



# FEBRUARY 2004



Volume 12

Issue 6

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Most of our rhododendrons and exotic plants seem to have made it through the last cold spell without freezing. My Crinodendron has succumbed, (luckily I took some cuttings in the fall). Some of my Daphne have black leaves and my eucalyptus does not look well. Prior to the temperature dropping to -12 degrees we checked the Greer's Guide for our rhododendrons low temperature range. Some had to be covered and some were dug up and moved to the garage. Keep your plants protected for a while longer the weather is going to get cold again.

With regards to the club's efforts in propagating and distributing rhododendrons to our members:

The ten flats of rooted cuttings we have ordered will be arriving in early March and we will need a crew to mix soil, pot up the plants and grow on until ready for distribution to club members. Those interested in participating please sign up at the meeting. Probable varieties are: Cinnkeys, Diane Titcombe, Fabia x bureavii, Genghis Khan, Lem's Monarch, Lori Eichelser, Mrs. T H Lowinsky, Red Walloper, Taurus and Trude Webster.

Let's keep in mind our spring functions, we need your input at the meetings. Spring Bus trip-assist John and Chris; Truss Show and plant sale, May 8. help welcomed; wind up BBQ-we need a volunteer to host the venue. CVIBGS Garden Show, March 12 - 14, do we wish to participate with a booth?

Volunteers required.

See you at the meeting, Richard.

## EXECUTIVE

<b>President</b>	Richard White	752-6519
<b>V/President</b>	Paul Lawry	390-2370
<b>Secretary</b>	Craig Clarke	390-4090
<b>Treasurer</b>	Barb Coy	758-8497
<b>Directors</b>	Allan McRae	758-7589
	Mike Miller	758-2879
	Helmut Neuman	714-1840
	Chris Southwick	758-0993
	Mary Taylor	756-3984
	Anne Williamson	390-2604

## COMMITTEES

<b>ADVERTISING</b>	Allan	758-7589
<b>LIBRARY</b>	Chris (temp)	758-0993
<b>NEWSLETTER</b>	Paul & Linda	390-2370
<b>PROGRAMS</b>	<b>VOLUNTEER NEEDED</b>	
<b>RAFFLE TABLE</b>	June & John	
<b>SOCIAL</b>	Anne	390-2604
<b>\$ TABLE</b>	Yvonne	756-3574

## NRS MEETING

**February 12 – BEBAN PARK AT 7:30**

**Agnes Lynn**

"Woody Companion Plants  
for  
Rhododendrons"

# FEBRUARY VOLUNTEERS

## SNACKS

MICHAEL MILLER  
THE LITTLES  
HARDY  
BRENDA LEWIS

## RAFFLE

JOHN & JUNE

## \$ TABLE

YVONNE

## NRS MAILING ADDRESS

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Nanaimo, BC V9T 6M4

## NRS WEBSITE

[www.rhodos.ca/nanaimo](http://www.rhodos.ca/nanaimo)

## NRS EMAIL ADDRESS

[Nanaimo@rhodos.ca](mailto:Nanaimo@rhodos.ca)

## PAST ISSUES

[www.rhodos.ca/nanaimo/newsarchive.htm](http://www.rhodos.ca/nanaimo/newsarchive.htm)

## ARS WEBSITE

[www.rhododendron.org](http://www.rhododendron.org)

## Rhododendron & Azalea News

[www.rhododendron.org/news/newsindex.htm](http://www.rhododendron.org/news/newsindex.htm)

## NEWSLETTER EDITORS

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Growers of Specialty Rhododendrons

**Dear Richard White:**

A long time ago when we first began growing rhododendrons, a hybridizer told us, "to grow a healthy rhododendron you have to grow the roots".

That clump that you bury in the ground and never see again... that clump of roots is actually a mirror reflection of your plant. Growing healthy roots grows healthy rhododendrons. Consider the following:

- 1) Location:** Rhododendron roots are surface feeders and develop a shallow root system. Because rhododendron roots obtain much of their oxygen and water near ground level, you will not want to plant the roots too deep and you will want to provide the roots with adequate water. You can achieve this by digging a shallow hole and backfill the hole with amended soil (soil mixed with mulch). Place the roots half way in the hole and lightly cover the top of the roots with mulch. One nice point to having a shallow root system is they do transplant fairly easy.
- 2) Water/Drainage:** Rhododendron roots love water, they can even sit in it when the temperatures are cool, but when it is hot and humid they can develop root rot. It is like drinking hot water when you are really thirsty; you usually stop after the first sip. Well drained soil is the key. Amending your soil can be very inexpensive too. You can use material such as pine needles, fresh sawdust, or bark dust. We do not recommend using fallen leaves because they can contain disease, but they do make a nice top covering in the winter months. Mix the mulch into your existing soil. Planting on a hillside or slope also provides good drainage.
- 3) Spacing:** When planting your rhododendrons you will want to consider spacing. A quick and general rule is how tall the plant will be in 10-years is how far a part you will want to plant the plant's center. If the rhododendrons will be 4' in 10-years, plant the centers (the stems) 4' a part. You can also stagger the plants for a more full look.
- 4) Fertilizing:** Is it lunch time yet? Yes rhododendron roots get hungry too. We recommend feeding your rhododendron roots as early as March and then a small dose or snack every 4-6 weeks until mid-July. Fertilizing after July can initiate fall new growth that is susceptible to early frost. You can purchase rhododendron/azalea food at your local garden supply store.

Thank You,  
Eileen Hoffman  
**A Sandy Rhododendron**  
<http://www.rhodo.com>

## **SPECIES STUDY DAYS 2004**

A comprehensive study of the Rhododendron species will again be held for the 3<sup>rd</sup> year at the Rhododendron Species Foundation in Seattle on the following dates:

- February 28
- March 27
- April 17
- May 8

All sessions are personally conducted by Steve Hootman, co-director of the R.S.F. Sessions are held from 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

In the previous years, we have found that crossing the border by 7:00 a.m. permits a leisurely travel to the garden in time for the commencement of the sessions at 10:00 a.m. The sessions are completed by 4:00 p.m. enabling a return to the lower mainland by 7:00 p.m. Every effort is made to carpool and this will be sorted out once registration has been completed.

Participants who may be interested from Vancouver Island Chapters would be made most welcome and we have found previously that traveling over on the Friday evening before the session and staying overnight on the lower mainland provides the most convenient arrangement. The lower mainland members will provide overnight accommodation to the Island members, if needed, in order to defray the cost of attending these sessions.

Attendance is restricted to 24 participants due to the limitations of the study area and the practicality of addressing a larger audience in the garden. Lunch is provided for a nominal sum of \$5.00.

The cost for the four sessions is \$140.00.

Fourteen of the previous year's participants have already confirmed their intention of participating again this year.

Please confirm and advise as soon as possible if you would like to participate.

For further information contact Mike Bale at 604 853-8839 or forward cheque to:

Mike Bale \*Species Study Days  
33623 Wildwood Dr  
Abbotsford BC

## AGNES LYNN

Is our presenter for the February 12 meeting.

Agnes enjoys many different plants, but shrubs are her specialty. On her 3/4 acre garden in Victoria in Ten Mile Point, Agnes grows almost every shrub available, including about 400 or so rhododendrons.

Agnes previously did a stint on the Finnerty Gardens Advisory Committee and currently helps out at the HCP Takata Japanese Garden. In addition she gives tours at Abkhazi Gardens; works with the Friends of Beacon Hill Park and is involved with the Native Plant Study Group; Rhodo Club; Hardy Plant Study Group; Rock and Alpine Club and others.

She works, during the day, at the University of Victoria in Administrative Computing.



## RHODODENDRON SPECIES BOTANICAL GARDEN

The 2004 winter newsletter is now available online. You can find it (as well as all the 2003 issues) online by clicking the following link:

<http://www.rhodygarden.org/RSFnewsletter.htm>

I am also pleased to let you know that both the 2004 Seed and Pollen list are now available. You can view them at:

<http://www.rhodygarden.org/seedpollenlist.htm>

Two weekends ago we were featured in the Seattle Times - Pacific Northwest Magazine. Both Steve and Rick contributed to the article as well as providing them with some great photos. If you missed this article just click on the following link to visit the Seattle Times site.

<http://seattletimes.nwsources.com/pacificnw/2004/0104/living.html>

Lastly...If you live in the Northwest, be sure and mark your calendar for the upcoming flower and garden show at the Seattle Convention and Trade Center, downtown. This years show is earlier than usual. It will run from Wednesday, February 4th through Sunday, February, 8th. Stop by the RSF booth and say "hi!" <http://www.gardenshow.com/nw02/index.html>

*Please note...the newsletter is an Adobe PDF format. If you DO NOT have acrobat reader on your computer you can click on the Adobe link on the newsletter home page that will take you to the Adobe site where you can download it for free!*

Happy reading!

Keri L. Hake

Membership Coordinator & Office Manager

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## Nanaimo Rhododendron Society - Minutes of January 8<sup>th</sup> 2004 Regular Meeting

1. The meeting was called to order by President Richard White at 7:41pm.
2. Richard welcomed members & guests. Attendance: 27.
3. **Secretary's report** Correspondence received: Letter from the Land Conservancy soliciting funds; letter from Communities in Bloom program.
4. **Treasurer's report** The balance in the Bowen Park Legacy Fund is \$156.16  
The balance in the general account is \$3378.43  
The balance in the library fund is \$373.81
5. **Committee Reports**
  - Library:** Featured publication is Harry Wright's list of rhododendrons in BC gardens
  - Social:** Thanks to all who contributed to the potluck Xmas party
  - Program:** February – Agnes Lynn  
March – Geoff Ball  
April - Ron Knight  
May - Michael Miller on his trip to Nepal.
  - Newsletter:** Paul Lawry reminded members about contributing articles for the newsletter..
6. **Old business**

The Christmas party & auction was a success.  
Richard White placed an order to the Rhododendron Species Foundation on behalf of club members. The plants will be delivered to UBC Botanical Garden in mid March so we can pick them up there.
7. **New Business.**

Richard White asked if members were interested in sharing their expertise and facilities to propagate rhododendrons from seed, cuttings and grafts. Chris Southwick & John Deniseger will plan the bus tour.
8. **Draws**
  - Door Prize Draw:** Reinholt Gorgosilich, Darlene Budd, Val Harvey.
  - Name Tag Draw:** Mary Taylor, Glenda Barr.
  - Raffle:** Ann Davey, Linda Lawry, Val Harvey, Brenda Lewis.
9. **Executive meeting** will be hosted by Allen McRae on January 15<sup>th</sup> at 7pm.
10. **Program** Charles Thirkill gave a presentation of excellent photographs from his recent book *The Nature of Nanaimo*.
11. Meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.