



NANAIMO RHODODENDRON SOCIETY



DECEMBER 2004



SEE YOU AT OUR XMAS AUCTION

Volume 14

Issue 4

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Season's Greetings to everyone. I am looking forward to seeing you all at our Christmas Social and Auction. Bring along some tasty finger food for our Pot Luck dinner, something for the "Auction", some cash and be prepared to have a good time. Drinks will be supplied. All guests are welcome-friends, neighbours and relatives.

Let's remember that it will soon be getting cold outside. Mulch your rhodos and protect your more cold sensitive plants. See you on the 9th. Allen

EXECUTIVE

President	Allen McRae	758-7589
Past President	Richard White	752-6519
V/President	Paul Lawry	390-2370
Secretary	Kathryn Grant	245-7879
Treasurer	Barb Coy	758-8497
Directors	Anne Williamson	390-2604
	Chris Southwick	758-0993
	Craig Clarke	390-4090
	Debbie Gaboury	758-1204
	Glenda Barr	390-2822
	Mary Taylor	756-3984
	Mike Miller	758-2879

COMMITTEES

ADVERTISING	Allan	758-7589
LIBRARY	Chris/Brenda	758-0993
NEWSLETTER	Paul & Linda	390-2370
PROGRAMS	Richard	752-6519
RAFFLE TABLE	June & John	390-3605
SOCIAL	Anne	390-2604
\$\$ TABLE	Yvonne	756-3574

DONATE PLANTS TO THE AUCTION

Have a plant that is getting too big? Donate it to the Auction. You can either bring it in, take a photo or give a description and we will Auction the plant. If it is big, we can always have a volunteer work party to dig it up and deliver it to the new owner.



NEXT MEETING

DECEMBER 9 - BEBAN PARK
6:30 PM

XMAS AUCTION

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL TIME
PLEASE MAIL IN OR PAY YOUR DUES
AT THE NEXT MEETING, *Thanks!*

1

MEETING IS AT 6:30
DECEMBER 9, 2004





NANAIMO RHODODENDRON SOCIETY



**OUR DECEMBER MEETING
IS POTLUCK.
BRING FINGER FOOD TO SHARE
DURING OUR AUCTION**

SILVER SALUTE
VICTORIA'S 25th ANNIVERSARY



**ARS CONVENTION
VICTORIA**
BRITISH COLUMBIA
APRIL 27 - MAY 1
2005

NRS MAILING ADDRESS
Suite 241 1-5765 Turner Road
Nanaimo, BC V9T 6M4

NRS WEBSITE
Nanaimo.rhodos.ca

NRS EMAIL ADDRESS
Nanaimo@rhodos.ca

PAST ISSUES
Nanaimo.rhodos.ca/newsarchive

ARS WEBSITE
www.rhododendron.org

Rhododendron & Azalea News
www.rhododendron.org/news/
newsindex.htm.

NEWSLETTER EDITORS
Paul & Linda Lawry
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Paul & Lynn Wurz
4307 Gordon Rd.
Campbell River
287-4301

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Growers of Specialty Rhododendrons

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MORE GROWDCOVERS TO HELP WORK IN THE GARDEN ... by Jennifer Moore

Groundcovers really are a benefit to any garden. They cover the ground, forming a nice even matting, thus not allowing weed seeds to find the soil to germinate and most are drought tolerant needing little care. The choices available to a gardener are numerous with their various characteristics; plain or variegated leaf, bloom colour, small or large-leaved and sun or shade tolerant. More plants are being asked to stretch their limits too, with water restrictions and colder zones being asked to survive winters in.

Large mass plantings of groundcovers planted in a border is quite striking, especially when placed in front of larger plants that become a backdrop for them. Complimentary colours carry their colour hues throughout the garden when planted in large groupings, rather than looking like small splatterings of colour here and there.

The only necessary requirements they do need during the first season, are watering deeply once a week to encourage the roots to go deeply and removing any weeds. The poorest of soils are tolerated by many groundcovers, making our job even easier with our task in choosing the right varieties.

Here is a selection of the many varieties being offered to gardeners:

Thyme - Very low-growing, this plant loves the heat. Tiny leaves are formed to be used in many savoury dishes. Very small pink flowers appear, but should be removed if leaves are going to be harvested. Once the flowers appear, the leaves turn bitter. There are many varieties of thyme available, so unlock your minds to the different smells when the leaves are gently rubbed.

Creeping Jenny - As the name suggest, the stems of this plant creep along and root as it travels. Round, bright green leaves with a gold tone are produced in mid-spring, then summer brings a flush of lemon yellow flowers. Slugs and caterpillars like this groundcover, yet watering during the day helps with regular checks.

Bugleflower - My favourite of all the various groundcovers I grow, this plant keeps trudging along with anything I throw at it. The blue or pink flower spikes appear in early summer above either green, purple or pink-tipped leaves. Even when not in bloom this groundcover still looks good through its foliage. Sending out runners that rest on the soil and start new plants makes this an easy plant to propagate. Once it is growing tight and compact, very little weed seeds will penetrate through.

Snow-In-Summer - Grey leaves and white five-petalled flowers adorn this plant. Growing in full sun or part-shade, this plant is smothered in blooms in the early summer, thus truly living up to its name. An easy carefree plant needing very little attention even in its first season.

Sweet Woodruff - A very quick spreader, the bright green leaves are formed in rings up the main stem of this plant. Very small white flowers also appear early summer and last for quite a long time. This plant must be thought about before planting, as once it is planted it does take persistence to remove it again completely.

Chameleon Plant - Called *Houttuynia cordata* 'Chameleon' in latin, this vigorous grower can thrive in wet conditions beside a natural pond or stream, or in a flowerbed with mulch. Its heart-shaped leaves are a greenish-blue with cream and reddish-pink markings. The flower is a very small cream bloom that appears in mid-summer on the very tip of the stems. It grows 6" - 12" tall in full-sun or shade locations and is hardy in zone 4 .

Burro's Tail - A great conversational plant, grey rosettes continue to grow longer and longer as the season progresses, trailing along the ground as they go. Tiny clusters of inconspicuous yellow flowers are formed on the very end to the rosette. Hard to transplant when they are long, it is better to split the clump early in the spring before they have put forth substantial growth, or take cuttings and root them in moist soilless mix during the growing season. They do not like being transplanted, so thought must be taken before planting them in their location.

Golden Carpet Sedum - Growing only 1 inch tall and very tightly together forming a mat, this plant spreads readily but is very easily controlled. Flowering throughout the summer with brilliant yellow little stars, this plant is worth any spot in the garden, as only a limited number of perennials flower so hard for so long. This plant is so forgiving and easy to propagate; simply remove a section and plant where wanted or even easier still, break off pieces and press them into the ground with your foot! This is a great heavy traffic area plant as well.

Dragon's Blood Sedum - Thick reddish leaves trail to make wonderful mats along any rockery. Showy light red flowers appear in the summer making the total height of this plant 6 inches tall.

These are only a few of the many varieties offered by growers. Well-tilled soil, a small amount of fertilizer or compost and water are the only necessities to have great coverage in the first season, and where grass isn't wanted or where a very low maintenance flower garden is required.

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3

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NANAIMO RHODODENDRON SOCIETY



Nanaimo Rhododendron Society - Minutes of November 2, 2004 Regular Meeting

1. **Meeting :** Called to order by President Allen McRae, at 7:34 p.m..
2. **Secretary's report:** M/S/C to adopt the minutes of the last meeting as printed in the news letter. Correspondence received: Letter from Ingeborg Woodsworth.
3. **Treasurer's report**

The balance in the Bowen Park Legacy Account is \$156.24
The balance in the general account is \$4076.44
The balance in the library fund is \$258.05
It was M/S/C to adopt the treasurer's report as read.
4. **Committee Reports:**
 - Library:** M/S/C to purchase *Rhododendrons in Horticulture and Science* and *George Forrest, Plant Hunter* with funds to be transferred from general account if necessary.
 - Social:** Reminder for Xmas party, bring finger food, donation for food bank. Club will supply punch, tea & coffee..
 - Program:** January Michael Miller will speak on his trip to Nepal.
February Dr. Roy Taylor on construction of his garden
 - Membership: **Deadline is November 30 to renew memberships & receive Winter issue of ARS journal.****
5. **Old business:**

Michael Miller picked up the club order of plants from the Rhododendron Species Foundation at UBC Botanical Garden; Craig Clarke will issue invoices once he receives his credit card statement.
6. **New Business:** None.
7. **Executive meeting:** Will be hosted by Michael Miller on November 25 at 7 p.m..
8. **Door prize winners:** Ann Davey, Joy Paull, Jerry Hoffer, Beryl Riches, Shelley.
 - Name Tag Draw:** Paul Lawry, Reinholt Gorgosilich
 - Raffle Draw:** Bill Hardy, Terry Richmond, Angkana Hechler, Ray Lauzier
9. **Program:** Steve Hootman gave a very informative presentation on his plant hunting trip to NE India..

Members who are interested in ordering from the **Rhododendron Species Foundation's Spring Catalogue**, please contact Craig Clarke — Catalogue arrives in December.

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4

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Rock Gardens

If your property has a slope dotted with interesting or weathered rock formations, you have an ideal spot for a rock garden. If nature hasn't provided you with the ideal location, all you need is a few loads of topsoil and some rocks. If you must bring in your own rocks and soil, start small. The job may be bigger than you think.

Rocks

Rocks native to your area will look natural and will be the cheapest and easiest to obtain. Large rocks with irregular shapes look interesting in the rock garden, but keep in mind that you'll need smaller rocks, too. Limestone is a good selection. The rock is soft and porous, allowing moisture to seep through, and some determined roots will be able to make their way through the rock. Limestone usually has depressions in it that can be filled with dirt for planting mosses and lichens.

Set the rocks in the lowest, front part of the garden first and work upward. Shovel enough soil around each rock to anchor it firmly. You may need to bury half or more of each rock. After the rocks are in place, let the soil settle around them for a few days, then take a look from a distance to be sure you like the layout before adding plants.

Plants

There is an endless variety of plants to choose from. Low growing perennials are the best, but since many of those best suited to rock gardens bloom only in the spring, consider strategic placement of summer-blooming heaths, heathers, herbs and annuals to add color during the rest of the season.

Some purists feel that a rock garden should contain only those plants which grow naturally on rocky slopes in poor soil. Most rock gardens, however, are not located in cool climates with long winters where these plants do well. When selecting your plants, make sure they are right for your climate and exposure.

Seeds for the Rock Garden

Annuals

- [Blue Eyed Grass](#)
- [Desert Bluebell](#)
- [Lobelia](#)
- [Strawflower](#)
- [Summer Savory](#)
- [Sweet Alyssum](#)

Perennials

- [Balloon Flower](#)
- [Dwarf Lavender](#)
- [English Daisy](#)
- [Forget-Me-Not](#)
- [Wallflower](#)
- [Penstemon](#)
- [Phlox](#)

Rock Garden Care

Think of your rock garden as a collection of potted plants, and tend them accordingly. Loosen the soil in each area occasionally with a small garden fork. Most rock plants do well in poor soil, but the occasional addition of manure or compost will give them a boost.

Routine care will include cutting back any leggy plants after flowering, clipping off dead stems and foliage, and dividing any plants that become root-bound or too large for its space. Check for insects and diseases regularly. Slugs may be especially pesky because they enjoy the shelter found among the rocks. Never let weeds grow in the nooks and crannies. They will easily crowd out plants in small areas.

Because plants in a rock garden are more exposed than plants in a level bed, they may need more protection in winter. A heavy mulch should be applied before the first freeze in cold climates.

About the Author:

Jackie Carroll is the editor of GardenGuides.com, a leading internet destination for gardening information and ideas.

[Visit GardenGuides.com](http://GardenGuides.com)

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Steve Hootman's trip to NE India

In the Fall of 2003, Steve Hootman traveled to northeastern India a region with the richest temperate flora in the world. First, he joined an expedition that climbed Mount Javpo in Nagaland near the Burmese border. The slopes of the mountain were cloaked in a forest of giant *Rhododendron macabeaenum*. A red form of *R. arboreum* in this mountain range is listed in the Guinness Book of World Records as the world's tallest rhododendron. The next ascent was Mt. Saramati. To his surprise, he found *R. macabeaenum* up to the summit at 3840 metres (12,600 feet), more than 600 metres higher than previously reported. Steve said that plants found at an elevation of 3050 metres (10,000 feet) or higher in Nagaland are hardy in our climate.

After the first expedition in Nagaland, Steve met with Ken Cox and attempted to cross the Dibang/Brahmaputra divide. This region is of particular interest because it was not visited by the earlier plant explorers. The trip was aborted due to bad weather and logistical problems. Instead, they visited the border between Arunachal Pradesh in India and western Bhutan. In this region they found that *R. kesangiae* is profuse in forests up to 3350 metres (11,000 feet). Other appealing rhododendrons included *R. megoratum*, *R. flinckii*, *R. falconeri* ssp. *eximium*, *R. bhutanense* and *R. dalhousiae* var. *rhabdotum* *R. keysii*, *R. fulgens*, *R. thomsonii*, *R. edgeworthii*, & *R. hodgsonii*. An attractive creeping alpine plant, *Gaultheria trichophylla* has fragrant flowers and aromatic foliage. More than 5,500 species of vascular plants have been documented in Bhutan, including 46 species of rhododendrons and 369 species of orchids.

A famed English explorer was invited to Dartmouth go tell of his adventures in the African jungle.

“Can you imagine,” he demanded. “people so primitive that they love to eat the embryo of certain birds, and slices from the belly of certain animals” and grind up grass seed, make it into a paste, burn it over a fire, then smear it with a greasy mess they extracted from the mammary fluid of certain other animals?”

When the students looked startled by such barbarism, the lecturer added, “What I’ve been describing, of course, is a breakfast of bacon, eggs and buttered toast.

FOOD BANK DONATION

Bring non-perishable items for the Food Bank.

We will be having a separate draw for those who donate to this worthy cause.

BRING YOUR OWN CUP FOR COFFEE OR TEA

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