



JANUARY 2014

President's Message

I would like to start this year by thanking all the executive, committees and members that have worked hard at making 2013 another successful year for the Nanaimo Rhododendron Society.

Susan and I have had a very pleasant Christmas season with both of our girls home, and many friends and relatives visiting. We also had the privilege of attending all five of the Vancouver Island rhododendron societies' Christmas parties. All had fabulous food, mostly potluck with some clubs supplying mains (ham or turkey). Victoria Rhododendron Society has a large raffle of member- donated items with the proceeds going to the Mustard Seed Society. Cowichan Valley Rhododendron Society had a smaller raffle, but a unique, judged short story telling by volunteers. I was selected as one of the judges, and a poem by Liz Murray won handily. Mount Arrowsmith Rhododendron Society served a great hot turkey and ham dinner and followed with a hilarious gift exchange. The evening ended with all the members singing Christmas carols. North Island Rhododendron Society also had a potluck dinner with two large hams. All present were given gifts supplied by a club committee. A large hamper had been gathered and sent to a selected family for Christmas. Dave Godfrey emceed their traditional Jeopardy game with lots of trick questions and hilarity. Our table won, although I wasn't much help. Nanaimo Rhodo Society had their traditional potluck dinner (lots of good food) followed with an auction ably led by Santa and his helper. All the items were donated by local businesses and members and brought some very spirited bidding, achieving a higher than normal revenue with a percentage going to the Salvation Army. As well, several large boxes of dry goods were collected for the 'Loaves and Fishes'.

Susan and I wish all our members a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year, and we are looking forward to the club activities in 2014. See you at the January meeting. Art

EXECUTIVE

President	Art Lightburn	468-7516
Vice President	John Deniseger	778 424-3605
Secretary	Ann Beamish	758-2574
Treasurer	Krystyna Sosulski	729-0948
Directors	Craig Clarke	390-4090
	Susan Lightburn	468-7516
	Dorothee Kieser	390-4136
	Ray Lauzier	756-2927
	Bryan Jubinville	956-6178
	Gaylle McRae	758-7589

COMMITTEES

Advertising	Bryan Jubinville	
Library	Ann Beamish	758-2574
Newsletter	Kathryn Grant	245-7879
Membership	Sandra Dorman	390-0136
Program	Ray Lauzier	756-2927
Raffle	Ann Davey & Val Harvey	
Social	Susan Lightburn	468-7516
Bargain Table	Reinhold Gorgosilich	758-6533
Website	Craig Clarke	390-4090
Sunshine	Sandra Dorman	390-0136
Awards	Craig Clarke, Chris Southwick,	
John	Deniseger, Gaylle	
McRae		

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Christmas Party 2013

NEXT MEETING

THURSDAY JANUARY 9 BEBAN PARK SOCIAL CENTRE

7:30 PM

PAUL WURZ

“UPGRADING YOUR RHODO COLLECTION”

Seen In Passing



- A large flock of American Wedgeons arriving in Cragi Bay, with a far European Wedgeon that normally travels on the East side of Europe
- Most Rhodos heavily budded this year and colour already showing in the buds of 'Lee's Scarlet'.

Rhodos Worth Growing



Admiral Piet Hein

4 feet in 10 years, -26° C, Rosy lilac fragrant flowers

Sister seedling to 'Van Ness Sensation'



Unique Marmalade

4 feet in 10 years, -18° C, floriferous, brilliant colour

some sun

Getting To Know Each Other...

By June Bouchard



December is a very busy month and most people have other things they'd rather do than answer a questionnaire. So I thought I'd answer it myself this month. ☺

Happy New Year everyone!!!!

1. How long have you been growing rhododendrons?

I remember the very first time I saw rhododendrons in bloom – it was in the spring of 1978 at the University of Victoria. Coming from Quebec, I had never seen anything so exotic looking – it was “love at first sight”! We bought our first rhododendron when we bought our first house in Victoria in 1985. It was Jean Marie de Montague because my father's first name is Jean-

Marie. There were already two gigantic rhodos in front of the house but we had no idea what they might have been.

2. How long have you lived on Vancouver Island?

I moved to Victoria in August 1977 to attend UVIC – the idea was to stay for one year and return home. It didn't happen quite that way....

3. Describe your best day in the garden. ☺

It would most definitely have to be a spring day when so much is in bloom, especially the rhodos. The best day is when you putter all day, either planting, pruning or weeding, and you suddenly realize it's late afternoon and you haven't looked at the clock all day.

4. What other interests do you have?

There are so many things to do and to enjoy, especially living on Vancouver Island. I love walking/hiking, swimming, canoeing, reading... I also love the pleasures of good food – cooking and eating with friends.

5. Do you have a favourite rhododendron?

This is the most difficult question – there are so many good ones! I do appreciate all the early bloomers such as Barbatum, Rosamundi, Christmas Cheer, Lee's Scarlet and others – it's such a delight to see colour in the garden early in the season. And I love the scented ones, especially hardier ones as they don't require as much attention but reward you with their intoxicating fragrance just the same – I particularly like Loderi King George and Decorum.

OUR JANUARY PROGRAM

Paul Wurz, President of the North Island Rhododendron Society, owner of Hidden Acres Nursery in Campbell River, plant propagator and long time friend of the NRS will be talking about new and different rhododendron hybrids, including some not yet on the market. He will touch on topics such as scented rhodos, good yellows, proven performers and the Greer's 5-5-5 classifications. Paul will also be discussing hybridizers including Brockenbrough, Fujioka, Lofthouse and Barlup, and teasing us with examples of some of their newer hybrids.

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

The NRS has been a wonderful group to meet with and learn about not only rhododendrons but about gardening in general – there is so much expertise all around and such a willingness to share that expertise. I also very much like the camaraderie; we have made so many wonderful friends through the NRS, both at the local level and beyond.

7. Anything else you might like to share????

I am really enjoying working on this column for our newsletter. It has been a wonderful experience to get to know people through the process.

Please do let me know if you wouldn't mind being featured in this column – you don't have to be a long time member – it's just as interesting to find out a little bit more about new club members. Please email me at juneandjohn@shaw.ca if you would like to be

“interviewed” – I'd love to hear from you! ☺

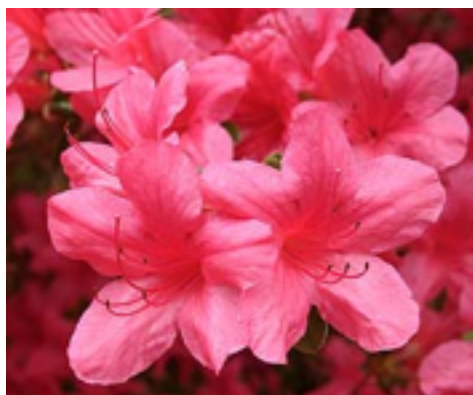
Tips For Beginners: How To Prune Evergreen Azaleas

Tom Hughes
Oak Ridge, Tennessee

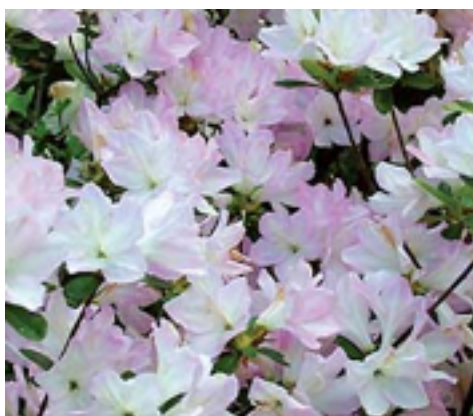
Many evergreen azaleas never experience the pruning shears, since, for the most part, these plants are naturally well behaved. If they are carefully selected, carefully sited, carefully planted, and properly tended, there is usually little need to prune them in the informal garden. Nevertheless, there are some situations in which pruning can be useful, enough to justify a look at the subject.



'Girard's Fuschia'



'Hino Crimson'



'Madame Butterfly'

Evergreen azaleas have a big advantage over some other garden shrubs when it comes to pruning - lop off the end of most any branch or twig that is not heavily shaded and a healthy plant will soon activate new buds (called adventitious buds) below the cut end. For good results, however, it's best to prune with a plan that takes other factors into account.

Why prune? First of all, to remove dead wood. Branches may be killed by cold over the winter or die in mid-summer after girdling by a hard frost in the spring. They may die back as a result of fungus attack, shading, borers, lack of water or improper fertilizing. Cut out the dead wood back to sound wood, i.e., where a nick with the fingernail reveals a layer of green cambium under the outer bark. If the cut end is more than a quarter of an inch across, I zap it with some aerosol wound dressing to discourage new invasion by fungus or borers. (Incidentally, when fungus is involved, the pruning shears should be sterilized after each cut by dipping in a fairly strong [20%] solution of sodium hypochlorite [Clorox] in water.

One of the most common reasons for pruning evergreen azaleas is to scale back an exuberant bush that is beginning to cover a window or crowd a walkway. Pruning would be unnecessary if a smaller-growing variety had been selected initially and positioned properly when planted. It is possible, however, to keep ambitious plants in bounds by regular judicious pruning. The secret here is to reach below the surface - follow projecting branches back a suitable distance into the bush to functions with other branches and cut them off flush. In this case don't leave stubs, which would probably die from lack of light and could invite fungus invasion. The overall effect is to reduce the size of the plant without destroying its symmetry. The surface of the plant will not be as dense at the outset but should fill in quickly.

Another common reason for pruning is to improve the appearance of tall leggy plants with ugly bare shanks and knobby knees. In these cases major surgery is often needed. Judgment is called for, but in serious cases I usually cut the offending stalks back to within a foot or so of the ground in spring (and spray the cut ends with wound dressing), leaving some low branches intact. Cutting so early will destroy the current year's flowers, of course, but new shoots will start earlier and recovery will be quicker. Strong-growing new shoots should be pinched once or twice up to early August to encourage branching.

Also, some varieties send up suckers from the base of *established* plants. These usually are shaded out eventually, so it's best to prune them away while they are still small. When the plant is

young, however, I like to make sure that it will develop a bushy habit rather than a single trunk like a tree. This means that at least three main branches should be left growing from the base of the plant. That way, if a major calamity such as a borer strikes, all is not lost.

Another reason for pruning is to increase the density of twigs and flower buds on plants of naturally rather open growth. This is accomplished by pinching or shearing the new growth during the growing season to induce branching. Timing is rather critical if optimum results are to be achieved. Not all shoots on a plant are ready for pinching at the same time, and not all varieties ripen at the same time. If the new shoots are pinched too early, while they are still soft, the likely result will be a single new branchlet

replacing the nipped growing point, and nothing is accomplished. If pinching is done at the right time, however, several buds will break below the point pruned. I usually wait till late June or early July, depending on variety, when the new shoots tend to snap when bent double. This is also the time to take cuttings for propagation, doubling one's reward for waiting.

Selective pinching of the terminal buds to increase branching can continue up until about the first week of August (later in the South). Pinching or shearing must stop while there is still enough of the growing season left to allow the plants to set flower buds for of next spring's show. Late pruning will take away the flower buds for the following year.

In formal garden, like some Japanese gardens, evergreen azaleas are often sheared to smooth rounded shapes. This is fine and gives results that are pleasing to many people, but, as we indicated earlier, shearing must stop in time for the plants to set flower buds.

In summary, the first rule of pruning is to select the right varieties in the first place and plant them where they'll do what you want without a lot of pruning. There are hundreds of varieties to choose from, dwarf, medium and tall, in many colors, blooming early and late. The second rule is to stop pruning while there is still time for the plant to set flower buds for the next year: around the first of August in the Mid-Atlantic region, and late August in the South. Third, don't leave stubs when pruning larger branches; cut them off flush with another branch.

Source: JARS V47:No.3:p136:y1993

Lamb & Eggplant Moussaka

Makes 4 to 6 servings

Ingredients

Eggplant:

- 2 to 3 medium eggplants (about 3 pounds total), peeled and sliced into 1/2-inch rounds

- Kosher salt

- 1/2 cup olive oil, or as needed

Meat sauce:

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 large onion, peeled and diced
- 1 1/4 pounds ground lamb (or beef, turkey, pork, or a combination)
- 2 cloves garlic, peeled and minced
- 1 28-ounce can diced tomatoes
- 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cloves

- 1 pinch ground allspice
- 1-inch cinnamon stick
- 1 bay leaf
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1/4 cup dry red wine

Cheese sauce:

- 5 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 5 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 2 1/2 cups milk
- Pinch freshly grated nutmeg
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 2 large egg yolks
- 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese

Assembly:

- 1/3 cup plain breadcrumbs



To prepare the eggplant:

1. Place the eggplant in a colander, toss liberally with salt, and let sit for about 1 hour to drain away extra water. Squeeze out the excess water and pat dry with a kitchen towel.
2. In a large skillet over medium-high heat, add the olive oil. Working in batches, fry the eggplant slices, turning as necessary, until tender and light brown, 4 to 5 minutes total. Transfer the cooked slices to a rack set over a baking sheet to drain while you sauté the remaining eggplant. Set aside.

To prepare the meat sauce:

1. In a large skillet over medium heat, add the olive oil. Add the onion to the pan and cook, stirring occasionally, until very tender, about 10 minutes. Add the ground meat and cook, stirring occasionally, until just browned, about 5 minutes.
2. Add the garlic, tomatoes, tomato paste, cloves, allspice, cinnamon, bay leaf, and 1/2 cup water and bring the liquids to a boil. Reduce the heat to medium-low, season with salt and pepper, and simmer, stirring occasionally, until most of the liquid has reduced and the sauce is very thick, about 30 minutes.
3. Add the red wine and continue simmering until the wine has

reduced and developed a sweet aroma, 2 to 3 minutes. Remove and discard the bay leaf and cinnamon stick. Set the sauce aside.

To prepare the cheese sauce:

1. In a medium saucepan over medium heat, melt the butter. Stir in the flour and whisk until it is dissolved and the mixture resembles a smooth paste, about 2 minutes.
2. Gradually whisk in the milk about 1 cup at a time, working out any lumps that form. Bring the sauce to a full boil, then reduce the heat to low and gently simmer, stirring frequently, until thickened, about 30 minutes. Remove the sauce from the heat. Season with nutmeg, salt, and pepper to taste.
3. In a medium bowl lightly beat the egg yolks. Whisk about 1 cup of the hot milk mixture into the yolks to bring them up to the same temperature. Slowly add the yolk mixture to the rest of the milk mixture, then add the cheese and blend well. Set aside and keep warm.

To assemble the moussaka:

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F.
2. Scatter the breadcrumbs in a deep, rectangular baking dish. Arrange about half of the eggplant slices in an even layer over the breadcrumbs. Add all of the meat sauce over the eggplant and spread into an even layer. Arrange the remaining eggplant in an even layer over the meat sauce. Pour the cheese sauce over the eggplant.
3. Bake the moussaka until the cheese sauce is thick and golden brown and the eggplant is very tender, about 45 minutes. Let the moussaka rest for 25 minutes before serving.

Read More <http://www.epicurious.com/recipes/food/views/Lamb-and-Eggplant-Casserole-Moussaka-51121520#ixzz2ohSmZBFd>



****** Not a difficult recipe & ohhhh so tasty!! Be sure to salt your eggplant and let sit for the hour. This removes excess water & any bitterness in the eggplant.