

The Kruckeberg Botanic Garden at Richmond Beach is dedicated to fostering and providing educational, cultural and aesthetic enrichment for all who visit: gardeners, amateur and professional horticulturalists, and young students of the plant world — in all, people of all walks of life.

“In the end we will conserve only what we love, we will love only what we understand, we will understand what we are taught.”

-- Baba Dioum Fenegal

Questions, ideas, suggestions?
Please contact KBGF at
(206) 542-4777
20312 15th Ave. NW · Shoreline, WA 98177
www.kruckeberg.org

Newsletter produced by Susan Will

Art by Mareen Kruckeberg: **Cyclamen coum**
from the Caucasus Mountains blooms mid-winter
regardless of weather.

Meetings

The next general membership meeting will be held on Thursday January 17, 2001, beginning at 7 pm at the Richmond Beach Congregational Church-United Church of Christ. The church is located at the corner of Richmond Beach Rd. and 15th Ave. NW. We hope to see you then.

Regular Board meetings are normally scheduled on the third Tuesday of each month; members are welcome to attend. Call 206-542-4777 or email kgbf@kruckeberg.org to ask for more information.

Garden Tours

The City of Shoreline again will offer tours of the Garden in its quarterly 2002 Shoreline Parks & Recreation Guides. Look for the Guide in your mailbox, and contact the Shoreline Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department at 206-546-5041 to sign up. The City of Edmonds will also offer KBG tours in its Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services catalog, “CRAZE.” For more information call 425-771-0230. Tentative dates are April 13 (Edmonds) and May 18 (Shoreline). In each case the fee is \$20 per person, of which the City forwards \$15 to KBGF.

Tours may be scheduled directly by calling the KBGF voicemail line, 206-542-4777. These tours normally are offered for groups of 6 to 15 persons by appointment. The fee is \$15 per person (fee waived for students). Tours normally start at 10 am and last about two hours. Parking is limited, and carpooling is recommended whenever possible.

Volunteer Help

The final Sunday afternoon work party of the season is scheduled for October 14. After a winter break we plan to resume work on March 3. Many thanks to those who lent a hand since the last newsletter.

We know that Sunday afternoon volunteering doesn't work well for everyone. If that's true for you, our “Adopt a Bed” program might be your ticket. We invite you to choose a bed of plants in the garden as your area of responsibility, your personal “preserve.” You may visit the garden at your convenience, any day of the week, to work on weeding, mulching, watering, and whatever is needed. The first step in the Adopt-a-Bed process will be to consult with Mareen (206-546-1281) or leave us a voicemail message (206-542-4777).

We would also welcome your help with the other work of the Foundation. We're looking for docents, a tax advisor, a newsletter coordinator, and help with publicity, plant inventory and labeling, grant applications, workshops and seminars, and our web site. If you have an interest in any of these areas, please call us at 206-542-4777 or send email to kgbf@kruckeberg.org.

Web Site

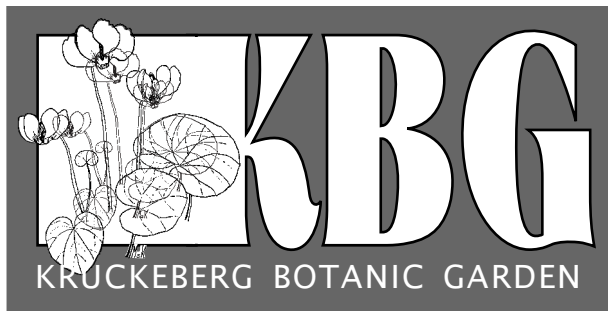
In each issue we include this standing reminder of our web site, www.kruckeberg.org. Worldlink Internet Services is donating domain-name hosting for KBGF. Worldlink offers the following discounts to KBGF members:

Dialup Internet Access at \$15/month

DSL at 15% off

All other Worldlink services at 10% off

Worldlink is a local company with over 5,000 subscribers, and we have been pleased with their support and positive attitude. Visit www.w-



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Ex officio members
Art and Mareen Kruckeberg

link.net or call 1-888-361-4638 for more information.

Membership Renewal

We continue to mail this newsletter to a growing list of friends (now more than 90) whose membership has expired, and to many others who have not yet joined. Look in the lower right corner of the mailing label for the expiration date of your membership. Please send renewal donations to Kathie Morino, 958 Walnut St., Edmonds 98020. Your donation is tax-deductible.

Gift matching is a great way to get more bang for your buck. Bank of America, Key Bank, Boeing, Bon Marche, Safeco, Starbucks, Washington Mutual, Microsoft and many other organizations will match employee gifts to non-profit organizations such as KBGF.

Send Us Your Email Address

Of the 180 or so KBGF members, we have email addresses for about 100 people. Email is a quick and inexpensive way for us to inform you of happenings of interest. If you think we may not have your email address, please send a message to kgbf@kruckeberg.org. We invite friends of KBGF (nonmembers) to do the same; we have about 185 of you on our mailing list. All such personal information is kept strictly private.

Recommended Reading

The American Gardener is the bimonthly magazine of The American Horticultural Society. The September/October issue contains an excellent article about KBG titled "Northwest Paradise Preserved." The author is Deborah Ferber. Look for the magazine on newsstands and at nurseries. You can find more information about the Society at www.ahs.org.

Conifers in the Garden by Art Kruckeberg

Trees make the garden! Of all the major growth forms on the palette for the garden designer, trees, shrubs, and herbs, it is the trees that set the scene. Trees, especially in our region, create the structural framework of most gardens. They serve eloquently as the defining architectural scaffolding of all else that the plant world offers the gardener. Trees, both evergreen and deciduous, come in two broad categories: broadleaved types and cone-bearing conifers. Both classes of tree form the dominant accents - the skeletal framework of the Kruckeberg Botanic Garden. In this and coming issues of the Newsletter, we will feature the conifer. Later we will give equal emphasis to broadleaved trees such as oaks, maples, and their flowering kin.

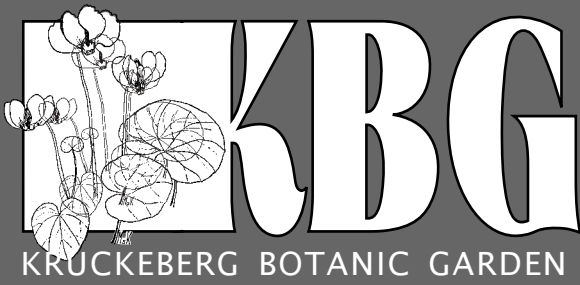
The word "conifer" is easily translated to mean "cone-bearing." The prodigious clan of the conifers is assembled into families distinguished by their foliage and cone types. The two most common families, the pines and the cypresses (or cedars), grace our garden in many forms. The most imposing and dramatic pine-family canopies in the garden are old specimens of Douglas fir, *Pseudotsuga menziesii*. It is our region's most common conifer, and its name commemorates the most noted plant hunter of all: David Douglas, a Scotsman who collected in the Northwest in the 1830s. At the western edge of the garden is a row of nine Douglas firs that defines the garden boundary. These were planted over 50 years ago. The most impressive specimens in the garden grow on the woodland slope just above the lower meadow area. Several of these "old-timers" have reached 6-8 feet circumference and are at least 100 feet

Mark Your Calendar

January 17 General Membership meeting

Call 206-546-1281
for tour reservations

Please pass this newsletter
on to a friend!



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KBGF Wish List

Besides cash donations, KBGF welcomes donations of needed items. Our wish list currently includes:

- **A computer more capable than a 486 or Macintosh Performa**
- **A Mac-compatible external hard drive (sealed or removable cartridge)**

KBGF T-shirts

Kruckeberg Botanic Garden Foundation T-shirts are available for \$15. They come in various sizes, and you can choose the new color combination (green on taupe) or the original (cream on green). Place an order or inquire by calling 206-542-4777 or emailing kgbf@kruckeberg.org.

tall. They must have been spontaneous saplings at the time of early logging in the Richmond Beach area. They have attained the stature and deeply furrowed bark of genuine old-growth trees. Several open-grown Douglas firs in the meadow have retained their lower branches, gracefully sweeping over the ground. A grove of Douglas firs creates a lovely woodland setting at the northeast corner of the garden. Indeed, we admire Douglas fir in all its forms!

How can Douglas fir be called a fir, but not be a true fir? It is in its own genus, *Pseudotsuga*, a small but distinct group with two species in North America and four in eastern Asia. The genus name means "false hemlock." It is so uniquely intermediate between hemlocks, spruces, and firs that it has borrowed common names from all three, and even has been called Oregon pine. There are features that distinguish Douglas firs from any of its next-of-kin conifers. Most telling is the cone, with its protruding (exserted) three-pronged bracts of the seed-bearing cone scales. Further, Douglas fir cones fall intact to the ground after shedding their seeds, while true firs (the genus *Abies*) bear their cones upright, and the cones fall apart at maturity while still attached to the upper branches.

Members of the Pine Family (*Pinaceae*), although rich in variety, all have in common the needle-shaped leaf. We know this feature best in the species of pines (genus *Pinus*). Needles of true pines are gathered in bundles of two to five. Familiar native pines like shore pine (*Pinus contorta*), ponderosa pine (*P. ponderosa*), and western white pine (*P. monticola*) have, respectively, two, three, and five needles per cluster. All three are on display in our garden. Pines from other lands add variety to our setting: the graceful Himalayan pine (*P. hemisleyana*), with pendant sprays of needles in fives, contrasts with the stiffly majestic two-needle Macedonian pine (*P. heldreichii*). We also delight in the presence of several specimens of the dwarf Japanese pine (*P. pumila*). It is an alpine species grown from seed collected in Hokkaido, Japan's northernmost island.

There is much more to the Pine Family than just pines. Firs, spruces, hemlocks, and larches also share the needle-leaf feature. Several true firs (genus *Abies*) figure prominently in the garden. We grow four of our native firs: noble fir (*Abies procera*), grand fir (*A. grandis*), white fir from Oregon southward (*A. concolor*), and the high mountain subalpine fir (*A. lasiocarpa*). Firs from other continents are also favorites: the graceful symmetry of the Japanese fir (*A. firma*) and the majestic Spanish fir (*A. pinsapo*) are two more delights of the genus *Abies*.

We have given garden space generously to hemlocks (species of *Tsuga*). The best of the clan is our own native, the mountain hemlock (*Tsuga mertensiana*); its blue-gray, dense foliage and graceful form put it high on our list of favorites. We also grow our other native, the lowland western hemlock (*T. heterophylla*), and we have two Asian charmers, *T. sieboldiana* and *T. chinensis*.

Spruces in the genus *Picea* have the sharpest needles of all conifers. Their stiff needles with pointed tips can be formidable to the touch! While we have grown our two natives, Sitka and Engelmann spruce (*Picea sitchensis* and *P. engelmannii*), we are easily swayed in favor of several exotic species. At the top of that list is the Turkish spruce, *P. orientalis*, with densely clustered, glossy, dark green needles. Our single specimen is now 30 feet tall and still growing. So enamored are we of this spruce that we induced Turkish friends to send us seed. Now we have dozens of



OCTOBER 2001

membership

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Fax _____

email _____

Membership Categories

_____ \$1,000 Oak (Benefactor)

_____ \$500 Douglas Fir (Patron)

_____ \$250 Red Cedar (Sustaining)

_____ \$100 Dogwood (Club)

_____ \$50 Dawn Redwood (Contributing)

_____ \$35 Madrone (Regular)

_____ \$25 Vine Maple (Student/Senior)

Please make tx-deductible checks payable to
KBGF and mail to
Kathie Morino
958 Walnut
Edmonds, WA 98020

Please let us know how you heard about the
Garden:

seedlings, still only a few inches tall. Two weeping spruces add a graceful aspect to the lower meadow. Centrally positioned is the Chinese weeping spruce, *P. smithiana*, now nearly 30 feet tall. Then, near the foot of the woodland slope, is a fine old specimen of Brewer's weeping spruce (*P. breweriana*); in nature it is found only in the Klamath-Siskiyou country of Oregon and California.

The garden is blessed with several larches, those deciduous, needle-leaved conifers that afford spectacular color: golden in fall and grass-green in spring. Besides our majestic native western larch (*Larix occidentalis*) from west of the Cascades, we delight in the display of two Asian species, *L. kaempferi* from Japan and *L. gmelinii* from northeast China and Siberia. Finally, we have an old specimen of the European *L. pendula*. Kin to *Larix* is the Golden Larch, *Pseudolarix amabilis*. Like *Larix*, it is deciduous and bears needles in clusters. The foliage of this slow-growing conifer from eastern China retains a golden-green hue, even in mid-season. Our larch collection also includes a rare hybrid between our two native larches, western larch intentionally crossed with Lyall's larch (*L. Lyallii*), given us by Forest Service researchers in Montana.

Many of the Pine Family conifer species have spawned dwarf and low-growing forms, mostly originating in cultivation (cultivars). Our garden features several such forms of hemlock and spruce. A rare and choice dwarf of our native subalpine fir is the tiny *Abies lasiocarpa* 'DuFlon', so named for its discoverers, Alton and Bita DuFlon. The native mountain hemlock has given us the low-growing *Tsuga mertensiana* 'Elizabeth'. Then there are several forms of the European spruce, *Picea Abies*. We are regaled with several low-growing forms of the eastern hemlock, *Tsuga canadensis*; one by our car park is huge: five feet tall and 15 feet in spread. A fine variant of the native western hemlock is the slow-growing form, 'Iron Springs', found in the wild on the Olympic Peninsula. A final dwarf demands last-but-not-least place: a natural dwarf, the Japanese subalpine pine, *Pinus pumila*, mentioned above.

Watch for the next installment of our conifer wealth in the winter issue.

KRUCKEBERG BOTANIC GARDEN FOUNDATION
20312 15th Ave. NW
Shoreline, WA 98177

