



# The Rhodomentum

## Nanaimo Rhododendron Society Newsletter



November 2023



### President's Message

Hello fellow members!

Well by now, you have learned Christmas will soon be upon us, as evident by Costco's abundant Christmas merchandise this past month. On the plus side, they bring in gardening products in January. 😊

Fall is a good time to see your garden give you one last blast of colour before winter sets in, especially from those of the acer genus.

Thirty plus members attended our last meeting and enjoyed a splendid talk by Margaret Cadwaladr about William Robinson and the history of Milner Gardens.

As usual, we had 3 rhododendrons raffled off. They were R. 'Rio Samba', R. 'Lucy Lou' and R. 'Star Trek'.

Your executive team is currently focusing on plans for our annual Christmas party. If you have any ideas for it, please share them by emailing me at the address listed below. Plans for it will be announced at the next meeting and in the December newsletter.

In closing, I would like all members to know that attendance at executive meetings is open to anyone interested, you can even host a meeting. You don't have to even be a committee member. It's part social and part business. The meeting host always provides a snack for it. We would welcome your input. Meetings are held in the early afternoon of the 3rd Thursday of the month. So, if you are curious about how your club is managed, come join us.

If interested, contact me at [rondsutton58@gmail.com](mailto:rondsutton58@gmail.com)

Ron Sutton

### OUR EXECUTIVE

<b>President</b>	Ron Sutton	416-951-1373
<b>Vice President</b>	Dorothee Kieser	390-4136
<b>Past President</b>	Rosina Schmidt	758-7589
<b>Secretary</b>	Deborah Francis	
<b>Treasurer</b>	Ron Sutton	416-951-1373

### Directors:

Wanda Brenton	754-1039
Margaret Cadwaladr	585-6046
Arthur Lightburn	468-7516
Gayle McRae	758-7589
Krystyna Sosulski	729-0948
Chris Southwick	616-2742

### COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

Advertising	Margaret Cadwaladr
Library	Ann Beamish / Gayle McRae
Newsletter	June Bouchard / John Deniseger
Membership	Krystyna Sosulski
Program	by Committee
Raffle	Val Harvey
Sunshine/Coffee	Wanda Brenton
Bargain Table	Reinhold Gorgosilich
Website	Deborah Francis/Rosina Schmidt
Bus Tour	
Propagation	Rosina Schmidt
Hailey Grove	Deborah Francis
Show and Sale	Jan Moles and Rosina Schmidt

Nanaimo Rhododendron Society  
Box 241, #101-5170 Dunster Road  
Nanaimo, BC V9T 6M4  
Website: [nanaimorhodos.ca](http://nanaimorhodos.ca)

**Our next meeting – Thursday, November 9<sup>th</sup>, at 7:30**  
**"Rhododendrons Recommended by NRS Members"**

At Beban Park Social Centre

## Our Program for November ~

### “Rhododendrons Recommended by NRS Members”

This program will be a little different, and we hope that you all will enjoy this different format. The idea is for NRS members to share with other NRS members some information about a rhododendron, azalea, or a plant that they really enjoy. Asking people to pick their “favourite” is almost impossible for plant lovers. So, get creative and think of a plant or two that you think others, particularly new members, might enjoy in their own gardens. This is a Rhododendron Society, so the emphasis should be on those plants, but if you are eager to share a special companion plant or a special tree, for example, that is fine too. Just ensure you tell me why you chose those plants.

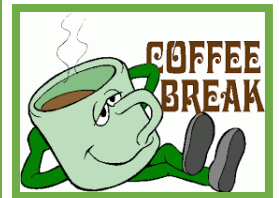
How does this work? Well, once you have thought about which plant(s) you’d like to share, please send me an email at: [csouthwick99@gmail.com](mailto:csouthwick99@gmail.com) with **a) the name of the plant, b) the reason you have picked this plant and c) a jpeg photo of the plant.** If you don’t have a photo of it, I will do my best to find one. I would like to have all the information from folks **by the end of October** so that I have enough time to put together a PowerPoint presentation.

Once I have completed the PowerPoint, the photo will be projected at the November meeting. I will ask each member who submitted plant names to say a few words about each plant they have submitted. If you are too shy, I could also do that part for you. If you aren’t able to attend that night, you could still submit your choices to me and I will do the rest.

Thanks everyone!

I hope to hear from almost everyone 😊.  
Chris

Many thanks to Ann Beamish and Wanda Brenton for bringing goodies to our November meeting! 😊



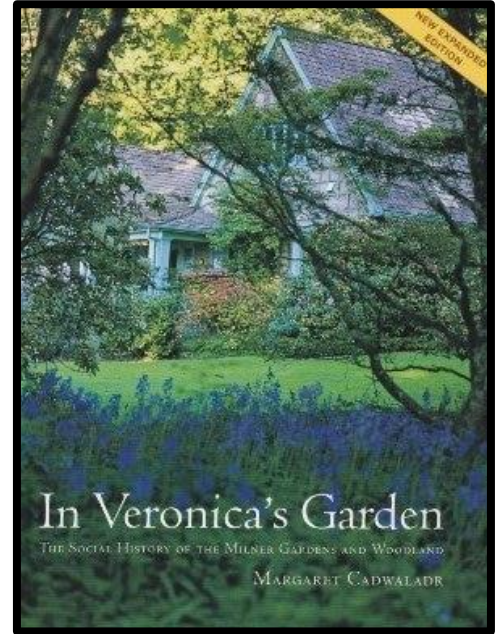
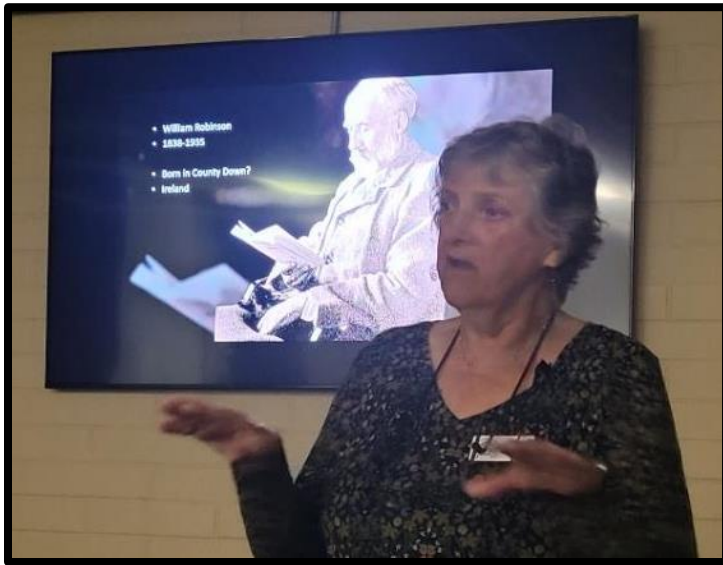
*Stay connected - check our web page - new things added regularly!* <http://nanaimorhodos.ca/>



**We now are on Facebook as the Nanaimo Rhododendron Society. Upcoming events will be posted there and members will be able to add photographs or items of interest to members.** (Thank you, Margaret, for setting that up!)

## Looking Back at our October Meeting...

We were treated to an excellent presentation on William Robinson and his influence on Veronica Milner by our very own Margaret Cadwaladr. We mentioned that Margaret was also the author of *"In Veronica's Garden: The Social History of the Milner Gardens and Woodland"*. You might like to know that our NRS library has at least two copies, which you can borrow at our next meeting. Ask a member of the Executive if you're unsure on how to proceed to borrow library materials – and while you're at it, check some of the other titles from our library – some excellent books in there!!!



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## Questions? ~An idea from our president...

Have you ever had a plant/gardening-related question and wondered how to get it answered... well, you have come to the right place.

The NRS has many knowledgeable members, including Master Gardeners, that can help you.

One of the many reasons we join a rhodo club is to learn more.

A wide variety of questions can be asked such as: How much sun a certain plant can take? What fertilizer to use? Where to find a particular plant? What's wrong with my plant? The plant in question doesn't even have to be a rhododendron.

You can send your question to our newsletter editors at [juneandjohn@shaw.ca](mailto:juneandjohn@shaw.ca) with any pertinent details and/or photo. Using the knowledge base in our club, we'll do our best to provide answers in the next newsletter.

Collectively, we might all learn something from the answers. 😊



# Hailey Rhododendron Grove Work Bee ~ Bowen Park

By Deborah Francis, coordinator



**We need your help to assist in removing invasive species from Hailey Grove at Bowen Park. Come and be part of the fun! 😊**

**Next work bee will be on Tuesday, November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023 – 9:00 am to noon at Bowen Park in Nanaimo – parking at the tennis courts. Bring good cheer, your gardening gloves, and a snack. The City will provide gardening tools. Hope to see you there!**

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Dear All,

Subscription renewal time is here again and we hope to be welcoming you all back for the new 2023/2024 year. **November meeting at latest is the target if you don't want to miss any issues of the Journal of the American Rhododendron Society (JARS).**

- Full membership: Single \$40, Family \$45
- Associate Membership: Single \$10, Family \$15
- Student Membership: \$10

Subscriptions can be paid at a meeting with cash or cheque.

**Or they can be e-transferred to our treasurer Ron Sutton at this email address: [rondsutton@shaw.ca](mailto:rondsutton@shaw.ca)**

Or sent by post to our treasurer at this address:

Ron Sutton, 7310 Cougar Smith Rd., Fanny Bay BC V0R 1W0

**\*\*\*Please Note: if you were a new member in 2023 AND paid after 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023, there is no need to pay again.**



**November sun is sunlight poured through honey:  
Old things, in such a light, grow subtle and fine.  
Bare oaks are like still fire...**

*~ Conrad Aiken, "The Charnel Rose," 1915*

## Twigs and Stems: Calendar of Other Upcoming Events:

**Milner Gardens and Woodland: Open Fridays & Saturdays, 11:00am to 3:30pm, through October 29<sup>th</sup>.** Milner Gardens' First Annual 'Scarecrow Spectacular' – October 27-29<sup>th</sup>. Closed in November as they prepare for Milner Christmas Magic. For details, check the [Milner Website](#)



**North Island Rhododendron Society:** "Organic Apple Growing" with Harry Burton; Comox United Church Hall, Tuesday, November 14th, 7:30 pm.

**Mount Arrowsmith Rhododendron Society:** "Dwarf Ferns for Small Garden Spaces" with Margot Moser, Qualicum Beach Civic Center, Wednesday, November 8th, 7:30pm

**Cowichan Valley Rhododendron Society:** "Gardening with Less Water" with Carolyn Joseffsen. St. John's Anglican Church Hall 486 Jubilee Street, Duncan. Wednesday, November 1st, 7:00 pm

**Victoria Rhododendron Society:** "Becoming a Rhododendron Grower From Seed" with Lloyd Gilmore, Couvelier Pavilion, Glendale Gardens, 505 Quayle Rd, Saanich, Thursday, November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 7:30pm

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## *A social gathering in memory of Sandra Dorman...*



Come and join us on Monday, October 30<sup>th</sup>, at the Lantzville Legion from 12:30 to 3:30 – Sandra wanted to have it on her birthday. It will be informal – there will be some food, a glass of wine or soft drinks, tea or coffee. Could you please let Jan Moles know at this email address a.s.a.p. if you are thinking of coming as we need to get some idea of numbers: [Jan.moles@btinternet.com](mailto:Jan.moles@btinternet.com)



IN MEMORIAM





(Editor's note: Thank you to Verna and Alan for allowing us to use their excellent report on the recent Species Garden Advisory Group meeting.)

With this photo report, it is our hope that you come to experience the Rhododendron Species Garden project at Milner Gardens as a worthy, long-term investment for our families and generations in the future. (Photos: Verna Buhler)

Following an introduction by John Deniseger, and the Treasurer's Report and Budget, committee members received an Update on Phase 1. Pam Murray presented a sample of signage for the Phase 1 area; temporary signage is in place and feedback was invited. Geoff explained the plans for benches, and that using different coloured wood chips, secondary pathways would soon be installed in the garden. Marilyn Dawson said that mulching bees would begin shortly to prepare the garden for winter.

Information on Phase 2, the Big Leaf Species Garden followed. Retired landscape architect and outdoor enthusiast, Jim Cadwaladr, made a lengthy and thorough presentation to the Advisory Committee. Using three large preliminary architectural landscape drawings, Jim explained the progress that he, a volunteer, and several geotechnical engineers had made since the committee's last meeting in February. He explained the results of the studies in terms of soil structure, degree of slope, drainage, and retention of the area that will be Phase 2 of the Greig Rhododendron Species Garden. Together with arborists, Jim and Geoff Ball identified and recorded the characteristics of each tree in the area, tagged trees that were weak, dying and dangerous for removal, and those that are considered special or specimen trees.

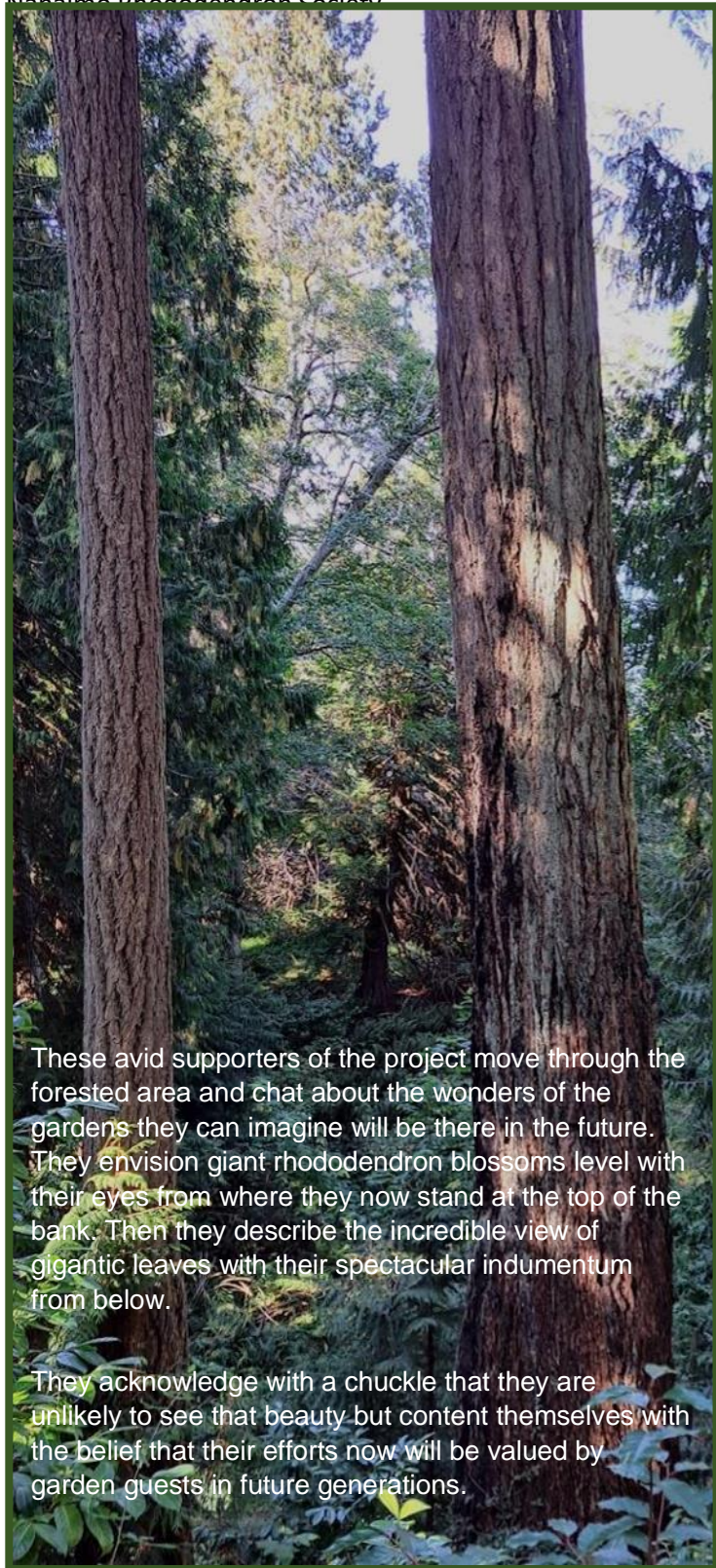


Following the indoor presentation, Jim led committee members through the Phase 2 area.



The entire Phase 2 area is very near the size of the Phase 1 area. Much of this area, however, is on the bank to the ocean; work will be done to build wattled “platforms” for planting the large leaf rhododendrons. Work on the large level section will begin first, with tree removal and minor clearing consistent with the Phase 1 section.

Special views of the ocean and beach will be preserved or enhanced.



These avid supporters of the project move through the forested area and chat about the wonders of the gardens they can imagine will be there in the future. They envision giant rhododendron blossoms level with their eyes from where they now stand at the top of the bank. Then they describe the incredible view of gigantic leaves with their spectacular indumentum from below.

They acknowledge with a chuckle that they are unlikely to see that beauty but content themselves with the belief that their efforts now will be valued by garden guests in future generations.



It was moving to see the sparkle in Jim's eyes, as he asked quietly of a few of us who stood with him among the ferns and trees, "It's just beautiful, isn't it? I love the forests. And can you imagine?"

***Jim is unquestionably the right person to design the garden.***





## *History of the American Rhododendron Society*

(Thanks to Chris Southwick for sharing this with us. Please click on underlined titles below for links to the various parts of the history.)

### **Part 1: History of the Founding the ARS and the major ARS Awards.**

During World War II, the isolation of the US from plant societies in Great Britain caused interest to spike in the formation of a rhododendron society in America. Efforts on both the Pacific Coast and the Atlantic Coast led to the formation of the ARS in 1945. Award medals were presented to those that contributed the most to the Genus Rhododendron. Includes lists of ARS Past Presidents, Executive Secretaries, Executive Directors, and ARS Chapters.

### **Part 2: History of the ARS Publications and Plant Registration.**

The lifeblood of any organization is its publications. The annual Yearbook started in 1945. The ARS Quarterly Bulletin started in 1947 and became the sole publication in 1950. Starting in 1957 the Bulletin began publishing the ARS Plant Registry. In 1982, the Bulletin became the Journal of the ARS.

### **Part 3: History of the ARS Test Gardens and Chapter Gardens.**

The ARS wished to create its own rating system in the US rather than use that of the RHS. This led to the creation of the ARS National Test Garden in 1951 which became Crystal Springs Rhododendron Garden in Portland, Oregon, and two other ARS Test Gardens at the University of Washington and Morris Arboretum in Philadelphia. Soon there were many Chapter Gardens worldwide.

### **Part 4: History of the ARS Endowment Fund.**

Several attempts were made over the years to form an Endowment Fund to insure the funding of office and publication expenses of the ARS. Finally, in 2000, after the Society received a \$320,000 bequest from Dr. John Swisher the fund generated significant income.

### **Part 5: History of the ARS Annual Conventions and Cut Flower Shows.**

From the very beginning, rhododendron shows were very popular. The first Annual ARS Convention was in 1961 when the International Rhododendron Conference of 1961 was held in Portland, Oregon. Subsequently such conventions were held annually each spring and alternated between the east coast and the west coast.

### **Part 6: History of the Rhododendron Species Foundation.**

The ARS Species Project which started in 1962, led to the formation of the Rhododendron Species Foundation in 1964, a non-ARS entity which was started by the ARS. Today the Rhododendron Species Foundation and Garden in Federal Way, WA, has over 700 species from around the world.

### **Part 7: History of the ARS Seed Exchange.**

In 1963, the ARS Seed Exchange started under the supervision of Esther Berry. It has continued under the capable hands of a number of dedicated ARS members. It has grown to be global in scope and refined to the point of using traceable sources.

**Part 8: History of the Rhododendron Research Foundation.**

The ARS formed a Research Committee in 1970. This committee followed research that impacted rhododendrons and reported on it to ARS members. In 1975, the ARS Rhododendron Research Foundation was formed to fund research projects each year.

**Part 9: History of the ARS Pollen Exchange.**

Marthaann Mayer started the Pollen Bank in 1975 as a New York Chapter project. At the request of August Kehr, who was then president of the American Rhododendron Society, the chapter pollen bank became the ARS Pollen Bank.

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**Japanese Persimmon fruit is a fruit for the Gods!** By Rosina Schmidt

On Vancouver Island, the Japanese Persimmon fruit needs to be harvested still unripe, prior to the fall rains rolling in. One stores the fruit in vegetable or fruit boxes and keeps them in a warm place until they are soft to preserve for the winter.

For more information, please see <http://nanaimorhodos.ca/fuyu-japanese-persimmon-tree-diospuros-kakai-fuji/>  
(Photos by Rosina)



A close-up view of the Persimmon fruit on the tree.

This Japanese Persimmon tree is now 20 years old on this year is heavily loaded with fruit. It grows in Rosina’s garden.

*“I cannot endure to waste anything so precious as autumnal sunshine by staying in the house.” —  
Nathaniel Hawthorne*

# An Update on our Activities at Milner

## Shadehouse at Milner

As the weather turns to cooler and wetter, we're preparing the shadehouse for winter. We began by installing a substantial quantity of hardware to allow for the easy installation, removal and fastening of the plastic cover. The plastic was installed on October 11<sup>th</sup> by volunteers from MARS and the NRS. Next steps will be the construction of the end walls, 2 large doors (one in each end) and securing the plastic on the end walls. Once that is completed the shade cloth will be reinstalled over top of the plastic. We've set up a weekly maintenance schedule in cooperation with MARS members – we alternate weeks. Thank you to everyone who signed up to help out at the October meeting. We'll be holding an orientation session in late October. **If you'd like to help out, please see John or Chris.**



### REMINDER:

**Shadehouse Checking Crew for the upcoming month or so...**

<b>Week of Oct 23rd</b>	<b>Margaret and Jim</b>
<b>Week of Nov 6th</b>	<b>Rosina</b>
<b>Week of Nov 20th</b>	<b>Margaret and Jim</b>
<b>Week of Dec 4th</b>	<b>John and June</b>



## DON'T MISS...

# Milner Garden's First Annual Scarecrow Spectacular

October 27 - 29 from 11am - 3pm with viewing until 3:30pm

\$7/Adult | \$5/Youth | Children, VIU Students and Milner Members are **free**

## Fall Colours from Rea and Ron's Garden



## *Plant of the Month* by Ron Sutton

### Rhododendron 'Loderi King George'

This is a hybrid cross between two species, *R. fortunei* and *R. griffithianum*. There are a total of 34 Loderi hybrids, but King George is the most well known. It grows into a tree size plant. Rate of growth is relatively fast, 6 to 8 feet tall in 10 years. On the Island, it blooms in early to mid-May, with loose trusses of 5 to 6 white flowers with a touch of pink, that are 4+ inches each in width. They are delightfully fragrant. It's hardy to -18°C and prefers part shade.

It's difficult to find, because it's difficult to propagate. The photo is of my young plant in bloom on May 10. I acquired my two plants from Perennial Ridge Farm. They however, no longer propagate rhododendrons.

(Ed. Note: there's a 10-to-12-foot specimen of Loderi King George just inside the main entrance of the Greig Rhododendron Species Garden at Milner. You may also come across *R. 'Mrs. Josephine Firth'* in your travels. It may simply be *R. 'Loderi King George'*.)



**Our president tells us he sees himself in this image – not sure if he is Leonardo or Brad.... Or maybe he just loves showing off his plants – as we all do... 😊**

From Ron: "My wife found this somewhere on Facebook, Brad Pitt and Leonardo DiCaprio, where someone wrote: "Me at social gatherings, So these are my plants" – I found it funny, because it's so like me to do that."

# Rhododendron Glossary...



We're building our very own collection of terms related to rhododendrons, one word at a time. Each month, we'll add a new word or term to the glossary. If you have suggestions that you'd like us to add, please let us know.



## This month's word is: senescence

Senescence is a normal process referring to rhododendron leaves turning completely yellow and dropping.

"Another reason that your rhododendron leaves may be yellowing is simply senescence or the aging and dropping of leaves. Leaves that are going through this process will be entirely yellow. Senescence may occur during a heat wave, but we most often see senescence in action in the fall as trees drop their leaves and go dormant for the winter.... A few older leaves will still turn yellow and drop on occasion as the plant renews its foliage, so you shouldn't see a dramatic shift in the entire plant. If you do, you're dealing with chlorosis, not senescence"



<https://www.epicgardening.com/rhododendron-problems/>

(Photos from our garden)

## Refer to previous issues for ....

October 2023's words: *Elepidote and Lepidote*

September 2023's word: *tomentum*

June 2023's word: *indumentum*

May 2023's word: *truss*

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## Propagation News

By Rosina Schmidt

The last exceptional rhodo cuttings for our goal of 300 were graciously donated by Dick Beamish, Chris Southwick, and Elaine Hutchison.

Chris, Elaine, Moira, and Rosina completed the planting. The cuttings are now being observed closely on a weekly basis: removing any dead leaves, hand watering, and checking the humidity level. Crossing our fingers, they should be marketable in three years' time.

The photo shows Chris, Elaine, and Moira at the VIU Greenhouse. Rosina was behind the camera.

Want to learn more about Trees? You are invited to:

**ABOUT THOSE TREES— "Tree Fundamentals"**

Sponsored by Vancouver Island Master Gardeners (VIMGA)



**Date:** Saturday, November 4, 2023  
**Location:** Nanoose Place Community Centre  
2925 Northwest Bay Rd. Nanoose Bay  
**Time:** 11:00—2:30 (Doors open to Public)  
**Cost:** By donation  
**Registration:** email Ruth at: [vicepresident@vimga.org](mailto:vicepresident@vimga.org)



*Bring a bag lunch, and mug for water. Door prizes at end of day.*

**Guest Presenter: Trevor Coey**, arborist with Bartlett Tree Experts will present:

**"Tree Fundamentals"**



Trevor Coey

Born and raised in Victoria, Trevor has always enjoyed the outdoors. When a job opportunity presented itself in 1999 to climb and care for trees, it was a perfect fit. Starting his career with Mt. View Tree Service as a grounds person, he worked his way up to climber, crew foreman and finally to Arborist Representative with Bartlett Tree Experts. Trevor is a Certified Arborist with the International Society of Arboriculture and a certified tree care safety professional.

"What I enjoy about this job is that there is always something new to learn. I am outside rain or shine, and I can pass on valuable information to help people keep their trees and landscape healthy."

Trevor's presentation will be followed by a panel discussion of Master Gardeners on: ***"tips and collective wisdom on growing and caring for trees in our gardens."***

**Registration: email Ruth at: [vicepresident@vimga.org](mailto:vicepresident@vimga.org)**



*Looking Forward  
to seeing you all  
at our next  
meeting on  
Thursday,  
November 9<sup>th</sup>! ☺*

(Two autumn views from our bedroom window – a foggy morning on the left, and Acer palmatum 'Osakazuki' in all its glory below.)

