



Chocolate & Roses

THE BUZZ

GARDEN CLUB OF INVERNESS NEWSLETTER

Volume 1, Issue 8

February 2021

BUZZY LINKS

WE ♥ OWLS

If you're a sucker for beautiful owls, and who isn't, here is the web site for you: www.ontarioparks.com/park/sblog Type "owls" into the white search box on the left. "Creatures of the Night: Owls" will appear. Read the article then click on each species. You will be able to learn all about your favorites, see many breathtaking photos of each, and listen to their calls! Further exploration of parksblog topics and the enchanting photography will be more than enough to entice you to add Ontario Parks to your list of destinations this summer.



Juvenile Eastern Screech Owls

UPCOMING

- Feb18 General Meeting/Program
Alyse Burman, Bird Lady
- Mar 4 Board Meeting 9:30 am
- Mar 11 7pm Wine Class with
Ambrosia
- Mar 18 General Meeting/Program
Veronica Porter 'Ask Aunt V'

GCI Plotting and Planning Our Way Out of a Pandemic

by Nancy Kaye

Friends, I like how February is short and imprecise, with a chocolate halftime. Those are good qualities for a winter month. So let's celebrate that goodness—welcome to our Chocolate & Roses Edition, a diversion that seems wholly appropriate for a garden club. Please read all of this issue instead of just skipping to the delectable recipes on the back pages. Thank you to bakers Joyce, Kathy Rein, Denise, and Myra. Kathy Z, each month your submission primes the pump and gets

us going on this newsletter. Thank you for your commitment to our membership!

If February seems kind of lull-ish to you, the fact is, it's a big planning month for GCI. We begin the scholarship process, doggedly hunt down members to serve on the board, and commence hounding for dues. We've just started to strategize on a virus-mindful Spring Luncheon and, possibly, a Garden Party. We have many activities and programs in our sights. As always, your help with planning and executing any of these tasks would be very much appreciated. Please volunteer.



WE ♥ GIVING

Re-scheduled Pantry Drop Off

NO FOOD PANTRY COLLECTION THIS WEEK. The arctic chill that swooshed in after our beautiful snowstorm looks to be parking here for a while. There's no balmy thaw in site. We certainly don't want you traipsing out in nasty weather to drop off a bag of food, so please **watch your email** for the next collection date. In the meantime, contact Mary Kay, Pam G, or Nancy K if you would like us to pick up from your porch. Any donations are gratefully accepted.

February Zoom Program: Alyse Burman *Soaring With the Birds*

Alyse is the owner of The WildBird Shack, an independent birding store, located in Mount Prospect. Burman has been birding for over 20 years, traveling throughout the United States to pursue her passion. She will talk about the behavior and identity of our backyard birds, as well as some passers-by, colors of the birds, nesting habits, characteristics, and their communication. Here is a terrific interview with our fascinating presenter. Go to voyagechicago.com/interview/meet-alyse-burman— Join us Feb 18 at 10 a.m., for our meeting and program.



WE ♥ SPECIAL EVENTS

Card Making

There was definitely something both satisfying and therapeutic about Susan Erickson's Feb. 2 cardmaking class. We each ended up with eight beautiful three dimensional greeting cards, all ready to be written and mailed. It was so pleasant to spend a winter's day with fellow members, albeit via Zoom, and to see maskless faces that are dear to us. All that was missing were the hugs. Thank you to Denise and Susan whose cahoots led to a most enjoyable and fruitful day.



Wine Class with Ambrosia Borowski

Some of you may remember Ambrosia from her Cider Education program (October of 2019.) In March, this fun and dynamic presenter will draw us into the world of wine. This is not a wine tasting. It's a seminar. Ambrosia will guide our exploration into the next dimension including history, grape education, wine pairing, and why we like what we like. Please join us for what is sure to be an entertaining and educational evening, March 11 at 7pm. The Zoom invitation to this event will be forthcoming.

Ambrosia is currently Director of Operations for the Northman Cider Company, as well as General Manager for Northman on the River. She shares her expertise via podcasts, as a



tasting panelist, and in various classes and tastings around the world. She loves to read, forage, and travel, and describes France as her second home.

Chocolate & Roses Books and Films

It's hard to beat *Chocolat* by Joanne Harris, author of *Five Quarters of the Orange*. She also wrote three *Chocolat* sequels featuring many of her grandmother's recipes. Another favorite is *Like Water for Chocolate* (also Number 1 in a series) by Laura Esquivel. These are oldies but must reads. If you liked the books, see the films. And if you liked the films, read the books! They are all delightful. "Rose" books tend to be romances, but not so with *In the Name of the Rose* by Umberto Eco, a gripping 14th century mystery. Of all the "rose" films, my favorite is from 1955, *The Rose Tattoo*. Anna Magnani and Burt Lancaster filmed on location in a bygone, atmospheric Florida. Another award winner is *La Vie en Rose*, a musical biography of French singer Edith Piaf, portrayed by Marion Cotillard. Cotillard and Magnani both earned Best Actress awards for these roles.

The Nose Knows a Rose WE ♥ PERFUME



•In Classic myth, the rose was linked both with the Greek goddess Aphrodite and her Roman counterpart, Venus.

When Cleopatra welcomed Mark Antony to her boudoir, her bed was strewn with these aphrodisiac blooms and the floor hidden under a foot and a half of fresh-picked petals.

Who could resist? Certainly no hot-blooded Roman, homesick for a city where rosewater bubbled through the fountains and rose garlands were the ultimate status symbol. At one bacchanale, the Emperor Nero, had silver pipes installed so guests could be spritzed with rosewater between courses.

•The roses most commonly used in perfumery are the Turkish rose, the Damask (or Damascene rose) and Rosa Centifolia (the 'hundred-leafed rose'), which is grown around Grasse in the south of France, and generally considered to produce the highest quality rose absolute.

•Around 70% of the rose oil in the world comes from Bulgaria; other significant producers are Turkey, Iran and Morocco, and limited quantities from Grasse. The task of the rose-picker is to pick the dew-drenched blooms before 10 a.m., when the sun evaporates their exquisite magic. So fast does the rose fade, that some farmers in Turkey and Bulgaria transport their copper stills to the fields, heating them over wood fires to distill the precious Damask Rose oil, which separates from the water when heated in only the tiniest of quantities: 170 rose flowers are said to relinquish but a single drop.



The Rose Tattoo

(rose facts by The Perfume Society, <https://perfumesociety.org>)



WE ♥ ROSES

by Kathy Zweidinger

Roses for Your Garden

Every rose has its thorn - but each type also has its own unique characteristics. A rose by any other name...would still be a rose! But boy, there are more than 150 species to choose from and thousands of hybrids! So how do you choose which rose is for you? Well, most specialists divide roses into three main categories: Wild Roses, Old Garden Roses, and Modern Garden Roses

The most common roses in today's gardens are **Modern Roses**. These are varieties bred after 1867. Unlike Old Garden Roses, Modern Roses bloom throughout the season. They generally have a larger bloom size, but some say they lack the hardiness, disease resistance, and fragrance of Old Garden Roses. Some of the Modern Roses you may want to consider are: Climbing Roses, English Roses, Floribunda Roses, Grandiflora Roses, Groundcover roses, Hybrid Tea Roses, Miniature Roses, Polyantha Roses, Rambling Roses, and Shrub Roses.

Old Garden Roses have been in existence before 1867 and are sometimes referred to as "heritage" or "historic" roses. They have a notably strong fragrance, double-flowered blooms and tend to be highly disease resistant. They typically bloom once per season. This category consists of Bourbon Roses, China Roses, Damask Roses, Noisette Roses, and Tea Roses.

Wild Roses, or "Species Roses," are the wildflower of the rose world. These roses have never been hybridized (cross-bred with other plants). They usually have single-bloom 5 petal flowers, and are almost always pink. Finding a white or red wild rose is an anomaly and a yellow one is even rarer. Wild Prairie Roses come from Colorado's Arkansas River where the species is found. This particular variety is native to North America and is found between the Appalachian and Rocky Mountains and all the way south to New Mexico and Texas.

Depending on what you choose, roses can be quite easy to care for. Of course, you will have to learn how to prune them, and it might be nice to learn how to grow roses from cuttings. If you're planning an English garden design - or really any kind of garden design - roses are a must. Hope you discover your favorite rose.



Wild Prairie Rose *Arkansana*



Memorial Day Hybrid Tea Rose



Heirloom Pink Damask Rose

Forcing Cut Rose Blooms Open Leanne Kessler, Director of the Floral Design Institute, offers these tips to hastening the opening of tight rose buds: As soon as you bring roses in, put in clean vase full of baby-bath-warm water. Remove bottom leaves and cut each stem at a slant. Tent with a light-weight plastic bag and let rest. Add flower food to the water. Or you can add a teaspoon of sugar combined with either a tablespoon of household bleach or a couple of aspirin to the water to offset bacterial growth. To open the petals first try blowing lightly on each bloom. You may also try gently prying the petals open, one at a time, following the ridges in towards the center of the bud. Lastly, hold the rose upright and gently pour a small stream of water between petals.

WE CHOCOLATE

Four lush recipes contributed by our members and presented in order of complexity, from easy to intense. Yummm...



Sugar Free Chocolate Mousse *from Kathy Rein*

- 1 small box of sugar-free instant chocolate pudding
- 1 cup cold milk
- 1 cup (1/2 pint) whipping cream whipped

Beat pudding mix and milk with whisk 2 minutes
(it will be thick)

Fold in whipped cream.

Mousse can be served immediately, or refrigerate for later.
Garnish, if you wish.

4-6 servings

Easy peasy!

Oreo Truffles *from Myra Buettner*

- 1 package of Oreo's (approximately 45 cookies)
 - 1-8 oz. softened cream cheese
 - 1 ½ bags white chocolate Wilton melting chips (or Ghirardelli white chocolate)
- 1) Twist Oreos and take apart. Scrape cream from cookies and put into a large bowl.
 - 2) Add softened cream cheese to bowl with cream from cookies and blend.
 - 3) Put cookie portion into a Ziploc bag and seal. Use a rolling pin to finely crush the cookies.
 - 4) Add crushed cookies to the creamed mixture and stir.
 - 5) Roll combined mixture into 1-inch balls and refrigerate for about 45 minutes.
 - 6) Melt white chocolate according to package directions.
 - 7) Dip cookie balls into the melted chocolate and place on a wax paper covered cookie sheet.
 - 8) Add sprinkles or colored sugar while the coating is still wet. Let set.

Makes about 4 dozen.



Chocolate-Covered Cherry Cookies

from Joyce Axe

Ingredients

- 1 cup all-purpose flour (see Cook's Note)
- 1/2 cup Dutch-process cocoa
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
- 6 tablespoons almond paste
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 6 tablespoons unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 1/2 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 1 large egg
- 1 1/2 teaspoons kirsch, optional
- 30 well-drained good-quality cherries in syrup (about one 14-ounce jar),
such as Tillen Farm Boda Bing Cherries available at Whole Foods
- Reserve cherry syrup for the glaze



Glaze

- 1/2 cup sugar
- 4 ounces dark chocolate chips

Directions

- **For the cookies:** Position oven racks in the top and bottom thirds of the oven and preheat to 350 degrees F. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment.
- Whisk together the flour, cocoa, baking powder and salt in a bowl until evenly combined; set aside. Break the almond paste into small pieces in the bowl of a stand mixer, add the sugar and beat on low speed until the paste forms small crumbles in the sugar, about 2 minutes. Add half the butter and continue beating until the mixture starts forming large clumps and wiping the sides of the bowl, add the remaining butter. Increase the speed to medium high and beat until pale and fluffy, about 3 minutes. Add the vanilla, egg and kirsch, if using, and beat until smooth. Add the dry ingredients and beat on low until the dough just comes together.
- Scoop 30 tablespoon-size portions of dough, roll into balls and divide between the prepared baking sheets, spacing them evenly apart. Press a cherry in the center of each dough ball, then refrigerate the cookies on the baking sheets for 30 minutes.
- Bake, rotating the baking sheets from top to bottom and front to back halfway through, until the cookies are puffed and set at the edges, 12 to 15 minutes. Cool the cookies on the baking sheets for 1 minute, then transfer them to a wire rack to cool completely.
- **For the glaze:** Combine the sugar, 2 tablespoons of the reserved cherry syrup and 1/4 cup water in a small saucepan and bring to a boil, stirring to dissolve the sugar. Remove the saucepan from the heat, add the chocolate chips and stir slowly until smooth.

Using a small teaspoon, spoon the chocolate glaze over the cherry of each cookie, letting it drip down the sides. Allow the glaze to set before serving, about 10 minutes. Store the cookies in a single layer in an airtight container for up to 5 days.

Cook's Note

When measuring flour, we spoon it into a dry measuring cup and level off the excess. (Scooping directly from the bag compacts the flour, resulting in dry baked goods.)

Countess Toulouse-Lautrec's French Chocolate Cake *from Denise Tumbarello*

This is Maida Heatter's heavenly version of the Countess's original 1959 recipe. The small amounts of sugar and flour noted below are correct. This is rather like a rich, moist, dense cheesecake in texture. A little goes a long way. It is best to make it a day before serving, or at least 6 to 8 hours before. Or, make it ahead of time and freeze, then thaw before serving.

1 pound semisweet chocolate

5 ounces unsalted butter, room temperature

4 large eggs, separated

1 tablespoon all-purpose flour, unsifted

1 pinch salt

1 tablespoon granulated sugar

- 1) Preheat oven to 425 degrees
- 2) Cut a round waxed or parchment paper to fit the bottom of an 8-inch springform pan. Butter one side of paper and the sides only of the pan. Place paper, buttered side up, in the pan and clamp pan shut.
- 3) In the top of a double boiler, place coarsely chopped chocolate. Melt over simmering water, stirring occasionally with a rubber spatula. Add 1/3 of the butter at a time, letting each addition melt completely before adding the next. Set aside to cool slightly.
- 4) In a small bowl, beat egg yolks at high speed for 5-7 minutes, until pale and thick. Add tablespoon of flour and beat on low, only to incorporate. Gently fold beaten egg yolks into chocolate.
- 5) In another clean bowl, beat egg whites and salt until whites hold a soft shape. Add sugar and beat until whites hold definite shape but not too stiff or dry. Fold one-half beaten whites into chocolate—don't be too thorough. Fold chocolate into remaining whites, handling gently until blended. Turn into prepared pan and rotate to level batter.
- 6) Bake for **15** minutes. Cake will be soft (only 1 inch high in the middle, rim will be higher and cracked—you'll think it's not done but don't worry.) With a small sharp knife, carefully cut around side of hot cake, but don't remove or loosen the sides. Let cake stand in pan until room temperature. Refrigerate several hours or overnight.
- 7) To remove, cut around sides again with small sharp knife. Unlatch and remove sides. Carefully insert a narrow spatula and invert on serving plate. Glaze with whipped cream, ganache, or top with toasted sliced almonds or a fine dusting of cocoa.



The Ultimate Chocolate Martini (Recipe by hungrycouplenyc.com)

Per Serving:

2 oz. Vanilla vodka

2 oz. Chocolate liqueur (preferably Godiva)

1 oz. Hot cocoa, cooled (chocolate whole milk works, too)

1/2 oz. Creme de cacao

1 oz. Piece of chocolate, melted

1 oz. Piece of chocolate, grated

Melt the chocolate in a shallow dish and dip a cocktail glass into it until the rim of the glass is coated in chocolate. Set the glass in the freezer for a few minutes to set.

Prepare a packet of hot cocoa mix using only 1/2 cup of boiling water. Make sure the cocoa is completely dissolved and set aside to cool. Once cooled, combine an ounce of the mixture with the vodka, chocolate liqueur and creme de cacao in a cocktail shaker and shake over ice. Pour into the chilled cocktail glass and top with the grated chocolate.





Editor Interrupted

The juncos are flitting in and out of the pear tree today. They've been plucking some things edible from between the bricks of our house, then darting back to shelter. It boggles the mind to think that anything worth eating could be found on a such a frigid day, except at our neighbors' many feeders. My late mother, Loretta, adored juncos. Snowbirds, she called them. Watching their antics makes me feel close to her for a while. She would have enjoyed the show outside these big bright windows where I'm typing.

Our backyard is a hotbed of activity despite the thermometer stating zero! Typically, raptors perch in our maple perusing the songbird smorgasbord at the feeders next door. Not today. Earlier, I spotted just one falcon-y predator. (He was smallish with black mutton chops. A very handsome fellow! He dined and dashed before I could grab the binoculars.) With no threats in sight, our yard has become a backed-up fly zone for any feathered thing anxious to snatch a nibble. Like jets taxiing at O'Hare, the birds line up in every tree within striking distance of the neighbors' bounty. Some are boldly exposed on the fence, ready to make their swoop. At the feeder, those that can hover, do. The others dive and dart, flapping furiously, pausing not even a second to perch, before retreating to safety. There is such mayhem at the feeders, the squirrels don't bother to climb, exuberantly sharing the generous spill below with some all-business mourning doves.

Back to the pear. In addition to the juncos, Mr. and Mrs. Cardinal and a pair of goldfinches came to call. No house finches today, and no blue jay, but the usual clique of nuthatches, chickadees, and a downy (I suspect he is the culprit for all the new holes in our cedar trim) showed up, fidgeting until their turn at the suet. And, of course, squirrels.

Suddenly all movement stops and I cannot spy one moving thing. I look down our tree line and, sure enough, a very small coyote soon emerges from the arborvitae. He is a bushy, well-fed regular, making the trek between the nature area behind Little City to the wetlands west of us twice a day. Today he pauses, ear to the ground, then pounces. I think it was all for fun or form because, without a backward glance he cedes and trots on towards me, his face alert as he approaches the yard with the buffet. This is often fertile hunting ground for him. Chipmunks! But all the creatures have disappeared so he veers northward and out of sight. The squirrels are first to emerge. They really can't contain themselves. Soon my yard becomes, once more, a bustling winter hub. I get back to my editing while the show goes on.

WE ♥ PLANNING AHEAD Mark Your Calendars!

March will soon be upon us and we find it's impossible not to get excited about the potential for better days and better weather ahead. Our February and March General/Meetings and Programs are, by necessity, Zoom. But we have leap-frogged into April and have decided to make a schedule change, pushing off our meeting date by one week in hopes of warmer weather. We have an abundance of Thursdays this April—five of them! We decided to take advantage, keep our fingers crossed, or our rosary beads clicking, and hold the April meeting outside, in person, on Earth Day! So please mark your calendars accordingly. We will finalize details once we get a chance to confer with Mother Nature. Once again, **this year's April General Meeting and Program will be on Earth Day Thursday, April 22.** Stay tuned.

THE BUZZ

*PLEASE SEND IDEAS, PHOTOS, POETRY, AND MATERIAL TO
NCKAYEDA@YAHOO.COM*

*YOU CAN ALSO SEND PHOTOS BY TEXT TO:
612-382-0898*

PLEASE INCLUDE YOUR NAME WITH ANY TEXTS

FAVORITE THINGS

*EMAIL YOUR RECOMMENDATIONS TO MYRA
MYRABUETTNER@OUTLOOK.COM*

HOW DOES YOUR GARDEN GROW?

*PLEASE EMAIL YOUR TIPS, QUESTIONS, OR SUGGESTED TOPICS
TO KATHY ZWEIDINGER
KZWEIDINGER@AOL.COM*

WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU

