



MARCH 2014

President's Message

The recent snowfall has brought a temporary halt to some of the outside projects underway. Nature's way of telling us that it is still winter. The last good freeze took the blooms off our *R. sichotense* and most of the flowers off Lee's Scarlet. However, Olive is bravely in full bloom and *strigillosum's* colour is showing through a toque of melting snow.

Susan and I have postponed our India travels this Spring due to medical concerns.

The executive has started planning the May Show and Sale - with 13 vendors this year. We have sign-up sheets for all the jobs required to make the day as successful as in the past. So please volunteer to work with our organizers.

The upcoming meeting looks to be a good meeting with a full agenda, a presentation on our own past bus tours, and then the always well-received panel of experts. Bring your questions.

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
	Gayle 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, Gayle	
McRae		

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NEXT MEETING

THURSDAY MARCH 13

BEBAN PARK SOCIAL CENTRE

7:30 PM

PANEL OF EXPERTS

THROUGH THE EYES OF A PHOTOGRAPHER

NANAIMO RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

Nanaimo Rhododendron Society Thursday, February 6th, 2014 Minutes

1. Welcome to all!
 - Meeting chaired by John as Art away tonight
2. Treasurer's Report: Balance as of January 31st, 2014: \$15,409.18
3. Congratulations Susan Lightburn for winning so many awards in the ARS photography contest. See latest ARS Journal for full details! Well done Susan!
4. Thanks to Eliane, Gaylle and Earl for providing treats for tonight's meeting.
5. Seedy Saturday on Feb. 2 in Qualicum Beach – lots of NRS members attended – Spring fever was in the air.
6. Program – March meeting:
 - Short slide show of past bus tours.
 - Panel of experts” – 3 M.A.R.S. members: Mary Parker, Don Brigden, Glen Jamieson will be present to answer pertinent questions – using October's members survey as guide.
 - Milner memberships discount will also be available at the March meeting.
7. District 1 Presidents meeting:
 - Hosted by Nanaimo on April 3rd.
 - Anyone welcome to attend.
 - Will be in the meeting room at Longwood Pub.
8. Proclamation – May will be “Rhododendron Month” in Nanaimo this year!
 - Bryan Jubinville outlined process that lead to the proclamation as well as activities scheduled for May to celebrate “our month”!

OUR MARCH PROGRAM

Learning from the experts: join us for a conversation with 3 Vancouver Island Rhododendron experts. Glen Jamieson, Mary Parker and Don Bridgen from the Mount Arrowsmith Rhododendron Society will share their collective experience and wisdom, answer questions and get us ready for spring. **BRING A FRIEND!**

Through the Eyes of a Photographer: Two wonderful photographers, Muriel Gustavson and Pat Haugen lead us on a look back at some of our club's recent spring bus tours.

9. <http://www.nanaimo.ca/assets/Departments/Legislative~Services/Proclamations/2014MayRhododendronMonth.pdf>
 - Followed lead of North Island Rhododendron Society – Courtenay has also proclaimed May “Rhododendron Month”.
 - Must re-apply every year.
 - Activities will include:
 - i. May 3rd: NRS information booth at Woodgrove Mall – volunteers needed – list to be circulated at our next meeting.
 - ii. May 10th: Plant Sale and Truss Show.
 - iii. May 17th: Bus tour.
 - iv. Suggestion by Bryan to create a generic N.R.S. banner to be hung up downtown during the month of May. This banner could be re-used year after year.
 - v. Suggestion to design and create two banners as part of City of Nanaimo's street banner design competition – this year's theme is “EVOLVE” – must apply by first week of March. Volunteers needed to help on this fun project.
10. Bus Tour – May 17th:
 - Going north this year to Comox Valley.
 - Sign up sheet available now or email John at juneandjohn@shaw.ca to reserve a seat.
 - Price to be announced.
11. Door prize winners: Elaine Hutchinson, Doug Kitts, Mary Parker.
12. Raffle winners: Earl Daneluk, Elaine Hutchinson, Charles Hardy.
12. Program tonight:

NANAIMO RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

- **Part 1:** Chris Southwick on “Developing a rhododendron garden”.
- “WASH the LADS”:
- WASH (Norm Todd):
 - i. **Water** - especially in summer
 - ii. **Acid soil** – 5.5 PH on average
 - iii. **Shade** – with some sun for good blooms
 - iv. **Humus** required
- LADS (Bill Macmillan):
 - v. **Loamy soil** is best
 - vi. **Acid**
 - vii. **Drainage**
 - viii. **Shallow planting**
- **Part 2:** June and John on Mosaicultures at the Montreal Botanical Garden this past September.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00.

Twigs and Stems

MARCH GOODIES

Jane Moles and Edith Higgins
Michael Miller
Craig Clarke

A small committee is looking to organize informal garden tours of members' gardens this spring. In the past, several club members have opened their gardens on a Friday evening or time that is convenient for a few hours to members and friends. These garden openings would occur from early April through May or so depending on the weather. If any of you are willing to open your garden for these informal tours, the committee would be interested in hearing from you. Please call either Sandra Dorman at (250) 390-0136 or Chris Southwick at (250) 390-3415. The Tennants have already volunteered their garden, thank you, Royce and Anne!!”

RAFFLE PLANTS



Cream Crest

3', -17° C

Compact, likes sun, good foliage, hardy and vigorous
Bright creamy yellow flowers
Donated by Anne and Dick Beamish



Exbury Yakusimanum (R. degronianum ssp yakushimanum)

1-4', -31° C

Compact, hardy, woolly indumentum
Cutting from Joan Rich
Exbury, the Rothschild Estate, Hampshire, England

Getting to know each other...

By June Bouchard

This month, we are featuring Dorothee Kieser. Dorothee joined the NRS in the 1990's and was on the executive for many years as a director during that time period. We were happy to welcome her back to the executive last year. Thank you so much Dorothee for sharing a little bit of yourself with us via this column.

1. How long have you been growing rhododendrons?

We moved onto our property in North Nanaimo in the mid-1970s. When we found out that deer can eat roses faster than they can grow, I looked around for something interesting to grow that would be less likely to be deer food. Rhodos were the obvious answer according to my colleagues at the Pacific Biological Station.

2. How long have you lived on Vancouver Island?

The Island has been home since the early 1970s.

3. Describe your best day in the garden. ☺

Hard to think of a single best day (so long as it is in the garden). But getting seeds into the ground in spring and harvesting the produce throughout the rest of the year, including lovely winter veggies ranks high on the list. Pruning, on the other hand, is rather low on the list.

4. What other interests do you have?

I enjoy community activities (e.g. being in the Community Garden Greenhouse, Milner Gardens and Woodlands) and of course being with the grandchildren.

5. Do you have a favourite rhododendron?

There are so many to choose from, but if I can only pick one, I think it is Pink Snowflake (racemosum x moupinense). It blooms reliably each year, is nice and early and even if I shovel heaps of snow on it (it being next to my driveway) it does not break since it is just a low bush.

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

I enjoy the informative meetings, chatting to other members, and sometimes even winning the raffle prize.

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

Having lots of space on my property, I enjoy having some of the big rhodos. However, when planting, I always think that I leave masses of space between plants and before you know it, they should be moved to a location where they have more room. Things are never dull.



The 14th Annual N.R.S. Bus Tour **Saturday, May 17th**



Continuing our tradition of visiting a great mixture of gardens, nurseries, and special places, we're heading north through the Comox Valley this year!

Our itinerary highlights 6 exceptional destinations, including 4 first time visits.

Cost: \$40 per person
(includes wine tasting)

Where do we meet? At Chapters/Woodgrove parking lot– the bus will be leaving at 7:30 am. We expect to return at approx. 6:30 pm

Don't forget to bring a picnic lunch and appropriate clothing. Bring a friend...

Call John to reserve a seat 778 424 3605

Rhododendron Tonic

The "rhododendron tonic" is a good formulation for rhododendron and azalea problems indicated by chlorosis.

Diane Pertson, Otter Point, Vancouver Island wrote: I have found the following foolproof formula for chlorotic leaves or a rhododendron that isn't looking healthy:



Purchase a bag of Epsom Salts crystals (magnesium sulfate) (available here in bulk at farm-and-feed outlets), about \$4.00 for a 5 lb. bag - and a bottle of FULLY Chelated Iron & Zinc (this is a very concentrated liquid - the chelation means it is in a form that can be readily absorbed by the plant), about \$7.00 for 1 quart; In a one gallon watering can, put in 2 Tbsp. of Epsom Salts crystals and 2 Tbsp. of Iron and Zinc liquid - fill with warm water and stir to dissolve; Sprinkle this over the rhododendron - by that I mean drench the leaves with the solution and pour the remainder around the drip line of the root ball.

Seen In Passing

In fresh snow, tracks of a large otter running and sliding as they do up our driveway and down to the ocean.



Coral Glow bent to the ground, but bravely displaying the pinky orange buds ready to burst.

MARS "Cisco" presentation in Qualicum Beach was fun and very well attended.

In 1-2 weeks, the leaves should be nice and green. You could repeat the process at this time if the leaves aren't fully green.

This works even better if, a month before, you have sweetened the soil by sprinkling a little Dolomite Lime on the roots. Very acidic soil can prevent the roots from taking up nutrients. As many of my rhododendrons are planted in very acidic soil under a canopy of giant cedar trees, I find an application of Dolomite and a light topdressing of mushroom manure in late spring is all they need.

soil is too acid, the symptoms can be the same. Very acidic soil can prevent the roots from taking up nutrients. As many rhododendrons are planted in very acidic forest soil, an application of Dolomite and a light topdressing of mushroom manure in late spring is all they need.

Sprinkle the lime on in late winter, very early spring. Don't overdo it - just a light sprinkle. If it is mid-spring, get the lime on right away so the rhododendron roots will be able to take up the soil nutrients in time for new growth. If you don't have rain, water it in well.

BOOK REVIEW

Hardy Rhododendron Species by James Cullen
Timber Press, Inc. Portland Oregon, 2005
496 pages, approx. 172 colour photos, Bibliography, index.
Hardbound \$69.95

Dr. James Cullen is Director of the Stanley Smith (U.K.) Horticultural Trust based in Cambridge. He served as Assistant Regius Keeper at the RBG Edinburgh from 1972 to 1989, where he was responsible for research on Rhododendron classification based on both dried and living collections. From 1976 to 2000 he was editor of The European Garden Flora (Cambridge University Press).

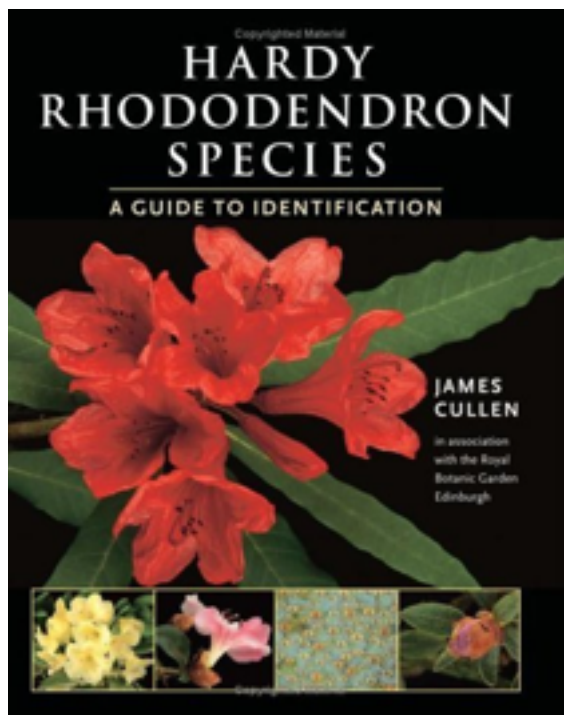
Hardy Rhododendron Species, A Guide to Identification is specifically directed towards identification of species of the genus Rhododendron that are cultivated in Britain, western Europe, and parts of North America. The stress is very much on the species: this is not a manual for the identification of hybrids.

The book is organized following normal practice and standard taxonomic forms (keys and descriptions): - species identification, subgenera, sections, and subsections. The descriptions are broken down into individual characteristics as to make comparison of one with another as easy as possible. In to the standard dichotomous keys, two other identification tools are provided: identification tables and character lists appear at the end of the book.

A long introduction of twenty-six pages includes the History of Classification, but also explains the current classification. The description continues on to include, with good diagrams, the physical characteristics of 1) leaves – position, shape, duration, 2) indumentum (hairs or scales) which may be present, 3) corolla shapes, 4) ovary shapes.

Following the introduction, Cullen leads the reader into thorough information of each subgenus with its corresponding subsections, before moving on to the next subgenus. Prior to the descriptions of the various subgenera and subsections, Cullen has given a clear explanation to his system of “Keys and Descriptions” by example.

Margaret Hodgson
reprinted from The Yak, February 2012



The following will give an example of the organization of the material:

27: *Rhododendron williamsianum* Rehder and Wilson
Illustration Curtis's Botanical Magazine, 8935 (1922) reprinted

Habit dwarf shrub to 1.5 m; young shoots glandular-bristly; bark grey- brown, shredding

Leaves ovate-circular, 2 – 4.5 cm

Inflorescence Buds elongate-ovoid, dark red towards base

Calyx to 1 mm, glandular-ciliate

Corolla campanulate, 3 – 4 cm, pale pink with darker spots

Stamens filaments hairless; anthers brown

Ovary glandular

Style glandular to the apex

Capsule 1.5 – 1.8 cm

Distribution western China (central Sichuan)

Flowering spring

Hardiness Zone 7

The above example is accompanied with a photograph of the flower and a microscopic image of the leaf surface. Only about one third of the identification entries include photographs which is disappointing. No plant hardiness zone map is included which is a drawback. The index is excellent.

Easiest Focaccia Recipe

By: MORTICIA_ADDAMS

"Extremely easy, fast and cheap. Great for sandwiches and snacks. You may use more or less olive oil or salt if you wish."

Prep Time: 30 Min

Cook Time: 20 Min

Ingredients

- 1 teaspoon white sugar
- 1 (.25 ounce) package active dry yeast
- 1/3 cup warm water (110 degrees F/ 45 degrees C)
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1/4 teaspoon salt

Directions

1. In a small bowl, dissolve sugar and yeast in warm water. Let stand until creamy, about 10 minutes.
2. In a large bowl, combine the yeast mixture with flour; stir well to combine. Stir in additional water, 1 tablespoon at a time, until all of the flour is absorbed. When the dough has pulled together, turn it out onto a lightly floured surface and knead briefly for about 1 minute.
3. Lightly oil a large bowl, place the dough in the bowl and turn to coat with oil. Cover with a damp cloth and let rise in a warm place until doubled in volume, about 30 minutes.
4. Preheat oven to 475 degrees F (245 degrees C).
5. Deflate the dough and turn it out onto a lightly floured surface; knead briefly. Pat or roll the dough into a sheet and place on a lightly greased baking sheet. Brush the dough with oil and sprinkle with salt.
6. Bake focaccia in preheated oven for 10 to 20 minutes, depending on desired crispness. If you like it moist and fluffy, then you'll have to wait just about 10 minutes. If you like it crunchier and darker in the outside, you may have to wait 20 minutes.

RHODOS WORTH GROWING



Blue Boy

5' -23°C

Very unusual vibrant violet flowers with prominent black blotch

Heave bloomer, dark green leaves.

Submitted by Krystyna Sosulski



R. kiushianum (white form)

2' -23°C

It is deciduous, but the branching stems are exquisite even in winter as they have a branching habit that is very "oriental" in form. When this lovely little plant blooms, it is covered in white and the new foliage is a beautiful fresh green. Grows wider than tall and in ten years or so might be 4 or 5 feet wide by 2 feet tall.

Submitted by Chris Southwick