

# The Rhodomentum

## Nanaimo Rhododendron Society Newsletter



May 2017



### President's Message

Spring is finally arriving and our rhododendrons are blooming one after the other. Our society is fairly well organized for the upcoming Plant Sale and Garden Tour. Many of our members have spent countless hours of work in preparation for these events, but we still need every ones help in three areas. **We need help on Saturday evening at 6:30 pm to help set up the tables and helping with the truss show preparation.**

Also, **please remember to bring your trusses Saturday evening, to take the pressure off those working in the truss area, otherwise there is too much pressure on Sunday morning, when the judging takes place. Trusses must be in at the latest by 8:00 am Sunday.**

**Secondly, we need extra bodies to help where needed before and during the plant sale.** The building will be open **at 6:30 am Sunday morning** to allow the growers to deliver and set up their plants. Some may appreciate help unloading. We need extra bodies to help customers or where needed. See Brenda Lewis after you buy your plants to see where you are needed.

And lastly and very importantly, **we need your help by bringing plants from your garden for the NRS table, as 100% of the money from these sales stays with the NRS.** Art Lightburn **still needs a couple of extra sitters for the Garden Tour, May 13/14.** Please contact him if you can help.

Thanks, Allen

### EXECUTIVE

President	Allen McRae	758-7589
Vice President	Art Lightburn	468-7516
Secretary	Ann Beamish	758-2574
Treasurer	Gayle McRae	758-7589
Directors	Glenda Barr	390-2822
	Craig Clarke	390-4090
	Susan Lightburn	468-7516
	Dick Beamish	758-2574
	Chris Southwick	390-3415

### COMMITTEES

Advertising	Jan Moles /Gerry Moore
Library	Ann Beamish/Sandra Dorman
Newsletter	Kathryn Grant/June and John
Membership	Krystyna Sosulski
Program	Doug Kitts
Raffle	Ann Davey & Val Harvey
Social	Susan Lightburn
Bargain Table	Reinhold Gorgosilich
Website	Craig Clarke
Bus Tour	John Deniseger & June Bouchard

Nanaimo Rhododendron Society  
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Website: [nanaimorhodos.ca](http://nanaimorhodos.ca)  
email: [nanaimo@rhodos.ca](mailto:nanaimo@rhodos.ca)

Annual General Meeting  
Thursday May 11, 7:30 pm Beban Park Social Centre  
Bill McMillan  
"Five Gardens Worth Visiting in Victoria"

# Twigs and Stems



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**GOODIES FOR MAY**

Burkhard & Baerbel Dressler  
Reinhold Gorgosolich  
Jan Moles

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**NRS GARDEN TOUR**

May 13 & 14  
10 am to 4 pm

tickets \$15 at Green Thumb, Turley's,  
Buckerfield's Nanaimo, Little Tree Gift and Garden, White  
Bridal Boutique Lantzville

**OUR MAY SPEAKER**

**BILL McMILLAN**

**FIVE GARDENS WORTH VISITING IN VICTORIA**

Bill is a geologist by training but focused on rhododendrons when he retired. He volunteered to work in the Rhododendron and Hosta Garden of the Horticulture Centre of the Pacific in 1999 and shortly afterward took over as curator. He was in charge of the Victoria Rhododendron Society Show and Sale for 5 years and was Registrar of the American Rhododendron Society convention in Victoria in 2006. He is a past president of the Victoria Rhododendron Society and is presently on the board.

Bill propagates rhodos from cuttings and grows them from seeds. He has given presentations on basic rhododendron culture to many garden clubs, Master Gardener's classes and to students. Bill describes himself as an enthusiast, rather than an expert.

**The 17th Annual N.R.S. Bus Tour**  
**Saturday, May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017**



Continuing our tradition of visiting a great mixture of gardens, nurseries and special places, we're heading north to the Comox Valley and Campbell River area this year.

**Cost: \$45 per person**  
includes 40 Knots Winery tour and tasting

**Where do we meet? Woodgrove Mall parking lot near Chapters.** The bus will be leaving at 7:30 am. We expect to return by 6:00 to 6:30 pm

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

***To reserve a seat, send us an email at [juneandjohn@shaw.ca](mailto:juneandjohn@shaw.ca)***

# NANAIMO RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

## NANAIMO RHODODENDRON SOCIETY Truss Show Sunday, May 7

Last year witnessed the greatest participation ever in our show.

Increase your knowledge and appreciation of rhododendrons by participating in our annual truss show. Access valuable information and tips from the winter 2013 ARS journal, the NRS website and the NRS May, 2012 and 2013 newsletters.

To ensure uniformity in the show, don't guess which class your truss belongs to. There is an updated PDF file with a list of plants sorted into show classes available from the truss show page of the club website. If in doubt, leave the class blank and it will be filled in at the registration desk. Avoid the Sunday morning rush by bringing trusses in between 6PM and 7:30 PM Saturday evening (May 6). Alternately, trusses can be entered from 6:30 – 7:45 AM Sunday morning.

Registration forms can be obtained at the NRS meeting, prior to the show, or from this newsletter or at the registration desk. Your name, the name of the truss and its entry class should be entered on the registration form. On the second page, provide a duplication of the **truss show names in the same or identical order as on the registration form.**

On arrival, give the registration form to people at the desk, thus enabling the withdrawal of the appropriate rhododendron name cards from the bank. Keep the separate list for assistance in organizing your entries. (Matching the identifying cards to the entries has been a major hold-up in the past). The desk will provide you with the numbered identifying cards; again in identical order as on the registration form.

On the table adjacent to the registration desk, entrants can then place trusses in the water filled bottles and **arrange them in the same order as on the registration form.**

Help will be available for this and in transporting the bottles and appropriate identification card to the display tables. Members entering more than 15 trusses might consider having a friend or spouse help.

### **Tips on Exhibiting Trusses and Sprays**

A day or two before the show go around and make a list of the blooms you will pick on the morning, the day before the show. Organize whatever containers you will be using to transport your blooms to the show. They needn't be elaborate. Empty bottles or cans work well. Be careful to avoid crushing the blooms. Fill the containers with water almost to the top. Bottles in six-pack cartons are great for transporting blooms.

Picking blooms always takes more time than you think it will! When choosing trusses, select ones that have straight stems with the bloom at the top. Don't choose ones with crooked stems that are growing at odd angles (e.g. pointing straight down). When choosing sprays, look for ones that will present themselves gracefully in a bottle. Pieces of cork can be used to stabilize the stem in the neck of the bottle.

Prune judiciously if need be to enhance the shape of a spray. Avoid choosing entries with bruises. Sometimes rain damage is inevitable, but avoid it if you can. Look for freshness. In a spray, it is better to have one or more unopened flower buds (for they frequently open after they have been picked) than to choose blooms that are already open and going over. Some judges like to see one or two unopened or partially opened buds, but a truss must not have flowers from more than one bud (except for the hammerhead class). Hammerhead definition (Seattle) is inflorescence with multiple rachis emanating from a single leaf stem.

# NANAIMO RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

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**NRS General Meeting, April 13, 2017**

1. **President's Report** President Allen McRae welcomed everyone
2. **Rhodo Biology** Chris Southwick presented a truss exercise which showed members what to look for in a truss and how to prepare them for entry into the show.
3. **Secretary's Report** Ann Beamish
4. **Treasurer's Report** Gayle presented an updated Treasurer's report indicating balance for February and indicating upcoming expenses.
5. **Bargain Table** Reinhold. Plants still for sale, see at the break
6. **Library** nothing new to report.
7. **Membership** no report
8. **Program Chair** Doug Kitts advised that the May program will be Bill McMillan speaking on the "5 gardens of Victoria" which should not be missed.
9. **Raffle Table** Anne Davey / Val Harvey reported plants today - Blaneys Blue, r. Kamchaticum, Rubicon and r. Villosum
10. **Social** no new information
11. **Website** Craig Clarke no new information
12. **Sunshine** Ann reported no new information
13. **Plant Sale and Truss Show, Sun. May 7<sup>th</sup>** **NOTE: start time 09:30 not 10:00**
  - a. Chris Southwick - we need volunteers for the raffle table and others, sign up sheet passed around for sign-up.
  - b. Doug Blenkarn will be handling the truss show Registration. Forms for trusses are available on the website and will be in the newsletter
14. **Garden Tour May 13/14 tickets \$15** Art Lightburn- reported that he has secured 13/14 gardens, 2 for one day only. He will require approximately 40 sitters and has a few shifts still open for sign up tonight. Shifts will be 10am-1pm and 1pm-4 pm. Master Gardeners will be available *in addition to the sitter* at 2 gardens, to assist attendees with questions and provide information.
15. **Bus Trip - John Deniseger May 20<sup>th</sup>.** **Tickets are \$45.** Approximately 3 seats left available. John reported that we will be going north this year to Comox and Campbell River. He has arranged visits to 6 private gardens. There will be a wine tasting at 40 Knots
16. **Old Business**
  - a. ARS Annual Spring Convention in Eureka, California, April 27-30<sup>th</sup>.
  - b. New Society's Act. Craig reported that he and Gayle and Allen McRae have reviewed the new requirements which are mainly moving to an on-line model. Craig recently attended a seminar on the required changes and it would appear that we will only be required to make minor changes which the executive can approve.
17. **Renewals for Milner Gardens.** -David Mitchell is selling Milner Garden memberships and renewals at tonight's meeting.
18. The next meeting of the Executive will be at Art and Susan Lightburn's, Thursday, April 20, at 2pm
19. **Our guest speaker** Philip MacDougall on plant hunting and companion plants for rhododendrons.



'R. 'Princess Abkhazi  
photo by Susan Lightburn

## RAFFLE PLANTS



***R. arboreum*** is a regal rhododendron which adds a distinctive touch of class to your garden. *R. arboreum* can grow to fifteen feet in 25 years. Some bloom pink/red, some pink/white, some red, some white. It will like: filtered sun, small amounts of fertilizer on Valentine's Day and Mothers Day, gentle watering



### **R. 'Snipe'**

This variety belongs to the group of small-leaved, compact Rhododendron species and hybrids, whose flower-size is smaller than their showy cousins but always produced in spectacular profusion in Spring. They are perfect subjects for the small garden and many are suitable for growing in pots, providing their cultural requirements are met.

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## Isabel's Tasty Muffins

**Crumb Topping** - In a small bowl, crumble together 1/2 C brown sugar  
1/2 to 1 tsp cinnamon  
1 Tbsp butter  
1/4 to 1/2 C chopped pecans (optional)

**Dry ingredients** - In medium size bowl mix together  
1 C whole wheat flour 1 1/2 C flour  
1 tsp baking soda Dash salt

**Wet ingredients** - In large bowl mix together  
1 C brown sugar  
1/2 C oil  
1 C buttermilk (or yogurt) 1 egg  
1 tsp vanilla

### **Fruit for muffins**

2 C blueberries (fresh or frozen)...or 2 C finely chopped rhubarb....or  
2 C chopped apple

### **Method:**

Pour dry ingredients onto wet, add fruit then mix until just combined. Divide among 12 muffin cups and top with the crumb topping. Bake 350° for 25 – 30 minutes. Cool in pan 5 – 10 min, then on cooling rack.

### **To turn recipe into a coffee cake:**

Add an extra egg to the wet ingredients. Bake in a bundt pan for 50 – 55 mins. Cool in pan, finish cooling on rack.

### **To turn recipe into a carrot cake (or carrot muffins):**

Make the following changes to basic recipe:

1 1/2 C grated carrot  
1/2 C coconut  
1/2 C raisins  
1 tsp cinnamon  
1/2 tsp nutmeg  
1/2 tsp ginger  
Dash cloves  
Grated rind of 1 orange  
1/2 C drained crushed pineapple (optional)  
Apple muffins  
1 tsp cinnamon  
1/2 tsp nutmeg  
1 1/2 C finely chopped apples 1/2 C raisins  
1/2 C chopped nuts



**R. 'Yaku Fairy'**

by Rose-Marie Silkens

For a long time I have been looking for *R. keiskie* var. *cordifolia* 'Yaku Fairy'. Les has a beautiful specimen in his garden, but he has never had any to sell, at least not when I was there. This year, however, I was in luck, and am thrilled to have this exquisite creeping rhodo for my garden.

A native of Japan, this form was found on the Island of Yakushima, and 'Yaku Fairy' is a named clone. It remains prostrate, blooms at a young age, and covers itself with pale yellow flowers. Peter Cox says "It will grow well in full exposure in even the coldest UK gardens." On a good day, I compare Sayward's climate with Scotland's, but probably we have more in common with the Outer Hebrides.

I have never visited Japan, but have developed a great fascination for the Island of Yakushima, which has given the world such extraordinary plants. Most rhodo enthusiasts have at least one plant of *R. yakushmanum* or one of its named selections, and hybrids with 'yak' parentage are among the most popular rhodos on the market. My new 'Yaku Fairy' will be placed near a favourite plant that also comes from what must be a magical island. *Pieris yakushmanum* is a tough little dwarf that looks just like a large pieris, but in miniature. There are a number of dwarf hybrids on the market, and some are quite handsome, but can't compare with the structural elegance of this plant – 8" high, it will spread to three times that, indifferent to wind and sun exposure. It is deep, rich green, and leaves are very small in proportion to the plant, rather than large leaves on a dwarfed plant. Its sprays of red flower buds provide very generous white bloom in early spring.

NIRS Newsletter 2008

