

# NANAIMO RHODODENDRON SOCIETY



## April 2013



### FROM THE PRESIDENT

"In like a lion and out like a lamb" seems to be true of this March. Another mild winter has brought us very early blooms on lots of our plants and kept the foliage in good condition. We have plenty of colour already with PJM matching the colour of Krammer's Red heather, the Forsythia yellow next to the new foliage on our Photinias and the pink blooms of the Japanese Plum just breaking out behind. The days of sunshine have put the bumble bees and our own honey bees into high gear collecting pollen and nectar.

The busy season for our club is upon us with lots of planning and arranging being done. A schedule of events is being printed. Susan and I have decided to host the year-end at our home and garden in Nanoose, so mark your calendars for June 15<sup>th</sup> – potluck, awards, games, etc.

See you at the April 11<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Art Lightburn

### EXECUTIVE

President	Art Lightburn	468-7516
Past President	John Deniseger	390-3605
Vice President	Sandra Dorman	390-0136
Secretary	Ann Beamish	758-2574
Treasurer	Burkhard Dressler	758-1738
Directors	Glenda Allard Barr	390-2822
	Debbie Gaboury	758-1204
	Craig Clarke	390-4090
	Paul Lawry	816-2370
	Susan Lightburn	468-7516

### COMMITTEES

Advertising	vacant	
Library	Ann Beamish	758-2574
Newsletter	Kathryn Grant	245-7879
Membership	Debbie Gaboury	758-1204
Program	Glenda Allard Barr	390-2822
Raffle	Ann Davey & Val Harvey	
Social	Susan Lightburn	468-7516
Bargain Table	Reinhold Gorgosilich	758-6533

Nanaimo Rhododendron Society  
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Nanaimo, BC V9T 6M4  
Website: [nanaimo.rhodos.ca](http://nanaimo.rhodos.ca)  
email: [nanaimo@rhodos.ca](mailto:nanaimo@rhodos.ca)

### NEXT MEETING

**THURSDAY, APRIL 11 BEBAN PARK SOCIAL CENTRE 7:30 pm**

**LOIS BLACKMORE**

**'A Journey of Love'**

# NANAIMO RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

## **TWIGS and STEMs**



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### **GOODIES FOR APRIL MEETING**

*Elaine Hutchison*

*Michael Miller*

*Burkhard Dressler*

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### **NORM TODD BOOKS**

*There will be a few copies of 'The Complete Wit and Wisdom of Norman Todd' at the April meeting*

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### **APRIL RAFFLE HIGHLIGHTS**

*Three awesome Rhododendrons:*

*R. williamsianum*

*R. pachysanthum*

*R. 'Seaview Sunset'*

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### **NRS PLANT SALE CLUB TABLE**

*Now is the time to pot up plants you would like to donate to the club table at our May plant sale.*

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### **CLUB DISCOUNTS**

*Arrowsmith Greenhouses*

*Art Knapp Plantland*

*Buckerfields*

*Diana's Garden Centre*

*Dig This*

*Green Thumb Garden Centre*

*Long Lake Nursery*

*Mayo Creek Gardens*

*Russell's Farm Market*

## **OUR APRIL SPEAKER**

On Thursday, April 11th, Lois Blackmore will present "A Journey of Love". It is about the 173 registered rhododendrons that Washington State hybridizer Jim Barlup has created over the past 37 years. Jim is a gold medal winner from the ARS for his work in hybridizing. Lois will explain how her interest in these hybrids got started and follow with a Power Point presentation with music.



*R. pachysanthum*

## **Seen In Passing**

- Bald Eagle occupying a large local nest left unused for 2 years
- a late frost turning our Snowladies from white to a brownish yellow (OH WELL!)
- Harold & Ginny Fearing visiting on their way to Ucluelet
- Huge buds on Yellow Rolls Royce showing colour



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## Websites With Pictures of Rhododendrons

[The American Rhododendron Society](#) - The ARS website has a searchable database of [rhododendrons](#) and [azaleas](#)

[The Rhododendron Species Foundation](#) - Federal Way, Washington State, USA - an extensive database of species pictures

[hirsutum.info](#) - database of rhododendrons, azaleas and vireyas - an initiative of the Dutch chapter of the ARS

[Fearing's Farm Nursery](#) - Abbotsford, British Columbia, Canada - excellent pictures of almost 300 species and hybrid rhodos

[Fraser South Chapter](#) - Langley, British Columbia, Canada - excellent pictures of almost 300 species and hybrid rhododendrons

[East Coast Native Azaleas](#) - Don Hyatt's excellent site on these North American East Coast native azaleas

[The Danish ARS Chapter Website](#) - good pictures, with text in a mixture of Danish and English

[Vireyas](#) - the tropical rhododendrons (these plants are not hardy in our area and need to be grown indoors in the winter months)

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## Nice Websites that our members have found:

[Marc Columbel's website](#) <http://www.rhododendron-azalee.fr/indexgb.htm> which includes his album of rhododendron pictures and his Classification according to the 1998 Handbook. Use "Fast Navigation" to move around the website.

[Welcome to My Blue Heaven](#) - a website devoted to the celebration of the Himalayan Blue Poppy - this is a very nice website that Mary Parker informed us about.

## Rhodos Worth Growing

### Coral Glow

Very early lepidote that looks great with a forest or fence backdrop.

Upright six feet in 10 years. Hardy to minus 29 °C . Slightly fragrant light orange-red flowers that can get frosted

Mucronulatum x lutescens by Melquist (reverse cross of Airy Fairy)



R. 'Sir Charles Lemon' in my garden today - ed

# NANAIMO RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

## Getting to Know Each Other - by June and John

This is a new feature in our newsletter profiling both long time and newer club members. To get things started, long time member Chris Southwick has graciously agreed to be our first "guest". ☺

### **1. How long have you lived on Vancouver Island?**

Chris was born in Nanaimo, returning here in 1992 after some time in northern BC along the Alaska Highway and Fort Nelson, where her vegetable garden, especially root crops, grew so well. Rhododendrons on the other hand... (except for the thousands of acres of the wild *R. groenlandicum* and the circumpolar dwarf *R. lapponicum*.)



### **2. How long have you been growing rhododendrons?**

Chris has been around rhododendron lovers since she was a toddler. She remembers running along long rows of rhodos in her grandparent's nursery in Royston, B. C. just south of Courtenay. She remembers playing under a species rhodo her grandfather Ted Greig referred to as "big Cal" (*R. calophytum*). There was also a stone trough containing a very special *R. forrestii* as well. Perhaps those experiences nurtured her love of species rhododendrons. It wasn't until 1992 however that Chris started growing her own rhodos.

### **3. What's your favourite rhododendron?**

Chris can't have just one favourite....she loves *R. pachysanthum* for its foliage, form and blooms; *R. strigillosum* for its interesting hairs and beautiful new growth; *R. bureauvii* for its indumentum and she has a special affinity for alpinines such as *R. campylogynum* and *R. megeratum*. After thinking about it, one of her favourites is probably *R. recurvoides* for its compact shape, shiny leaves, indumentum, and leaf interest. Hers has never bloomed yet it is still one of her all-time favourites!

### **4. Describe your best day in the garden. ☺**

Not too hot, not too cold, seeing lots of things coming into bloom, while getting a lot of work accomplished. Spring time is best although there's always something of interest to see in the garden at any time of year in our climate.

### **5. What other interests do you have?**

In addition to gardening, Chris enjoys baking, reading mysteries and historical fiction, and spending time with her family and friends.

### **6. What do you like about the Nanaimo Rhododendron Society?**

Chris enjoys the mix of people from all walks of life, the mutual love of plants, nature and the outdoors.



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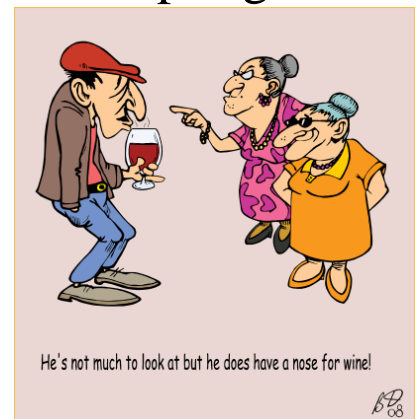
## The 13<sup>th</sup> Annual N.R.S. Bus Tour Saturday, May 18th, 2013



Continuing our tradition of visiting a great mixture of gardens, nurseries, and special places, this year we're going to Saltspring Island.

Cost: \$40 per person includes ferry and Saltspring Island Vineyards wine tasting

**Where do we meet? At the Northfield/Nanaimo Parkway parking lot - the bus will be leaving at 7:20 am.**  
We expect to return at approx. 6:30 pm



Don't forget to bring a picnic lunch and appropriate clothing. Bring a friend...

***Call John to reserve a seat 778.424. 3605***

# NANAIMO RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

## **Nanaimo Rhododendron Society Meeting March 14, 2013 – Minutes**

Meeting started at 7:35

**Welcome:** Art Lightburn welcomed everyone to the 179<sup>th</sup> meeting of the NRS!!

### **President's Address:**

Art Lightburn thanked Sandra Dorman, Gaylle McRae, and Susan Lightburn for bringing the refreshments.

Art has retrieved a few books and pamphlets on growing rhododendrons, please note these are old versions.

Art and Susan attended the planning meeting for the Victoria convention 2015 and they have confirmed that the meeting will be 4 days not 5 and planning is going well.

Art, Tony, and Terry met regarding the Milner Species Garden and were able to measure and develop a scale map which will be saved as a digital file and will be presented to District #1 executive on Tuesday.

The club will be participating at an information table Saturday, May 4, 2013 from 10am-2pm to offer assistance for customers buying rhododendrons and to market our show and sale. A sign-up sheet was distributed.

Bursary: Art is still working with VIU to determine the name of the awards.

### **Committee Reports**

**Speakers:** Glenda Barr reported that the April Speaker will be Lois Blackmore

**Bus Trip:** John Denisiger reported that the bus trip to Salt Spring Island is being planned and distributed a sign-up sheet. The cost is \$40 and the tour will leave as usual from the Northfield/Inland Highway lot. The trip will make 6 stops including Ganges and the market, Temple Farm Plant Nursery, Winery, Susan Bloom garden and Grace Point at Ganges.

**Show and Sale-** Paul Lawry and Art Lightburn will be managing the show.

**Hike-** Burkhardt is working on arranging a hike for the group.

**Secretary** Ann Beamish read a letter from Bill Mangles, treasurer of the ARS thanking NRS for their donation of \$240.

**Membership:** Debbie welcomed Eliane Le Clerc and John Ayres who have joined.

### **1. New Business**

Note: the date of the May 2015 show will be changed to a week prior to Mother's Day so it does not conflict with the convention in Victoria

Al Beiberstein will present a talk on truss care so we can be prepared for the show Susan Lightburn gave a demonstration of logging on to the ejournal of the ARS website. You will need your ARS membership number which she has provided and which also can be found on the address label of your paper copy.

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Door Prizes: Elaine Hutchinson, Edith Higgins, Sandra Millen,  
Raffle: Debbie Gaboury, Ray Lauzier, Earl Daneluk

**PANEL: Dick Beamish, Terry Richmond, Ken Webb**

## **Terry Richmond**

- Uses Earth, Land, and Sea (Cinnabar Valley Farms product) for a potting mix, as it breaks down slowly, and can be topped up with the same as needed
- When repotting, if root bound, score the roots ball down to bottom with 4 to 5 cuts and pot into a bigger pot, better to go up 2 sizes of pot not one
- Watering, Terry advised not to put black pots in the sun and then water as they tend to “cook” as they warm up. Depends on location of plant and amount of mulching you do.
- What to look for in a one gallon pot – good structure not number of buds, look for strong branches
- Does not subscribe to leaving big plants in pots
- Terry has given Craig Clarke and 8-page document on fertilization, Craig will add it to the information tab on the website.
- Terry will make house calls for advice and pH measurement he likes the soil to the 6.7 to 6.8 in the ground and lower in pots maybe 6.5 to 6.7

## **Dick Beamish**

- Buys plants small for low cost and enjoys them as small plants when they finish blooming replants to larger pot and/or into ground. Does leave some pots sunk into ground.
- Plants not doing well, dig up and move them to see where they will do better
- Tends to give away large plants
- Buys small plants to have in garden to give away

## **Ken Webb**

- Decided years ago that he and Madeleine were going to grow rhodos for pleasure and give away rather than to sell them.
- Grow their many plants from cuttings
- Tend to garden on their own time so the garden does not drive their life
- Potting mix: ½ perlite, ½ peat moss, a small amount of fertilizer.

There was a general discussion among the three presenters; some of the early favourites such as Lees Scarlet, Harry Carter and Heatherside Beauty are not readily available. Difficult to propagate. Growers tend to bring in those that they can be certain will sell.

## **Chili Cheese Appetizers (++ easy /tasty recipe)**

1 cup cottage cheese  
1/3 c flour  
½ tsp baking soda  
½ tsp baking Powder  
4 eggs  
3 Tbsp butter, melted

Combine these, then add  
1 ½ c sharp cheddar  
cheese, grated  
1 14 ml can chopped mild  
green chili peppers  
½ cup red pepper,  
chopped

Spread in a greased dish  
(better if not too thick)  
and bake at 350 F for 45  
– 50 minutes.  
Serve warm or cold.  
Freezes well.

I sometimes add Art's  
dried tomatoes – get  
creative!

## **2. Next meeting – Thursday, April 11, at 7:30pm**

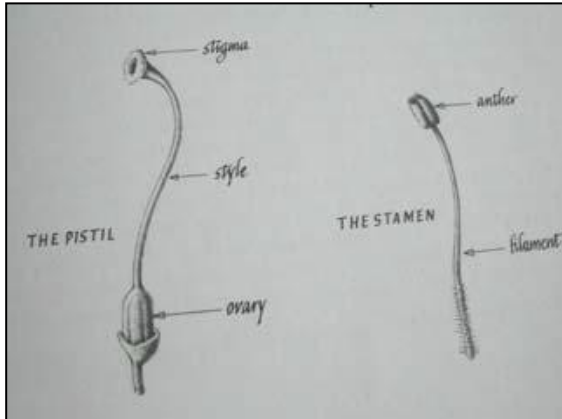
Meeting adjourned at 9:15

# NANAIMO RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

## Hybridizing By Harry Wright

*(reprinted from the NIRS newsletter, April 2007)*

Now that we have winter behind us we can spend more time in the garden, where we belong. A joy to see some real colour, not that I have any trouble with "green". It's the colour that makes the rhodo's so enjoyable year around, plus the fact that there are so many different sizes and shapes of foliage.

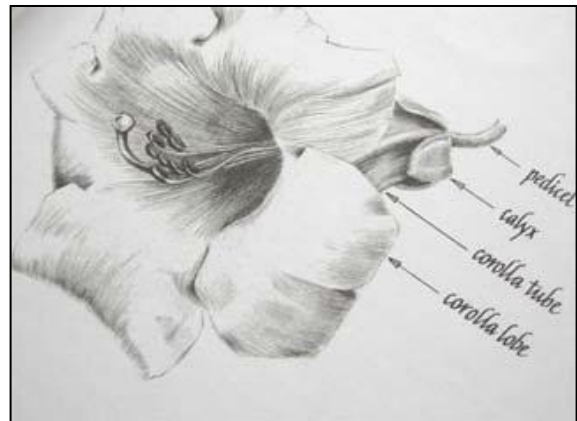


If you are looking to try your hand at hybridizing, now is the time. Creating a new rhododendron takes a few years, but the wait can be very rewarding. The first thing to do is to take a little time and learn the parts of a flower in order to know how pollination takes place. One of the most important things to remember is that you will not be the only one in the garden moving pollen around.

If you wish to cross an early blooming variety with a later one, pollen can be collected, dried and kept in the fridge until the female flower is ready to be pollinated.

When collecting pollen and preparing the female for the cross, do this just before the flower opens. When removing the corollas from the female, ensure that stigma does not come in contact with the anthers as this could cause pollination. This is called self pollination, which you should try to avoid.

On each truss (complete flower) I usually remove all the florets but three, then gently remove petals and anthers. If there are other trusses close by, remove them as well, as it is the bright colours which attract the insects that could contaminate your cross.



Hybridizing is most successful when done during the warmest time of the day, as the stigma is most receptive to the pollen. I usually apply the pollen two or three days in a row to ensure that it is being accepted. Some pollen has a very fine texture, and some are very stringy.

After a month or so, the ovary will remain green and become enlarged which should mean that your cross has been successful. The ripe ovary can be harvested in late September, provided it hasn't been dislodged during the summer by man or beast. Later we will discuss what to do with the seed.

Always remember to tag your cross, on the plant and also enter it in a record book. I also put a piece of survey tape on the branch containing the cross.