with *"Succulents to Go"*
3rd Place - Susan Aune with *"Cascade"*

Adult Landscape

1st Place - DeVonne Koppenberg with *"Hidden Shadows"*
2nd Place - Emily Dylla with *"Peace"*
3rd Place - Kimberly Hill with *"A Burst of Yellow"*

Honorable Mentions

Suzanna Johnson with *"Entrance to the Nursery"*
Abigail Gans with *"A Fall Walk in the Park"*
Mike Brubaker with *"Untitled Floral"*



Honorable Mentions
Abigail Gans
"A Fall Walk in the Park"

Honorable Mentions

Suzanna Johnson
"Entrance to the Nursery"



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2018 Rose Garden Season Recap

By Joan Andersen

As you probably know, growing tender roses is challenging in our climate. We had a tough winter in 2017-2018 because it was windy and severely cold, and there was no snow to help insulate the plants during the periods of sub-zero weather. Unfortunately, there were quite a few roses that did not survive the winter. Deb Keiser, Rose Specialist at the Gardens, has observed that many of the losses were older plants (roses don't live forever in our climate) and some of them were what she calls weaker plants – harder to keep alive in Minnesota. The problem was especially bad in the northeast corner of the Virginia Clemens Rose Garden so extra care will be taken to protect this area this fall.

In 2018, there were 502 new roses planted, mostly in Virginia Clemens Rose Garden, but also in the Bailey Rose Walk, and in the Upper and Lower Trial Rose Gardens. A large number were replacement roses for the shipment that arrived frozen in Spring 2018. The Gardens received generous donations of roses from Bailey Nurseries and Bachman's Greenhouse, and discounted roses from Roses Unlimited. The last rose donation was received at the end of September, so planting lasted all season long.

The roses recovered and we had some nice growing weather in late summer. Roses don't mind cool fall weather. It helps them harden off for winter. By now, all of the roses in Virginia Clemens Rose Garden have been cut back and received at least three big scoops of compost on top of the crown of the plant. They are ready for cover with construction blankets which will be done the week of November 12. All other roses in the Gardens are also being given a generous cover with compost to help them survive winter.

This year the Gardens purchased 25 slightly used construction blankets in excellent condition. They will replace some of the older construction blankets that are used to cover the roses in the Virginia Clemens Rose Garden and the Upper Trial Rose Garden. Part of this cost was paid by a \$500 donation from the St. Cloud Flower and Garden Club – thank you. The new blankets will really help protect the roses. The best thing that can happen for the roses is that we get some snow – nature's best insulator.

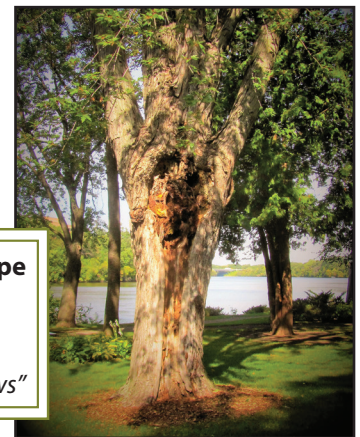
Adult Hardscape

3rd Place
Susan Aune
"Cascade"



Adult Hardscape

2nd Place
Kimberly Hill
"Succulents to Go"



Adult Landscape

1st Place
DeVonne
Koppenberg
"Hidden Shadows"



Youth Landscape

2nd Place
Avah Nyren
"Princess of
the Flower"

Adult Hardscape

1st Place
Kimberly Hill
"Fountain"



© Kimberly Hill



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Angelonia 'Angelface' series grows flower spikes up to 40" tall. Nia says that the white and blue cultivars grew the best and they will be used again in 2019.

Begonia 'Go Go' comes in many colors and is a reliable grower that is planted in Munsinger and other places in the gardens. It is a tuberous begonia that gets showy flowers that light up a shady area.

Begonia 'Bada Bing' is a wax begonia that is used extensively in shady parts of the Gardens, although it can take sun if it is well watered. This year, they grew 3500 plants of 'Bada Bing' in mixed colors. They are excellent for mass plantings.

Coleus 'Solar Eclipse' is a favorite of the more than 30 varieties of sun coleus planted in the Gardens. They provide color all season since they are grown for their beautiful foliage - the flowers are often removed if the garden staff has time.

A cultivar of Colocasia (also known as Elephant's Ear) called 'Coffee Cups' is another favorite. They have huge green leaves on a tall plant with burgundy stems and veins. This plant takes a long time to reach a mature size so they are dug up and grown in the greenhouse over the winter.

Gomphrena 'Forest Red and Forest Pink' are airy plants that grow up to 26" tall and have flowers on long sturdy stems held above the foliage. They mix well with other flowers.

Kniphofia is a perennial plant but it is hardy only to zone 6. 'Redhot Popsicle' was planted in Treillage and Munsinger and grows spikes of bright red/yellow flowers that arise out of grassy foliage all summer.

It would not be summer without petunias. Over 50 cultivars are grown and a few standouts this year were 'Tidal Wave Cherry' which is a good size spreader, and 'Supertunia Giant Pink' which has huge flowers on a short spreading plant.

About 20 cultivars of salvia are grown in the Gardens. Salvia 'Bodacious Rhythm & Blues' has deep cobalt blue flowers on tall black stems. It blooms earlier than some similar cultivars. Another favorite is Salvia 'Rockin Deep Purple.' 'Wendy's Wish' has vivid magenta flowers and can be found in sunny areas of the Gardens every year. Salvia have tubular flowers loved by hummingbirds and many are also visited by bees and other pollinators.

Another mainstay in sunny Clemens Gardens is the zinnia. Favorites include 'Zahara Double Raspberry Ripple' which grows up to 20" tall and has full pink flowers with a darker pink strip on each petal. Other zinnias include the 'Magellan' series which has large blooms on a 14" plant and 'Profusion' Series which is a smaller plant with bright flowers that is good for planting at the edge of a bed.

There are too many good plants to mention. By the way, planning is underway and lots of plants have already been ordered for the 2019 season. In the next newsletter we will reveal the color scheme and talk about some new plants for next year.

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Adult Landscape
2nd Place
Emily Dylla
"Peace"



Adult Landscape
3rd Place
Kimberly Hill
"A Burst of Yellow"



Honorable Mentions
Mike Brubaker
"Untitled Floral"



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Andrew Schroeder
"Colorful Concoction"





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Taking some trips in warmer weather? Maybe you're going to one of 320 gardens through North America where your MCBS membership card entitles you to special admission or discount. Check it out at www.ahsgardening.org/rap.

RAP

Membership Application and Renewal

\$ _____ \$50-\$99 (Basic Membership)

\$ _____ \$100-\$249

\$ _____ \$250-\$500

\$ _____ Other

Gifts over the Basic Membership may be designated to:

_____ Music in the Gardens _____ Art Fair in the Gardens

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