



FEBRUARY 2015

President's Message

Aren't we lucky that there are many plants blooming in our gardens? One of the harbingers of spring in our area is the blooming of *R. Lee's Scarlet* and *R. Nobleanum Coccineum* that we can see driving by the Beamish's property on Hammond Bay Road. In my garden, which is much cooler and shadier than the Beamish's I have *R. mucronulatum*



showing its purple hue, with *R. moupinense* starting to unfurl as well. When I confirmed with Ann Beamish which rhodos were blooming, she said, "Well, you know, that usually means that we'll have snow next week. Lee's Scarlet always gets snow." We'll see!

If you have a plant blooming in your garden, bring in a little sample to our next general meeting. It will be fun to see how many rhodos are in bloom as each of our gardens has unique growing conditions and we have such a variety of plants on the mid-island region. Let's hope that Ann's prediction is incorrect so that we have something to share.

Please remember that our next meeting is this coming Thursday, February 5th. It is NOT the 2nd Thursday of the month due to another event scheduled at Beban Park that evening. Our program will be a panel presentation with some of our own experts, John Deniseger and Jean Rhodes as well as Glen Jamieson from MARS. We hope to see you all there to ask questions and soak up some knowledge.

Chris

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Truss Show	Doug Blenkarn	
Spring Sale	Ann Beamish	

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Next Meeting

Thursday February 5, 7:30 pm Beban Park Social Centre

PANEL OF EXPERTS

Twigs and Stems



Goodies for February Meeting

Sandra Dorman

Linda Moore

Sandra Millen

Qualicum Beach Seedy Saturday

'SOW THE SEEDS!'

Saturday February 7

10 am to 3:30 pm

Qualicum Beach Civic Center

www.qbseedysaturday.com

ARS Spring 2015 Convention

May 6 - 10th, 2015

Sydney by the Sea

<http://2015rhodo.ca>

OUR FEBRUARY SPEAKERS

The program for February is a panel of well-known rhododendron growers: Jean Rhodes of NRS, Glen Jamieson of MARS (also the editor of the ARS journal) and our own Past President, John Denisegeer. All will present their views and experiences on growing rhododendrons in this area and will be taking questions from the audience.

Rhodos Worth Growing



Rosa Mundi

Bean (1976) states that the similar 'Rosa Mundi' differs from 'Christmas Cheer' in having dark green leaves and an even dwarfier growth habit, reaching about only 2-3 ft. (0.6-0.9 m) in twenty years. Harold Greer (1996, p. 186) states that

there is much confusion about 'Rosamundi' [i.e., 'Rosa Mundi'] and lists it as growing to 4 ft. in 10 years. He says the flower color of 'Rosamundi' is described as darker than that of 'Christmas Cheer'. However, the plant most commonly in cultivation as 'Rosamundi' has very light pink flowers and begins to flower about a week after 'Christmas Cheer'. Both cultivars are the result of a cross between *R. caucasicum* and an unknown.



Yak Exbury

For the most part, yaks grow slowly, staying low to the ground in a mounded shape that suits the small dimensions. In spring, the large blooms are dazzling, with buds of deep red or pink, opening to pale pink or white. But even more important are the leaves, deep green on top with the underside soft brown and velvety (this layer of velvet is called indumentum). Yak forms and hybrids are well suited for foundation plantings in front of low windows, for rock gardens, for container growing and for other small-scale sites.

NANAIMO RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

Getting to know each other...

By June Bouchard

This month, I am pleased to introduce you to Dick Beamish. Dick has been a member of the NRS since May 1993 and has been involved in a number of ways, including doing presentations at meetings and hosting garden tours. I am particularly grateful to Dick for taking the time to answer these questions at a very busy time for him – in between two book publications!

1. How long have you been growing rhododendrons?

Since the day after we arrived in Nanaimo (almost).

2. How long have you lived on Vancouver Island?

Since March 1974.

3. Describe your best day in the garden.

Any warm sunny day.

4. What other interests do you have?

I still write scientific papers and some books. I want to get back into chocolate making and I might consider playing over 70s rugby.

5. Do you have a favourite rhododendron?

We have about 650 rhododendrons and it is hard to decide which ones to give to new owners. If I had to choose, it would be Lem's Best Orange.

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

All I have to do is talk to nice people, listen to presentations, and think about getting more rhododendrons.

7. Anything else you might like to share?

Walking around the garden is an opportunity to discover how some forgotten plants are doing which also frees up your mind for new ideas.



As we

putting together baskets for the silent auction at the upcoming ARS Conference in May 2015. For our own basket, we're looking for donations that represent the Nanaimo area - possible items could include local delicacies (no perishables), CD's or books from local artists and authors, small items depicting local fauna or flora, or ... Please bring any donations to our upcoming meetings. Thank you so much in advance for your cooperation and generosity!

Yvonne and June

et for 2/pecoming ARS Conference

February Raffle Plants



Eucryphia Intermedia Roscoii

The species and their hybrids are attractive small trees for gardens, typically with a slender conic crown when young, though widening with age. They are valued for their conspicuous scented flowers, produced in late summer and autumn when few or no other trees are in flower. Cultivation is restricted to areas with mild winters, cool summers and good rainfall.



R. 'Lucy Lou'

Soft, snowy white flowers cover this pretty little plant- very similar to "snowlady". The foliage is a lovely bonus all year with its velvety, hairy texture. Even if it never flowered, you could grow it for its especially nice foliage! (leucaspis x [ciliatum x leucaspis])



Rhododendron pseudochrysanthum

(HY, hy, Maculifera) 1-3', -23°C. This dense, compact shrub has glossy dark green leaves, paler on the undersides, slightly hairy on both sides. Dark pink buds open to 2" long, bell-shaped flowers, pale pink or white, occasionally displaying rose lines outside and crimson spotting inside. They are held in trusses of 9-20. 15 cm & up.

NANAIMO RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

Nanaimo Rhododendron Society General Meeting Beban Park Recreation Centre January 8, 2015

Meeting called to order by President Chris Southwick at 7:31 p.m.
Minutes taken by Joyce Clarke in Ann's absence.

President's report:

Change in date for the Show and Sale to Sunday May 3rd
Reminder that the next general meeting is on February 5, 2015, the first Thursday.
Christmas auction was very successful. \$139.00, 10% of the proceeds, were donated to the Salvation Army.

Correspondence: Bulletins from the BC Council of Garden Clubs are available for members to look at.

Treasurer's Report, Krystyna Sosulski:

Balance forward of	\$12,114.88
<u>Income</u>	
Memberships	\$85.00
Interest	\$64.00
Total:	\$85.64
<u>Expenses</u>	
Membership (ARS)	\$724.59
Balance	\$11,465.93
This does not include auction proceeds	

Membership - Sandra Dorman absent. Membership dues must be paid by today.

Program, Art Lightburn - February's speaker is Gordon McKay on George Forrest the plant explorer. Is working on a panel discussion for March. Members are requested to suggest topics of interest.

Sunshine, Edith Higgins - Yvonne Hardy has had cataract surgery; Sandra Dorman is doing better after a fall. Cards have been sent to both.

Milner Species Garden Update, Art Lightburn - Jim Cadwaladr has drawn up another version of the landscape plan, copy of pathways here to view. The third plan has been sent to Art for review. The scale shows 8' rhododendrons with room for approximately 165 plants, layering trees, companion plants and about 50 smaller rhodos. The plan selection committee will meet at the end of January. Looking specifically for parents of Milner hybrids and those endangered as well as simply nice plants.

The application for a \$20,000 grant was turned down.

ARS Spring Conference - Registration forms are available. Spring Conference Basket Collection, June Bouchard is taking donations for the Nanaimo-themed basket.

Proceedings adjourned at 7:46 p.m.

Seen In Passing

Lee's Scarlet announcing spring with about 20 trusses, and the Coral Bark Maple very showy against the green Cedar background

an easterly breeze bringing in the incessant barking of the sea lion colony in North West Bay

our *R. sichotense* coming into full bloom



Article Copied from the American Rhododendron Society Blog
Print date: 1/25/2015

Fragrant *Rhododendron fortunei*

5 December 2014 @ 14:13 | Posted by Admin

Plant hunter Robert Fortune discovered this lovely species in 1855. It is a fragrant rhododendron...but unlike those sweetly scented, tender beauties *lindleyi*, *nuttallii* and *maddenii*, *R. fortunei* is quite hardy.

Fortune's original collections were made in Chekiang Province, in eastern China, at about 3,000 feet. Other plant hunters later found the species in Anhwei, Kiangsi, and Hunan Provinces growing in woods and forests at 2,000-4,000 feet in elevation. Plant hunter Robert Wilson noted that the species was common on other Chekiang mountains, particularly in the Lu Shan range of the neighboring province of Kiangsi, to the west.

The leaves of *R. fortunei* are handsome, and show some variation. They are 3 to 7 inches long, 1.5 to 3 inches wide. A prominent and very attractive feature is the deep red of the midrib and petioles (leaf stems); these create a ring of color around the dormant bud that seems to deepen and become more conspicuous in winter. The leaves of the Lu Shan form are typically a dull, olive green in color, and have rich red petioles.

The flowers of *R. fortunei* are borne in a loose truss of 5 to 12, and are shaped like wide bells...funnel-campanulate. They are pink to pale pinkish-lilac or rose and are fragrant.



Photo by Boris Bauer

R. fortunei has been much used for hybridizing, particularly in North America, and especially in the East...where it is appreciated for its tolerance of summer heat and winter cold. The two great hybridizers, Rothschild and Dexter, made free use of it this rhododendron as a parent. Indeed, one of the most loved hybrids of all time in eastern North America is Dexter's *R. 'Scintillation'*.

It is noteworthy that a particularly fine large flowered, sweet-scented *R. fortunei* clone was used as the seed parent of the original 'Loderi' hybrid grex. The other parent is *R. griffithianum*; a tender rhododendron found growing in the lower elevations of the Himalayas.

Adapted from Whidbey Island ARS Chapter newsletter, May 2003

R. forrestii group

Sean Rafferty

This delightful prostrate species was discovered growing on a mossy rock in southeast Tibet, by George Forrest in 1905. It has subsequently been located in northeast Yunnan, Upper Burma and Arunchal Pradesh. Current opinion seems to hold that *R. forrestii* group contains only one 'good' species which takes two forms: *repens*, which is prostrate and creeping, and *temscens*, which has more of a mounding habit and which flowers somewhat more freely than *repens*. Cox and Cox indicate that *chamaethompsonii*, which is also included in this group is most likely a natural hybrid and exhibits more flowers per inflorescence. *R. forrestii* is noted for having only a single or sometimes double inflorescence. Despite its small stature, 15 cm (6 in) tall with



R. forrestii Repens Group

small attractive, obovate leaves and fleshy crimson, scarlet and carmine flowers 3 – 3.5 cm (1 – 1.5 in) long, *R. forrestii* is a beautiful and charming specimen to have in your garden or rockery. This is if you find the right spot for it. As noted above, Forrest discovered it growing on a moist, mossy rock, so if you have one of those hanging about you should be in good shape. Or are you? Cox and Cox suggest careful siting on a wall facing away from the sun but in the open, and if it is in too much shade it will not flower. Shade but not too much shade and in the open? I take that to mean deciduous filtered shade in the open on a mossy rock. We live in the rainforest of North Vancouver and that particular requirement is difficult to achieve. However what does seem to work for us here is sticking them atop old mossy stumps and allowing them to layer themselves down the sides. Please don't let these siting challenges dissuade you from bringing this species into your garden. Pushing the envelope is often a good thing and a carpet of charming *forrestii* is a marvellous reward.

R. forrestii's compact habit, attractive leaves and flowers and its ability to retain these attributes when used as a parent in hybridising, has managed to find favour with many hybridisers throughout the world, particularly in Germany. Dietrich Hobbie's crossing of *R. forrestii* with *R. 'Essex Scarlett'* during the 1950's and 1960's brought many (perhaps too many) hybrids into the market and some linger to this day. If I had to choose a favourite of his, I would hang it on *R. 'Baden-Baden'*, a low growing, glossy leaved, showy red, large, waxy-flowered beauty. From England and Lionel de Rothschild came the finest gem of the *R. forrestii* hybrids, which is *R. 'Carmen'*, created from two wonderful *R. neriiflorum* species, *R. forrestii* and *R. sanguineum ssp didymum*. There has also been local hybridizing success from Ted and Mary Grieg, of Royston on Vancouver Island, who produced a cross from *R. forrestii* and *R. thompsonii*, producing the sweet *R. 'Royston Red'*.



R. 'Carmen'



R. 'Royston Red'

The above-mentioned hybrids are certainly favourites of mine and I am quite partial to the small Rhododendrons that make such a large impact.

Reprinted (with adaptations) from The Yak, February 2012

Black Bean Sweet Potato Chili

1 tbsp olive oil
1 medium-large sweet potato, peeled & diced
1 large red onion, diced
3 cloves garlic, minced
1-2 tsp chili powder
¼ tsp chipotle chili powder
¼ tsp ground cumin or less
¼ tsp salt
3 cups vegetable stock
1 x 15 oz can black beans, rinsed
1 x 28 oz can diced tomatoes
¼ c dried quinoa, rinsed
¼ c green lentils, rinsed* if not using add extra ¼ c. quinoa
*4 tsp lime juice – (I forgot this when I made it but would add it next time)

Garnish suggestions: avocado, cilantro, grated cheese, sour cream

1. Heat oil in a heavy bottom pot, add onions & cook for 4-5 min until softened.
2. Add garlic & spices and stir to combine. Add sweet potato and stir & cook a few minutes
3. Add stock, tomatoes, black beans & green lentils if desired, stir to combine.
4. Bring mixture to a boil & cover & simmer for 10 minutes.
5. Add quinoa & cook until quinoa is fully cooked & sweet potatoes are soft. Add more vegetable stock if required
6. Add the lime juice & remove the pot from the heat. Garnish if desired.

I put this in the slow cooker after I had brought mixture to boil & simmered for 10 minutes.
Put quinoa in and left on low for a couple of hours