



# The Rhodomentum

## Nanaimo Rhododendron Society Newsletter



January 2024



### President's Message

Happy New Year to everyone!

I hope everyone had a great Christmas – we certainly had a splendid NRS Christmas party with lots of good food and desirable auction and raffle items.

A thank you goes out to all the members who contributed food and raffle items, and a special thank you to those members who prepared the room and got things set up for the auction and raffle. Lastly, a big thank you to the members who purchased and cooked the club supplied turkey and ham. Early feed back from attendees indicated that they liked the format of the silent auction.

The silent auction generated \$835.00 and the raffle \$125.00 as well as \$190.00 which was collected from members for the Loaves and Fishes Food Bank. An additional 10% from our auction will also be donated to Loaves and Fishes.

The warmer than normal weather continues into the new year, which I'm sure most of us are grateful for, and while not very noticeable, the days are getting longer also. Some of us may even have blooms on some of our rhododendrons. Last year, we had snow on the ground here through most of December into January.

I plan to pay the ARS for our memberships soon, so if you haven't renewed yet, please do so, to continue getting your ARS journal in the mail.

Mark your calendar for January 9th, for Hailey Grove work outing, and January 11, for the general meeting, which will have our very own John and June give a presentation of their England trip to Exbury and other gardens. See you then.

Ron

**Our next meeting – Thursday, January 11th, at 7:30**

**At Beban Park Social Centre**

**“Three Gardens, a bit of history and a wall: our travels in England”**

**with June Bouchard and John Deniseger**

### OUR EXECUTIVE

<b>President</b>	Ron Sutton	416-951-1373
<b>Vice President</b>	Dorothee Kieser	390-4136
<b>Past President</b>	Rosina Schmidt	751-3386
<b>Secretary</b>	Deborah Francis	
<b>Treasurer</b>	Ron Sutton	416-951-1373

### Directors:

Wanda Brenton	754-1039
Margaret Cadwaladr	585-6046
Arthur Lightburn	468-7516
Gayle McRae	758-7589
Krystyna Sosulski	729-0948
Chris Southwick	616-2742

### COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

Advertising	Margaret Cadwaladr
Library	Ann Beamish / Gayle McRae
Newsletter	June Bouchard / John Deniseger
Membership	Krystyna Sosulski
Program	by Committee
Raffle	Val Harvey
Sunshine/Coffee	Wanda Brenton
Bargain Table	Reinhold Gorgosilich
Website	Deborah Francis/Rosina Schmidt
Bus Tour	
Propagation	Rosina Schmidt
Hailey Grove	Deborah Francis
Show and Sale	Jan Moles and Rosina Schmidt

Nanaimo Rhododendron Society  
Box 241, #101-5170 Dunster Road  
Nanaimo, BC V9T 6M4  
Website: [nanaimorhodos.ca](http://nanaimorhodos.ca)

## *Our Program for January* ~ with June Bouchard and John Deniseger

**“Three Gardens, a bit of history and a wall: our travels in England – join us for a walk through some beautiful gardens!”**

In the spring of 2023, June and John travelled to England to enjoy gardens, the countryside, and England’s history. They’ll show us some of the gardens that they visited, including a very special visit to Exbury, one of the world’s great woodland gardens. They’ll take us to the south of England, exploring historical influences on modern gardens – from there to London, Bath, Oxford, York and the immensity and beauty of Hadrian’s Wall. England has so much to offer!



Thank you to Ann Beamish and Eliane Leclerc for bringing goodies to our upcoming January meeting.

### **PLEASE NOTE:**

A pen with personal value, got misplaced at the NRS Christmas party. It is described as being black, with silver bands on it, and made by Parker. It belongs to Mary O’Neill if you know of its whereabouts, Mike and Mary will appreciate getting it back.

Thanks,  
Ron

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

## Looking Back at our December Meeting:



Anyone want to buy raffle tickets?

We tried something a little different this year. Rather than lots of traditional auction items, we had a larger silent auction, a raffle, two mystery items and a Dutch auction. Coupled with a lively Christmas bingo which had everyone mingling and socializing, and the usual great food, it was a fun evening. In the spirit of the season, we raised \$960 through the auction and raffle, as well as a significant donation to Loaves and Fishes!!

Our thanks go to everyone who generously donated items for the auction, and of course, for all of the great food contributed by our club's chefs.

Special thanks go to our organizing committee who put it all together!! It worked out so well!



Beautiful table centerpieces...



Mystery auction items...



Raffle items...

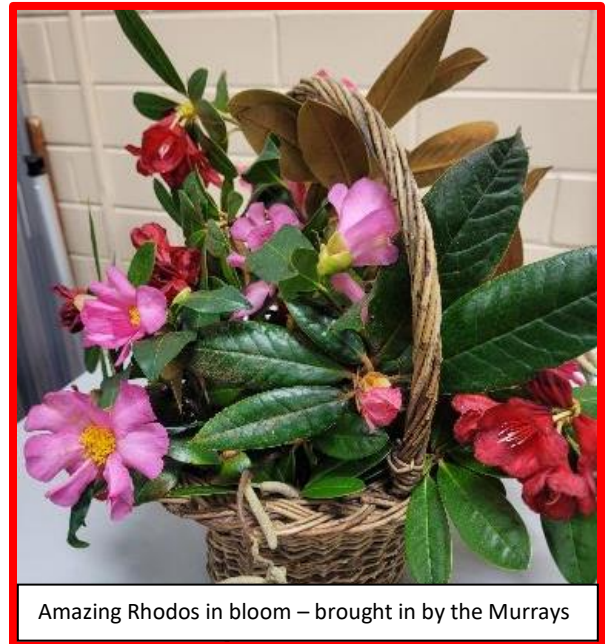




Chris at the Dutch Auction...



So much good food...



Amazing Rhodos in bloom – brought in by the Murrays



"Our table is going to be called

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## Celebration of Life for Linda White

Long time NRS member Linda White passed away earlier this fall (see December newsletter). Richard has let us know that Linda's Celebration of Life will be held at Nanaimo's Cavalloti Lodge (2060 East Wellington Rd.) on Saturday, February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024 from 1 to 4 pm.



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## Twigs and Stems: Calendar of Other Upcoming Events:

**Milner Gardens and Woodland:** Open Fridays and Saturdays, from 11:00 am to 3:30 pm, **beginning February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2024.** For details, check the [Milner Website](#)

**North Island Rhododendron Society:** "Panel of Experience", Comox United Church Hall, Tuesday, January 9<sup>th</sup> at 7:30.

**Mount Arrowsmith Rhododendron Society:** "Members Photo Show" Qualicum Beach Civic Center, Wednesday, January 10<sup>th</sup>, 7:30pm

**Cowichan Valley Rhododendron Society:** Next meeting in February

**Victoria Rhododendron Society:** "Invasive Plants of Vancouver Island" with Glen Jamieson - Couvelier Pavilion, Glendale Gardens, 505 Quayle Rd, Saanich, Thursday, January 4<sup>th</sup>, 7:30pm

**Seedy Saturday in Qualicum:** Saturday February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024 at the Qualicum Beach Civic Centre. [Click here](#) for further details.

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## Ode To My Gardening Gloves by Sara Etgen-Baker



Alas, beautiful gardening gloves, I knew you well. I remember that early March morn; I opened your package and slipped you onto my hands. At first you were a bit stiff and uncomfortable. Over time you softened and became my weekly companion, pulling weeds, cutting flowers, and guiding the nozzle on the water hose allowing our foliage to flourish even during the hot summer months. You've faded, though, from our days together in the sun. Your bubble grippers are worn, your fingers tattered and torn--worse for the wear. I will surely miss you as I will miss the warm, languid summer days we shared together. Soon, I'll cover my hands with woolen mittens or furry gloves. But you'll hold a special place in my heart as I stand on my front porch shivering and yearning for next spring's arrival. Inside my desk drawer I've placed my new pair of gardening gloves, already purchased for next spring. Each morning during the seemingly endless dreary winter months, I'll open my desk drawer and slip them onto my hands, embracing the hope they symbolize.

Copyright © [Sara Etgen-Baker](#) | Year Posted 2023 ([Click here](#) for more poems.)



## *Congratulations to Dorothee Kieser*

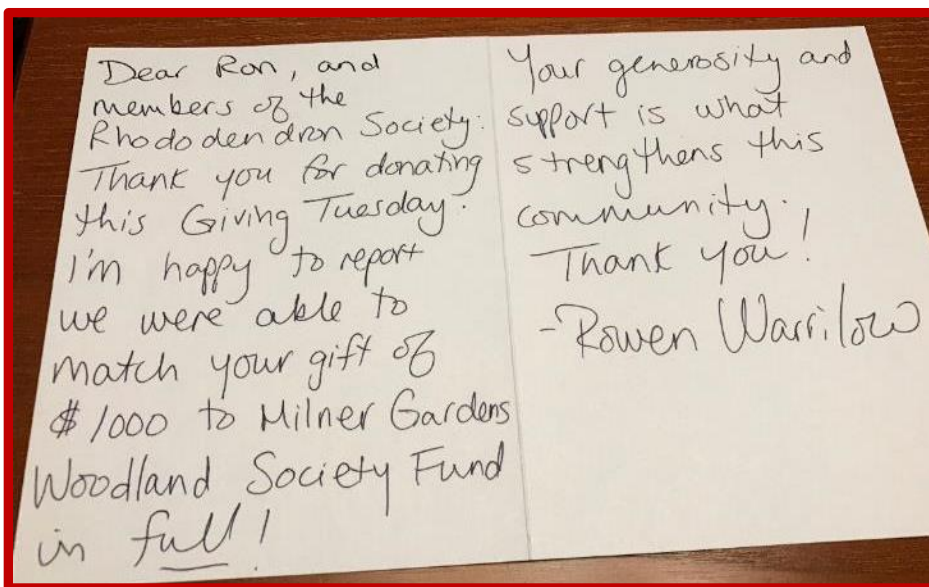
*“The Nanaimo Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society is pleased to award its highest honour to Dorothee Kieser.”*

“Dorothee, as a long-time member of the Nanaimo Rhododendron Society, you have wholeheartedly supported our chapter activities and events. You have been a member of our club’s executive for much of that time, enthusiastically sharing your beautiful property for meetings, garden tours, year-end social activities and pruning demonstrations. You have been an important part of our program committee, organizing presentations, and billeting speakers when needed. You have been an important part of the success of our club’s propagation committee. Through your knowledge of native plants and the natural world, your involvement with the Milner Gardens and Woodland, the Vancouver Island Master Gardeners and Beban Learning Gardens, you have tirelessly promoted horticulture, while raising awareness of our chapter within our community. Thank you Dorothee!”



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*A thank you card sent to our club from Vancouver Island University on behalf of Milner Gardens and Woodland*



By donating on Giving Tuesday, we were able to have our gift matched!!

## Hailey Rhododendron Grove Work Bee ~ Bowen Park

By Deborah Francis, coordinator

Work continues at Hailey Grove in Bowen Park, thanks to some very dedicated volunteers.

**Tuesday, January 9<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 am to 12:00 will be our first Hailey Work Bee of the year at Bowen Park in Nanaimo** – parking at the tennis courts. Bring good cheer, your gardening gloves, and a snack. The City will provide gardening tools. **Hope to see you there! Come and be part of the fun!** 😊



Check out Rosina and Deborah working hard at Hailey Grove at our latest work bee on December 12<sup>th</sup>.

*“Anyone who thinks gardening begins in the spring and ends in the fall is missing the best part of the whole year; for gardening begins in January with a dream.” — Josephine Nuese*



## Shadehouse at Milner

We've set up a weekly maintenance schedule in cooperation with MARS members – we alternate weeks. Thank you to everyone who signed up to help out. **If you'd like to join the team, please see John or Chris.**

### REMINDER:

#### Shadehouse Checking Crew for the upcoming month or so...

January 1st	Art and Susan Lightburn
January 15th	June and John
January 29th	June and John

## *Propagation News* By Rosina Schmidt

Our 2023 cuttings at VIU's greenhouse are doing well. Even the new growth is to be seen, thanks to all that loving care by the Propagators! Happy New Year, Rosina



## Do you remember Hirsutum? (Thank you, Susan and Art Lightburn for sharing this news with us.)

Many of us couldn't believe the wealth of information and photos that became available on Hirsutum. It was too good to be true. It required a continuing web presence and constant maintenance. In 2021, it lost its web presence and had lost maintenance in 2015. It was just announced that Canadian web-guru John Verwolf has created *Rhododendra* which is a functional replacement for Hirsutum. The new website is at <http://www.rhododendra.com/>



## *Plant of the Month* by Ron Sutton

### *Rhododendron x-planetum*

Here is an interesting and little-known species rhododendron that is actually considered a natural hybrid, that is why there is a small "X" in front of the name, signifying a cross. It was discovered growing in south central China

Information on this plant is limited. One reputable site says it is a cross between *R. sutchuenense* and *R. oreodoxa* and listed under subsection *Fortunea*. Another site says it is probably a hybrid of *R. decorum*.

What I can say about it, is that it is a fine plant. It buds up reliably, has a compact upright growing habit and can take full sun. The dull green elliptical leaves have no tomentum or indumentum.

*R. planetum* flowers here in early to mid-April with lax trusses of approximately 10-12 light pink flowers. It isn't a fast grower, approximately 4" a year, but will be taller than 6 feet eventually, from the images I have seen. It is hardy to at least -20°C as both parents are that hardy. It does show some nice colouring on young branch stems as seen in the photo below.

Unfortunately, this plant isn't available by any growers that I know of. My plant was purchased from Harold Fearing who grew it from seed he got from the ARS seed exchange.

First photo taken April 15, 2020



Coloured branch structure - photo taken November 2, 2023

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**Did you know???** We are now on Facebook as the Nanaimo Rhododendron Society. Upcoming events will be posted there and members will be able to add photographs or items of interest to members. (Thank you, Margaret, for setting that up!)



**SAVE THE DATE !**

**ARS 2024 Spring Convention**

**Bellingham, Washington**

**May 2-5, 2024**

**Four Points by Sheraton, Bellingham**

**Hotel and Conference Center**

**714 Lakeway Drive, Bellingham, WA, USA, 98229**

**Phone: +1 360-671-1011**

**Highlights:**

**Pre-Tour: May 1: Private Gardens around Seattle**

**Convention: Tours \* Seminars \* Workshops \* Banquets**

**Post-Tour: May 5: Gardens around Vancouver, Canada**

**Time to check your Passport!**

**Plus:**

**Plant Sales \* Auctions \* Raffles \* Photo Booth \* Poster Session**

**Help get the message out!**

**Please forward to friends and gardeners in your community and around the globe.**

**Visit [ARS 2024](#) for more information and to register.**

**(Editor's Note: if you haven't been to an ARS Spring Convention for a while or if you've never gone, this may be the time to go! It's only a ferry ride and a short drive away. Check [ARS 2024](#) and the Journal of the American Rhododendron Society for details.)**





### Curator's Classroom

An introduction to plant collection curation (and a bit of taxonomy) at the RSBG with Executive Director and Curator Steve Hootman

**Saturday, January 13, 2024 | 4 PM**

Join Steve Hootman to learn about plant collection curation, specifically the curation methods used at the RSBG. Steve will discuss the design and use of the plant database at the RSBG, including the how's and why's of accessioning plants and seed. Steve will also discuss the taxonomy of *Rhododendron* and provide a lesson on the use of a dichotomous key to determine the proper identification of plant species.

**Registration open now until January 10, 2024**

[Register Now!](#)



### Attention Gardeners!

#### The RSBG Spring Catalog will be available January 17!

The RSBG is pleased to announce the return of online ordering and our latest selection of *Rhododendron* species, hybrids and companion plants. Shop online from the finest and largest selection of *Rhododendron* species in North America.

We also offer a large selection of species grown from seed, the majority of these from wild populations. Seedlings provide an exciting opportunity to acquire taxa new to cultivation and to grow those desirable species that are not readily produced through asexual propagation.

Our ever-expanding collection of non-rhododendrons or “companion plants” provides the opportunity to acquire an outstanding range of rare and hard to find treasures selected from around the world.

Your purchases directly fund the mission of the Rhododendron Species Foundation (RSF). We hope you enjoy the catalog and are happy with the plants you receive.

*Members get early access to ordering!*

#### Ordering Timeline:

- Sustaining & Benefactor Members: Wed., Jan. 17
- All Members: Wed., Jan. 24
- Non-Members: Wed., Jan. 31
- Ordering ends April 24

[Become a Member Today!](#)



# Rhododendron Glossary...



We're building our very own collection of terms related to rhododendrons, one word at a time. Each month, we'll add a new word or term to the glossary. If you have suggestions that you'd like us to add, please let us know.

## This month's word is: hammerhead

At our truss show in May, you'll find a special "hammerhead" category. What is a hammerhead? Normally, a single flower bud is formed as a terminal bud at the end of a branch. In turn, that flower bud forms a single truss composed of one inflorescence (the complete flower head of a plant including stems, stalks and trusses). Occasionally, there are clusters of two or more flower buds arising from the terminal. When the trusses form, they combine to form the appearance of a very large truss, known as a "hammerhead".

## Refer to previous issues for ....

December 2023: *Chlorosis*

November 2023's word: *senescence*

October 2023's words: *Elepidote and Lepidote*

September 2023's word: *tomentum*

June 2023's word: *indumentum*

May 2023's word: *truss*

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Happy New  
Year  
Everyone!  
Looking  
forward to  
seeing you  
on  
January  
11<sup>th</sup>!