

Clachanburn comment 81

Autumn is one of my favourite seasons, with the slowing down and more relaxed feel of the garden. The lovely balmy days, the tapestry of different coloured leaves and their crunchy sound underfoot which I love to enjoy before been forced to rack them up. I also enjoy the ripened seed pods, the rosehips and crab apples. Fantails are everywhere and looking for food, so time to put out sugar and water.

The NZ Gardens Trust conference is always held at this time of the year when the gardeners' visitor numbers have slowed down and we can get together, and this year it was held in Akaroa last week. We saw some stunning gardens both large and small, town and country. I returned to Ohinetahi the home of Sir Miles Warren. Our local garden club went there quite some yrs. ago, and to see it again since the house has been restored from earthquake damage is amazing. Being an architect of renown a new top storey with a slightly modern slant is no trouble to him. New garden developments have taken place using a lot of the old limestone from the rubble. Banks Peninsula was dry but in old established gardens mature trees provide shelter, and in newer gardens the use of natives is extensive. It is always a good opportunity to network with likeminded folk who share the same interest. There are now over 100 gardens in the trust spread over the entire country. In Christchurch on my way home I met up with Errol Millar, the local Lions member who presented a cheque of \$8,194.53 to Allison Nichol at Ranui House for the sale of Lucy's rose.

Two people have asked me about codlin moth in apples. It is a common pest in apples in NZ. The larvae enter the fruit leaving a disfiguring passageway to the core. I was asked is there anything you can do about it, and yes there is - a good thing to do at this time of year is to pick up old fruit, leaves and twigs from under the tree and discard them. Old flaky bark at the base of trees is a likely overwintering problem, and the loose bark can be removed with a wire brush to expose the larvae to birds. Another thing you can do in the growing season is to wrap rings of corrugated cardboard around main branches and even the trunk, tie on with string. This will help trap the larvae in the corrugations of the cardboard, so replace it regularly and burn the infested pieces. If none of this works you may have to spray and my advice would be to talk to your nurseryman.

In the forthcoming issue of the Life and Leisure magazine there is a 16 page article of the Clachanburn garden, their first to feature a garden in all four seasons, they chose ours because they thought our extreme climate variations would work well – see what you think.

Happy gardening

Jane