



June 2014

President's Message

Congratulations and thank you to all the members that organized and participated in the club functions this past year. From the annual Christmas Party/Auction, the recent Show and Sale, the Bus Tour and the Members' Garden Tours, all were successful and well attended. The revenues gained will support our yearly meetings. The Truss Show, again, had lots of great trusses on display for the public and was well received. The Nanaimo Rhododendron Society gained two new members at the Show and Sale and all the vendors went away pleased with their sales. Our PR department, mainly Bryan and John, helped to increase the club's profile in the community this year with the city of Nanaimo declaring May as Rhododendron Month, a 15 foot banner flying high on Church Street for three weeks and an information kiosk set up on a Saturday in the Woodgrove Mall's main entrance. The winner of the Kiosk's free raffle Rhodo 'Alena' was Louisa McFarlane of Nanaimo. Allen and Gaylle McRae's banners are hanging on Terminal Avenue near Cliff Street intersection. Have a look.

The executive is deciding to hold the 2015 Truss Show and Sale one week ahead of our usual time, so that all members will be able to attend and participate in the ARS International Convention in Sydney on Mothers Day weekend. With speakers from abroad, Kenneth Cox, Mark Colombel, Harold Greer, to name a few, the Victoria Rhododendron Society is expecting attendees from all parts of the globe.

The year-end windup will be held at the home of Dorothee Kieser at 6299 Pearce Rd., Nanaimo, off Dumont Rd, near the 'Black Bear' pub. Details will follow.

See you there,
Art

EXECUTIVE

President	Art Lightburn	468-7516
Vice President	John Deniseeger	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 Deniseeger, Gaylle McRae	

Nanaimo Rhododendron Society
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Nanaimo, BC V9T
Website: nanaimo.rhodos.ca
email: nanaimo@rhodos.ca

Twigs and Stems



End of Year Barbeque

Saturday June 14, 4 - 7 pm

Dorothee Kieser's home

6299 Pearce Road

Visit to Rhododendron Lake Saturday June 7

We are planning to visit Rhododendron Lake to see the trusses on Saturday June 7. Meet in the parking lot at NW Bay road 10 am. Bring a lunch. Contact Craig Clarke if you plan to attend. The road is in relatively good shape but some may prefer to carpool from the parking lot. Bring a lunch and plan for rough muddy trails. [See the photo album on the website for pictures of Art & Susan's visit last year].

The fellow at the gate will issue you a permit to travel on the logging roads.

Gate hours are 9 am - 5 pm on Saturday & Sunday.

For those who wish to drive in, the following instructions will get you there.

Gate at NW Bay Camp	0 km
End of pavement	2.0 km
Branch at	3.4 km stay left
Branch at	3.9 km stay left
Branch at	9.3 km stay right
Branch at	9.5 km stay left
Branch at	10.1 km stay right
Branch at	10.5 km turn right
Under powerline at	12.7 km
Left turn to parking lot	13.95 km
Parking lot	14.0 km

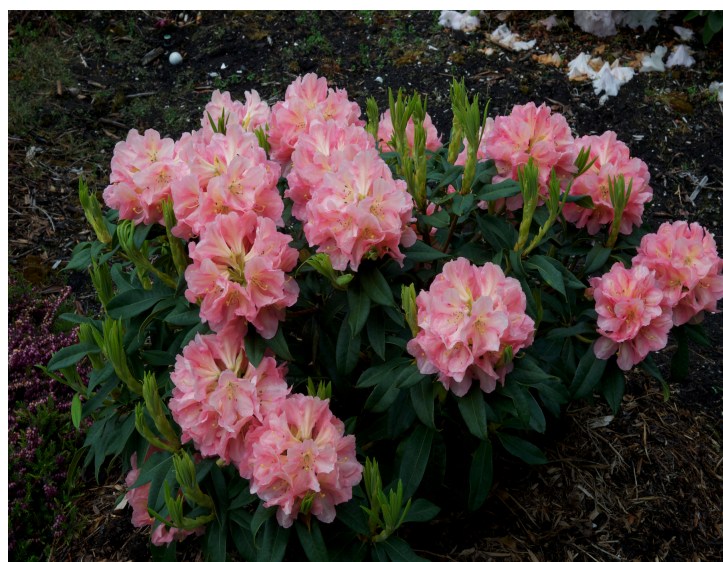
For further information from the North West Bay logging Co phone: Morgan Kennah 468-6830

Rhodos Worth Growing

Patty Bee (-20C) Large lemon yellow trumpet-shaped flowers in lax trusses of 6. Probably the best dwarf yellow available flowering in April. A compact plant with bronzy-plum winter foliage. Height to 40-60cm in 10 years. Recommended by Chris Southwick



Langley Tranquility A recent hybrid from Bev & Les Clay's garden (Rhodohaven). A tidy plant with dark green leaves and soft multi-coloured bloom that is reflected in its name. Recommended by Art Lightburn



2014 TRUSS SHOW WINNERS

Class	Prize	Plant	Winner
Red hybrid	1 st	The Honorable Jean Marie de M	Ann & Dick Beamish
	2 nd	The Honorable Jean Marie de M	Art Lightburn
	3 rd	Heart's Delight	Ann & Dick Beamish
Blotch/flare hybrid	1 st	Mrs Furnival's Daughter	Ann & Dick Beamish
	2 nd	Phyllis Korn	Doug Blenkarn
	3 rd	Noble Mountain	Doug Blenkarn
Lax truss	1 st	Gold Buckett	Allan & Gaylle McRae
	2 nd	Corination	Ann & Dick Beamish
	2 nd	Conroy	Mary Parker
	3 rd	Cinnkey's	John Deniseger & June Bouchard
	3 rd	Weebee	Chris Southwick
Pink hybrid	1 st	Ellie Sather	Chris Southwick
	2 nd	Point Defiance	Ann & Dick Beamish
	3 rd	Reina	Ann & Dick Beamish
White hybrid	1 st	*-----	*-----
	2 nd	*-----	*-----
	3 rd	Yeti	Craig Clarke
Salmon/Orange	1 st	Lem's Cameo	Sandra Dorman
	1 st	Rim Fire	Ann & Dick Beamish
	2 nd	Apricot Fantasy	Doug Blenkarn
	3 rd	Lem's Best Orange	Ann & Dick Beamish
Purple/blue	1 st	Blue Boy	Ann & Dick Beamish
	2 nd	Elsie Watson	Allan & Gaylle McRae
	3 rd	Black Widow	Ann & Dick Beamish
Yellow	1 st	Horizon Monarch	Chris Southwick
	2 nd	Alice Street	Ann & Dick Beamish
	3 rd	Golden Genie	Earl Daneluk
Best Scented	1 st	Liz Ann	Chris Southwick
	2 nd	Loderi King George	Doug Blenkarn
	3 rd	Snow Queen	Ann & Dick Beamish

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Hammerhead	1 st	Gold Buckett	Doug Blenkarn
	2 nd	*-----	*-----
	3 rd	*-----	*-----
Alpine species	1 st	<i>R. camplogynum</i>	Chris Southwick
	2 nd	<i>R. cephalanthum</i>	Chris Southwick
	3 rd	<i>R. sargentianum</i>	Burkhard Dressler
Elepidote species	1 st	*-----	*-----
	2 nd	<i>R. orbiculare</i>	John Deniseger & June Bouchard
	2 nd	<i>R. figulactum</i>	Craig Clarke
	3 rd	*-----	*-----
Lepidote Species	1 st	<i>milky way?</i>	Valerie Harvey
	2 nd	<i>R. oreotrephes</i>	Chris Southwick
	3 rd	*-----	*-----
Azalea	1 st	<i>C. amomum</i>	Art Lightburn
Truss or spray	2 nd	<i>R. kaempferi</i>	Art Lightburn
	3 rd	<i>R. linerfaium</i>	Mary Parker
Foliage	1 st	<i>R. braenycarpum</i>	Chris Southwick
	2 nd	<i>R. mallotum</i>	Art Lightburn
	2 nd	<i>R. bureavii</i> (Greig form)	Chris Southwick
	3 rd	<i>R. proteoides</i>	Ann & Dick Beamish
Popular Choice Trophy	1 st	Black Widow	Ann & Dick Beamish
	2 nd	Rim Fire	Ann & Dick Beamish
	3 rd	Ellie Sather	Chris Southwick
Best Of Show Trophy		Ellie Sather	Chris Southwick
Hammerhead Trophy		***	***
Best Scented Trophy		Liz Ann	Chris Southwick
Paul Trophy		Cumulative Points	Ann & Dick Beamish

* No Truss worthy of award

*** Judgement Unacceptable

Hammerhead definition (Seattle) Inflorescence with multiple rachis emanating from a single leaf stem.

A record 17 members entered 208 specimens. Over 85% of entrants completed the new entry format. We appreciate that many members helped with the care, storage and transport of show materials, the administration, registration, display, judging and clean-up. The team of Valerie, Ann, Yvonne, Sandra, Glenda and Jan deserve special mention.

NANAIMO RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

Getting to know each other...

By June Bouchard

Our feature member for this month is Allen McRae. Allen has been involved in the Nanaimo Rhododendron Society for many years and was president from 2004 to 2006. In addition, Allen has been involved in various roles including coordinating the Christmas Auction for many years; Conference Committee member in charge of fundraising; and more recently, artist for one of our banners in downtown Nanaimo – in addition to being a helping hand in many other capacities over the years. Thanks Allen for your continuous support of the NRS.

1. How long have you been growing rhododendrons?

I have been growing rhododendrons for 40 years - since 1974!

2. How long have you lived on Vancouver Island?

I have been living on Vancouver Island since 1968 having grown up in Vancouver.

3. Describe your best day in the garden. ☺

My best day in the garden is a “May Day” when all my rhododendrons are coming into bloom.

4. What other interests do you have?

My other interests are skiing, painting with watercolours, golfing, and travelling

5. Do you have a favourite rhododendron?

My favourite rhododendrons are the scented ones - Mi Amor for example.

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

What I like about the Nanaimo Rhododendron Society is that it consists of people from many walks of life, who all have at least one



common interest - the growing and appreciation of rhododendrons.

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

I have enjoyed going to rhododendron conferences in North Carolina, Washington State, and Oregon. I have also visited members of the Hawaii Rhododendron Society and seen the wonderful rhodos that grow in the subtropics. I have also seen many rhododendrons growing wild in the highest mountains of Thailand. Just being aware of them makes travelling more interesting.



Allen and Gayle's banners

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A full bus load of Rhododendron enthusiasts took part in our 14th annual spring bus tour. This year's tour included 5 gardens and nurseries from Deep Bay to Campbell River as well as wine tasting at Coastal Black. As always, we saw beautiful gardens, each one uniquely inspiring. We also took the opportunity to fill the bus with plants from Outback Nursery, Hidden Acres and Bob and Adela Smith. Thanks are due to Myrna and Ed Schebel, Paul and Lynn Wurz, Barb and Brian Staton and Bob and Adela Smith for so generously sharing their gardens with us. Special thanks to Chris Southwick for doing such a great job keeping us entertained on the bus.



John and June



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Tips for Beginners: Mulching

Terry Richmond Port Alberni, British Columbia, Canada

Some of the best gardening ideas come from nature. Mulching - one of the very best gardening ideas when it comes to rhododendrons - is one of these. In their wild homelands rhododendron roots are covered with nature's own debris of leaves, twigs and whatever else finds a resting place about the plant. This cover, gardeners have discovered, is beneficial, if not downright essential, for the shallow rooted rhododendron. When gardeners take matters into their own hands and do the spreading themselves they call it "mulching", and the material they cast about is, of course, called "mulch".

Benefits of Mulching The benefits of mulching are many, some of which are obvious to any gardener with a little common sense and others of which need explanation by trained scientists. The first of these benefits is that mulching conserves moisture by physically holding it and releasing it slowly to the soil beneath. Since rhododendrons like a damp soil, this is an obvious plus. Mulch also conserves moisture by reducing evaporation by up to 90 percent. The results of this conservation is that the need for external water is reduced by one third to one half of that needed for un-mulched soil.

Mulches also moderate soil temperature. Mulched soil is up to 10 degrees C cooler on hot summer days and up to 10 degrees C warmer during chilly spring and fall nights, extending the growing season at both ends. Most plants, in fact, virtually cease taking up food and water when the soil temperature is below 6 degrees C (43 degrees F) or above 30 degrees C (86 degrees F).

Nature can at times be excessive, and mulches can protect the rhododendron from nature's intemperance. Erosion from heavy rain and winds can be moderated by mulch. Soil compaction from heavy rain and hail can be prevented. The heaving of roots by frost can be prevented as can the drying of roots by high temperatures and winds. Mulch can even prevent the uprooting of the whole plant by winds. The shock from sudden changes in temperature can also be moderated by mulching.

Humans, however, can be even more excessive than nature, and mulching protects the rhododendron from their lack of restraint. Mulching can protect the plants from soil compaction due to foot and cart traffic, cold water on hot days and overdoses of water, fertilizers, pesticides, fungicides and salt deicers on sidewalks and roads.

Salt is very destructive of the biological life of the earth and of the tiny feeder roots through which plants take up their nourishment. An organic mulch locks up and hastens the degradation of these soil and plant poisons.

Much to the gardener's liking, a mulch can help eliminate weeds under the rhododendron. Not only does it lessen the work load but it reduces the competition for moisture, nutrients and sunlight. Besides, removing the weeds can cause damage to shallow rooted plants.

Mulching can minimize damage caused by insects and disease by curbing "back-splash inoculation", slowing their growth cycles. It helps prevent the spreading of disease spores by foot traffic, and some mulches even repel insects and combat diseases.

Plants that are undernourished and in distress will produce more carbohydrates than proteins. Insects will zero in on these plants since they are attracted to plants high in carbohydrates.

Mulching also helps protect the lower leaves of sprawling rhododendrons from dirt contamination and loss from insects and fungus. By maintaining a dry, sanitary work environment, gardening is made more pleasant. Moreover, mulch creates an attractive background accent for your plants. Pleasing visual effects can result through the use of different mulch textures and colors in combination with plants of various structures and colors.

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One of the most beneficial aspects of mulching, however, is the improvement it brings to structure and fertility of the soil. Mulching establishes a cool, moist environment where bacteria and other micro-organisms (e.g., worms) can aid in the decomposition process. This process, among many other things, produces humic acid, which helps release bound-up materials such as phosphorus and iron to the soil, carbon dioxide to the plant for use in food production and ammonia, a form of nitrogen plant food, to the plant. As a general rule, the more organic material there is in a soil, the less important the pH level will be and the more flexible your rhododendrons will be in their ability to grow in a range of pH levels.

Mulching Materials The wide range of potential mulching materials gives gardeners a chance to let their imaginations soar. Among the organic, inorganic and living mulches is an almost infinite number of possibilities.

Following is a sampling of possible organic mulches: seaweed, kelp or eel grass; shredded bark, wood chips or sawdust; straw, hay or grass clippings; compost, mushroom compost or various rotted manures; hulls, shells or cones; conifer needles and twigs; coffee grounds and tea leaves; ground oyster shells or egg shells; ground corn cobs or shredded sugar cane; shredded cardboard or whole or shredded newspaper; peat or sphagnum moss; rotted wood; leaves; burlap sacks; and bracken fern.

Most of these mulches are acidic, but some such as crushed oyster and egg shells are alkaline. Determine the correct pH for your particular application. Rhododendrons, of course, like acidic conditions.

Some carbon-rich materials such as fresh sawdust, newspapers and straw temporarily take nitrogen from the surrounding soil, causing plants to become yellow. Neutralize this situation by applying a nitrogen-rich material in combination with one high in carbon, or spread a nitrogen fertilizer on most soils before applying carbon-rich mulches.

Examples of carbon-rich mulches are: straw, sawdust, bark, ground corn cobs and leaves. Nitrogen-rich mulches include cottonseed meal, manure, blood meal, grass clippings and compost.

Inorganic mulches provide a permanent mulch which will not break down. Among the possibilities in this category are: rocks, bricks, boards, gravel, solid plastic sheeting (black or clear), perforated clear plastics, fiberglass wool, kitty litter, aluminum foil and expanded vermiculite. Most of these materials are designed to be used in a special situation.

Living mulches include the ground covers such as grass, periwinkle and other plants that can be used to satisfy certain landscaping requirements.

When a mulch should be applied depends upon your climate. In the moderate Pacific Northwest, mulches should be applied in spring after the soil has warmed up. Be sure the soil is moist before the mulch is applied. Top up mulch in the fall before the temperature drops off. In warm climates such as Florida or California, maintain full mulch all year round.

In cold climates such as Prince George, apply mulch in the fall after the ground has frozen to one inch. Uncover in the spring and after the frost danger has passed, recovering again before the heat of summer. Alternatively, spread black plastic over the mulch in the spring and remove after the soil has thawed and warmed sufficiently. But remember, never mulch a heavy, waterlogged soil.

How much mulch to apply will vary according to the density and texture of the chosen mulching materials. Apply the amount necessary to maintain a cool, moist soil. Following are some examples: - Coffee grounds: one-half inch. - Sawdust: two inches. - Bark mulch: three inches. - Needles and small twigs: four inches. - Seaweed or straw: five inches. Once you begin using mulches on your rhododendrons you will see the benefits of imitating nature in this rewarding garden activity.

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Rosina Schmidt's banners

Ann and Dick Beamish receive the ARS Bronze Medal Award, presented by Art Lightburn



May is Rhododendron Month in Nanaimo