

NANAIMO RHODODENDRON SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY



Volume 10

Issue 6

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

CHRIS SOUTHWICK

It is 6:30 on Sunday morning, January 27th and I've just come inside after vainly knocking off snow from all of my trees and tall rhodies. My small ones are deeply buried and I hope they have enough snow under their branches to protect them from breaking. I awoke at 5:02 a.m. to a large cracking noise close to my head. I knew instantly that it was coming from the yard and as it had been snowing when I went to bed, I lept out of bed and threw some pants on over my pajamas.

I stepped over the dog (she's old and deaf) and roused her out of a deep sleep. She followed me down the stairs and then eagerly waited at the door as I pulled on my boots, coat, gloves and a hat to protect my neck from errant snow.

A beautiful but deadly scene awaited us. A good 45 cm blanketed everything. My alarm grew as I saw my large Japanese maple groaning under the weight of the snow. A rescue mission began. I started with that beautiful tree as I couldn't bear to lose some of its beautiful symmetry.

After getting thoroughly dowsed with

(Continued on page 6)

UPCOMING EVENTS

**February 14, 2002 NRS General Meeting
at Beban Park 7:30 P.M.**

**Steve Hootman from the Rhododendron
Species Foundation Botanical Garden.**

February, March, April & May: Species identification workshops, Rhododendron Species Foundation, Saturdays \$140. Jim Greig (phone 468-7805)

March 15-17 Botanical Garden Society Annual Spring Garden Show, Beban Park.

John Deniseger and Chris Southwick are organising a visit to North Island gardens

May 9, 10, 11 Milner Gardens Rhododendron festival

May 18, 19 MARS bus tour to Bernt Ronning Garden near Holberg. Phone Pat Jefferson 752-2524

VOLUNTEERS

RAFFLE:

JUNE BOUCHARD
TERRI MACK

DOLLAR TABLE:

ANTOINETTE SPOOR

GOODIES:

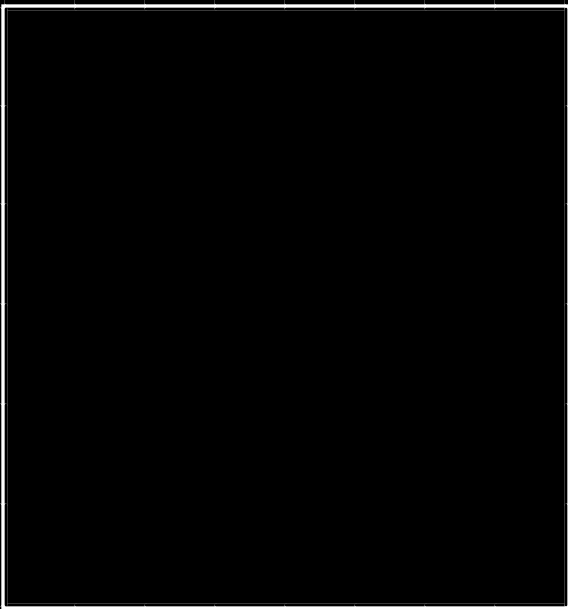
PAUL LAWRY

CHRIS SOUTHWICK

Don't forget bring plants
for the \$ Table

1





FOR FREE & FOR SALE

I have some old clay and wooden pots for free and rhodos for sale. The rhodos are as follows: Falconeri, Rex, Diaprepies, Ariculatum, Whirlaway, Purple Splendour and Circus.

Al Hirst

THE BACKYARD
Wildbird & Nature Store

Colin & Denise Bartlett

Tel: (250) 390-3669
Fax: (250) 390-1633
www.go-nanaimo.com/birds

#6-6404 Metral Drive, Nanaimo, B.C. V9T 2L8

NANAIMO RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

Nanaimo Rhododendron Society - Minutes of January 10th Regular Meeting

1. The meeting was called to order by President Chris Southwick at 7:35pm.
2. Chris welcomed new members and guests.
3. **Secretary's report:** Correspondence from Cusheon Creek Nursery regarding the date of the May Truss show & Sale and an advertisement for the Northwest Flower & Garden Show in Seattle..
4. **Treasurer's report:** The balance in the Bowen Park Legacy Fund is \$155.90
The balance in the general account is \$3550.73
The balance in the library fund is \$325.81
The Christmas auction income was \$1266, expenditures were \$271.60 and the raffle income was \$228.00.
5. **President's report** Chris Southwick reported that Jim Cadwaladr thanked her for sending a letter in support of their successful application for a US \$20,000 grant from the Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust for installation of identification labelling and interpretation of the Greig Rhododendron Collection at Milner Gardens and Woodland
6. **Committee Reports:**
 - Library:** David is putting together a book order.
 - Program:** February speaker is Steve Hootman of the Rhododendron Species Foundation Botanical Garden.
 - Tours:** Doug Blenkarn is organising visits to members' gardens, passing a sign up sheet
7. **Upcoming Events:** See page 1 of Newsletter
8. **5-minute talk:** Leslie Sutton and her daughter Rachel from "Dig This" demonstrated a variety of interesting garden tools & gadgets.
9. **Next executive meeting:** At Chris Southwick's house on January 17th at 7pm
10. **Door Prize winners:** Craig Clarke, Alan McCrae, Joy Paul, Doug Blenkarn, Beryl Riches, Terry Richmond
 - Name Tag draw:** John Deniseger.
 - Raffle winners:** Glenda Barr, Craig Clarke, Linda White, Ann Williamson, Helene Sullivan, Barbara Little.
11. Richard White gave a slide presentation of his trip to the ARS Annual Convention in Eugene, Oregon last year with visits to a number of beautiful gardens along the way.

Art Knapp's provides the best selection of Fertilizers & Pesticides, Trees & Shrubs, Annuals & Perennials plus hundreds more garden related items and all the Free information you can use! Clay, Plastic and Ceramic Pots. Tropicals. Flower & Vegetable Seeds. Bulk Soil & Bark Mulch. Indoor Potting Mixes, Outdoor Bagged Soil. You name it, we got it.



6469 Metral Dr., Nanaimo, B.C.
Next to Woodgrove Mall, across from Home Depot
390-1151 Phone us for free information!

OPEN
SEVEN DAYS A WEEK
9:00 am - 5:30 pm



Don't forget bring plants
for the \$ Table

3



NANAIMO RHODODENDRON SOCIETY



**Island Stone & Landscaping
Supply**
*7425 Industrial Road
Lantzville, BC
V0R 2H0*



PORT DAVID
**Landscaping, Stonework,
Garden Design & Irrigation**
Ward Porter
Office [250]758-2494
Cell [250]714-9754

December 14, 2001

West Island Highway
Qualicum Beach, BC, V9K 1G1
tp: milnergardens mala bc. ca

Chris Southwick
Nanaimo Rhododendron Society
5588 Clipper Drive
Nanaimo, BC V9T 5M7

Dear Chris,

I am pleased to inform you that our proposal for \$20,000.00 (US) to the Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust for the identification labelling and interpretation of the Greig Rhododendron Collection at Milner Gardens and Woodland has been approved.

Thank you for your letter of support towards this project.

We will keep you updated on our progress.

Sincerely,

Jim Cadwaladr, Executive Director



Paul & Lynn Wurz
4307 Gordon Rd.
Campbell River,
287-4301
Pwurz@oberon.ark.com

**Growers of
Specialty Rhododendrons**



**STONEBRIDGE
LANDSCAPE
MAINTENANCE**

753 - 3243
DAVE ROSE

Don't forget bring plants
for the \$ Table

4



Sudden Oak Death in California

By Craig Clarke

An article in the January 17th issue of the British science journal *Nature* reported that the organism causing sudden oak death has recently been detected in dying needles of the California redwood tree (*Sequoia sempervirens*). Tests to determine whether the pathogen infects healthy redwoods, or is merely an opportunist that attacks already ailing trees, are now under way at a University of California nursery near Monterey.

But even if the fungus-like organism that causes the disease proves to be no great threat to redwoods, it is rapidly becoming one of the most damaging forest pathogens to have emerged in the United States in recent years. In 1995, large numbers of tanoak (*Lithocarpus densiflorus*) and coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*) began dying in counties surrounding San Francisco Bay. The phenomenon was called sudden oak death (SOD) because once the first symptoms had appeared - wilted shoots and a deep red sap oozing from the bark - the entire canopy would turn brown within two or three weeks. SOD has now spread to many areas within a 300-kilometre swath of coastal forest. In June 2000, a plant pathologist at the University of California, Davis, found that the likely culprit was a member of the genus *Phytophthora*, to which potato blight also belongs.

DNA sequencing at the University of California, Berkeley, revealed that the SOD *Phytophthora* was new to California but had previously been identified in rhododendrons in Germany and the Netherlands. Researchers at the Federal Biological Research Centre for Agriculture and Forestry in Braunschweig, Germany, first described the species, and named it *P. ramorum*.

Unlike Dutch elm disease, SOD does not restrict itself to a single type of tree. The California Department of Forestry, researchers and even members of the public have reported that trees other than oaks have the same symptoms as SOD. So far, researchers have confirmed that *P. ramorum* causes disease in 15 different species, including huckleberry, buckeye, madrone and bigleaf maple.

Even if redwoods are a host for *P. ramorum*, the infection may not be lethal. SOD usually kills oaks and sometimes rhododendrons, but in other species the infection just causes leaf spots or the death of some shoots without killing the tree. So far, *P. ramorum* has not done as much damage as some of its close relatives. *P. cinnamomi*, for example, has reduced vast tracts of the Jarrah forest in Western Australia to grassland since it was accidentally introduced in the 1920s. It infects the roots of nearly a thousand different species, and can be lethal in many of these if the soil is soggy. But unlike most other forest *Phytophthora* species, *P. ramorum* spreads through the air, rather than through the soil.

Researchers have found very few genetic differences between different isolates of *P. ramorum* from California, suggesting that it is a recent introduction. So far the only way of stopping the disease is to cut and burn infected trees, but a variety of chemicals are being tested on laboratory cultures to see if any are effective against the pathogen. For more information visit the web site <http://www.suddenoakdeath.org>.

Don't forget bring plants
for the \$ Table



NANAIMO RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

Hi from the wet side:

Although today its trying to make it white, I have a beautiful R.shilsoni (similiar to barbatum) bright red out. How about Dr Beamish's pink rhodo near Departure Bay Rd. (R Noblatum Coxinum)? A few hours ago, I went down the hill to see if I could get next year's Christmas card (photo) but it clouded over and it is also getting too high.

I see in the Exotic plant magazine: Nanaimo was getting hammered for digging up the palm trees.

We are going to Ireland with Clint (perhaps our members would be interested in this tour). Oh, the suns out again—gotta go!

Ken & Dot Gibson



FREE PRUNING DEMONSTRATIONS AND PRACTICE

Beginning February 2nd and continuing every Saturday for several weeks, Scott Wiskerke of Limberlost Orchards will be giving free pruning demonstrations and the opportunity to practice techniques on an existing and somewhat overgrown orchard. This will run from 2 until 4 pm at Westwood Orchard, 170 Westwood Road. For more information please call Scott or Penny at 245-1221. Bring along your questions about organic fruit cultivation.

President's Message (continued from page 1)

the heavy snow falling from the maple, I realized that the snow was almost rain and the weight of the snow was getting extremely heavy. I dashed from the maple to the cluster of unpruned mock oranges that were bent almost to the ground, then to the columnar cedars that had branches splayed dizzily. As I heard the Douglas firs cracking under their white burden in the neighbourhood, I thought of all of my rhodies in the back yard and trudged around there in my wet gear. I carefully knocked snow from R. Polar Bear, R. Sir Charles Lemon, R. augustinii, the weeping cercediphyllum, my eastern redbud. I worked carefully around R. Royston Reverie and R. Peach, R. Seta and R. Nancy Evans. As I nudged it with my snow shovel, the Granny Smith apple rained snow down upon R. Vulcan, and R. Loder's White. I spent time packing the heavy white stuff under all of my taller plants so that their branches would be supported.

By this time the snow had changed from little, hard rain/snow pellets to huge white sails careening down from the heavens. I thought of my parents and friends in the rhodie club, should I call anyone, wake them up and help them save their plants from disfigurement, or worse? I hope that not too many of their pride and joy will be lost. I await the news....

Don't forget bring plants
for the \$ Table



NANAIMO RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

Forcing Flowers for Indoor Enjoyment ... by Jennifer Moore

Gardening needn't stop when the weather turns cold and snow starts to gently fall. Forcing bulbs indoors is easy to do, giving a person a sense of accomplishment and wonderment at the same time. It is so gratifying knowing that anyone at any gardening level can achieve success with a few simple steps. Tulips, Daffodils, Hyacinth and Crocus bulbs are the bulbs of choice to force with good reason; colours, heights and flower sizes are varied, they're cheerful looking, easy to take care of, fragrant and they bloom for a long time.

More importantly - they are forgiving! The only requirement one needs to know is how to plant a bulb - with their tip upwards. If in doubt, plant the bulb on its side and it will correct itself. Yet, when planted upside down, you will surely experience failure!

Everyone loves the sight and smell of flowers blooming and children love to get their hands dirty! What is more, if you are not sure what to give that hard-to-buy-for-person - try packaging all the ingredients needed for them to start their own pot of cheer!

Steps for bulb forcing

Gather your materials together prior to planting to be sure everything is available.

Fill your pot half full with potting mix and firm down with your hands.

Remove your bulbs from any packaging. Nestle them lightly into the potting mix, ensuring the pointed tip is facing up and the flatter side of the bulb is facing outwards toward the pot. This ensures the first leaf (the largest) will emerge to the outside of the pot allowing room for the other leaves and flower stalks.

Work more potting mix around and on top of the planted bulbs until only the very tips of the bulbs are barely visible.

Water the bulbs lightly and place in a well-lit location. Water again when the soil has become dry and enjoy your blossoms to come!

After they have bloomed, the foliage will die back naturally. Do not remove the green foliage after flowering, as the bulbs continue to store nutrients through the leaves. Instead continue watering lightly until the leaves have turned yellow.

Once the leaves have yellowed considerably, cut the leaves down to the soil level, and place the bulbs still in their pot in a cool dark place (like a basement or cold cellar). Leave the bulbs still potted until spring, as bulbs can only be forced indoors once.

When spring arrives and the ground is able to be worked, remove the bulbs from the pot and plant them into their new location. The bulbs should be planted pointed side up, flat side out and 3-4 times deep as they are tall. They will sit dormant until the next spring where they will provide another year of glorious colour.

Materials needed for forcing bulbs for indoor enjoyment

Medium to large plastic pot with drainage holes in the bottom.

Potting mix (Not soil as it is too heavy. Be sure white perlite is evident.)

Bulbs of your choice. Select large, firm and unblemished bulbs for the best results.

Water.

Don't forget bring plants
for the \$ Table



NANAIMO RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

EIGHTH ANNUAL COWICHAN VALLEY GARDEN TOUR **Cowichan Family Life Association & Cowichan Dogwoods Chapter of the IODE**

Sunday, June 23, 2002 – 10 am – 5 pm

This year's Garden Tour features summer gardens, filled with glorious roses and brilliant annuals. The six gardens, none of which has been on the Tour during the last three years, are all in the Mill Bay and Cobble Hill areas. Another exciting feature of this Tour is that some of the gardeners are also artists, adding a different dimension to the glory of the gardens. Refreshments will be available by donation in one garden. **Tickets: \$14 per person**

Ticket outlets

- Volume One, Kenneth Street, Duncan
- Buckerfields, Trans Canada Highway, Duncan
- Dinter's Nursery, Trans Canada Highway, S of Duncan
- Third Addition Mill Bay
- Blue Rose Garden Centre, Cobble Hill
- Dig This, Bastion Square, Victoria
- Dig This, Broadmead, Victoria
- Dig This, Nanaimo

Tickets for the Tour will also be available on June 23rd at any of the gardens.

Proceeds of the Tour are divided between Cowichan Family Life Association and the Cowichan Dogwoods Chapter of IODE. Both organizations fund a variety of projects that support families, individuals and educational needs within the Valley. Information: Tel. (250) 746-8950

Rhododendron of the Year

I am pleased to announce that the Awards Committee of the ARS has made their first selections for the Rhododendrons of the Year. There will be a new group each year. You will notice that we did not pick one rhododendron for the entire world. We all know that there isn't one fabulous rhododendron that will grow well everywhere. These selections were made by people from each of the regions so that selected plants will thrive in each region. That was one of our main criteria. The plan of the committee is for each chapter to use any or all of the plants of their region in the Public Relations campaign as they wish. Each chapter or group of chapters should try to find pictures of each of the 4 groups. If you have trouble finding a photo, please contact me.

2002 Regional Plants of the Year

North Eastern & Mid Atlantic

Elepidote - Janet Blair
Lepidote - Mary Fleming
Deciduous Azalea - R. schlippenbachii
Evergreen Azalea - Day Spring

Mid Western

Elepidote - Mist Maiden
Lepidote - Olga Mezitt
Deciduous Azalea - Crimson Tide
Evergreen Azalea - Karen

South Eastern

Elepidote - Vivacious
Lepidote - Dora Amateis
Deciduous Azalea - R. austrinum
Evergreen Azalea - Elsie Lee

North Western

Elepidote - Ken Janeck
Lepidote - Ginny Gee
Deciduous Azalea - R. schlippenbachii
Evergreen Azalea - Hino Crimson

Vireya - Swisher Award - Harry Wu