

The Rhodomentum

Nanaimo Rhododendron Society Newsletter



February 2022

President's Message

Hello NRS Gardeners,



This being "The Year of the Garden", your Executive Team is working on preparing a list of members' gardens to be open to the public or for members only - so please let them know if you wish to include your charming garden. It would be wonderful to see them all! The Propagation group is getting ready to re-pot the 2019 cuttings into 2-gallon pots, with the hope of selling them at our spring sale on April 30th. Hopefully, there will no longer be any pandemic restrictions at that time.

The other day, ARS Membership Director Steve McCormick sent all ARS chapters suggestions on how to attract new members. He must have peeked at our calendar to see what the NRS was doing, as we seem to be doing all but two of the items suggested. Our fine NRS Rhododendron Club will always warmly welcome new members! Thank you for making the NRS as great as it is!

Rosina Schmidt

OUR EXECUTIVE				
President	Rosina Schmidt	751-3386		
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COMMITTEES:

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Membership Jan Moles Program by Committee

Raffle Ann Davey & Val Harvey

Social Deborah Francis Bargain Table Reinhold Gorgosilich

Website Deborah Francis/Rosina Schmidt

Bus Tour David & Joyce Mitchell

Sunshine Wanda Brenton Propagation Rosina Schmidt Hailey Grove Kevin Francis

Show and Sale Jan Moles and Brenda Lewis

Nanaimo Rhododendron Society Box 241, #101-5170 Dunster Road Nanaimo, BC V9T 6M4 Website: nanaimorhodos.ca

February Meeting ~ via Zoom
Thursday, February 10th at 7:30
"Bulbs in the Rhododendron Garden"
By Jo-Ann Canning

The Nanaimo Rhododendron Society Presents

Our February program – via Zoom

February 10th at 7:30 – with Jo Canning

"Bulbs in the Rhododendron Garden"



The link for Jo Canning's talk will be sent out a few days before the event

In this seminar, we'll explore how 2 unique groups of plants – geophytes and rhododendrons – can make wonderful companions in the woodland garden. Bulbs are unique in the horticultural world, and are known for being sun-lovers and very happy in dry conditions, yet many are suited to cool and dappled light. Bulbs can complement rhododendrons during the bloom season as well as add colour during the rhodo off-season, using their structure and texture as a backdrop to a bulb's singular bloom shape and colour. We'll explore growing conditions, suitable bulb cultivars, and some caveats to ensure everyone enjoys how these wonderful plants enhance our gardens.

Jo-Ann Canning is a certified Master Gardener with the Vancouver Island Master Gardeners Association. She has lived and gardened in the Lower Mainland, Vancouver Island, BC's Sunshine Coast, Nova Scotia, the UK, the dry high plains of the American Rockies, and its southwest desert. Since 1996, Jo-Ann has been teaching and speaking on sustainable gardening, bringing this broad-based experience to her seminars. Her articles and photographs have appeared in local and international newsletters and magazines, and on the MGABC's website. One of Jo-Ann's passions are the geophytes, especially those in the woodland garden.





The link for Jo Canning's talk will be sent out a few days before the event

Jo Canning has sent us a list of bulbs for the coastal garden in advance of her upcoming presentation!

A Year of Flowering Bulbs for Coastal Rhododendron Gardens

Winter (late November - mid February)	Spring (late February - mid May)	Summer (late May - early September)	Autumn (mid September - early November)
Arum italicum* (leaves only)	Achlys triphylla	Agapanthus	Arum Italicum*
Bletilla striata	Asarum spp.	Allium spp.*	Begonia*
Chionodoxa*	Arum spp.*	Alstroemeria	Colchicum*
Crocus*	Allium*	Amaryllis belladonna	Crocus*
Cyclamen spp.*	Alstromeria +	Arisaema	Cyclamen spp.*
Eranthis hyemalis*	Anemone	Arum italicum*	Cyrtanthus elatus
Eucharis X grandiflora	Arum	Begonia*	Dahlia*
Galanthus *	Babiana	Belamcanda chinensis	Gladiolus*
Hippeastrum (indoors) *	Bletilla striata	Canna spp.	Hemerocallis*
Iris (bulb)*	Camassia	Cardiocrinum giganteum	Hosta*
Lachenalia*	Chionodoxa *	Colchicum*	Iris (tuberous)*
Leucojum*	Colchicum luteum	Convallaria*	Leucojum*
Narcissus tazetta (indoors)	Convallaria*	Crinum	Nerine
Oxalis*	Crocus *	Crocosmia	Oxalis*
Scilla (bluebell)*	Cyclamen spp*	Cyclamen spp.*	Schizostylis coccinea
Tulbaghia* +	Dicentra spp.	Dahlia*	Tulbaghia* +
Veltheimia bracteate* +	Eranthis hyenalis *	Eucomis	Zephyranthes*
	Eremurus	Galtonia candicans	
	Erythronium spp.	Gladiolus	
	Fritillaria spp.	Gloriosa rothchildiana +	
	Galanthus *	Hemerocallis	
	Gladiolus*	Hosta spp.*	
	Hemerocallis*	Iris (tuberous)	
	Hippeastrum (in ground)	Liatris	
	Hosta spp.*	Lilium spp.	
	Hyacinthoides	Oxalis*	
	Hyacinthus	Sprekilia formosissima	
	Ipheion uniflorum	Tigridia pavonia	
	Leucojum*	Tulbaghia* +	
	Oxalis*	Watsonia*	
	Puschkinia scilloides	Zantedeschia*	
	Scilla (bluebell)*	Zephyranthes*	
	Sparaxis tricolor	Zephyranaies	
	Trillium ovatum		
	Tulbaghia*		
	Tulipa spp.		
	Veltheimia bracteate* +		
	Watsonia*		
	Zantedeschia* +		
	Zephyranthes*		
	Zephyranules.		

Legend & Notes:

► Includes, bulbs, corms, rhizomes, tubers, tuberous roots.

+ ... tender / only survive in zones 9a, 9b, 10

Spp. ...Several species available, some a combination of native and domestic varieties.

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[►] Includes groundcovers, bloom heights 15 cm (6 in) – 90 cm (3 ft.). Includes several native geophytes.

 $^{{\}red} \textit{Plants have various sun needs for bloom time. All plants need moisture during dormancy}$

^{* ...} multi-season interest

Hailey Rhododendron Grove at Bowen Park

Our club's connection to the Hailey Rhododendron Grove at Bowen Park goes back about 25 years to the mid to late 1990's. We've weeded, trimmed, planted azaleas and companion plants, mapped, and just enjoyed rhododendrons. The grove was planted with already established rhododendrons nearly 50 years ago. As you can imagine, there are some spectacular, large rhododendrons in the grove. Our work bees, lead by Bryan Jubinville over the last couple of years, have been focusing on the removal of invasive plants, pruning, and just general cleanup. While much has been accomplished, like any garden, there is still more to do.





Now coordinated by Kevin Francis, work bees are scheduled for the second Tuesday of each month, weather permitting. The next one is scheduled for Tuesday, February 8th from 10am to 2pm. You can arrive at any time and stay for as long as you like. We could really use a few extra hands!

Bring your lunch and a smile!

http://nanaimorhodos.ca/hailey/

WORK BEES:

An opportunity to spend time outdoors in a beautiful rhododendron garden, while socializing with friends (at a distance, of course...) Sounds pretty attractive doesn't it....

- Hailey Grove at Bowen Park The next monthly work bee will be on Tuesday, February 8th, weather permitting. Bring your lunch and sunny disposition.
- The Shade House project at Milner: when the construction phase starts, we'll be looking for volunteers in the new year. Stay tuned...

Upcoming NRS Programs are Planned:

We're hoping to be able to get together again soon. Our program committee has been working hard putting together a variety of presentations for the new year:

	Speaker	Topic
March 10 th	Rose Pruffer	Pruning
		Rhododendrons
Friday,	Lionel de	Exbury – specific topic
April 22nd	Rothschild	to be confirmed
**Note		
the date		
change		

The club executive and committees are working on other club events such as our annual plant sale and show on April 30th, as well as garden tours (see p.6). Details will be forthcoming as the spring progresses and as we know more about potential PHO guidelines.

Twigs and Stems Calendar of Upcoming Events:



(We haven't specified in person or zoom as we simply don't know yet)

Milner Gardens and Woodland: closed for the winter season – spring openings coming soon. Check the Milner website for details: Milner Garden Events

Mount Arrowsmith Rhododendron Society:

Wednesday, February 12th; 7:30pm – "Members Photo Night".

North Island Rhododendron Society: Tuesday, February 15th – "Bringing the World to Milner Gardens – the story of the Greig Rhododendron Species Garden" – John Deniseger

Cowichan Valley Rhododendron Society: Wednesday, February 2nd at 7pm – Expert Panel: Sean Rafferty, Ken Webb, Allan Murray, Garth Wedemire

Victoria Rhododendron Society: Monday, February 7th, 7:30 on zoom: "*The Garden in a Changing World*" - Jeff de Jong (see details on page 8)

Tuesday, March 1st, 7:30 – "You're Smarter than Your Average Deer" – Leanne Mueller

Stay connected - check our web page - new things added regularly! http://nanaimorhodos.ca/

The Year of the Garden - Spring Open Gardens



We're being optimistic and are beginning to plan garden tours for the coming spring. Hurrah! We hope to have a Member's free Garden tour (for NRS members only) as well as a separate Nanaimo Rhodo Club Public Garden Tour as a fundraiser for the Club. Rosina is organizing the Members Tour and Gaylle, Allen and Chris are planning the Public Tour. The dates of the Public Tour are Saturday, May 14th and Sunday, May 15th. The cost will be \$15 per ticket which gives people access to all of the gardens for two days.

The Member's Tour will be a little different from those in the past. Each day of the tour will have only one garden open. Details such as dates and times are still being decided but organizers are busy looking for volunteers to both host the tours and for garden sitting to take tickets for the Public Tour. If you are interested in hosting a tour or helping out by garden sitting, Gaylle and Chris would be very happy to hear from you at csouthwick@shaw.ca or allengaylle@shaw.ca

Obviously, we will have to be cognizant of the latest Ministry of Health guidelines, but we are thinking that this spring will be better for us than the last two with regard to being out and enjoying the fruits of our gardening friends' labours!



Rhododendron of the Year Plant Award:

Every year, the ARS plant award committee selects rhododendrons to be honoured as "Rhododendrons of the Year". To be selected, the plant must have excellent foliage and flowers, have an attractive plant habit, be pest and disease resistant and be cold hardy for the region. The Committee has chosen four rhododendrons of each of the 8 regions: an elepidote and lepidote rhododendron, a deciduous azalea and an evergreen azalea. For the warm weather Hawaii/Southern California region, a vireya has been selected. For further information and to see which plants were selected for each region, go to: Rhododendron of the Year

Here are the 4 winners selected for our region.



Elepidote Rhododendron: 'Chemainus'

Flower opens inside deep purplish pink with deep red spots on upper lobe becoming solid near throat; outside deep pink, color fades with age, funnel-campanulate, wavyedges, 3" across. Dome-shaped truss holds 18 flowers. Blooms early season. Leaves elliptic, broadly acute apex, rounded base, 6" long, glossy, dark bluish green, retained 3 years. Orange bronze indumentum on underside of leaves and slight silvery tomentum above. Dense growth habit, grows to a height of 4 ft. in 10 years. Plant is hardy to at least 10°F (-12°C), buds to 5°F (-15°C). Hybridized by Fujioka.



Lepidote Rhododendron: 'Wren'

Flower pale yellow, unmarked, openly funnel-shaped. When in bloom, flowers almost completely cover the plant. Blooms midseason. Leaves elliptic, about ¾" long, leathery, recurved, glossy, dark green. Bronze colored in winter. Prostrate, mounding plant habit. Height: slow-growing, typically 2 ft. in 10 years. Cold hardy to 0°F (-18°C). Earned the RHS Award of Merit in 2013. Hybridized by Cox.



Evergreen Azalea: 'Frosted Orange'

Flower white with strong reddish orange edges, funnel-shaped, single, 3" across. Blooms late mid-season. Leaves narrowly ovate, leathery, dark green. Mounding plant habit. Grows to a typical height of 3 ft. in 10 years. Hardy to -5°F (-21°C). Hybridized by Harris.



Deciduous Azalea: 'Chetco'

Flower vivid yellow with a vivid orange yellow blotch, reverse of tube strong reddish orange, 3½" across, widely funnel-shaped. Blooms mid-season. Leaves elliptic, medium green, deciduous. Upright plant habit. Grows to a height of about 5 ft. in 10 years. Cold hardy to -15°F (-26°C). Hybridized by Slonecker.

How did your plants fare last summer???

Our club continues to gather information that we can all use. We are collectively building a list of sun/heat tolerant and sun/heat sensitive plants. If you'd like to contribute, begin by making a list of rhododendrons in your garden that have significant sun exposure. From there, create 3 categories: severe sunburn, slight sunburn and no damage. Please send your list to dorotheekieser@shaw.ca. While conditions will vary from garden to garden depending on site specific conditions such as irrigation, soil structure, and mulching, the information should still be of interest as we move forward.

(Ed. note: See the latest issue of the Journal of the American Rhododendron Society for more information on sunburned leaves...)

On our website, Rosina has added a list of some of the Rhodos that perform better in heat. You'll find them at: http://nanaimorhodos.ca/rhododendron-species-for-changing-climate/.

Don't Miss...

Victoria Rhododendron Society is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting Monday February 07.

"The Garden in a Changing World."

Description: The garden has become a place to escape and offers a refuge more than ever.

There is nothing static about growing plants.

The plants we grow deal with heat, cold and wind and still, they persevere.

It seems nothing can halt our passion for gardening and the promise of a New Year only fuels our enthusiasm. Jeff de Jong will be speaking on the ways we can see our garden making some interesting changes.

From exciting new plants, colours, and garden ideas you won't want to miss.

This is your time to really start the year with joyful energy.

Topic: Victoria Rhodo Feb.07 meeting with Jeff De Jong

Time: Feb 7, 2022.

Presentation starts at 7:30 PM (Vancouver BC time zone)

You may sign in at 7:15pm

Join Zoom Meeting

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84538935641?pwd=UHB4NHRkc1lxTkk2NWp5c1FFWjlOZz09

Meeting ID: 845 3893 5641

Passcode: 280448



February Gardening Chores

A few tidbits of wisdom found online on the following link: https://awaytogarden.com/the-february-garden-chores/ Although it's a year old, it's still quite relevant. Here's the first paragraph:

"RESTLESS, ANYONE?

The houseplants are noticing, and so am I: the days are longer, making us both want to get up and grow. Rather than torture tomato seeds by starting them too soon, divert that energy into fruit-tree pruning, perhaps—or into making plans for when spring really arrives to install a water garden, improve your compost set-up, or finally get a deer fence. Those and other productive stalling tactics form the February chores.

Some stats on that astronomical provocateur, the sun: On the last day of December 2020 where I live, the day was only 9 hours 18 minutes 51 seconds long; by February 1, 2021, it is 10:08:22, and February 28 promises me an embarrassment of light: 11:15:26. (Calculate your daylength for any day of any year here.)"



And more on February Gardening from Rosina:

- -Time to fertilize the rhododendrons with 6-7-5. Using one handful per foot of the height of the plant and sprinkling it around the drip line. See: http://nanaimorhodos.ca/rhododendron-caring-schedule/
- -Prune fruit trees and spray with dormant oil/lime sulphur spray;
- -Spread lime around alkaline-loving plant, such as lilacs, clematis and peonies;
- -Prune dormant trees, shrubs and conifers; treat hydrangeas with aluminium sulphate (for bluer shades) or lime (for pink shades);
- -Set the Mason Bee nests outside; refrigerate cocoons until released.

"The February sunshine steeps your boughs and tints the buds and swells the leaves within."
- William C. Bryant

Plant of the month by Ron Sutton

Rhododendron 'Saffron Silk'

Here's a beautiful yellow flowering rhododendron that is currently my favourite, best performing yellow. It was created by hybridizer Frank Fujioka, who crossed rhododendrons 'Nancy Evans' x ('Odee Wright' x 'Crest'). The 3-inch, pale yellow luminous flowers have 6 petals and form a loose ball truss. There are no blotches or other colours to detract from the beauty of them. The semi glossy, dark green, five and half inch leaves make a nice contrast to the yellow flowers. The leaves last two years before dropping.

It will grow to six feet in ten years and is hardy to at least 5°F
It grows well in sun and shade. My plant seen in the photo gets a fair amount of full sun and was in bloom May 5th when photo was taken.



"Why, what's the matter,
That you have such a February face,
So full of frost, of storm and cloudiness?"
- William Shakespeare, Much Ado About Nothing

Next Generation Program Podcasts - from the ARS website



Short audio interviews, discussions or presentations for the rhododendron enthusiasts. You can listen to them through your iPad, cell phone or laptop - while sitting in your garden, your living room, or driving your car....

For the Love of Rhododendron

Podcasts sharing personal stories about lives enriched through growing, exploring and researching the genus Rhododendron. https://rhododendron.org/next_gen_podcasts.htm

Check out the Episode List:

Episode 1 - There wasn't a map

In this episode, we learn about the podcast production team, how random twists and turns in the road of life led them to discover their love of Rhododendron, and their hopes for how this podcast can inspire and support others embarking on their own journey into the vast and uncharted territory that is genus Rhododendron.

For, as D.H. Lawrence once wrote: "Love is the flower of life, and blossoms unexpectedly and without law, and must be plucked where it is found, and enjoyed for the brief hour of its duration."

Episode 2 - The genome was the puzzle

In this episode, Ryan and Juliana meet with Dr. Valerie Soza to learn about the Rhododendron *williamsianum* genome sequencing project. How a visionary researcher led a huge team of scientists on an epic adventure to tackle a 30,000-piece puzzle that took 10 years and a whole lot of persistence to complete.

Reflecting on the words of the immortal Smokey Robinson, "Love's a puzzle, love's a puzzle, Confusing as can be, But work it out and you'll discover, The beauty of love's mystery."

Episode 3 - A treasure-trove of experiences

In this episode, we learn about Ryan Fuller's research on Rhododendron evolution in the Hengduan Mountains of China, how this magical place spawned Ryan's polyploidy problems, how the people in Yunnan and the rhododendrons themselves welcomed him, and how the rather practical goal of collecting plant samples led him to a goldmine of adventures worthy of the most ambitious bucket-list.

As told by Paulo Coelho in the "The Alchemist", when you are about to climb yet another dune, that is the moment when your heart whispers, "Be aware of the place where you are brought to tears. That's where I am, and that's where your treasure is."

Episode 4 - Where kindred spirits convene

In this episode, we meet some of the organizers and speakers from the upcoming American Rhododendron Society Fall Convention, they share their fascinating Rhododendron origin stories, the important work they are currently doing in Rhododendron, and give a tantalizing preview of the virtual convention program.

Though our friends and families may tire of hearing about Rhododendron, as Lucy Maud Montgomery reminds us in Anne of Green Gables: "Kindred spirits are not so scarce as I used to think. It's splendid to find out there are so many of them in the world."

Episode 5 - You can add your own twist

In this episode, we meet Rhododendron hybridizer and college professor, Paul Chafe. We learn how a memorable brush with giant rhododendrons led him to hybridizing, how he's adding his own twist on breeding cold-hardy rhododendrons by chasing a dream of tree-like, big-leaf plants that don't look like they should survive in the frigid cold of continental Canada.

Representing the next generation of Rhododendron breeders, Paul is expanding the palate of cold-hardy cultivars with the same modernistic approach embodied by author Henry James, who once quipped "A tradition is kept alive only by something being added to it."

Episode 6 - The pitch of their wingbeats

In today's episode, we meet Dr. Robbie Hart, a researcher at the William L. Brown Center of the Missouri Botanical Garden. We learn how hillsides filled with rhododendron flowers have influenced the everyday lives of people on Mt. Yulong in South China, how this traditional ecological knowledge is preserved in the local languages of Yunnan, and how even listening to a tiny bee buzzing around a flower can provide insight on the importance of plants and the environment for the flourishing of humankind.

Echoing the words of author Nancy Farmer, "Look around you...feel the wind, smell the air. Listen to the birds and watch the sky. Tell me what's happening in the wide world."

Episode 7 - Finding new mountains

In this episode, we meet Steve Hootman, Executive Director and Curator of the Rhododendron Species Foundation and Botanical Garden, located in Federal Way, Washington. We get a glimpse into the history of this stunning wild garden, we learn how observing Rhododendron in nature provides insights into their cultivation, and we discover that gaining plant knowledge and finding new mountains is an actual career path.

As John Muir described in a letter to his sister in 1873, "The mountains are calling, and I must go, and I will work on while I can, studying incessantly."

Episode 8 - Shake the world gently

In this episode, we meet Mike Stewart, President of the Van Veen Heritage Garden in Portland Oregon. We learn how this non-profit organization is carrying on the extraordinary legacy of the Van Veen family, three generations of horticultural pioneers who dedicated themselves to rhododendrons, devising new propagation techniques, and generously sharing their plants and their knowledge.

In doing so, they turned their nursery into a veritable sanctuary of rhododendrons and built a huge community of friends, evoking the wisdom of Mahatma Gandhi, "In a gentle way, you can shake the world."



VIRAGS ANNUAL SPRING SHOW & SALE APRIL 1st 1-8PM & APRIL 2nd 1-5PM MARY WINSPEAR CENTER, SIDNEY, BC

Entry by donation

Plant show & sale, silent auction & door prizes, tea & lunches available Crevice garden demo with Paul Spriggs, Chris Dixon & Ty Danylchuk, April 1st 2-5pm Info @ virags.com/the-spring-show

SYMPOSIUM APRIL 2nd 9AM-12PM

Panayoti Kelaidis: North American Rock Plants, 2nd Series-Revisiting Hugh Preece Laura Caddy: Rock Gardening in the Pacific North West Limited registration-\$35 @ virags.com/the-spring-show



Garden Photos of the Month - from June and John's garden

It's that time of year when we're eagerly anticipating spring. On nice days, we search the garden for colour, winter interest, and those hardy early blooms. Here are a few teasers of what's to come...













Welcome to the

2022 ARS Spring International Convention

Hosted by the chapters of ARS District 4
Portland – Tualatin Valley – Eugene – Willamette – Siuslaw



After a two-year delay of our scheduled 75th Anniversary celebration, we're excited to announce a reunion of the ARS in its founding city, Portland, Oregon. Here you will find all elements of the planned 2020 convention, including the Pre-Tour (new dates: May 2-3) and Post-Tour (new dates: May 8-10), while including even more enhancements to the original features. Click here for a preview video of the event.

**ARS 2022 Registration opening Wednesday, December 1, 2021

Covid Considerations

In an effort to assure the health and safety of all participants, the decision has been made to require proof of full vaccination for all registrants. You will need to confirm your vaccine status on registering, and proof will be required at the registration desk on check-in. Masks will be required in the hotel, on buses, and at all meetings and events. Please be aware that conditions may change as the convention comes closer and a revised policy may be issued. We recommend that you sign up for convention updates, below, to be apprised of changes in policy as they occur. Thank you for your cooperation.

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TRADITIONAL PLANT WORKSHOP

FEATURING THE GARDEN CAFE





March 15th, 2022 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm Qualicum Beach Community Hall 644 Memorial Avenue ENTRY BY DONATION

Join a panel of experts, including

Geraldine Manson Dr. Nancy Turner Kim Recalma Les Malbon

as they teach about the traditional knowledge of native plants and how to make traditional medicine.

To register and to learn more about this event, visit: https://traditional-plant-workshop.eventbrite.ca

For questions, please contact Jessica. Pyett@viu.ca | 250.753.3245 (local 2802)

Thank you to our Sponsors:









February in the Garden

"Every gardener knows that under the cloak of winter lies a miracle ... a seed waiting to sprout, a bulb opening to the light, a bud straining to unfurl. And the anticipation nurtures our dream."

- Barbara Winkler

