

The Rhodomentum



Nanaimo Rhododendron Society Newsletter

November 2019



Hi everyone!

All of us who had a chance to take part in the ARS 2019 Fall Conference in Parksville were impressed with how informative it was. And no wonder, some of our own members worked hard with MARS to make it such a success as it was: June Bouchard, John Deniseger, Deborah Francis, Liz Higgins, Susan Lightburn, Art Lightburn, Gaylle McRae, Jan Moles, Linda Moore, Gerry Moore, and Chris Southwick. Congratulations for a job done so superbly!

While at the conference, I took the opportunity to interview all notable rhodo growers regarding the soil they use to propagate and grow their rhododendrons. I also compared the condition of their plants on display and came to the conclusion that Bob Zimmermann's (of Chimacum Woods, USA) soil mixture brought the best results: equal parts of fine ground bark and medium bark plus 20% of pumice (lava rock). He reasoned that bark is full of oxygen, which the rhodo roots need; and pumice stores air, which the roots also need. When transplanting to a 1-gallon pot, he uses a diluted 30-10-10 liquid fertilizer. The NRS Propagating team will be implementing this "Rhodo soil recipe" when transplanting the rooted cuttings to 1-gallon pots.

Speaking of the NRS Propagating team, those members are truly without par. They not only visit the greenhouse to check on the cuttings on their duty days, but also pop up in between too!

Now is the time to collect your Mason Bees nests and harvest the cocoons. Clean the nests and the cocoons. Store the cocoons, best in the garage, and check occasionally for mold and predation.

Happy gardening,

Rosina (*more from Rosina on page 4*)

EXECUTIVE

President	Rosina Schmidt	751-3386
Vice President	Chris Southwick	390-3415
Past President	Allen McRae	758-7589
Secretary	Jan Moles	758-2574
Treasurer	Liz Higgins	390-9340
Directors	Bryan Jubinville	956-6178
	Art Lightburn	468-7516
	Susan Lightburn	468-7516
	Gaylle McRae	758 7589
	Don Noakes	778 441-4783
	Ron Sutton	905 331 5527

COMMITTEES:

Advertising	Allen McRae
Library	Ann Beamish / Sandra Dorman
Newsletter	June Bouchard / John Deniseger
Membership	Krystyna Sosulski
Program	Committee
Raffle	Ann Davey & Val Harvey
Social	Deborah Francis
Bargain Table	Reinhold Gorgosolich/Don Noakes
Website	Craig Clarke
Bus Tour	David & Joyce Mitchell
Sunshine	Ann Beamish
Propagation Group	Ron Sutton

Nanaimo Rhododendron Society
Box 241, #101-5170 Dunster Road
Nanaimo, BC V9T 6M4

Website: nanaimorhododendron.ca

email: rhodomentum@nanaimorhododendron.ca

Next meeting: Thursday, November 14th, at 7:30 at Beban Park Social Center
Bill McMillan on "Cultivation, Pruning, Pests and Diseases Specific to Rhododendrons"
Plus, a short demonstration by Paul Wurz on "Taking Cuttings".

November program:

“Cultivation, Pruning, Pests and Diseases Specific to Rhododendrons”

The following topics will be covered:

Soil requirements

Planting – one viewpoint

Planting (from the ARS Website) - a slightly different viewpoint

Mulching

Fertilizing

Shade and Aspect

Types of pruning:

Leaf bud pruning and dead-heading of elepidotes

Woody pruning of elepidotes

Woody pruning of mature elepidotes – Another Approach

Woody pruning and deadheading of lepidotes

Pruning deciduous azaleas

Pruning evergreen azaleas

Pests and Problems

Leaf margin necrosis – difficult to diagnose!

Chlorosis and element deficiency symptoms.

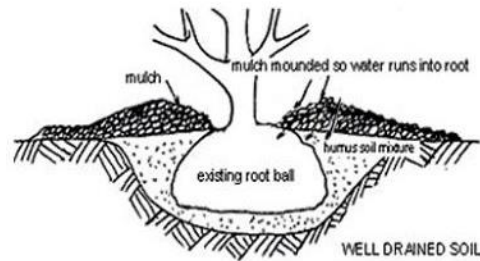
Fungal Infections

Weevils

Aphids and white fly

Slugs, caterpillars and wood lice

Lace bugs



About Bill McMillan:



“I am a Geologist by training but was enthusiastic about plants and decided to focus on rhododendrons when I retired. I 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 when my predecessor could not continue because of knee problems. I have been Curator, now Lead Hand, ever since. The last few years we have been increasing the number of rhododendron species and newer hybrids and also companion plants in the garden to make it interesting to visit even when the rhododendrons are not in bloom.

I was in charge of the Victoria Rhododendron Society Show and Sale for 5 years and Registrar of the American Rhododendron Society convention in Victoria in 2006. I am a past President of the Victoria Rhododendron Society and worked with Ken Webb on garden tours for the 2015 convention.

I am a propagator and grow rhododendrons and other plants from seeds and cuttings.

I have given presentations on basic rhododendron culture to many garden clubs, Master Gardener's classes and the HCP College students. I describe myself as an enthusiast, rather than an expert.”

Twigs and Stems

Calendar of Upcoming Events:

Milner Gardens and Woodland: Milner Christmas Magic.
December 6th to 8th, 13th to 15th and 18th to 22nd. It'll be here
before you know it!

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

Mount Arrowsmith Rhododendron Society: Harry Burton:
Everything You Wanted to Know About Apples. Qualicum Beach
Community Center, November 13th; 7:30 pm.

North Island Rhododendron Society: United Church in Comox,
7:30 pm, October 8th: **Steve Hootman** from the Rhododendron
Species Foundation, program TBA

Eaglecrest Garden Club: Wednesday, November 20th; at 7:00;
Qualicum Beach Civic Center;

Nanaimo Horticultural Society: First United Fellowship Church,
595 Townsite Rd; Wednesday, November 13th, at 7:30; **Jo**
Canning will discuss composting.

Nanoose Garden Club: Capri Brugg (RDN) - Water Conservation;
Nanoose Library Center & Event Hall, November 1st; 1:15pm.

Qualicum Beach Garden Club: Mike Yip: "Bird Photography". QB
Civic Center, Tuesday, November 12th, 7:30pm.

Goodies for next meeting:



Thank you to the
following people for
bringing the goodies
to our next meeting:
**Glenda Barr, Linda
Moore, Chris
Southwick.**

*A note from our membership
chair - Krystyna Sosulski:*



*Please renew your
membership NOW!!!*

*"The membership dues will be
collected in November and
must be deposited by the club
to ARS by December 2nd. The
single membership is
\$40, family \$45, associate
member: single \$10 and
family \$15."*

Need a ride to one of our meetings?



Call Chris at 250-390-3415 or 250-616-2742 (cell)

or send her an email at csouthwick@shaw.ca

November Raffle Plants:

R. “Bremen”:

Glowing scarlet red flowers in a loose truss appear in April. This plant has bright silvery green leaves and is neat and compact. It is hardy, but needs a sheltered site. Height 40-60cm in 10 years.

- Ideal for containers and small gardens.
- Easy to grow
- Parentage: unknown x *williamsianum*
- Hybridization date: pre-1950 (1945)
- Bred by: D G Hobbie. Origin: German.
- Habit: Compact bushy.
- Ideal position: Dappled shade
- **Hardiness:** -20 °C



R. bureavii x yakushmanum :

With a cross like this, you are bound to get a great foliage plant. Exceptional foliage is dark lustrous green with thick indumentum. Flowers are a delicate pink. Dense foliage on a compact, rounded, spreading plant. 3-5'h. Very hardy.



R. “Blueshine Girl”:

Long-lasting May flowers are an enticing blend of white, pink and cream! Attractive glaucous young growth, a lovely contrast to the flowers. This hardy variety can grow to 183 cm (6ft.) A tough German hybrid.

FURTHER NOTES FROM ROSINA: Harold E. Greer of “*Greer’s Guidebook to Available Rhododendrons*”, together with his spouse, attended the ARS Parkville conference.

On my question regarding the fertilizing of young rhodo plants, he advised that in our area we should fertilize after the plant goes dormant, sometime between late November and January. A second time would be in February/March, and a third time in April/May. The final fertilization should be in June/July.

Rhododendron Propagating Program



1. A very full greenhouse; 2. Bryan Jubinville and Rosina Schmidt. (Photos by Chris Southwick)



1. Group hard at work; 2. Ron and Rosina getting cuttings from Johanna Massa. (Photos by Ron Sutton)

The NRS Propagating Team has been very busy getting and rooting cuttings, as well as checking on the plants regularly. It's been a great club project! We look forward to their progress through the winter!

October 10th, 2019 - General Meeting Minutes:

Meeting opened at 7:30pm at Beban Park Social Centre Nanaimo. President Rosina Schmidt welcomed members, speaker Margaret Cadwaladr, and two guests to the Nanaimo Chapter Meeting.

1. President's report:

Propagation: Rosina reported that the propagation team thanked a number of key donors for cuttings of different varieties.

The major donors were:

Johanna Massa of Sooke, 24 varieties;

Chris Southwick of Nanaimo, 25 varieties;

Sean Rafferty of Shirley, 29 varieties;

Ken Gibson of Tofino, 51 varieties.

While Deborah Francis helped Chis Southwick with the cuttings, Doug Kitts, Rosina Schmidt and Ron Sutton ventured to Shirley, Sooke and Tofino to obtain the cuttings from those notable gardens and the generous hosts.

All the propagating team members with established gardens donated cuttings of different varieties. 3-5 cuttings per variety, and so far, we have planted 170 varieties, or about 900 cuttings.

Looking for volunteers: The cuttings now need to be looked after. They are in the propagation house at the Paine Horticultural Centre. Each day a club member goes to check them – it takes about 5 minutes to check that they are being watered and that the temperature is good in the propagation area. Currently there are six volunteers; we could do with many more volunteers so that the rota could be extended. Two people volunteered: Liisa Rullo and Dorothee Kieser.

The Rhodo conference in Parksville: on the weekend of September 28/29 was an outstanding success - thanks to all of the volunteers from the Nanaimo Club who helped to make it so.

A number of Questions that we need to think & make decisions about in the coming weeks are as follows:

- Would we like to have a garden tour next spring? Who would be prepared to open their garden, are there others outside the club who might open their garden?
- Should we have a table at the Master Gardeners Conference, Feb/March, to help publicize the club? Chris Southwick is making enquiries on what would be involved, cost etc.

2. Past President's Report: Allen McRae

Craig & Joyce Clarke have moved to Cameron Island. We all wish them well.

Craig had the pH meter and has now passed it on to Allen. It is available for use if anyone wants to borrow it. There will be a book so that it can be reserved.

Many American Rhododendron Society journals have been donated from Ken Gibson. They are available for members to read.

3. Treasurer's Report: Liz Higgins

Balance in bank. As at 12 September 2019	\$ 11, 160.01
--	---------------

revenue since 12 September	485.09
----------------------------	--------

expenses since 12 September	185.29
-----------------------------	--------

Balance as at 10 October 2019.	\$ 11, 460.01
--------------------------------	---------------

Cheques written but not cashed.	164.87
---------------------------------	--------

Cash available balance on 10 October 2019. **\$ 11, 295.14**

4. Secretary's Report: Jan Moles

- Correspondence has been received from VIU horticultural department thanking us for our bursary, including a card from the student who received the bursary expressing his thanks for our help.

- We will need to make a decision as a club on this coming year's donation.

5. Membership report - Krystyna Sosulski

Krystyna reminded the meeting that membership renewals MUST be completed by the November meeting at the latest so that dues can be sent to American Rhododendron Society (ARS) in December.

6. **Sunshine: Ann Beamish** reported to the meeting that Joyce Clarke is struggling with ill health. Ann has sent a card to Joyce and Craig from the club wishing them well. Ann also reminded members that if they know of members with ill health or problems, they should let her know.

7. The raffle & Reception Table - Ann Davey and Val Harvey:

Ann described the raffle offerings for this meeting:

- R. "Lemon Mist": Hachman hybrid, soft pink with dark yellow blotch – **generously donated for the raffle by Liz & Alan Murray.**
- A fragrant herb (do not know the name) was donated by Doug Kitts.
- 3 rhodos were provided by the club:
 - Barlup hybrid: R. "Only Yours", large peach pink flowers
 - R. "Brocade": a hybrid of *R. williamsianum*, pink bell-like flowers
 - Developed by Lionel de Rothschild

8. Program Committee – Art Lightburn:

- We are in the planning stage for next year's Truss Show and Plant Sale. The biggest challenge will be to get enough vendors.
- Rose Rogan from Perennial Ridge Farms will not be a vendor this year, BUT has agreed to sell us her plants wholesale - we need to figure out how to transfer 200 plants to our sale. A pre-visit will be required to see which plants we will have and thought put into transportation.
- On the theme of plant Sale: Ann Beamish is in contact with all of our previous vendors, those who came last year, and those who were unable to come last year to ask if they will be at the sale in 2020. Work needs to be done by all club members in finding or making suggestions for new vendors.

10 Our speaker for the evening Margaret Cadwaladr from her book 'A secret Garden'

An enjoyable and historically interesting presentation on the history of the Dart's Hill Garden Park in South Surrey. Some of our audience recognised important gardening figures from their gardening past.

Next Meeting: 14 November Main speaker: Bill McMillan: Rhododendron Pests and Diseases AND a Demo: Paul Wurz on taking Rhodo cuttings.

"If it is true that one of the greatest pleasures of gardening lies in looking forward, then the planning of next year's beds and borders must be one of the most agreeable occupations in the gardener's calendar. This should make October and November particularly pleasant months, for then we may begin to clear our borders, to cut down those sodden and untidy stalks, to dig up and increase our plants, and to move them to other positions where they will show up to greater effect. People who are not gardeners always say that the bare beds of winter are uninteresting; gardeners know better, and take even a certain pleasure in the neatness of the newly dug, bare, brown earth."

- Vita Sackville-West

Do Gardeners Live Longer?

Here's something that might be of interest.... we've only included an excerpt of the article here. If you'd like to read more, check out the link at the BOTTOM of the article.

Gardening could be the one hobby that helps you live to be 100!!!

By Jamie Feldmar, 22nd July 2019

Dan Buettner has studied five places around the world where residents are famed for their longevity: Okinawa in Japan, Nicoya in Costa Rica, Icaria in Greece, and Loma Linda in California and Sardinia in Italy.

People living in these so-called “**blue zones**” have certain factors in common – social support networks, daily exercise habits and a plant-based diet, for starters. But they share another unexpected commonality. In each community, people are gardening well into old age – their 80s, 90s and beyond.

Could nurturing your green thumb help you live to 100?

Mood elevator

It is well-known that an **outdoor lifestyle** with moderate **physical activity** is linked to longer life, and gardening is an easy way to accomplish both. “If you garden, you’re getting some low-intensity physical activity most days, and you tend to work routinely,” says Buettner.

He says there is evidence that gardeners live longer and are less stressed. A variety of studies confirm this, pointing to both the physical and mental health benefits of gardening.

Okinawa in Japan has one of the world's highest concentration of centenarians (Credit: Getty Images)



In **recent Dutch study**, researchers asked participants to complete a stressful task, then split them into two groups. One group read indoors and the other gardened outdoors for 30 minutes. The group that read reported that their mood “further deteriorated”, while the gardeners not only had lower levels of the stress hormone cortisol afterwards, they also felt “fully restored” to a good mood.

Australian researchers following men and women in their 60s found that those who regularly gardened had a **36% lower risk of dementia** than their non-gardening counterparts.

And preliminary studies among elderly people suffering from cognitive issues (such as dementia and Alzheimer's) report **benefits from garden settings** and horticulture therapy. Sunlight and fresh air, for example, help agitated elders feel calmer, while the colours and textures of various plants and vegetables can improve visual and tactile ability.

There is no panacea for growing old but, the science suggests, gardening does appear to improve our quality of life as we age.

Let nature nurture you

It's not just about health effects, either: the social benefits of gardening can also increase longevity. Dr Bradley Willcox of the University of Hawaii studies centenarians in Okinawa, which has the world's highest ratio of centenarians, at approximately 50 per 100,000 people. Many residents maintain small personal gardens well into old age.

He says that gardening helps with other essential, if somewhat more ephemeral, factors in increasing longevity. "In Okinawa, they say that anybody who grows old healthfully needs an *ikigai*, or reason for living. Gardening gives you that something to get up for every day."

On top of that, explains Willcox, Okinawans value the concept of *yuimaru*, or a high level of social connectedness. "Getting together at a local market, bringing your produce and sharing your latest creations from the garden is a big social activity," he says. "That certainly helps people feel grounded and connected."

A sense of connection to other people is important, but so too is the individual connection to nature. One Harvard University study showed that people who were surrounded by lush greenery lived longer, with a lower chance of developing cancer or respiratory illnesses.

Doctors in Scotland can now prescribe a walk in nature to treat a variety of ailments, including reducing blood pressure and anxiety, and to improve overall happiness. Gardening – even on a small plot in an urban area – is a simple way to incorporate more nature into your daily life.

Finally, there is also a dietary component to longevity that gardening can help with. Researchers have demonstrated a link between the "Mediterranean diet" – rich in vegetables, fruits, whole grains, legumes, nuts, fish and olive oil – and slower aging.

Willcox says the fundamental principle of eating an abundance of fresh vegetables, ideally from local gardens and markets, is important to longevity, whether the diet is technically Mediterranean or not. In Okinawa, for example, most people grow vegetables such as bitter melon and sweet potatoes in their gardens.

"When you eat vegetables that you've grown yourself, it changes everything – they taste more delicious, and it really makes a difference in the health qualities (vitamins, minerals, phytoactive compounds etc.) of the food itself," says Willcox. Buettner, the "blue zones" expert, recommends a diet of "90% plants, especially greens and beans", and points out a simple truth: gardeners are more likely to plant what they want to eat.

For the rest of the article see: <https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20181210-gardening-could-be-the-hobby-that-helps-you-live-to-100>

NOW GET BACK OUT IN THE GARDEN 

NRS Program: 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?), they 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
November 2019	Main speaker: Bill McMillan Demo: Paul Wurz on Rhodo cuttings	Rhododendron Pests and Diseases
December 2019	Christmas potluck and auction!!	Start thinking of possible contributions to the auction!
January 2020	John Deniseger and June Bouchard	Gardens of 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

November in the garden (Find out more ideas at <https://www.thompson-morgan.com/what-to-do-in-the-garden-in-november>)

November is here - the leaves are falling and it's getting colder and wetter. As autumn turns to winter, your main jobs in the garden are mostly about protecting plants and structures from the wilder weather to come:

- **Insulate your outdoor containers from frosts**, using hessian or bubble wrap held in place with garden twine.
- **Raise pots off the ground for the winter by using bricks or 'pot feet'**, to prevent waterlogging.
- **Encourage hungry birds into your garden by investing in bird baths and bird feeders.** Our feathered friends will keep pest numbers down and bring joy on a bleak winter's day.
- **Protect roses from windrock by pruning them by one-third to half their height.** This will stop them swaying in strong wind and prevent roots coming loose in the soil.

Useful Links

Victoria Rhododendron Society: victoriarhodo.ca/index.html

Cowichan Rhododendron Society: cowichanrhodos.ca/

Mount Arrowsmith Rhododendron Society: marsrhodos.ca/

North Island Rhododendron Society: nirsrhodos.ca/ws/

The American Rhododendron Society: rhododendron.org/

Linda Gilkeson's website: lindagilkeson.ca/

Nanoose Bay Garden Club: nanoosegardenclub.ca/

<p>American Rhododendron Society 75th Anniversary 20/20 VISION ARS75.org <i>Looking forward, reflecting back</i> Portland-Vancouver, April 29-May 3, 2020</p> 	<p><i>You're invited to the celebration!</i></p>  <p>World-renowned Keynote Speakers Kenneth Cox • Jens Nielsen • Steve Hootman • Juliana Medeiros Lionel de Rothschild • Steve Krebs • Valerie Soza • & more! Tours to the Northwest's Outstanding Gardens & Nurseries</p>
---	---

**April 29-May 3, 2020, Hosted by ARS District 4
Heathman Lodge, Vancouver, WA.**

20/20 Vision international speakers to include:

- Kenneth Cox from Glendoick in Scotland
- Lionel de Rothschild from Exbury in England
- Jens Nielsen, plant explorer from Denmark
- Steve Krebs and Juliana Medeiros from the Holden Arboretum
- Steve Hootman from the Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden
- Valerie Soza from the University of Washington
- and more.

Garden tours to include:

- Crystal Springs Botanical Garden
- Cecil & Molly Smith Garden
- Portland Japanese Garden
- Lan Su Chinese Garden
- Iseli Nursery
- Woodburn Nursery
- The Stewart Garden (formerly Dover Nursery)
- Sebright Gardens

Plant sale, photo contest, poster session, special clinics, plus:

- **Around the Sound** *pre-tour*
- **Willamette Valley and Oregon Coast Excursion** *post-tour*

ars75.org

Registration opens December 2, 2019



In Memoriam – Alleyne Cook (1924-2019)

“Canada and the World has lost one of its foremost plantsmen and a last link to the greats of the past, Sunday evening in Vancouver, BC. Alleyne Cook, ARS Gold Medalist, passed peacefully away. Cook had a long and distinguished career in horticulture dating back more than 75 years.” *(From ARS Facebook page)*

“He was credited with being the main designer and planter of the Ted and Mary Greig Rhododendron Garden in Stanley Park, which is possibly the best formal-designed and laid-out planted gardens in the park,” said former Vancouver Sun gardening writer Steve Whysall. (...) He was a gardener for many years at the (Vancouver) park board, but more than that, he became a rhododendron expert. He was given the top award for the American Rhododendron Society, and honoured as a world expert. He was very significant, and much-loved. (...) Alleyne Cook died Sunday at his North Vancouver home after a battle with chronic lymphocytic leukemia. He was just shy of his 95th birthday”. *(From the Vancouver Sun)*. Full article can be found at:

<https://vancouversun.com/news/local-news/the-guru-of-rhododendrons-alleyne-cook-dies-at-age-94>

*See you
all at the
November
meeting!*

