

# The Rhodomentum



## Nanaimo Rhododendron Society Newsletter

May 2019



Happy May!

Looking at the calendar, there's no shortage of events coming up over the next few weeks. As always, many people have contributed to getting things organized. It's great to see so many club members taking an active role in our sale/show on May 11<sup>th</sup>. Hopefully, we'll have many members entering trusses in our show! For both, our members and the general public, the display really highlights the variety and beauty of the rhododendrons that we all grow. And then, there's the plant sale... have you got your "wish list" ready?

Our annual bus tour is coming up on May 4<sup>th</sup>. **We still have a few seats left – tell your friends and neighbours!**

Please note that our AGM will no longer be held in May. The executive has decided to have it in September – May is already busy enough – and our club's year really runs from September to June.

Our year end potluck BBQ will be held at the Lightburns on Saturday, June 8<sup>th</sup>. Mark your calendars – details to follow. See you at the bus tour, the meeting, and the sale and show.

All the best,

John and June

### EXECUTIVE

President	Vacant	
Vice President	Rosina Schmidt	751-3386
Past President	Allen McRae	758-7589
Secretary	Jan Moles	758-2574
Treasurer	Liz Higgins	390-9340

### Directors

Art Lightburn	468-7516
Susan Lightburn	468-7516
Don Noakes	778 441-4783

### COMMITTEES

Advertising	Jan Moles / June Bouchard
Library	Ann Beamish / Sandra Dorman
Newsletter	June Bouchard / John Deniseger
Membership	Krystyna Sosulski
Program	Committee
Raffle	Ann Davey & Val Harvey
Social	Susan Lightburn
Bargain Table	Reinhold Gorgosolich
Website	Craig Clarke
Bus Tour	David & Joyce Mitchell

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email: [rhodomentum@nanaimorhodos.ca](mailto:rhodomentum@nanaimorhodos.ca)

Next meeting: Thursday, May 9<sup>th</sup>, at 7:30, Beban Park Social Center  
"How the seasons change – Mt Arrowsmith Biosphere Reserve and Milner Phenology Project"  
by Heather Klassen and Larissa Thelin

## Our May Program:

### “How the Seasons Change: Mt Arrowsmith Biosphere Reserve and Milner Phenology Project”

Gardeners constantly fret about the winter chill, the timing of spring and the dryness of the summer to come. It seems to be one of our great hobbies. Plant and animal life cycles and migration patterns are influenced by seasonal and year-to-year variability and of course, in today's world, climate change is a further complicating factor. To examine these changes and patterns, at Milner Gardens and Woodland, a collaborative study is underway between Milner, the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resources Operations and Rural Development, and Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere Region Research Institute.

Plant phenology studies the timing of seasonally reoccurring events such as bud break, flowering, fruit development, and leaf drop. To understand how climate change will impact local vegetation growth and development, the Coastal Forest Plant Phenology Research Project was initiated in 2016. Key members of the project will give you an overview of the project, as well as talking about other projects in the Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere Reserve. This project depends on volunteer involvement and through this presentation, the project partners hope to convince you to join their dedicated volunteer team!

#### Presenters:

**Heather Klassen** is a Coast Area Research Vegetation Ecologist for the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations, and Rural Development (MFLNRORD). Currently, she works on biogeoclimatic ecosystem classification and mapping, and other forest ecology research projects, investigating impacts of shifting climate and disturbance regimes on forest ecosystem structure and function, and integration into ecosystem classification and natural resource management. Heather has worked on climate change related project since 2009, and has been involved in the Coastal Forest Plant Phenology Research and Monitoring Project since it was initiated in 2016.

**Larissa Thelin** is MABRRI's Assistant Research and Community Engagement Coordinator. She has been involved with MABRRI since January 2017 when she was hired on as a work-op student. Larissa graduated from VIU in June of 2017 with a major in Geography, specializing in Natural Resource Management, and a minor in Languages & Culture. Larissa began working on the Coastal Forest Plant Phenology Research and Monitoring Pilot in 2018, and now coordinates MABRRI's involvement in the project. In addition to training research assistants on the project, she is continually searching for new funding initiatives and partners in hopes of expanding the reach of this research in the future.



# Twigs and Stems

## Calendar of Upcoming Events:



**Goodies for May meeting - thank you to the following people:** Reinhold Gorgosilich, Ann Beamish, Gerry Moore



It must be spring, there's so much going on, I really can't keep up!

**Eaglecrest Garden Club:** Melanie Penn from Bilston Creek Farm; "Lavender", Qualicum Beach Civic Center, May 15<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 pm.

**Milner Gardens and Woodland:** Open daily 10:00 am to 5:00 pm (last entry at 4:30) Check their website for other events and details.

<https://www2.viu.ca/milnergardens/events.asp>

**Mount Arrowsmith Rhododendron Society:** Bernie Dinter – "The Changing Horticulture Industry". Qualicum Beach Civic Center, May 8<sup>th</sup>; 7:30 pm.

**Nanaimo Horticultural Society:** Jo Canning - "Soil Amendment"; First United Fellowship Church, 595 Townsite Rd, May 8<sup>th</sup>; 7:30 pm

**Nanoose Garden Club:** AGCVI members – "Alpine and Rock Gardening"; Nanoose Library Center and Event Hall, May 3<sup>rd</sup>; 1:15 pm.

**North Island Rhododendron Society:** AGM held in the garden of Nadine Boudreau in Royston, garden tour at 6:30, meeting at 7:30 pm.

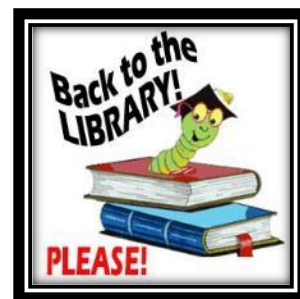
**Qualicum Beach Garden Club:** Linda Gilkeson. QB Civic Center, May 14<sup>th</sup>, 7:30 pm.



May is our last meeting for this year. We have been looking for someone to take over from Susan Lightburn (who has been doing it for years...) to look after monthly coffee breaks and other social functions. This is a great opportunity to get involved – perfect for two friends to share. It would be wonderful to have this filled for our upcoming season. Susan can fill you in with details if you think this might fit you!



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## REMINDER!

A reminder to all who have NRS library books out to return them at our May meeting – our librarian Ann would like to do an inventory over the summer.

## April 11, 2019 – General Meeting Minutes:

Meeting Opened at 7:30 pm by acting chair Chris Southwick, who welcomed guests and new members.

Guests: Karen Saunders, Don Wright, a Rhodo veteran from Pioneer Park Rugby Club and Rhodos R Us, and new member Debbie Francis.

### 1. Chris's Report:

Chris Southwick reported on a visit to Sean & Brenda Rafferty, who have a 2/3-acre property in Shirley BC, in which they have planted hundreds of rhodos transferred from their former property in North Van. Chris and Rosina Schmidt visited, in conjunction with their responsibilities at the District 1 meeting. The District 1 meeting is a good opportunity to discover what other clubs are doing. Nanaimo is not the only club with admin difficulties.



Chris appealed to members to participate in the running of the club – maybe the duty could be shared, and it is frequently not as onerous as it seems at first, some tasks do not require an in-depth knowledge of rhodos and getting involved is a great way to learn.

A beautiful rhodo display was provided by various members.

Chris said a few words about each.

### 2. Treasurer's Report

Balance in Bank as at Mar 14, 2019

**\$8,425.48**

Revenue: Mar 14 – Apr 11

123.27

Expenses: Mar 14 – Apr 11

98.06

Balance in Bank as at Apr 11, 2019

**\$8,450.69**

### 3. Secretary's Report

Thank you letter from VIU for our sponsorship donation available to read.

Moving AGM to September, may not be a possibility due to Regulations of Societies – Jan thinks we can only make the change between October and December.

### 4. Membership Report: Nothing to report from Krystyna.

### 5. Social Report:

Susan Lightburn needs 3 people to sign up to bring goodies in May. Susan will not be available for May meeting – Gaylle McRae will do coffee for her.

### 6. Old Business:

- a. **NRS Spring Truss Show & Plant Sale** at Beban Park Centennial Building on May 11<sup>th</sup>, from 10am to 2pm.

Jan Moles repeated the dates, and asked members to consider entering trusses to the show, especially new members.

Trusses can be registered from 6:30 pm on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> and 6:30 – 7:30 am on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup>.

Instructions on how to prepare your entries and how to enter will be in the upcoming newsletter, available on the NRS web site, and will be discussed in the May 9<sup>th</sup> Meeting.

- b. **ARS Fall Conference in Parksville, Sept 27<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup>:**

Information & registration available online at [www.marsrhodos.ca](http://www.marsrhodos.ca), under ARS Fall Conference 2019. Theme: 'Rhodos by the Seaside'.

Early Bird registration fee of \$95 includes: 12 speakers, bus tours, workshops, 2 breakfasts, 1 lunch. Banquet Fri/Sat is extra.

Some very interesting speakers: includes Marc Colombel from France, Steve Hootman, ... many others.

There will be opportunities to volunteer in the near future.

- c. **Milner Work Bee** 3 weeks ago was very successful, there is an upcoming one at 9am next Thursday, where 450 1-gallon perennials will be planted. Volunteers wanted – let John know if you will volunteer.

- d. **2019 Annual Bus Tour on May 4<sup>th</sup> to Saanich Peninsula:**

Private gardens, public garden with restaurant where you can buy lunch/eat your packed.

Nursery where you can buy plants, also plant sale at one of private gardens (Ken Webb)

Bus leaves at 7:30 am from Woodgrove by Starbuck's coffee shop.

Price increase to \$55 per person for the tour, due to inflated bus prices and gas prices.

Currently have tentatively 30 names, 17 paid up, see Joyce to book your place.

- e. **Program Committee:**

All programs are planned for next year 2019/2020. Well done program committee!

## 7. New Business:

- a. Mount Arrowsmith Show and Plant Sale is on 20<sup>th</sup> April, see [www.marsrhodos.ca](http://www.marsrhodos.ca)
- b. Windup potluck will be in June, we are still looking for a host to offer their garden as a venue.

## 8. Raffle & Dollar table:

Ann Davey: Phyllis Korn, Horizon Monarch, Seaview Sunset, Ginny G (donated by Murrays)

Dorothee Kieser provided some plant cuttings, Oleander and others for Dollar table.

**NEXT Meeting: May 9<sup>th</sup>** – a presentation by Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere reserve Team.

Next Exec Meeting: April 18<sup>th</sup>, 2pm at Chris Southwick's home.

**Presentation by Margot Moser: 'Native Plant Beauties for small Garden Spaces'.** We thanked Margot very much for her very interesting presentation.

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## We want to start a Propagation Group!



The time has come for the NRS to have its own rhodo propagation group. It is getting harder and harder to find rhodo vendors for our plant sale. We can propagate from cuttings and seeds for our own future plants for raffles, plant sales, and each other. With the help of our splendid experienced NRS members

to teach us novices, I offer to coordinate a propagating team come this September. Please join me.

For where and when, stay tuned - please see our September newsletter.

Rosina Schmidt



## NRS Program - looking ahead to next year!

Our club's program committee (Chris Southwick, Dorothee Kieser, Art and Susan Lightburn, Glenda Barr, and John Deniseger) have been busy. Working together (isn't it always easier, when we work together?), we have booked speakers for the entire 2019-20 season. You'll notice a fairly diverse range of topics while adding more rhododendron content. As the year progresses, we hope to add more demos and short presentations on topics of interest.

Date	Speaker	Topic
September 2019	Garth Wedemire	Gardens in Wales
October 2019	Main speaker: Margaret Cadwaladr Demo: Paul Wurz on Rhodo cuttings	The Making of Dart's Hill Garden (White Rock)
November 2019	Bill McMillan	Rhododendron Pests and Diseases
December 2019	Christmas potluck and auction	
January 2020	John Deniseger and June Bouchard	Gardens on New Zealand's North Island
February 2020	Sean Rafferty	Favourite Himalayan Plants
March 2020	Linda Gilkeson	Life After Pesticides
April 2020	Shannon Berch	Soil Biology
May 2020	Dick Beamish	My Favourite Trusses

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## Our annual Plant Sale and Truss Show is coming up in a hurry – Saturday, May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2019!!!



Here's a word from Brenda Lewis, our plant sale coordinator: "Anyone willing to help with the setup on Friday, May 10<sup>th</sup> – please contact me at [h-homes@shaw.ca](mailto:h-homes@shaw.ca), your help is much appreciated.

Also, if you have any rhodos or plants to donate to the NRS table, please bring to the sale, either on Friday evening or early Saturday morning to allow time for pricing." **Sign-up sheets will be available at our May meeting.**

## Greig Species Garden – Update:

On Wednesday, April 24<sup>th</sup>, a group of enthusiastic volunteers from the NRS and MARS spent a beautiful sunny morning doing something most gardeners enjoy doing. No, they weren't weeding, they planted 450 one-gallon perennials in the Greig Rhododendron Species Garden! If you haven't been to the Species Garden recently, it's come a long way. It's filling in and there are many rhodos in bloom!



Plants laid out ready for planting



Rhododendron "Moonstone" welcoming us into the garden



Chris hard at work...



Kathy Loyer and Marilyn Dawson from MARS...

### Useful Links

Victoria Rhododendron Society: [victoriarhodo.ca/index.html](http://victoriarhodo.ca/index.html)

Cowichan Rhododendron Society: [cowichanrhodos.ca/](http://cowichanrhodos.ca/)

Mount Arrowsmith Rhododendron Society: [marsrhodos.ca/](http://marsrhodos.ca/)

North Island Rhododendron Society: [nirsrhodos.ca/ws/](http://nirsrhodos.ca/ws/)

The American Rhododendron Society: [rhododendron.org/](http://rhododendron.org/)

Linda Gilkeson's website: [lindagilkeson.ca/](http://lindagilkeson.ca/)

Nanoose Bay Garden Club: [nanoosegardenclub.ca/](http://nanoosegardenclub.ca/)

## Raffle plants for May meeting

### *R. kiusianum* 'Komo Kulshan'

Pink flowers have a picotee edge with a white throat. Plant is low-growing and compact. A favorite for bonsai, rock gardens and those who love dwarf foreground plants. When in bloom, it's hard to see the leaves. Listed as a species. (Tsutsusi) azalea Kyushu, Japan. A 10-year-old plant will be about 2 feet high. Very hardy to -24C. Depending on location and climate, will be semi evergreen to evergreen. Grows well in sun or part shade. Blooms in mid to late May.



### 'Lee's Best Purple'

A *R. catawbiense* hybrid, noted for its smooth, dark and glossy foliage and deep purple flowers. It's a relatively fast grower, reaching 6 feet in 10 years. Very hardy to -29C.

*In the spring, at the end of the day, you  
should smell like dirt. – Margaret Atwood*



**Mark your calendar!**

**The 19th Annual Nanaimo Rhododendron Society Bus Tour**

**Destination – Saanich Peninsula**

**Saturday, May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2019**

**Cost: \$55 per person**

**(includes wine/cider tasting)**



Continuing our tradition of visiting a great mixture of gardens, nurseries and special places!!! This year we have 4 private gardens, a public garden (includes a tour) and a winery (or cidery). You'll have opportunities to buy plants at one of Vancouver Island's best nurseries, as well as 2 of the gardens that we'll be visiting.

To book your seat – contact David and Joyce Mitchell at 250 245 5601 or David's cell at 250-729-6498 or email at [drumsbythesea@shaw.ca](mailto:drumsbythesea@shaw.ca)

**Where do we meet? Chapters/Woodgrove Mall parking lot in Nanaimo.** The bus will be leaving at 7:30 am. Please get there early.

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

*I love spring anywhere, but if I could choose,  
I would always greet it in a garden. – Ruth  
Stout*

## **“The Future of the NRS” – it’s worth reading!**

**Maureen Denny, President of the North Island Rhododendron Society, recently sent a letter out to their membership. With permission from Maureen, Chris Southwick, our acting meeting chair, shared portions of that letter with our group at our April meeting. We’ve included excerpts from Maureen’s letter below because it’s worth reading and we think she got it right. Thank you, Maureen, not only for writing this letter, but for letting us use it in our newsletter.**

“Many of our members currently holding executive or committee positions have been doing so for years. Some want a break from constantly being responsible. Can we all expect these same people to keep on giving their time and energy year after year? It is now time for some new members to step up and fill vacant roles. It is time for new people to learn the ins and outs of how our club functions.

I would like to share with you my experiences in becoming involved with the NIRS with the hope it may encourage some of you to become more involved. At first, I attended meetings infrequently as a guest for about two years. I was working full time and didn’t feel I had time or energy to be committed to the club. I wasn’t sure if I could really fit in or had anything, other than the love of plants and gardening, to offer. I admit I felt intimidated as it seemed everyone knew everyone else.

Then, when I became a member, I felt I would have to somehow get my nerve up and get involved. I volunteered to be on the social committee with Judi Murakami. When Judi volunteered to be President, she asked me to be her Vice President. I was terrified, never having been in such a position. I said I would, but I would not be President. They all said I could do it, but I didn’t believe them. Well here I am.... President! Everyone on the executive has been so helpful and supportive. I have learned so much, gained some wonderful friends, and am having fun. I am amazed how important the NIRS has become in my life.

Do you all want our club to continue? Think of what the NIRS has to offer the community: our Annual Plant Sale; the Mother’s Day Garden Tour; the wonderful speakers at each monthly meeting. None of this can continue unless new people step up and get involved. So please, seriously think about volunteering to help in some capacity.”

**The Nanaimo Rhododendron Society’s AGM will be in September.**

**We need you!**



## ***2019 Fall Rhododendron Conference***

### **A Vancouver Island Celebration of Gardening**



**The Mount Arrowsmith Rhododendron Society (MARS) is bringing hundreds of gardening enthusiasts together for the fall conference of the American Rhododendron Society.**

### ***Rhododendrons by the Seaside***

**September 27 to 29, 2019**

**Parksville Community and Conference Center**

**Register at [www.marsrhodos.ca/ars2019/](http://www.marsrhodos.ca/ars2019/)**

With the theme of “Rhododendrons as the World Warms,” the lineup of speakers, workshops and tours promises a busy and exciting weekend for everyone. This conference is one of the biggest bargains of the year. An early registration fee of \$95 will entitle you to 12 speakers over three days, including two workshops, choice of one of three bus tours, two continental breakfasts and lunch on Saturday. As well, there is access to a plant sale, a display of international rhododendron photos throughout the facility and a silent auction. Two keynote speakers follow the evening banquets on Friday and Saturday. Dinner is buffet style for an additional \$50 for each night.

The conference theme relates to climate change implications, but the context is for all gardeners who are interested in growing healthy plants of any type in our area. Speakers include a wide range of local and internationally-recognized experts in their fields; Dr. Richard Hebda, Curator Emeritus from the Royal BC Museum; Dr. Linda Gilkeson, entomologist; Mike Stewart, rhododendron nurseryman; Steve Hootman, Executive Director and Curator of the Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden (RSBG) in Federal Way, Wash.; Dr. Nancy Turner, UVic ethnobotanist; Marc Colombel, author and hybridizer, France; Ron Long, botanist and wildflower photographer, Nancy Moore, landscape designer & horticulturist, Geoff Ball, executive director Milner Gardens and Woodland and Dr. Juliana Medeiros, research scientist, Holden Arboretum, Ohio. Bulb and seed propagation workshops will be conducted by Bernie Dinter, Cowichan nurseryman and Dennis Bottemiller, propagator extraordinaire recently of the RSBG.



For those who need a place to stay, the MARS website has a list of various accommodations near the conference site. For best choice and best price, we suggest booking early as late September is still busy with tourists.

**Annual Truss Show - Part 2** by Jan Moles


**Saturday, May 11 (The day before Mother's Day)  
at Beban Park Centennial Building 10am to 2pm**

If you have a beautiful rhododendron in your garden, blooming at the right time, think about entering it – just one truss, or many. Think about entering a truss into the foliage class; foliage can be stunning.

Just a few features from last year's show (photos are from ARS.....) and some definitions.....

 <p><i>R. oreotrephes</i> is an Elepidote Species. Species are botanically identified plants originating from seed or cuttings.</p>	 <p>'Capistrano' won the class 'Yellow' hybrid truss Truss: A single rachis, i.e. all florets from one bud</p>
 <p>'Loderi Venus' won BEST SCENTED last year.</p>	 <p>'Black Widow', a 'red' hybrid was the PEOPLE'S CHOICE Hybrids are plants resulting from cross-breeding of more than one species, hybrid, or combination thereof.</p>
 <p>'Janet Blair' and 'Mrs. Furnivall' -</p>	 <p>both featured in Class 'Blotch Flare'</p>
	 <p>'Thor' won BEST IN SHOW last year, it has a 'Lax Truss' where the individual flowers are loose, not rigid</p>



 <p>'Irene Koster' featured in the 'Azalea (Truss or Spray)' class Spray: Multi-stems emerging from a single stem</p>	<p>A Hammerhead: Truss with multiple rachides emanating from a single terminal. Last year's show featured hammerheads from 'Mrs. Furnivall's Daughter', 'Vincent Van Gogh' and 'Ingrid Mehlquist'.</p>
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### Last minute instructions for entering Rhodo Trusses to the show on 11th May

1. Be sure to read the section attached (p. 16) on tips for picking your entries for the show, on preparing them for entry and on displaying your rhodo trusses to the best advantage.
2. **Entries need to be received at the registration desk between 6:30 and 7:30 pm on Friday, May 10<sup>th</sup> if possible,** please. If you come from far and need to register on Saturday 11th, registration clerks will be available from 6:30 am and the last entries will be accepted at the registration desk at 7:30 am; all entries arriving after that time will not be entered and will be displayed on the 'display only' table.
3. Please complete the two-part registration form (included on the following 2 pages):
  - a. Page 1 is for your list of entries with the class if at all possible, please. (the clerk will retain this page);
  - b. Page 2 is a copy of your list of entries **in exactly the same order** as is on page 1 (this list is for you to keep track of your entries and to help transfer them to the show table) (You can find the 2-page registration form on the NRS Web site and also in the newsletter below. A list of rhodos by class can be found on the NRS web site 'Truss Show' section and if in doubt, help will be available at the registration desk to find the correct class for the entry).
4. At the registration desk, please put your entries in the water bottles provided and line them up on one of the tables adjacent to the desk, **in the order in which they appear on page 1 of the form.** Corks are available to help display your entries to advantage in the bottles.
5. Take your registration form to the desk. The registration clerk should return page 2 to you.
6. You will receive a card for each entry from the registration clerk which will have the name and class of the rhodo truss and an entry number on a small sticker.
7. Put each card into a wooden card-holder next to the correct entry, and with the help of a registration clerk, the entries will be transferred to the show display tables to the correct sections.
8. Good luck!

**If you have a particular rhodo truss or foliage, beautiful, or a bit different that you think people might like to see - but not for entry to the show - please bring it for the 'display only' table.**

Access valuable information and tips from the winter 2013 ARS journal, the NRS website and the NRS newsletters.

Truss Name	Truss Name

Truss Name	Truss Name

## 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 in the morning, or 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. You can remove a damaged leaf or two, as long as you leave a set of leaves in good condition encircling the bloom. Remove additional leaves further down the stem. 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 past their best. 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".

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**Hope to see most of you at the May  
meeting, the plant sale/truss show  
and of course our annual bus  
tour!!!!**

**Now get back out to your  
garden and enjoy the spring!!!**

