



The Rhodomentum

Nanaimo Rhododendron Society Newsletter



September 2022



President's Message

Dear NRS Gardeners,

The time has come for another member to lead us as new President onto better paths, so I am taking this opportunity to thank you for standing by me and giving me your help any way you could. Yes, thank you warmly! Now I am looking forward to be your 'Past President', and if the rumor is correct, Past Presidents have no obligation. Wow, I am looking forward to it!

In the last three years, we have achieved much together – taken unknown paths into Zoom, online meetings and presentations – we can proudly pat ourselves on the back, as we did it superbly!

Working today with Deborah and Kevin at the Hailey Grove, it was very evident that this year was a splendid growing season: the blackberry vines are doing wonderfully! **More hands are definitely and urgently needed.** Next work party will be on Tuesday, September 13th, please come at 10 a.m. (See details p.9)

Good news - we can once again do our propagation at VIU's Paine Centre starting in mid-September. Our huge thanks go to Allan Murray who was looking after our cuttings during the pandemic years.

Currently, the *2022 Fall Into Gardening* one-day conference is in the works (please see p.6 for more info). At the *District 1 Presidents Meeting* the other day, it was discussed whether all Vancouver Island chapters could collectively hold the 2026 conference in Nanaimo, as it is centrally located. That would be something to be looking forward to, and most likely we will work towards it. Please keep your fingers crossed...

As you will read below, our AGM and 30th Anniversary party will be on 10th of September and Rea and Ron Sutton generously offered us their charming garden for our celebration. Please bring a lawn chair, potluck dish to go with ham, a plant to raffle off, as well as your favorite story about the NRS. You can also email your story to Ron, and he is going to print it. He has mine already. Any photos you would like to share will go into the "*NRS 30th Anniversary*" album which will be kept in our library cabinet.

Lastly, my great thank-you goes to June and John and to the outgoing Executive Team for their splendid help. (See photo p.3)

Rosina

OUR EXECUTIVE

President	Rosina Schmidt	751-3386
Vice President	Chris Southwick	390-3415
Past President	Allen McRae	758-7589
Secretary	Deborah Francis	
Treasurer	Ron Sutton	416 951-1373
Directors	Ann Beamish	758-2574
	Dorothee Kieser	390-4136
	Gayle McRae	758-7589

COMMITTEES:

Advertising	Allen McRae
Library	Ann Beamish / Gayle McRae
Newsletter	June Bouchard / John Deniseger
Membership	Jan Moles
Program	by Committee
Raffle	Ann Davey & Val Harvey
Social	Deborah Francis
Bargain Table	Reinhold Gorgosilich
Website	Deborah Francis/Rosina Schmidt
Bus Tour	David & Joyce Mitchell
Sunshine	Wanda Brenton
Propagation	Rosina Schmidt
Hailey Grove	Kevin Francis
Show and Sale	Jan Moles and Brenda Lewis

Nanaimo Rhododendron Society
Box 241, #101-5170 Dunster Road
Nanaimo, BC V9T 6M4
Website: nanaimorhodos.ca

Our next meeting

30th Anniversary of the NRS and our AGM

Saturday, September 10th at 2:00

At Rea and Ron Sutton 7310 Cougar Smith Rd., Fanny Bay



Saturday, September 10th – 2:00 pm
Ron and Rea Sutton's Home and Garden
7310 Cougar Smith Rd, Fanny Bay

Don't forget to bring cutlery, plates, cup or glass
A potluck dish that you love to make and share
A chair to relax on and a beverage of your choice



Ham, coffee, tea and non-alcoholic punch will be provided by the club



We will be having a draw for plants. If you can, please bring a plant that some other member would appreciate.

****Bring your friends, neighbours, or visiting relatives to help celebrate!**

Please car pool if you can

Hi All,

By now you have likely heard that the NRS will celebrate its 30th anniversary at the September meeting, together with our AGM (September 10th at Ron Sutton's place). This will be a special event and your executive is busy planning the party. One of the ideas we would like to put into action is to collect members' memories on what makes the NRS special to each of you. An activity or event (like a bus tour), an outstanding member, a special garden. If you bring your thoughts written on a card or a piece of paper (about a paragraph's worth – 150 words or less), with your name on it and possibly a photo, they could be posted on a board, or some could be drawn for reading at the celebration. All would be collected to put together into a book that might be made available on the club's website.

We will be calling you just prior to the celebration to remind you of this special event and its "Good Memories" collection.

Thank you for giving it some thought and for participating.

Dorothee Kieser



September is AGM month - please consider joining the NRS Executive!!!



While a number of members have stepped up to join the executive team, we are still looking for more volunteers, as we could use one or two more directors. **Please consider joining!**

Many thanks to the outgoing members who have donated many hours of their time to our society!



From the last executive meeting: Art Lightburn, Deborah Francis, Ron Sutton, Jan Moles, Dorothee Keiser, Margaret Cadwaladr, Chris Southwick, Rosina Schmidt (missing from photo Allen and Gayle McRae and Ann Beamish)

Dear All,

Subscription renewal time is here again and we hope to be welcoming you all back for the new 2022/2023 year. November meeting at latest is the target.

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 eTransferred to our treasurer Ron Sutton at this email address:

rondsutton@shaw.ca

Or sent by post to our treasurer at the address:

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

Jan Moles

Membership Secretary

*****Please Note: if you were a new member in 2022 AND paid after 1st April 2022, there is no need to pay again.**

The following is an excerpt from the "Green Thumb" column by Marion Woloschuk in the latest issue of the Lighthouse Country Living newsletter. We thought we'd share it with you as it's particularly appropriate at this time of year. Thank you, Marion, for allowing us to reprint it here:



"I've been gardening most of my life – starting as a three-year-old with pint sized rake and shovel following in my Dad's footsteps, with stops along the way as backyard garden geek, small farmer, and into retirement – with new challenges every step of the way. Perhaps the next phase of life will see me growing tomatoes in pots on a patio, but until then, I'll continue to plan, and plant and weed, and look forward to the next season in the garden."



Twigs and Stems: Calendar of Other Upcoming Events:

Mount Arrowsmith Rhododendron Society: Glen Jamieson – “Iceland: Land of Fire and Ice”, Qualicum Beach Civic Center, Wednesday, September 14th, 7:30pm

North Island Rhododendron Society: Lois and Roy Blackmore – “Jim Barlup’s Hybrids”, Comox United Church Hall, Tuesday, September 13th, 7:30pm

Milner Gardens and Woodland: – Fall openings through October 2nd: Thursday thru Sunday from 11am to 4:30 with viewing until 5pm. Fall plant sale: September 17th and 18th. October openings: Friday and Saturdays from 11am to 3:00 with viewing until 3:30. Check the Milner website for details: [Milner Garden Events](#)

Live the Garden Life - check this out to see what's going on in our area:

In recognition of the “Year of the Garden”, Milner has created “Live the Garden Life” on the Milner website. It is a guide to local resources to support the mid-Island community in getting out into the garden.

Whether you visit our Milner’s beautiful gardens for inspiration, join a garden club to meet other gardeners and share knowledge, are planning your first garden and want to gain knowledge, or take courses to learn more about gardening, celebrate everything gardens do for us at a local garden event, or check out our trusted web resources, ... see the listings in each category. For more information, click here to [“Live the Garden Life”](#).



NRS PROGRAM

Our club’s program committee (Chris Southwick, Dorothee Kieser, Glenda Barr, Rosina Schmidt and John Deniseger) have been busy. Working together (Isn’t it always easier, when we work together?), they have booked speakers for much of the 2022/23 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
October 13, 2022	Bob Duncan	Growing Figs
November 10, 2022	Sean Rafferty	My Favourite Himalayan Plants
December 8, 2022	Christmas potluck and auction	
January 12, 2022	Linda Derkach	Garden Sense for a Changing Climate
February 9, 2022	Allison McCabe	Invasive Species in the Vancouver Island Garden – Identification, Management, and Removal

A Look Back at our June picnic in Dorothee and Robert's beautiful garden



Stay connected - check our web page - new things added regularly!

<http://nanaimorhodos.ca/>



2022 Fall into Gardening

“Coping with Climate Instability in your Garden”

MARS (Mount Arrowsmith Rhododendron Society), **NRS** (Nanaimo Rhododendron Society), and **VIMGA** (Vancouver Island Master Gardeners Association) are pleased to offer a day of education and enjoyment with internationally recognized gardening experts.

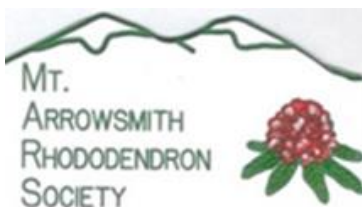
Tickets: \$25 in advance or \$30 at the door

See NRS website for details about **how to register:** <http://nanaimorhodos.ca/>

- **Date:** **Sunday, October 23, 2022**
- **Location:** Qualicum Beach Civic Centre
747 Jones St. Qualicum Beach, B.C. V9K 1S7
- **Time:** 10:00 AM to 3:30 PM

10:00 AM – 10:05 AM	Introductory Remarks
10:05 AM – 11:00 AM	Douglas Justice: UBC Botanical Garden Associate Director and Curator “Planting Trees for a Drier and Hotter Future”
11:00 AM – 11:20 AM	Break
11:20 AM – 12:15 PM	Caroline Josefsson: Vancouver Island University Biology Department “Gardening with less water – learning from the Garry Oak Ecosystem”
12:15 PM – 1:15 PM	Lunch
1:15 PM – 2:10 PM	Des Kennedy: writer, activist, celebrated speaker “Weather or Not – a light-hearted romp through the triumphs and travails of the weather-beaten gardener”
2:10 PM – 2:30 PM	Break
2:30 PM – 3:25 PM	Bonnie Zand: Entomologist and owner of Bonnie’s Bugs IPM “Gardening for pollinators: supporting BC’s diverse native bees”
3:25 PM – 3:30 PM	Closing Remarks

Refreshments: coffee, tea, and treats will be provided. **Please bring your own bag lunch.**



2022 Fall into Gardening

“Coping with Climate Instability in Your Garden”

Douglas Justice presents “*Planting Trees for a Drier and Hotter Future*”

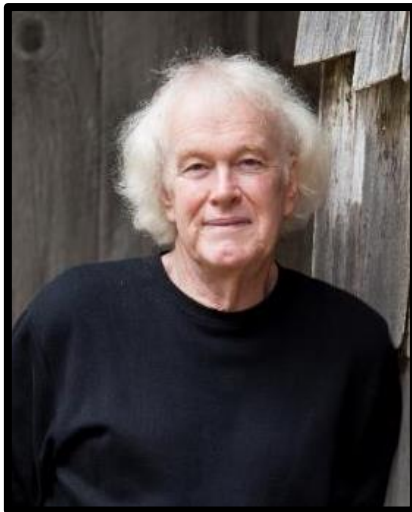


There is increasing awareness among gardeners, if not the public at large, for the need to reconsider many of our planting choices. Numerous factors contribute to this change in perspective, but climate change, sustainability in horticultural practices and the biodiversity crisis are paramount among them. Douglas’s presentation will address tree selection in light of these issues.

Douglas had his initial exposure to horticulture in his parents' garden in Vancouver and at the family farm in Duncan. His passion for plants eventually led him into nursery work, then to degrees in horticulture and botany, which spurred him to pursue a career in teaching and public garden management. For the last two decades, Douglas’s job has been Associate Director, Horticulture & Collections at UBC Botanical Garden. He

teaches in UBC's Landscape Architecture program and in the Botanical Garden's Horticulture Training Program, and is currently working on a manual of Vancouver's cultivated woody plants.

Des Kennedy presents “*Weather or Not – a light-hearted romp through the triumphs and travails of the weather-beaten gardener*”



Des Kennedy is a writer, an activist and seasoned back-to-the-lander. He and his partner Sandy have for the last 50 years lived a conserver lifestyle on Denman Island. Their gardens, hand-built house and surrounding woodlands are regularly featured on the Denman Island Home and Garden Tour.

A celebrated speaker, Des is the author of ten books, in both fiction and non-fiction. He has been three times nominated for the Stephen Leacock Memorial Medal for Humour. His latest book is a novel titled “*Beautiful Communion*” (Ronsdale Press.)

Caroline Jossefson presents “*Gardening with less water – learning from the Garry Oak Ecosystem*”



Climate projections suggest that summers in our region will become increasingly warmer and drier, presenting challenges to gardeners. Can we look to our local flora, our region’s ancient history, and traditional ecological practices for solutions? The Garry oak ecosystem is a species-rich, drought-adapted plant community that originates in a warm dry period of British Columbia’s ancient past, 8,000 to 6,000 years ago. As the climate became cooler and moister about 6,000 years ago, the ecosystem was protected from encroaching conifers by Coast Salish Peoples who benefitted from the game and edible plants associated with it. The Garry oak ecosystem can serve as a model for sustainable gardening in our area, one that honours our region’s cultural history and its biodiversity. I will speak to my experience of gardening with Garry oak ecosystem-associated plants in my small front yard in Nanaimo, and suggest resources for information, seeds, and plants.

Born and raised in the southwest of Sweden, Caroline’s life-long interest in plants and plant propagation originates from her grandmothers, who were keen gardeners, house plant keepers and observers of nature. At the Swedish University of Agriculture, Caroline pursued an undergraduate degree in Horticulture and Biology. For her doctorate at the University of Washington, she studied gene deregulation stemming from hybridization in the plant model system *Arabidopsis*. Caroline joined the Biology Department at Vancouver Island University in 2009. There she teaches plant biology courses, as well as courses in genetics and biochemistry. In 2020, together with students from VIU’s Eco Club, Caroline initiated a Garry oak ecosystem restoration project on the VIU campus.

Bonnie Zand presents “*Gardening for pollinators: supporting BC’s diverse native bees*”



When most people think of pollinators, they think of honey bees. But did you know that there are more than 450 different bee species in BC, along with other pollinating insects? These pollinators are incredibly diverse in size, appearance and lifestyle, and are vitally important for pollination of both food crops and wild plants. Learn to observe and appreciate some of these less well-known pollinators, find out what challenges they are facing, and learn what you can do within your own gardens to support native pollinators!

Bonnie Zand is the owner of Bonnie’s Bugs IPM, a private consulting company working with farmers to manage insect pests on Vancouver Island. She is currently running the Vancouver Island Pests, Pollinators and Beneficials Project. Bonnie holds a BSc in biology from UVic, is a board member of the Native Bee Society of BC and is part of the recovery implementation group for the endangered Taylor’s checkerspot butterfly. Bonnie is also the BC instructor for the Master Melittologist program. In her spare time, she likes to look for interesting native bees and other insects, raise mason bees, garden with native plants and instill a love of insects in her five-year-old daughter.

In Memoriam...



It is with sadness that we report that long time NRS member Michael Miller passed away on May 30th. Michael was a very active member of our club for many years. He served on our executive, chaired our truss show committee, initiated our original Hailey Grove partnership with the City of Nanaimo and supported the club in so many ways. He received a Bronze Medal from the NRS in 2009 in recognition of his contributions. A memorial for Michael will be held at First Unitarian Fellowship of Nanaimo, 595 Townsite Road at 2pm on Saturday, October 1st.

<https://www.vancouverislandfreedaily.com/obituaries/michael-john-miller/>



Michael receiving the Bronze Medal in 2009.

Hailey Rhododendron Grove Work Bee ~ Bowen Park



The wet spring and early summer have resulted in lots of growth in both the rhodos **and** the invasives So, mark your calendar and come and join the fun on the following dates – always the second Tuesday of the month from 10am to 2pm:

September 13th, October 11th, November 8th!

As they say... “Many hands make light work!”

Bring your lunch and a sunny disposition! 😊

We could really use your help!



Propagation Update ~ by Rosina Schmidt

On June 27th, the Propagators were hard at work with 2021 cuttings that Allan Murray graciously was looking after for the last 8 months in his greenhouse with lots of TLC.

Gayle and Allen came in the morning and repotted the last 12 of the 2019 cuttings into 2-gallon pots, and 12 of the 2021 cuttings into 1-gallon pots. In the afternoon Dick, Dorothee, Jan and Liz repotted 35 of the 2021 cuttings into 1-gallon pots. The afternoon crew celebrated the mission accomplished with Vienna apple cake that Rosina baked. Dick made that photograph, while Rosina took the others.

For now, the propagating team has sufficient pots of both 1 gallon and 2 gallons.



We are Looking for a New Propagation Coordinator

Our current NRS Propagation coordinator, Rosina, has “retired” effective immediately- due to some unexpected medical problems. Thank you, Rosina, for everything you’ve done to make this a successful initiative for our club!

This is a great opportunity for a new member to step forward to take on this role. It’s an interesting position that has become a very important part of our club and future plant acquisition and plant sales. The next cuttings will be propagated at VIU’s Paine Centre in mid-September. Please contact Rosina (rosinatschmidt@gmail.com) for further information.



The Shadehouse at Milner – more on propagation

Over the last few months, we have made significant progress on the construction of a 30' X 45' shadehouse at Milner Gardens and Woodland. This is a partnership between Milner, the NRS and MARS, generously funded by an anonymous donor. The intent is to create a shared space for “growing on” cuttings once they have been well rooted. Through the summer, the site was prepared, the shadehouse frame erected, the gravel base placed and spread and the shadedcloth netting was put into place. The remaining steps to be completed this fall include construction of a deer fence to surround the entire area, bringing water to the site, and the placement of more gravel inside the fenced area.



Attendees at the August 23rd District 1 President's meeting standing inside the shadehouse



Our thanks go to the volunteer construction crew: from left to right – Guy Loyer, Ross Renwick, Glen Jamieson, John Deniseger and Brent Darnell



The Rhododendron Revival Project- excerpt from June 2022 newsletter (more on propagation)

Together, horticulture students in the Horticulture Technician Foundation Certificate Program at VIU, Milner Gardens staff and the NRS and MARS will be working together to share knowledge and experience and contribute to the success of the project.

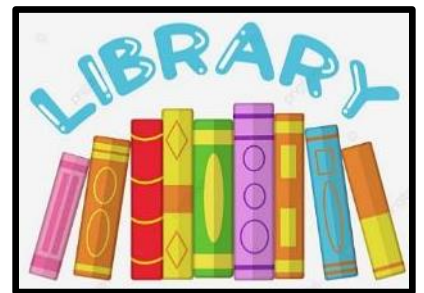
An overarching goal for this project includes the revival of rhododendron species at risk in the garden through propagation of plants that require replacement and/or population expansion. Another goal is to identify and propagate rhododendron species from Milner Gardens that aren't commonly propagated or are difficult to propagate in commercial production settings. The project also creates a networking opportunity between the three groups involved and has proven to be valuable in building relationships that continue to strengthen the VIU and wider community.

Ed. Note: Christine is looking for 4 or 5 NRS / MARS members to join the Rhododendron Collection and "Sticking" Team in the fall. The intent is to have students come to our meetings in the fall to provide us with updates and progress reports on the project.

From our library by Ann Beamish:

Our thanks go to Yvonne Harding who has generously donated the following books to the NRS Library:

- *Annuals & Perennials*, Botanica's Pocket
- Sommer, Ramona; *Island Gardening: A Month-by-Month Guide for West Coast Gardeners*
- Brayshaw, T. Christopher; *Trees and Shrubs of British Columbia*, Royal British Columbia Museum Handbook.
- Beck, Alison and Binetti, Marianne; *Perennials for British Columbia*. Lone Pine Gardening
- *Bulbs: A Photographic Guide to More Than 500 Bulbs by Type, Size, Season of Interest and Color* (Cavendish Plant Guides)
- Brickell, Christopher, *Technical Consultant; Pruning and Training Plants: A Complete Guide*
- Chalker-Scott, Linda; *The Informed Gardener*



R. 'September Song' – Glendoick Photo

*Silently the sweet September
Counts her heart-beats as they go;
And the afternoon shades linger,
Blushing to the sunset low...*

~Sara L. Vickers Oberholtzer, 1891

Plant of the Month by Ron Sutton

Rhododendron 'Superflimmer'

Here is an improved variegated form of R. 'Goldflimmer', which is said to be a *R. ponticum* hybrid. The difference is that R. 'Superflimmer' has much larger pale-yellow blotches on its leaves. It really stands out among other solid green leafed rhododendrons. In May, it produces small ball trusses of lavender flowers. It doesn't grow fast, and may reach 5 feet tall by 5 feet wide in 10 years. It is really hardy and can be grown in zone 6 and maybe zone 5. I grew it in Ontario and it took full sun and zone 6 winters without damage. There are very few variegated rhododendrons in the trade, and this is arguably the best of them. Problem is, it isn't easy to find, and I was fortunate to get mine from the late Paul Wurz.



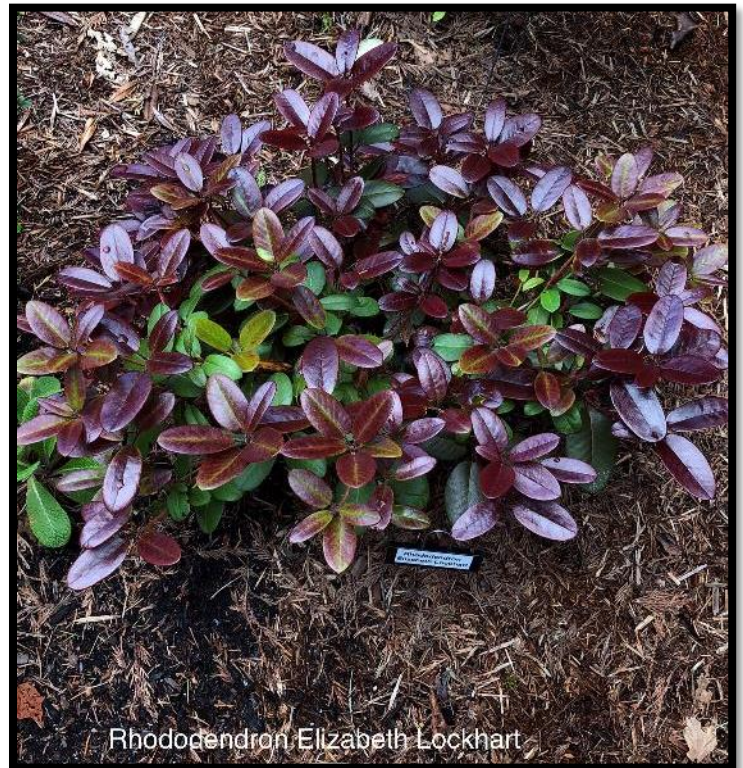
The first photo is of my current young plant, the second is my plant in Ontario, and the last, is a photo from the internet showing the flower.

Foliage by Ron Sutton

(Another reason we grow rhododendrons...)

When it comes to flowers, rhododendrons have few equals in the plant world, but they, with some exceptions, only produce them once a year, and only for a short time. The foliage however, is around all year and some have great aesthetic appeal. Their leaves come in various sizes, shapes and colours to add year-round interest to our gardens. Then there is the well-known indumentum or tomentum that some are famous for.

The following photos taken from our garden and Chris's, are just some of the fine foliage examples.







Present **PAUL SPRIGGS**



To give 2 presentations:
**Island Alpine: the Mountain Flora in Our Own Backyard, &
Favourites for the Crevice Garden**



**At Nanoose Place,
2925 NW Bay Road, Nanoose
in Multipurpose Room # 1**

**Monday, September 12, 2022,
12:30-3:30 p.m.
(doors open 12:15),**

**\$5 at door includes entry in plant draw &
coffee/tea & goodies.**

Paul Spriggs has been rock gardening c. 23 years & building crevice gardens c. 16 years. An avid plant explorer, photographer, mountaineer, owner of Spriggs Gardens Landscaping company, and past President of the Vancouver Island Rock and Alpine Garden Society, Paul has a passion for all wild plants especially those of dwarf stature & collects & cultivates them at various gardens in his hometown of Victoria. Paul learned the craft of crevice garden building directly from one of its innovators, Zdenek Zvalonek, of the Czech Republic, & in the past 10 ½ years, has built many gardens at public parks & private homes that range in size from small feature troughs, to large installations involving many tonnes of stone. Paul is passionate about spreading the word of this style, through speaking to garden clubs all over the west, & by giving workshops for those keen on learning the finer points of this developing art form. He & co-author Kenton Seth have just published The Crevice Garden, the first North American book on Crevice gardening.



*Info? Valerie: 250-937-7143 or
Melanson.valerie@gmail.com*

September Gardening Calendar by Rosina T. Schmidt

Mason Bees – collect nests and harvest cocoons. Clean the nests and cocoons. Store cocoons.

Annuals – replace with fall-blooming perennials, asters, mums, and pansies.

Vegetable garden – plant fall rye as a cover crop in the harvested areas. Plant garlic incorporating composted manure.

Lawn – repair and overseed; fertilize with the Fall & Winter Lawn Food.

Rhododendrons – keep watering as needed. Plant trees and shrubs using Shrub Growth Supplement.

Spring flowering bulbs are now available.



*Looking forward to seeing you
all at our 30th Anniversary and
AGM on Saturday, September
10th!!! 😊*

