



MARCH 2004



Volume 12

Issue 7

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

A walk around the garden to see how our plants fared over the winter; not too bad considering the weather. A deciduous Daphne blooming, R moupanense and cilpinense starting, and fulvums buds ready to burst open. This is one of the most exciting times as the fruits of our labour show their stuff, especially those newly acquired plants. R roxieanum oreonastes has one large bud forming, and the R sinogrande has perked up and is ready to grow. Some of the rhododendrons look like they are going to be spectacular, like R yungingense. Maybe some varieties need a cold winter to set good flowering buds? One family which did not fair too well are R cinnabarinum, and may have some dieback later on. Start uncovering those plants. Our Wasabi plant was already growing through the drain holes of its protecting 10 gallon covering pot. We better check the Gunnera next week; but do we want to look under the burlap covering the R macabeanum? Thanks to all for volunteering for the planting of our rhododendron liners. We will let everyone know of the location, date of planting, and what we should bring, in the next newsletter. Looks like April 10 may work .

Our executive restructuring is coming up in May, so give some thought in standing for a position. We require a volunteer to phone members and nominate members to positions. We also need a host venue for our wind up BBQ. See you at the meeting, Richard.

EXECUTIVE

President	Richard White	752-6519
V/President	Paul Lawry	390-2370
Secretary	Craig Clarke	390-4090
Treasurer	Barb Coy	758-8497
Directors	Allan McRae	758-7589
	Mike Miller	758-2879
	Helmut Neuman	714-1840
	Chris Southwick	758-0993
	Mary Taylor	756-3984
	Anne Williamson	390-2604

COMMITTEES

ADVERTISING	Allan	758-7589
LIBRARY	Chris (temp)	758-0993
NEWSLETTER	Paul & Linda	390-2370
PROGRAMS	VOLUNTEER NEEDED	
RAFFLE TABLE	June & John	
SOCIAL	Anne	390-2604
\$ TABLE	Yvonne	756-3574

NRS MEETING
MARCH 11 – BEBAN PARK AT 7:30

GEOFF BALL

Presents

“AN UPDATE ON MILNER GARDENS”

SLIDE SHOW & LECTURE

MARCH VOLUNTEERS

SNACKS

JUNE & JOHN
CHRIS SOUTHWICK
PAUL & LINDA

RAFFLE

JOHN & JUNE

\$ TABLE

YVONNE

Nanaimo Horticultural Society

presents

Spring Plant Sale

April 17th, 9:00am-2:00pm

Rutherford Mall, *centre court*

Master Gardeners on site

15 minutes quickie demonstrations each hour.

Buckets of plants will be available!



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287-4301

Pwurz@oberon.ark.com

Growers of Specialty Rhododendrons

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PAST ISSUES

www.rhodos.ca/nanaimo/newsarchive.htm

ARS WEBSITE

www.rhododendron.org

Rhododendron & Azalea News

www.rhododendron.org/news/newsindex.htm

NEWSLETTER EDITORS

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MARCH SPEAKER'S INFORMATION

Geoff Ball

Position:

Horticultural Supervisor, Milner Gardens and Woodland

Back Ground:

Geoff started working for Milner Gardens and Woodland as the Horticulturist in the spring of 1998. In his role at Milner Gardens, he oversees all gardening activities carried by staff, volunteers, Horticulture Technician Program students and summer students.

Previous to his current position, Geoff worked for Malaspina University-College's Horticulture Technician Program in various roles in the greenhouses, landscapes and classroom, and as an assistant grower at PRT's forest seedling operation in Campbell River.

Geoff completed Malaspina University-College's Horticulture Technician Program in 1995 and a B.Sc. in Microbiology from UBC in 1991.

BUS TOUR

April 24 and we are going South.

Details at the March Meeting

TRUSS & PLANT SHOW

MAY 8

Volunteers will be needed to help with a variety of duties

Second Annual Nanaimo Seed Exchange

The Second Annual Nanaimo Seed Exchange will be taking place on Sunday, March 7, 2004 at Bowen Park Auditorium between 10am and 4pm.

The Nanaimo Seed Savers are market gardeners, horticulturalists, and individuals committed to grassroots community development.

We will be fostering community involvement in our local food network by showcasing tools and resources for local self-reliance. We are seeking to promote diversity of our heritage, native, and locally adapted plant and seed sources.

Our Seedy Sunday will feature seed vendors, vendors promoting self-reliance, and educational displays. There will be an activity centre for kids and a seedy cafe to satiate your appetite. Hope to see you there!

Workshops will include:

- Barbara Ebell, Nanoose Edibles
"Nanaimo Region Agriculture: the Healthy Choice"
- Geoff Johnson, Greater Victoria Compost Education Centre
"Planting Guild and Companion Planting"
- Jessica Dawe, the Bug Lady
"Build a Pocket Insectary: Banish the Pests"
- Michael Cowan, Edibella Organic Landscapes
"how to Wisely Water your Watermelons and other tales of micro-irrigation in the veggie garden"
- **WHEN: March 7, 2004 from 10am to 4pm**
WHERE: Bowen Park Auditorium, 500 Bowen Rd, Nanaimo

Admission by donation.

Contact info: Michael Carpenter

(250) 741-1928

carpentem@mala.bc.ca

www.seedsavers.bc.ca

ARS District 1 Events – 2004				
CHAPTER	EVENT	DATE	LOCATION	CONTACT
PARS	Sale & Show	April 3/04 0900 -1500	Elgin Hall, Surrey	A. Burién 604-882-1101
CVRS	Sale & Show	May 1/04	Cowichan Exhibition Grounds	Al Campbell 250-743-3597
MARS	Sale	April 17/04	Curling Rink Qualicum Beach	Mary Parker 250-752-6106
VICTORIA	Sale & Show	April 24/04	Cadburow Bay United Church	Bill McMillan 250-478-3515
FVRS	Sale	May 15/04		
ARS	Annual Convention	May 13 - 16/04	Philadelphia, PA	ARS Journal
VRS	Sale & Show	May 1 & 2/04	Park & Tilford North Vancouver	Ron Knight rcknight@shaw.ca
NIRS	Sale & Show	May 1/04		Paul Wurz 250-287-4301
NIRS	Garden Tour	May 9/04	Comox Valley	Harry Wright 250-338-8345
NRS	Sale & Show	May 8/04	Beban Park	Richard White 250-752-6519
MARS	Garden Tour	May 8 -9/04	Qualicum Beach	Bill Burgogne (Kay)
PARS	Mother's Day at the Glades	May 16/04	561-172nd St. Surrey	E. Dewolfe 604-538-0928
FSRS	Sale & Show	May 16/04		

FRASER DAYS

In Ucluelet on May 29, 2004 there will be a celebration of the 150th Anniversary of the birth of George Fraser. This will be a major event for rhodo lovers. Several dignitaries, including Iona Campanola, Lieutenant Governor of BC and Mike Stewart, the president of the American Rhododendron Society, are expected to attend. This is an advance notice for those who may want to make overnight reservations.

CELEBRATION OF ISLAND GARDENING ANNUAL SPRING FLOWER & GARDEN SHOW MARCH 12 – 14, 2004 BEBAN PARK RECREATION CENTRE NANAIMO

THINGS TO DO IN MARCH

Now is a good time to:

- ◆ Fertilize your lawns.
- ◆ Spray your Fruit Tree & Ornamental Trees with Dorman Oil/Lime Sulphar
- ◆ Fertilize Trees & Shrubs
- ◆ A little lime for your Rhodos

Pacific Northwest Plant Sale 2004

The fifth annual Pacific Northwest Plant Sale - one of the largest events of its kind in the western US and Canada - will be held on Saturday, April 17, 2004 at the University of British Columbia Botanical Garden. There will be nine specialty native plant nurseries from the South Coast region of the province participating in the event. They will offer over 250 species of plants native to the West Coast, from Alaska to northern California.

Many of these species are not commonly available outside of the UBC event. Participating wholesale nurseries normally do not sell direct to the public and many less common species sell out early in the season at retail garden centres. This sale offers the best opportunity to meet the nursery owners, see the plants available and get information on growing natives.

This year, a central cashier service will be provided for plant sales, with one-stop payment by cash, debit card or credit card. Plant sales will also be complemented with the addition of natural and organic product retailers who will sell direct to the public in a farmer's market style. Products for sale or being demonstrated may include bee houses, birdhouses and bat-houses, worm bins, and natural and organic foods.

During the event, admission to the garden will

be free. There will also be exhibits by organizations working with native plants and habitats, tours of the BC Native Garden and demonstrations in the sales areas. Due to construction of a new residential project in the former parking lot across Marine Drive from the Botanical Garden, visitors are requested to park in the West Mall parkade, entered from Gate 6 or 7 on Marine Drive; a free shuttle bus will be provided to the site.

The Pacific Northwest Plant Sale is organized by the NPSBC Native Plant Society of British Columbia and the UBC Friends of the Garden, with the cooperation of the BC Landscape and Nursery Association Native Plant Committee. A percentage of the proceeds from plant sales are donated by the nursery participants to support the Society and the BC Native Garden at the Botanical Garden.

Participating Nurseries:

- BC's Wild Heritage Plants, Chilliwack
- Linnaea Nurseries Ltd., Langley
- N.A.T.S. Nurseries Ltd., Surrey
- Natural Resource Native Plant Nursery, Duncan
- Pacific Rim Native Plant Nursery, Chilliwack
- Peel's Nurseries, Mission
- Streamside Native Plants, Courtenay
- Wildside Nursery, Denman Island
- Woodgate Native Plant Services, Duncan

Nanaimo Rhododendron Society - Minutes of February 13th 2004 Regular Meeting

1. The meeting was called to order by President Richard White at 7:40pm.
2. Richard welcomed members & guests including Rosina Schmidt, Debbie Gaboury and Neville Hardy – from New Zealand (brother of Bill Hardy).
3. **Secretary's report.** In absence of Craig Clarke, Val Harvey took the minutes. Correspondence received from the Rhododendron Species Foundation requesting sponsorship donations and newsletters from other chapters, MARS, Seattle, North Island and Victoria.
4. **Treasurer's report:**
 - The balance in the Bowen Park Legacy Fund is \$156.16
 - The balance in the general account is \$2955.47
 - The balance in the library fund is \$373.81
5. **Committee Reports:**
 - Library:** We need a volunteer to look after the library.
 - Social** Thanks to all who contributed goodies.
 - Program**
 - March – Geoff Ball “What’s new at Milner Gardens & Woodland”
 - April - Ron Knight
 - May - Michael Miller on his trip to Nepal.
 - Draws:**
 - Name Tag – Liatris bulbs
 - Door Prize – Book
 - Raffle – R. cilpinense, Pieris ‘Snowdrift’, primulas, mini-cyclamen.
 - Newsletter** Paul Lawry asked members to check that he has their correct e-mail addresses as several people have not received their newsletters.
6. **Old business**
 - Spring Bus Trip – April 24, 2004, south to Duncan & Victoria gardens.
 - Truss show & Sale – May 8, 2004; more information at our next meeting.
 - Year-end BBQ – June 5, 2004; need someone to host it.
 - Rhodo seedlings to be picked up April 7, 2004; work party will be organized on a weekend to pot them up; a volunteer is required to hold the pots in their yard. Richard White has ½ gallon pots.
7. **New Business.**
 - MARS Truss Show & Sale on April 17, 2004 at Qualicum Curling Club. Richard White & Paul Lawry volunteered to act as judges.
 - CVIBGS Annual Garden Show – Richard White asked for volunteers to set up a booth; our participation is contingent upon volunteers to set it up; the cost for the club to participate is \$50.
8. **Executive meeting** will be hosted by Ann Williamson, 118 Lakeview Crescent on February 26th at 7pm.
9. **Program.** Agnes Lynn gave an interesting presentation on Woody companion plants for Rhododendrons..
10. Meeting was adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

NAMING PLANTS

This information taken from J. Harold Clarke's book "Getting Started with Rhodos and Azaleas". Timber Press 1982.

HORTICULTURAL VARIETIES

In order to have a variety that you know will bloom at a certain date and have a flower of known size and colour, it is necessary to see the plant in bloom, or to purchase plants which have been grown from cuttings, layers or grafts taken from the desired variety. There is, however, a hidden hazard, not often pointed out in nursery catalogues. This is the very unfortunate practise of giving a name to a group of seedlings from a particular cross, and not to an individually selected plant.

As you know, woody garden plants are normally propagated asexually - that is, by budding, grafting, cuttings or layers, so that each plant so propagated is really a part of the original plant, and barring very infrequent mutations, is identical with it. If you buy a Peace Rose, you expect to get a plant identical with one of the same name purchased by your neighbour. Plants propagated in this way are said to be CLONES, that is, each one is actually a part of the original, selected plant.

GROUP VARIETIES

Rhododendron varieties originating in Holland and some other countries, have normally been propagated as clones.

However, a number of years ago, English breeders began to use group names for large lots of seedlings of the same cross. This practise probably stemmed from the custom of giving Latin names to natural hybrids found in the wild. According to botanical custom, once such a name is given to a natural hybrid, additional findings of the same parentage must be given the same name. Some of the breeders, being perhaps more familiar with botanical than horticultural practise, adopted the method of giving a name to all of the progeny (hybrids) of a particular cross. The next step was to set up a stud book, registering names for each cross. Breeders who made the same cross at a later date were then expected to use the name which had already been given by the first person who made it.

At first the crosses were between species, and so the seedlings were primary hybrids, similar to those found in the wild, and giving a botanical name to all the progeny of a particular cross probably seemed the logical thing to do. Later, crosses between a species and a hybrid were registered, then between registered hybrids, then between a hybrid and an unknown variety.

You can see where this is all leading. The stud book had value in indicating what crosses between different species had

been successfully made, and was of historical value in indicating who first made the cross. The unfortunate fact was that these seedlings were then sold under the group name. If the group names had been confined to use by the breeders simply for their convenience, to indicate a particular group of seedlings, no harm would have been done. However, seedlings got into the nursery trade under the group name, and many were brought to America.

This method of naming presumably did not appear undesirable to the English breeders, because they were familiar with the system. The American gardener, however, being accustomed to woody shrubs sold as clones, was often disgusted to find he had purchased a seedling that was different from a plant seen at a show or in another garden. A few American breeders, following the English system, also named group varieties. The advantage to the breeder is that it provides a name by which he can sell his seedlings. The gardener, however, must wait to see the seedling in bloom before he can be sure he has the specific form he expected.

Any rhodo cross will usually produce some individuals which are good, or even superior, and others which are inferior. The stud book system provides for the naming of superior clones within the groups, by using two names. Thus the clone 'King George' in the group Loderi. It is insufficient to remember the name 'King George' alone, as you may get the clone R. King George, which is red, or Loderi King George, a magnificent white.

ARS CODE OF NOMENCLATURE

Several years ago the ARS drew up a code of nomenclature for the guidance of American breeders, and most conform to these provisions. According to this code, group names are not to be used. Any seedling not receiving a clonal name should be sold as unnamed seedlings or with parentage indicated by a formula, for instance 'Pink Pearl x Britannia'

Repudiation of the system of group naming should give reasonable assurance that only clones will be named in future. However, there are many well-known varieties in the nursery trade which are actually group names. 'Elizabeth', 'May Day', 'David', 'Fabia', 'Cilpinense' in your garden may be sister seedlings to those in your neighbour's garden, thus may not look the same.

Ed. Note: This article was taken from the March Issue of the North Island Rhododendron Society's Newsletter

Selecting Rhododendrons

<http://www.angelfire.com/or/paulrogers/Rhodys.html>

by Paul Rogers

About specific choices, first know that there is no true blue in rhodos. To call *Blue Jay* or the like anything more than somewhat lavender is over-generous in my opinion. Likewise, the yellows lack brilliance in the evergreens, look to the deciduous Exbury azaleas. There are good whites, but many whites have faint blushes of pink or yellow, especially in bud. Rhodos excel in pinks of all shades; light pinks, dark pinks, purply pinks, intense pinks. But we also have good, true reds—so don't settle for an intense pink if what you want is a red.

- Since I mentioned blues first, *Ocean Lake*, or *Crater Lake*, followed by *Blaney's Blue* are about the best I've seen. But they are about the color of blue vinca or scilla; bluish but not delphinium blue. There are some selected clones of the *R. augustinii* species, like *chasmanthum*, that are passable.
- *Crest* and *Hotei* are about the best clear yellow evergreens. But *Crest* is noted for discarding leaves after one year—keep it well pinched and branching so it has lots of terminals leafing. *Hotei* is notably susceptible to root rot, so make sure it has **perfect** drainage. There are other yellows, for example *Nancy Evans*, *Lemon Tart*, and *Yellow Rolls Royce* among others, that don't have these problems, but they might be a bit paler or have a little more blush of pink.
- *Sappho*, a purple splotched white, is noted for getting leggy, but this is because it is looking for light. There is one in my neighborhood planted exposed in full sun that is a perfectly tight and tidy. Normally rhodos are planted with some shade.
- *Loderi Venus* is worth mentioning. It's large and pink, but it is also wonderfully fragrant! (Apples, watermelon and pineapple.) *Puget Sound* is another fragrant pink. There isn't much in the way of fragrance in most rhodos, and what there is in the evergreens usually comes from the *R. fortunei* series of species and their hybrids. Unfortunately, there aren't many of these in the trade. There are some very fragrant native American deciduous azaleas from the east coast *R. atlanticum* species and hybrids, and west coast *R. occidentale*. But fragrant rhodos do exist if you're willing to hunt for them!
- *Avalanche* is one of my favorite rhodos for scent. The scent has lots of vanilla in it, with a dash of cinnamon and nutmeg—it reminds me of the kitchen when Mom's baking cookies! The flower is pale pink with red in the throat. The one I'm most familiar with is about 10' tall, but it's an old specimen plant.
- *Taurus* has to be one of my favorites! It's **red**. And it isn't suitable for a foundation planting—it's huge! I know examples of both *Taurus* and *Loderi Venus* that are well over 9' tall. But if you've got the proper place, a *Taurus* will make an unforgettable show in spring! *Vulcan* is also "Coke can" red.
- *Mrs. Furnival* and *Furnival's Daughter* are also favorites. They are pinks with red blotches. Perhaps they are favorites because they remind me of strawberry ice cream!
- *Rainbow* is pretty with a white throat and dark pink edging on the petals. *President Roosevelt* adds uniquely variegated leaves to similarly colored flowers.
- There are Rhododendrons varieties that will survive down to -20°F or so, and are suitable for most of the country. Some names are: *Catalgla*, white, -25°F ; *Nova Zembla*, red, -25°F ; *Mrs Furnival*, pink with red blotch, -15°F ; *Anah Kruschke*, reddish purple, -15°F ; *PJM*, light purple, -25°F ; *Exbury Azaleas*, yellows and oranges, -25°F .

These are just a few, but the point I am making is there is a great variety of rhodys, not just "pink 'uns, purple 'uns, and white 'uns".