



The Rhodomentum

Nanaimo Rhododendron Society Newsletter



January 2023



President's Message

Dear NRS members,

What a wonderful Christmas Potluck we had on December 8th! There was an assortment of good dinner food and desserts provided by the estimated 30 attending members. A turkey provided by the club was perfectly prepared by the Lightburns. Dick Beamish provided home made, professional looking chocolates. There was quite an assortment of interesting plants and gifts provided by the club and its members. Some were won in silent auction, others by active competitive bidding. Megan Francis, Deborah's daughter, celebrated her birthday that day, and was in attendance, so everyone acknowledged it by singing Happy Birthday to her.

Special Thanks to:

David and Joyce Mitchell, who dressed as Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus, dispensed treats and handled the auction - a big sincere thank you for doing this.

Jan Moles, who prepared photo labels for donated plants and kept track of the auction sales

Liz Higgins & Sandra Dorman, who helped Jan with the auction sales

Val Harvey, who did a superb job organizing the raffle.

Chris Southwick, who "MC'd" the event and helped prepare the tables, decorations and setup the silent and Dutch auctions.

Deborah Francis, who prepared the punch and helped prepare the tables, decorations and setup the silent auction.

VIU, and Christine Quist, who donated a number of potted poinsettias.

Rosina, for taking photos of our event and posting them on the website.

The attending Members, for the donated plants and gifts, and the delicious food you brought. Also, for purchasing the items and donating to the Loaves and Fishes charity. But mainly, for just being there, to help make it a joyous evening all around.

Our next regular meeting on January 12 will feature Linda Derkach who will talk about "**Garden Sense for a Changing Climate**".

Wishing you all a Very Happy New Year!

Ron Sutton

President & Treasurer

OUR EXECUTIVE

President	Ron Sutton	416-951-1373
Vice President	Chris Southwick	390-3415
Past President	Rosina Schmidt	758-7589
Secretary	Deborah Francis	
Treasurer	Ron Sutton	416-951-1373

Directors:

Margaret Cadwaladr	585-6046
Dorothee Kieser	390-4136
Paul Lawry	816-2370
Arthur Lightburn	468-7516
Gaylle McRae	758-7589

COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

Advertising	Margaret Cadwaladr
Library	Ann Beamish / Gaylle McRae
Newsletter	June Bouchard / John Deniseger
Membership	Jan Moles
Program	by Committee
Raffle	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	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

Our next meeting - Thursday, January 12th, at 7:30

Beban Park Social Center

Hotter, Drier, Wetter: Garden Sense for a Changing Climate - with Linda Derkach

Our Program for January: Hotter, Drier, Wetter: Garden Sense for a Changing Climate - with Linda Derkach

Linda will talk about the challenges of climate change, loss of native insects and animals, and what we as gardeners can do in our own gardens to protect the soil, bring back pollinators and help our native flora and fauna.

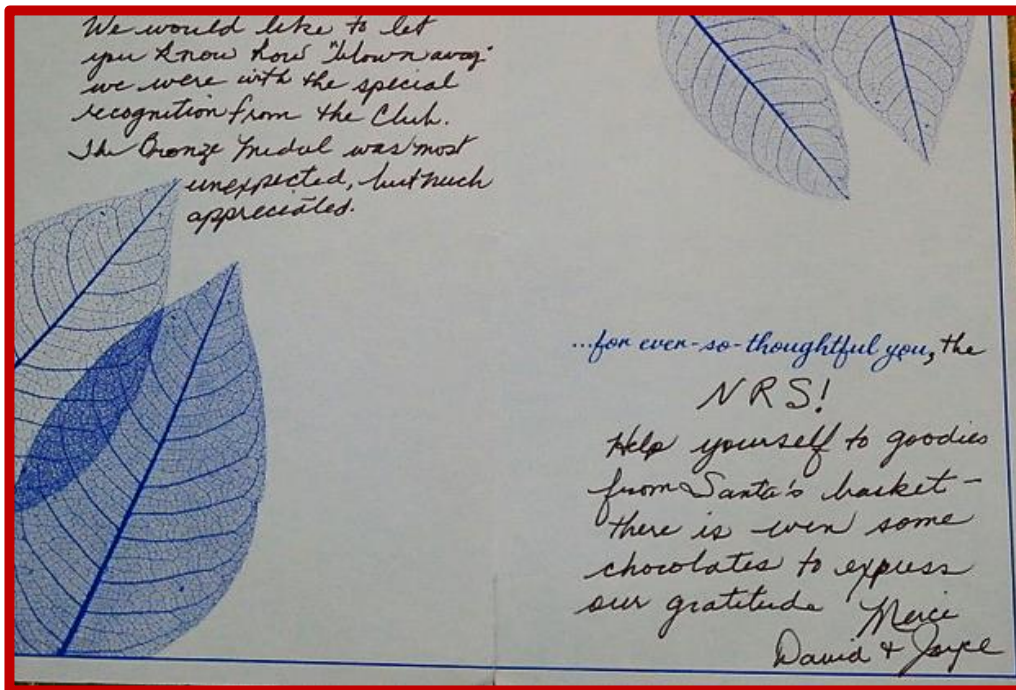
Linda is a long-time member of MARS, a past President and currently newsletter editor. She is an avid alpine gardener, and enjoys research, writing and learning about plants and horticulture. Linda is secretary for the American Rhododendron Society, and very active in the Master Gardeners Association of BC as well as many other garden clubs.



Christmas Potluck and Auction – photos by Rosina Schmidt

It was so nice to see everyone celebrating the season at our December Christmas potluck and auction. The auction was a great success, netting well over \$1200 for the club. In the spirit of the season, we also made a significant contribution of \$357 to Loaves and Fishes. Thank you to everyone who contributed to the success of the evening!





A special note to the NRS from Joyce and David Mitchell



NRS UPCOMING PROGRAM

Our club's program committee (Chris Southwick, Dorothee Kieser, and John Deniseger) have been busy. Working together, they have continued to fill in our calendar with great speakers on interesting topics.

Make sure to mark those dates on your calendar!

Check out the new program entries for March and April!

Date	Speaker	Topic
February 9, 2023	Allison McCabe	Invasive Species in the Vancouver Island Garden – Identification, Management, and Removal
March 9, 2023	Scott Wiskerke	Pruning Rhododendrons
March 18, 2023	Scott Wiskerke – at Chris Southwick's garden	Pruning Demonstration
April 13, 2023	John Deniseger	Why I Grow Rhodos

Twigs and Stems: Calendar of Other Upcoming Events:

Mount Arrowsmith Rhododendron Society: "MARS Member's Slide Show and Iceland Plants and Gardening Techniques" with Glen Jamieson; Qualicum Beach Civic Center, Wednesday, January 11th, 7:30pm

North Island Rhododendron Society: "Three Public Gardens You've Gotta See" with Garth Wedemire; Comox United Church Hall, Tuesday, January 10th, 5:00 pm. Please let them know if you plan on attending.

Victoria Rhododendron Society: "Lilies" with Dr. Colin Tamboline; Glendale Gardens, Thursday, January 5th, 2022, 7:30pm

Cowichan Valley Rhododendron Society: St. John's Anglican Church Hall 486 Jubilee Street, Duncan. Wednesday, February 1st, 7:30 pm

Milner Gardens and Woodland: Closed for January, will reopen in February. Check the Milner website for details: [Milner Garden Events](#)



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

Hailey Rhododendron Grove Work Bee ~ Bowen Park

By Deborah Francis, coordinator

Holly and Ivy in the Hailey Rhododendron Garden, sounds idyllic but it is not.

We need your help to assist in removing invasive species from Hailey Grove at Bowen Park.



The next monthly work bee will be held on **Tuesday, January 10th from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm**. If you can spare a little or a lot of time, all are welcome to spend some time in the rhododendron garden. Weather permitting.



As you can see, there is no shortage of holly and ivy in the Hailey Rhododendron Grove. Together, we can gradually improve things...

Are you having trouble receiving the newsletter via e-mail?

It has come to our attention that NRS members with Shaw e-mail addresses (including ourselves) may be having trouble receiving NRS group e-mails. It is our understanding that a security filtering program for Shaw may be causing delays. We suggest checking your SPAM folder – or you may wish to reach out to Shaw to inquire about filter settings for your account. Remember that the newsletter and general club information is also found on the NRS website at:

<http://nanaimorhodos.ca/>

Mark your Calendar – Seedy Saturday in Qualicum Beach is back on February 4th, 2023.

Check [here](#) for further details!



Rhododendron Revival Research Project - a partnership with VIU Horticulture, Milner Gardens, and the Nanaimo Rhododendron Society by Kurstin Rispin

Happy New Year to the Rhododendron Club Members from Nanaimo, Cowichan, and Mount Arrowsmith Region and members of Milner Gardens and Woodland!

I hope that everyone had a restful holiday season filled with laughter, snow, and holiday treats. I also hope your gardens, no doubt full of curled-up rhododendron leaves, fared ok with all the snow and cold! I am happy to be back to update you all on how our research is going in the Rhododendron Revival Project through Vancouver Island University in partnership with the Nanaimo Rhododendron Society and Milner Gardens and Woodland.

As a recap, our research is focused on figuring out which rhododendron hybrids can be successfully propagated and in this round of cuttings, Denise (Horticulture Coordinator at Milner Gardens) chose, 'Beauty of Littleworth', 'Blue Peter', and, 'Dr.Stocker'. These were chosen because of available plant material and consumer demand, not to mention they are beautiful additions to any garden and hard to find in your typical garden center!

As you may know, we are drawing on the American Rhododendron Society's (ARS) body of research for propagating rhododendrons to guide our care for the cuttings at the Paine Centre. According to the ARS, hybrids are typically easy to propagate but we won't know for sure until we can pull up the cuttings in the new year to get a closer look. So far, our cuttings have been faring well besides a few casualties which are not uncommon at this stage in the propagating process. I am also seeing some buds flushing, and while this is not necessarily a sign of good callousing or rooting, it is exciting in an otherwise slow time for watching rhododendron cuttings!

'Blue Peter' Week 50



Image 1. Mosaic/Mottling on Foliage



Image 2. Dead Cutting

Environmental conditions have been set according to the ARS guidelines and include 21°C bottom heat temperature, ambient heat to heat at 15°C and cool at 20°C, and a, eight-second pulse of water from the mister each hour to keep up humidity within the mist tent. These consistent environmental conditions are critical to the health and survival of these cuttings and are monitored weekly by me and the greenhouse staff to ensure we stay on track and have some nicely rooted-out cuttings come the spring.

As for the next in-person update, I will see you at the Nanaimo Rhododendron Society's monthly meeting on January 12th, 2023 for my monthly presentation to share the progress of our Rhododendron Revival Research. Thanks for reading and happy garden planning for 2023!

'Dr. Stocker' Week 50



Image 1. Dry Edge, Leaf Curl and Brown Tipped Foliage



Image 2. Overall Tray Growth (2 dead)



Image 1. Shriveled Stem of Dead Cutting

'Beauty of Littleworth' Week 50



Image 2. Brown Leaf Tips. Overall Health



Image 4. Bud Flush on One Cutting



NRS Propagation Committee report – by Rosina Schmidt

The NRS's 300 plants are doing well. The NRS contributed to repairing the misting system at VIU's Paine Centre. Updated watering list for January available with Rosina.

You may wish to check out the B.C. Council of Garden Clubs January newsletter. It's always full of lots of useful information at [BCCGC newsletter](#)

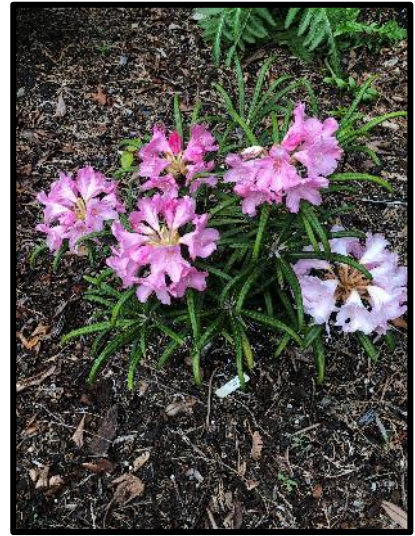


Plant of the Month by Ron Sutton

Rhododendron makinoi

Continuing with rhododendrons that have outstanding foliage, I chose *R. makinoi* for this post. This plant originates from central Honshu Japan, where it is growing on rocky mountain slopes. It belongs to section Ponticum. This rhododendron has very distinctive foliage that makes it easy to identify. The leaves are about six inches long with a downward curve, but less than a half an inch wide. The underside of the leaves are coated in off white indumentum. In early May, it produces medium pink flowers in open trusses of 9-12 flowers. They will fade in full sun to light pink, as this rhododendron can handle full sun. It isn't a fast grower, in ten years it will be only three feet tall, but about five feet wide. It is very hardy and can take temperatures down to -23°C

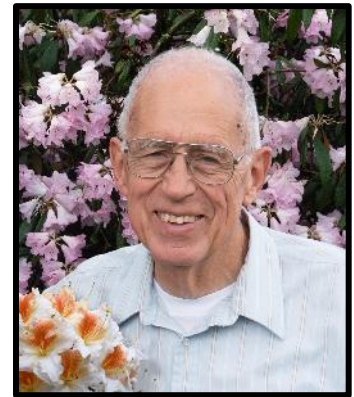
My plant seen here, blooming on May 5th.



Harold Fearing – sad news

by Ron Sutton

Harold Fearing recently died of Covid while recovering from recent surgery. He was 81. Harold was a rhododendron enthusiast who propagated rhododendrons from seeds and cuttings at his nursery in Abbotsford, B.C. He kept very accurate records of his plants, their source and inventory, recording what he sold. He also contributed much over the years to his club, the Fraser South Rhododendron Society, serving most recently as their treasurer. I got to know him through emails and visits to his nursery. He was always so friendly and accommodating with a good sense of humour. His death is a great loss to me and the rhododendron community, as he



was the only Canadian grower and retailer of specie rhododendrons. His website, [Fearing's Farm - Species Rhododendron and Azalea Nursery](http://www.fearingfarm.com) has many good rhododendron and azalea photos in the picture gallery.

I had the pleasure of seeing him near the end of November before he died, and we talked about a future visit, which sadly won't happen.

The second photo is of Harold and I, when Craig Clarke and myself visited his nursery in October 2018. Photo by Craig.

You can see his full obituary at

<https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/abbotsford-bc/harold-fearing-11045981>



Our sincere condolences go to his wife Ginny and their family.

Far Reaches Farm zoom talk – organized by ARS District 1

On Thursday February 23, 2023 7:30pm – the zoom link will be sent out as we get closer to the date

Kelly Dodson and Sue Milliken will give a talk on interesting and rare companion plants for our rhododendron gardens.

Rare Companion Plants at Far Reaches Botanical Conservancy

A look at uncommon to very rare introductions in the FRBC collection which are suitable to accompany Rhododendrons in the woodland garden. Many of these were acquired on joint collecting trips with our good friend, whom you may have heard of, Steve Hootman. Kidding of course! There will be a bit of plant hunting in the wild as well as seeing how these are performing for us in the Far Reaches of Port Townsend, Washington.

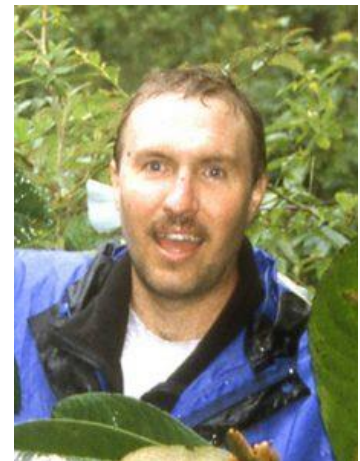
Their bio...

Kelly and Sue have spent their lives learning and working with plants in nurseries, botanic gardens and on plant hunting expeditions. They are owners of Far Reaches Farm whose extensive collection of plants is spectacularly unfocused. The nursery has been featured in magazines such as Pacific Horticulture, Horticulture, Martha Stewart Living and in 2021, mentioned in the New York Times as “arguably the best nursery in the country for cool-climate perennials” and in Gardens Illustrated as “one of the best nurseries in the world.” In addition, they are contributing editors for Fine Gardening magazine. They are also founding directors of Far Reaches Botanical Conservancy, a non-profit whose mission is the acquisition and conservation of vulnerable plants of wild and cultivated origin that are new or rare in North America. Visit them at www.farreachesfarm.com or www.farreachesbotanicalconservancy.org



From the Bellevue Garden Botanical Society: An opportunity to hear Steve Hootman: “Rhododendron Introductions in the Second Golden Age of Plant Hunting”.

Steve Hootman is executive director and curator of the Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden in Federal Way. Steve will show most of the interesting new species that have been introduced over the past forty years and discuss their use in the garden, cultivation tips, and more. Many will be shown growing in their native habitats. This is a hybrid lecture which will be both in person and on-line. The cost is \$15 - to register for the on-line version of the talk please go to : [BGBS Steve Hootman](#)



**Vancouver Island Master Gardeners Association “Spring Education Day”
Vegetable Gardening, the Good, the Bad and the Ugly
Saturday, March 11th at Nanoose Place**

- The day will include a panel of VIMGA Master Gardeners from their four districts who will discuss vegetable gardening (with a Q & A to follow).
- There will also be a presentation from Bonnie Zand. Many of you will remember Bonnie from our “Fall into Gardening” event in October, where she gave an excellent presentation! Bonnie 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 plants in her five-year-old daughter.



Loquat tree (Eriobotrya japonica) by Rosina T. Schmidt (Source [Global Healing](#))



Loquat, a subtropical tree, has a long history as herbal medicine in Japan, and other Asian lands. Even though Loquat’s edible fruit is rich in calcium, vitamin A, iron and potassium, its therapeutic power is contained in the glossy evergreen large leaves. The tea made of loquat leaves has a reputation to promote skin, respiratory and intestinal health. Loquat leaves contain an antioxidant known as B-17 (Amygdalin), as well as linoleic acids and plant sterols that encourage **normal liver functions**. The liver is the first line of defense for eliminating toxins from the body. The tormentic acid of triterpenes in the loquat leaf encourages polysaccharide production – an important component of insulin production. It **promotes normal Blood Sugar**.

There is more to those Loquat leaf tea, like the **support of the respiratory system**. Loquat tea has been used for generations as a remedy for congestion, cough, lung irritation and sensitivity to irritants.

As the loquat leaf has beneficial antioxidants, in the clinical examination of mice with loquat tea extract in 2011, **memory improvements** were observed.

Loquat leaf topical cream is excellent against environmental sensibility **irritated skin**. The tea has also been used to soothe **swollen gums**.

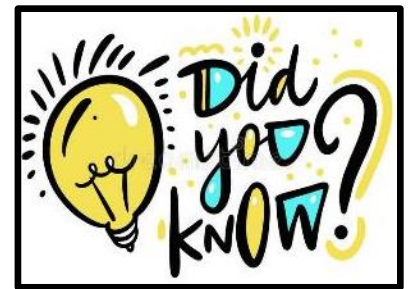


Loquat leaf tea instruction

- To 4 cups of cold water add 2 heaping tablespoons of crushed loquat leaves. (2 large size leaves.)
- Heat to a full, rolling boil.
- Let it simmer for 15 minutes by turning the heat down.
- Turn the heat off and cool down for 10 minutes.
- Strain and serve.

Membership pays!!!

Jan Moles, our membership chair, has been doing some digging (she is a gardener after all 😊!). Did you know that with your valid NRS membership card, you can get various discounts at local businesses such as: Buckerfields, Arrowsmith Greenhouses, Russell Farm Market & Garden Centre. Your NRS membership will also get you a discount on a membership at Milner which in turn gives you a discount at the Milner nursery. Watch this space in future newsletters as Jan will be updating it monthly.





Looking forward to seeing you all at our January meeting!