

Virtual Hortlandia 2020

Rogerson Clematis Garden

www.rogersonclematiscollection.org

www.facebook.com/rogersonclematiscollection

This week Joanne Fuller spoke with Linda Beutler Curator of the Rogerson Clematis Garden and edited the interview for this article.

Linda, is the garden open?

The garden is sited at Luscher Farms which is a City of Lake Oswego public park, so we follow the Covid-19 safety regulations of the City. Right now, we are open to foot traffic with no onsite parking. Visitors can park down the street at the nearest church parking lot or at the Palisades Market parking lot and walk from there. The garden is looking so beautiful this year with so many plants in bloom. I encourage people to visit if they can make the walk. We believe the city will open the park soon, so folks can more easily visit the garden. The website and Facebook page both have up to date information about open times and hours as the situation changes. If you do visit, please respect the volunteers by social distancing and wearing a mask if people are around.

Can customers shop for clematis right now?

We are doing "coopside pick-up" since we don't have a curb, but we do have a chicken coop. The list of plants on the website www.rogersonclematiscollection.org is updated regularly, and right now we have lots of wonderful plants to offer. The purchasing instructions are on the website. Plants are available for pick-up on Wednesday and Friday from 10 am to 2 pm (hours based upon the park rules). Customers can park very briefly, call us, and volunteers bring the plants to the car. We hope when the park opens that we can open for shopping by appointment at the garden. We will post these changes on the website and Facebook page.

Friends of the Rogerson Clematis Garden is a membership organization, how does that work?

Membership is very important to the mission of our organization and our financial health. We love our existing membership and want to grow. If you join now as a new member, you will get nineteen months of membership (now through Dec. 2021) for the price of one year of membership. About 60% of our operating budget comes from plant sales, and since that revenue will be way down this year, growing our membership is very important. Some people believe if they become a member they must also volunteer, but that is not the expectation. And, members get early access to the best clematis for sale.

What's looking good in the garden right now?

We have a great selection of the Raymond Evison hybrids. These are large flowered hybrids developed to grow well in containers and bloom at one to three feet in height. They never grow very large and can be pruned to fit your space. Clematis 'Bijou' and C. 'Filigree' both have large lavender-blue flowers blooming at one to three feet in height. C. 'Edda' blooms at three to five feet. It is like a very short C. 'Mrs. N. Thompson' with a reddish-purple stripe on lavender-purple petals. C. 'Fleuri' has large deep amethyst purple flowers that look like they are made of velvet-- you just want to crawl in and lay on it. All of these will never get too tall, probably no more than six to eight feet. On the website, all of the descriptions of our clematis are linked to www.clematisontheweb.org where you can see beautiful photos and descriptions of these flowers and all the clematis we grow.

I think of clematis as sun plants. Do you have clematis for sale that grow in shade?

Many clematis will grow in some shade. Often, you want to grow pale colored clematis in shade, because they look like they glow in the shade, and they can get washed out in full sun. A clematis with pink stripes on white like C. 'Nellie Moiser' will retain its color longer in shade. One that will grow almost anywhere is Clematis 'Pink Fantasy' which has pale pink flowers with a deeper pink bar with darker anthers. Clematis 'Fujimusume' is periwinkle blue and does very well in part shade. A shade classic is Clematis 'Guernsey Cream' which has large white flowers with a green stripe that fades as each flower matures. We are out of it right now. We should have more soon. At the garden, it is hardest for us to keep white clematis in stock because they are so popular.

Does the Garden sell some clematis that you can't get anywhere else?

Yes! We have a collection of the clematis bred by two Polish breeders; Wladyslaw Noll who bred C. 'Niobe' and Brother Stefan Franczak who bred C. 'Polish Spirit'. They were breeding clematis during the cold war, naming them after Polish heroes, and smuggling them to Britain where they were introduced to the world. Through their work, they were keeping Polish history alive despite the Soviet occupation. We have the best collection of their plants outside of Poland. A lovely one is Clematis 'Halina Noll' which is a gorgeous white with reddish brown stamens-- lovely in shade. We also grow some American species. Right now, in our "Collector's Corner", we are offering Clematis glaucophylla native to Georgia, USA. It has sweet small bell-shaped pink flowers with yellow interiors. It tolerates a wetter site than many clematis.

Do you have a few favorite clematis?

I am never shy about which is my favorite, it is Clematis 'Venosa Violacea'. It has a large white flower that is edged and veined with purple. It is easy care-- many clematis are, and it is very responsive to pruning. There's just something special about that one. I also love red clematis. So many "red" clematis are really purple, so I am currently growing a trial of all the red Raymond Evison hybrids to evaluate the reds. This includes Clematis 'Rebecca', C. 'Rosemore', C. 'Picardy' and C. 'Charmaine'. Clematis 'Charmaine' is described as almost a Chinese red, but we will see when they grow side by side which come closest to true reds.

What about clematis care?

We have very helpful handouts on the website about care and pruning. We fertilize our plants in spring with a basic organic rose and flower food-- any brand will do. We fertilize again when we deadhead and/or prune during the growing season. Gardeners should read our handout on pruning because the advice about pruning clematis is changing. I will say that gardeners can prune their large flowered hybrid clematis after first bloom, often more severely than they think in order to get rebloom. At a minimum, clematis should be deadheaded to encourage rebloom. Also don't be afraid to prune clematis to keep it under control and in its place. Remember you are the boss.