

The Rhodomentum

Nanaimo Rhododendron Society Newsletter



April 2017



President's Message

Spring is here! It is so nice to go for a walk and see so many plants, shrubs and trees coming into leaf and into bloom. Work has now started on the "Rhododendron Species Garden" at Milner Garden. Much planning has been underway for the month of May and here is a reminder of what is going to happen in the coming months.

April 13: NRS General Meeting at Beban at 7:30 pm. Our guest speaker is Philip MacDougall from Maple Ridge. His topic will be on Woodland Perennials. Philip is a plant explorer, speaker and plant grower of exceptional perennials. He sells rare and unusual plants. A reminder to all our members, please plan to volunteer to help out at the Plant Sale and Truss show and the Garden Tour. We need you!

Craig will be sending out information by email re the changes to our Constitution/Bylaws. Please read them. The old Constitution is on the NRS website. You can read it and compare it to the draft copy. The voting on this will be at the AGM in May.

April 23: ARS Annual Spring Convention in Eureka, California, April 27-30th.

May 7: Rhododendron Truss Show and Plant Sale at Beban. Remember to bring your trusses on Saturday evening. Thirteen vendors will be selling rhododendrons and other plants.

May 13/14: A two day garden tour of 14 local gardens. Plan to treat your mother with a garden tour or others of your choosing. Your ticket is good for two days, so you do not have to do them all in one day. Art Lightburn will be signing up sitters for gardens at our next meeting.

May 20: Bus Tour of the Comox Valley and Campbell River area. Sign up with June or John at our next meeting.

All the best, Allen

EXECUTIVE

President	Allen McRae	758-7589
Vice President	Art Lightburn	468-7516
Secretary	Ann Beamish	758-2574
Treasurer	Gayle McRae	758-7589
Directors	Glenda Barr	390-2822
	Craig Clarke	390-4090
	Susan Lightburn	468-7516
	Dick Beamish	758-2574
	Chris Southwick	390-3415

COMMITTEES

Advertising	Jan Moles /Gerry Moore
Library	Ann Beamish/Sandra Dorman
Newsletter	Kathryn Grant/June and John
Membership	Krystyna Sosulski
Program	Doug Kitts
Raffle	Ann Davey & Val Harvey
Social	Susan Lightburn
Bargain Table	Reinhold Gorgosilich
Website	Craig Clarke
Bus Tour	John Deniseger & June Bouchard

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Next Meeting

Thursday April 13, 7:30 pm Beban Park Social Centre

Philip MacDougall

"Green Patience - Woodlanders"

Twigs and Stems



GOODIES FOR APRIL

Gerry Moore
Eliane Leclerc
Susan Lightburn

OUR APRIL SPEAKER

PHILIP MACDOUGALL

**GREEN PATIENCE – WOODLANDERS:
THE COMMON AND RARE, EASY AND
RECALCITRANT**

Patience. That's the formula for woodlanders. Seen as the logical perennial companion to Rhododendron gardens, chosen properly these charmers offer interest throughout the year. The cyclic element of birth, growth, death and regeneration add flow to the static structures

of evergreen shrubs. Familiar from long use in our gardens, old standbys from Europe and America have left the group with a dowdy reputation. New breeding and collections from Asia have added heaps of surprisingly good plants. Painfully winnowed to only my very favorites, I'll discuss the common and rare, easy and recalcitrant, with focus paid to Polygonatum and Epimediums.



The 17th Annual N.R.S. Bus Tour Saturday, May 20th, 2017

Continuing our tradition of visiting a great mixture of gardens, nurseries and special places, we're heading north to the Comox Valley and Campbell River area this year.



Cost: \$45 per person

includes 40 Knots Winery tour and tasting

Where do we meet? Woodgrove Mall parking lot near Chapters. The bus will be leaving at 7:30 am. We expect to return by 6:00 to 6:30 pm

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

To reserve a seat, send us an email at juneandjohn@shaw.ca

Five Fragrance Champs for Early Spring

Make spring so much more with fragrance in the garden

We are pleased to share some of our favourite fragrant plants for early spring olfactory bliss. All of these plants are in bloom right now at Phoenix. We really think you should come down for some smell tests. But beware: once you discover how these amazing plants can change your life in early spring you won't be able to live without them.



Daphne mezereum - February Daphne - February daphne (*D. mezereum*) is an upright deciduous shrub with mid green leaves. In late winter the naked stems are festooned with intoxicatingly fragrant magenta-purple flowers later turning into red berries. This is one of the hardiest of daphnes. Plant in part sun/part shade with morning or late afternoon sun (protect it from the hottest sun of the day) in rich, well-drained soil. Do not move after planting due to sensitive roots.



Lonicera fragrantissima - Winter Honeysuckle - *Lonicera fragrantissima* is a very fragrant winter-flowering honeysuckle shrub best placed where you will walk past it in winter and early spring. Our large specimen at the nursery begins blooming with small, white flowers in January and continues through March. Makes a lovely cut flower for a winter vase. Underplant with hellebores and allow a few Clematis to grow up through its branches to add colour later in the season.



Clematis armandii - Evergreen Clematis - This vigorous, evergreen clematis blooms in early spring with masses of small, star-shaped, white flowers that are sweetly fragrant -- just the antidote you need after a long grey winter. The leaves are long, pointed and deep green and are lovely in winter. Tolerant of part shade. As with all clematis *C. armandii* appreciates its roots in the shade.



Clematis armandii 'Apple Blossom' - Evergreen Clematis - 'Apple Blossom' is a vigorous, evergreen clematis that blooms in early spring with masses of small, star-shaped, sweetly fragrant flowers that are pink in bud opening to white flowers with pink reverses. The young leaves and stems have a lovely bronze tint. The mature leaves are long, pointed and deep green. Tolerant of part shade. As with all clematis C. armandii appreciates its roots in the shade.



Sarcococca ruscifolia - Fragrant Sweet Box - Sarcococca ruscifolia is a tall and elegant occasionally suckering sweet box with dark green, leathery, shiny, somewhat twisted, evergreen leaves atop arching stems to 3-4 ft. tall. In late winter and early spring small, white, feathery, extremely fragrant flowers are produced along the stems followed later by dark red to black berries. Use as in informal hedge or for evergreen accents in their garden where you can enjoy the winter fragrance.

Phoenix Perennials



Rhodos for the species garden at Milner

-Craig Clarke

NANAIMO RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

NANAIMO RHODODENDRON SOCIETY Truss Show Sunday, May 7

Last year witnessed the greatest participation ever in our show.

Increase your knowledge and appreciation of rhododendrons by participating in our annual truss show. Access valuable information and tips from the winter 2013 ARS journal, the NRS website and the NRS May, 2012 and 2013 newsletters.

To ensure uniformity in the show, don't guess which class your truss belongs to. There is an updated PDF file with a list of plants sorted into show classes available from the truss show page of the club website. If in doubt, leave the class blank and it will be filled in at the registration desk. Avoid the Sunday morning rush by bringing trusses in between 6PM and 7:30 PM Saturday evening (May 6). Alternately, trusses can be entered from 6:30 – 7:45 AM Sunday morning.

Registration forms can be obtained at the NRS meeting, prior to the show, or from this newsletter or at the registration desk. Your name, the name of the truss and its entry class should be entered on the registration form. On the second page, provide a duplication of the **truss show names in the same or identical order as on the registration form.**

On arrival, give the registration form to people at the desk, thus enabling the withdrawal of the appropriate rhododendron name cards from the bank. Keep the separate list for assistance in organizing your entries. (Matching the identifying cards to the entries has been a major hold-up in the past). The desk will provide you with the numbered identifying cards; again in identical order as on the registration form.

On the table adjacent to the registration desk, entrants can then place trusses in the water filled bottles and **arrange them in the same order as on the registration form.**

Help will be available for this and in transporting the bottles and appropriate identification card to the display tables. Members entering more than 15 trusses might consider having a friend or spouse help.

Tips on Exhibiting Trusses and Sprays

A day or two before the show go around and make a list of the blooms you will pick on the morning, the day before the show. Organize whatever containers you will be using to transport your blooms to the show. They needn't be elaborate. Empty bottles or cans work well. Be careful to avoid crushing the blooms. Fill the containers with water almost to the top. Bottles in six-pack cartons are great for transporting blooms.

Picking blooms always takes more time than you think it will! When choosing trusses, select ones that have straight stems with the bloom at the top. Don't choose ones with crooked stems that are growing at odd angles (e.g. pointing straight down). When choosing sprays, look for ones that will present themselves gracefully in a bottle. Pieces of cork can be used to stabilize the stem in the neck of the bottle.

Prune judiciously if need be to enhance the shape of a spray. Avoid choosing entries with bruises. Sometimes rain damage is inevitable, but avoid it if you can. Look for freshness. In a spray, it is better to have one or more unopened flower buds (for they frequently open after they have been picked) than to choose blooms that are already open and going over. Some judges like to see one or two unopened or partially opened buds, but a truss must not have flowers from more than one bud (except for the hammerhead class). Hammerhead definition (Seattle) is inflorescence with multiple rachis emanating from a single leaf stem.

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Mini Botany Lesson #4 Flowers

What is a truss?

ARS Glossary: **truss** Flower cluster (inflorescence) made up of many individual flowers. The structure varies considerably among species and cultivars, giving the plants distinctive appearance.

If you look at a flower truss (inflorescence), you should be able to identify the peduncle (main stalk, bearing the truss, above the whorl of leaves), the rachis (central axis) if any, and the pedicel (the stalk of each flower).

The inflorescence is described as a raceme if the separate flowers are attached by short stalks at equal distances along the central stem (rachis), or as an umbel if the flower stalks arise from one point at the tip of a stem. An intermediate shape may be described as an umbellate raceme. The inflorescence may bear one to many flowers and are described as loose (or lax) e.g., *R. cinnabarinum* or tight (or compact) *R. catawbiense*.

There are three different arrangements of flower and leaf buds and these are useful in defining the main groups

1. Flower buds terminal with leaf buds separate (the common arrangement).

Found:

- in all subgenus **Hymenanthus** (elepidote)
- in practically all subgenus **Rhododendron** (lepidote)
- in deciduous azaleas (sections **Rhodora**, **Pentanthera**, **Viscidula** of subgenus **Pentanthera**).

2. Flower buds lateral (in leaf axils) with leaf buds above them. i.e. terminal bud is vegetative on the flowering shoot.

Found:

- in subgenus **Azaleastrum** (e.g. *R. ovatum*)
- in subgenus **Mumeazalea** (*R. semibarbatum*)
- in subgenus **Candidastrum** (*R. albiflorum*)
- in subsection **Scabriflora** (*R. racemosum*)
- in subsection **Rhododrastra** (*R. dauricum*)
- in subsection **Virgata** (*R. virgatum*)

3. Buds compound, i.e. with leaf buds arising from within the flower buds, but flowers and leaves still produced by separate buds, on different axes.

Found:

- in subgenus **Tsutsusi** (i.e. in sections **Tsutsusi** and **Brachycalyx**)
- in two of the four species in section **Sciadorhodon** of subgenus **Pentanthera** (*R. schlippenbachii* and *R. quinquefolium*).

TRUSSES ARE NICE BUT

Austin C. Kennell, Martinsburg, W. Va.

If I were a rhododendron, I don't believe I'd be much impressed with folks who make such a big fuss over my flowers but practically ignore my many other interesting and, in most cases, more important, attributes. I'd probably be quite disappointed that none of these other good points were given much attention. I find it hard to understand why my beauty is seemingly judged by something I do only a few weeks out of each year, particularly when that judgment is made in an artificially created setting rather than in context with the rest of me. And, along with most of my fellow rhodos who don't have a big perfectly formed truss with magnificently hued flowers, I'd undoubtedly lead a vociferous protest for equal time!

But since I'm not a rhododendron,* I guess I can't speak for them. I can, however, speak as an individual who loves rhodos for their multi-faceted and year-round appeal. Flowers are an important part of the composite attractiveness of a rhododendron - but they are not the most significant component to me. Nice big perfect trusses and gorgeously colored flowers are certainly nice but do not in themselves make outstanding rhododendrons.

I hope no one gets the idea that I'm against flowers. I like them! I'm also not against Truss Shows. I

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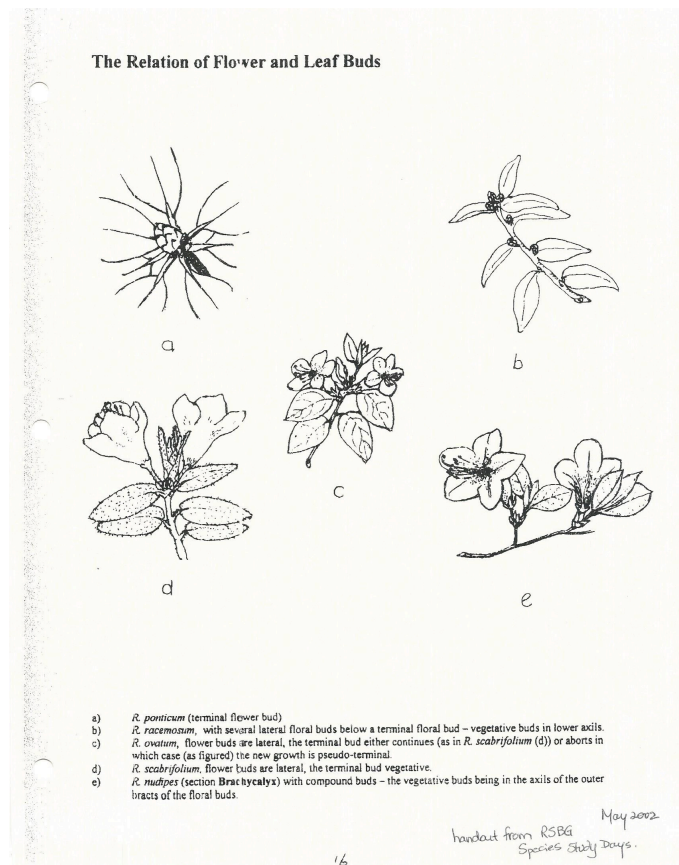
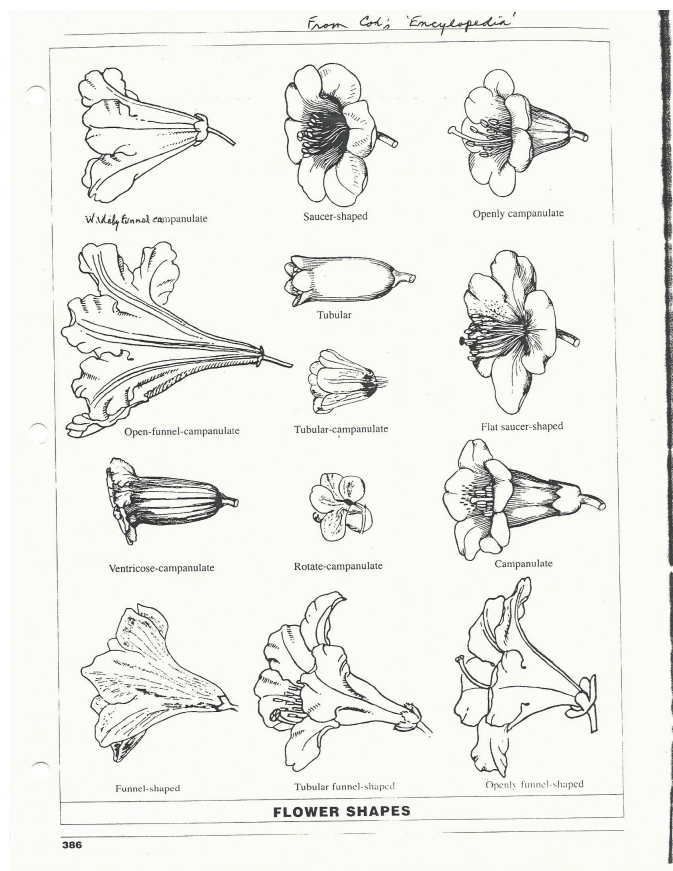
enjoy them! What I don't particularly like is a tendency to focus so much attention on trusses that the other desirable and attractive characteristics of my beloved rhododendrons sort of get shunted into the background.

I don't advocate the abolishment of Truss Shows, but I would like to also see some other shows that focus attention on the other interesting and beautiful rhododendron features. Some possibilities are Foliage Shows, Fragrance Shows, New Growth Shows, Fall Coloration Shows, Plant Habit Shows, Stem Shows, and Indumentum Shows. Such shows would add new dimensions to the fascinating subject of a rhododendron's appeal.

There are many rhododendrons I'd love even if they never bloomed. There are many rhododendrons I cherish even though they do not have perfect trusses. But I've never seen even one rhododendron I would want if it had nothing but flowers.

*but my wife says I might as well be one.

**Journal of the American Rhododendron Society, (JARS) Volume 32, Number 3
Summer 1978**



Mini Botany Lesson

#4 Flowers

Rhododendrons are mainly grown for their spectacular, sometimes strongly scented flowers, which are borne singly or in lateral or terminal racemes or umbels. The individual flowers vary greatly in size and shape but are usually 5-lobed and often marked with flares or spots inside, on the upper or lower lobes or in the throats; some also have conspicuous or brightly coloured, basal nectar pouches inside. There are over a thousand species and many thousands of hybrids in almost every flower colour.

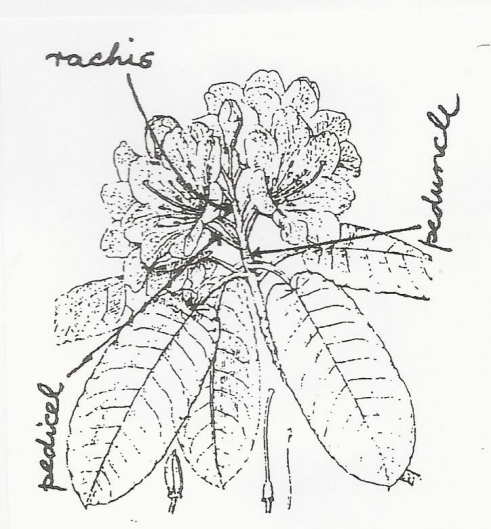
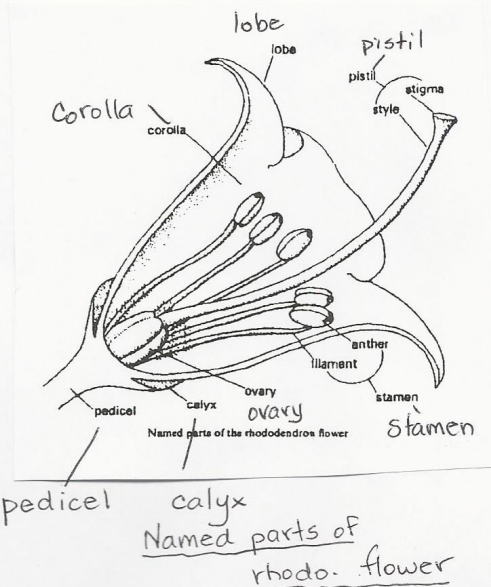
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Some info & diagrams
From Rhodo Species Botanical Garden Species Study
Days Notes 2002.



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Viva's Rum Cake

4 eggs
2 C white sugar
1 C vegetable oil
2 C pure pumpkin (14 oz tin)
3 C flour
1 T b powder
1 T b. soda
½ t. salt
½ t. cinnamon
1 C choc chips (or not)

Cake:

Mix all cake ingredients together starting with the wet ingredients. Bake at 350 for approx. 55 minutes for one cake, less for 2 cakes. Use a Bundt pan that is well-oiled.

Glaze:

¼ C butter, ¼ C water, 1 C sugar, ½ C dark rum. Melt ingredients together except the rum. Bring to a good boil for 1 min. Take off the heat, cool and add rum. Take baked cake out of the pan, pour glaze into the Bundt pan then put the cake back in to soak for about an hour. It doesn't need icing!

This is large recipe. It makes a very high and dense Bundt cake or 2 smaller Bundt cakes. You can use home made, fresh pumpkin and add some ginger, or nutmeg, too. In the glaze, you can also use brown sugar instead of white.

I am leading a 21 day tour of South Africa gardens, sights and safari this fall and would kindly request if you could publicize this tour with your chapter members and/or in your monthly newsletters.

Deadline for deposits is April 15, 2017. Approximate tour costs (not including international flights) all inclusive in country are CAD\$7300 USD\$5600 for double accommodation with a CAD\$1400 USD\$1100 for single supplement. Deposits are CAD \$1750 USD\$1375.00 per person.

I am a long time ARS member from the Cowichan Valley on Vancouver Island and have led a number of excellent and highly rated tours to the US, UK and most recently New Zealand. The South Africa tour is a trip of a lifetime and we welcome anyone to join our group for a visit to this fascinating country with some exceptional botanic and show gardens along with a couple of fabulous safaris, culture and other sights.

The tour begins in Capetown and departs from Johannesburg. Flights **must not** be booked until the tour is confirmed.

You can find all of the detailed information on the tour at www.SouthAfricaTour2017.com.

Bill Dumont



Agapanthus and Elephants!
Fabulous South Africa
SEPT. 13 - OCT. 4
21 Day Guided Garden, Safari & Sights Tour
www.SouthAfricaTour2017.com
marlin★travel
250 748 2594 - Cindy

NANAIMO RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

NRS General Meeting, March 9, 2017

President's Report

Welcome. We are few in number this evening due to the weather and we thank Bernie Dinter, our speaker, for venturing up here from Duncan.

Rhodo Biology Chris Southwick presented the third in her series on rhodo botany with a presentation on "flowers"

Secretary's Report

Ann Beamish
Rock and Alpine Garden Show March 17/18 Victoria at Cadboro Bay United Church, 2625 Arbutus Road, Victoria

Treasurer's Report Gaylle presented an updated Treasurer's report indicating balance for February and indicating upcoming expenses.

Bargain Table Reinhold. Plants and some books from the library for sale.

Library Ann and Gaylle McRae gutted the library and sorted the books, future will include recarding and new sleeves.

Membership Krystyna reported memberships at 53(67 members) and 5 associate members

Program Chair no report in Doug Kitts absence

Raffle Table Anne Davey / Val Harvey reported plants today Olive, Norma Howell and r. anwheiense

Social Susan Lightburn thanked members for signing up for the year and encouraged all present to help themselves as we have many treats tonight

Website Craig Clarke

Sunshine Ann reported sending cards to: the family of Mary Hardy, Jean Grieg, and Fred Hechler. She will send one to Doug Kitts.

Plant Sale and Truss Show, Sun. May 7th **NOTE: start time 0930 not 1000**

Chris Southwick we need volunteers for the raffle table and others, sign up sheet will be going out at April meeting

Doug Blenkarn will be handling the truss show

Garden Tour May 13/14 tickets \$15 Art Lightburn- reported that he has secured 13/14 gardens, 2 for one day only. He will require approximately 40 sitters. Shifts will be 10am-1pm and 1pm-4 pm. Master Gardeners will be available *in addition to the sitter* at 2 gardens, to assist attendees with questions and provide information.

Bus Trip John Deniseger **May 20th. Tickets are \$45.** John reported that we will be going north this year to Comox and Campbell River. And he has arranged to visit 6 private gardens. There will be a wine tasting at 40 Knots

Old Business

ARS Annual Spring Convention in Eureka, California, April 27-30th.

New Society's Act. Craig reported that he and Gaylle and Allen McRae have reviewed the new requirements which are mainly moving to an on-line model. The changes will be advertised at our April meeting in order to meet requirement to have any changes to by-law or constitution advertised one month prior to the Annual General Meeting which will be in May.

Renewals for Milner Gardens. –David Mitchell will be selling renewals at the April meeting.

The next meeting of the Executive will be at Chris Southwick's at 2 pm on March 16th.

Silent Auction: a beautiful *R. lutea* was available for silent auction

Our guest speaker Bernie Dinter from Dinter's Garden Center, Duncan

RAFFLE PLANTS



Rubicon -12° C Height: 1.2-1.8M (4-6 ft)

Fantastic cardinal red flowers with black spotting on the upper lobes. Anthers are white and add to the attractiveness of the truss. Plant has wonderful, glossy green leaves with deep veining. A superior plant that is exceptional! ('Noyo Chief' x 'Kilimanjaro')



Rhododendron Blaney's Blue -5°F (-21°C) 5 feet in 10 years.

Beautiful Blue to purple; leaves green to bronze; Likes sun or part shade; blooms last longer than Bob's

Parentage: Augustinii tower court x blue diamond Hybridizer: Ticknor

Guess what's showing up in the garden?
Photos by Susan Lightburn



R. calophytum



R. vellereum



R. cilpinense



R. lanigerum



R. 'Coral Glow'



R. 'Coral Glow'