

# The Victoria Rhododendron Society Newsletter



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**Monday, May 7th, 7:30 p.m.**

## 'Glen Jamieson

**The history of exploring for plants in China, and the changes that have happened in rural China over the past 100 years**

Glen has a B.Sc. in Agriculture, McGill University, but obtained his Doctorate at UBC and has been a research scientist with Fisheries and Oceans Canada for the past 30 years. He is a keen gardener with an extensive one acre garden, and has traveled widely in both Central and South America and Asia.

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### This Issue:

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### May Refreshments:

**Carolyn and Tony Marquardt, Moe and Johanna**

**Massa, Murray and Peggy Matheson, Bruce and**

**Anne Maycock, Bill McCarter and Julia**

**McCartney** are asked to bring delicacies for the

members.. Please phone **Theresa** at 478-3515 to

confirm contributions and willingness to help behind the

counter. Thank you kindly!

Remember our website is **victoriarhodo.ca** Newsletter pictures are in colour and the newsletter is in HTML so it is easy to read! Thank you Arthur and Pat.



photo :Margaret deWeese

## **Frogs as Companions for Rhododendrons by David Sellars**

from ROOTSTALK by Indumentum FSRS

Visitors to our garden have often commented on the lack of rhododendron leaf weevil damage and asked what our secret was. The only explanation I could think of was that we put a lot of effort into planting, watering and fertilizing and that healthy plants are less prone to insect attacks. We are also careful not to plant under evergreens that create the dry conditions that weevils like so much and we provide extra water, even during wet spells in the Spring, for plants that are partly sheltered by evergreens. But that still did not explain why a Scarlet Wonder, reportedly prone to weevil attacks, planted in clay among boulders half way up the rock garden has never had a piece chewed out of a single leaf.

A couple of years ago I planted out some cuttings of *R. globigerum*, *R. nakotiltum* and *R. taliense* under a cherry tree on the east side of the garden in a new rhodo nursery bed. Within a few months these plants were so damaged by weevils I thought they were not going to survive. I blamed the dry conditions under the cherry, which has shallow roots. I moved the plants over to the west side of the garden and they flourished.

That year was a particularly wet Spring, but we did not have too many slugs because they had provided food for the frog population explosion from our three ponds on the west side of the garden. We used to have a fourth pond on the east side of the garden but I had filled it in as part of creating the rhododendron nursery. The correlation was too strong to ignore. No ponds, and therefore no frogs, on the east side had resulted in weevil damage. There was no weevil damage on the west side of the garden where most of the rhododendrons are and where there are also

ponds and frogs.

So I looked up weevils and frogs on the internet and found the RHS Advice page where, after picking off the weevils by torchlight and trapping them with sticky barriers, they recommend encouraging natural predators such as birds, frogs, toads, shrews and hedgehogs. Well we can't do too much about encouraging hedgehogs but filling your garden with frogs is easy. Just build a pond and they will come.

We also have many Rufous-sided Towhees, ground-feeding birds that love scratching about in the mulch under bushes where weevils hide. They like a bit more cover than rhododendrons provide, so planting some other bushier shrubs among the rhodos is probably a good idea to keep them happy.

So there you have it. No prowling about the garden in your nightie with a flashlight, squishing weevils between your thumb and finger. Just sit back and let those frogs and Towhees do all the work for you.

## GARDEN VISITS

**Thursday, April 19 from 6:00-8:00p.m.**

**THE MCMILLAN GARDEN.. 562 HALLSOR DRIVE**

Our garden is on a normal city lot, so space is a factor. We have three raised beds, two with shade covers because shade is minimal on most of our lot. The front area features heathers, designed to 'sweep through the seasons'. Six of the other beds are rhododendron-centric but companion plants add year-round interest. One bed with Berberis, a Pin Oak, a pogonanthum rhododendron and other drought tolerant plants is kept very dry. Magnolias, Smoke Bush, Pieris, lilies, roses - a range of other plants have found a place in our garden. It is a work in progress and the lawn area shrinks each year.

**Directions:** Coming from town, take Hwy.1 to the Colwood/View Royal (exit 10) exit. Continue on Sooke Road to Ridley Drive. (Colwood Pentecostal Church is on the right.) Turn left on Ridley Drive for one block. Turn right on Jenner for one block and we are right on the corner at 562 Hallsor Drive. If all else fails, call 478-3515.

**Wednesday, April 25 from 6:00-8:00p.m.**

**THE MORRISON GARDEN 2150 FERNDALE ROAD**

After more than thirty years, we are still changing our garden. We have collected mostly species rhododendrons, but, as there are no hard rules, we have hybrids too! We have many companion plants, including hellebores, cyclamens, hostas, ferns, magnolias and cornus...and a rapidly disappearing perennial bed. Basically our garden is a collection of plants we like, arranged so we get maximum pleasure out of our space! But kids grow, plants and trees die and freezes happen HELP!!...we're always reworking the garden. Come and enjoy a walk through!

**Saturday, May 5 from 1:00 to 3:00p.m.**

**THE PEET GARDEN 8600 Klee Wyck**

The garden created by the late Joan and Bob Peet is situated in North Saanich on a steep wooded slope. It is on the waterfront and has a seasonal creek running through. This mature garden features rhododendrons, camellias, Japanese maples and dogwoods under a canopy of big-leaf maples, arbutus, fir and cedar trees.

**Directions:** 8600 Klee Wyck Road is off West Saanich Road, on the ocean side, about halfway between Mount Newton X Road and McTavish Road. If you are coming from town, it is just past Peninsula Nursery. Please park on Klee Wyck Road and walk down the steep driveway.

**Saturday May 5 from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.**

**THE TRELAWNY GARDEN**

John and Ruth were a great team and when John passed away in December Ruth was determined to keep the garden as it has always been, open to those who truly love gardens. This is such a special garden, situated on an acre of hillside above Deep Cove. It is mainly a rhododendron garden with wonderful specimen trees, now reaching great heights. Dappled shade and interesting crisscross paths take the visitor on a journey through this lovely woodland garden. 11388 Chalet Road, North Saanich. Please park at the top and walk down the steep driveway.

**Sunday May 6 from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.**

**THE DANCER GARDEN 3950 Sherwood Road**

Ours is a very young garden as when we bought the property, it needed lots of work. Every variety of weed that could possibly grow in Victoria had found a home in this garden. We started by removing and clearing. You will find that most of our plants are species: rhododendrons, ferns, magnolias, peonies, as we think they are important to grow. I once read that it takes eight years before a garden begins to develop. We think that by the end of eight years, the bones of this garden should be established.

**Sunday, May 6 from 2.00 to 4:00 p.m.**

**THE LYNN GARDEN 3913 Woodhaven Terrace**

Our garden has many rhododendrons, but you will also find many companion trees and shrubs under-planted with spring bulbs. Our aim is to have a low maintenance garden with year-round interest. Included are many native plants, most adapted to handling our very dry summers. Additional summer interest is added with annuals planted in pots on the patios. As well, there are a number of "small treasures" we keep in pots.

**Saturday, May 12 from 12:00 to 2:00 p.m.**

**THE JOHNSON GARDEN 635 Lost Lake Road**

We are situated on Teanook Lake and built our own log house in 1975 through 1981. We inherited a number of rhododendrons from my wife's father, Dr. T.M.C. Taylor, who lived on the other side of the lake. Since that time we have collected a number of rhododendrons. Last year we had a pond and waterfall installed in what we call the Rhododendron Dell, adding several new rhododendrons. The garden is very much rhododendrons established amongst the native vegetation.

**Directions:** Coming from town, take Hwy. 1 to the Langford/Highlands (exit 14), taking the Highlands option. Continue on Millstream Road until you come to Lost Lake Road. Turn right and continue on Lost Lake Road to 635. If all else fails, call 474-1349.

**Apologia:**

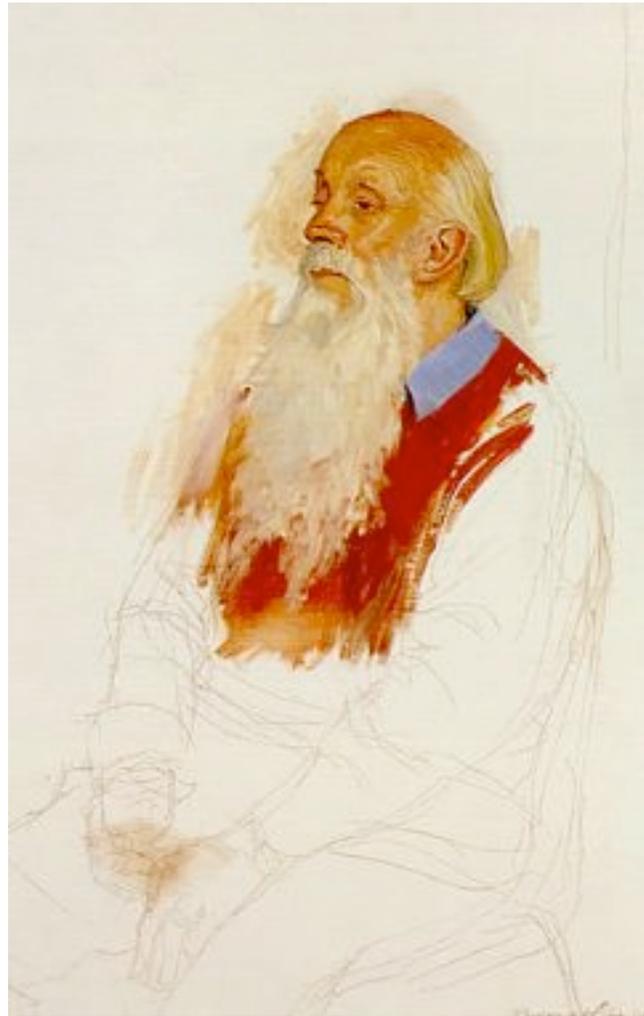
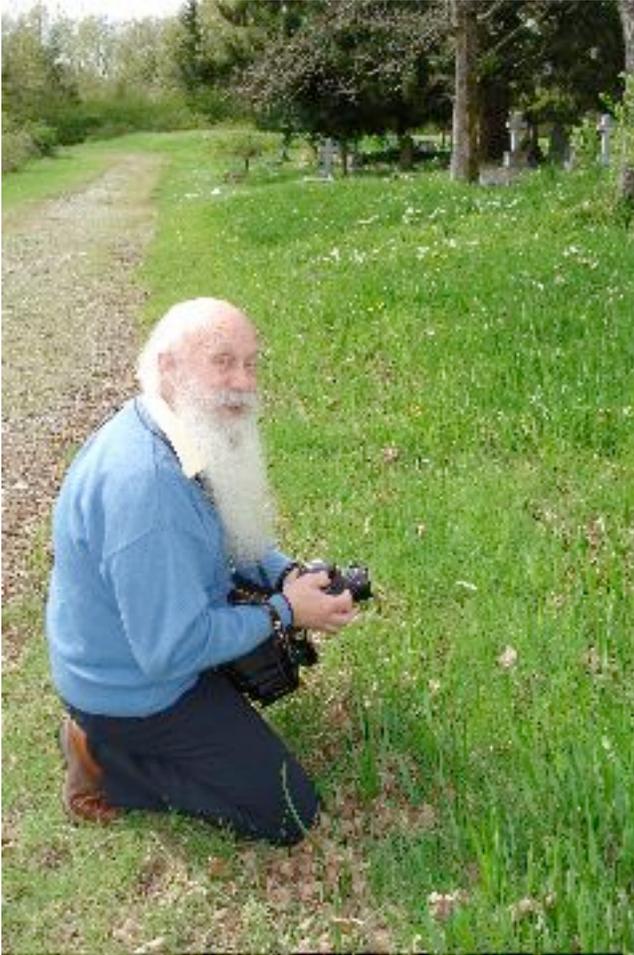
VRS trophy photos last month were taken by **Jason Jones**

Comments from a new member

A **Help Column** would be useful. So, if you have questions please send them in to the newsletter and we'll try to answer them for you and others who may be experiencing the same problem.

Great idea Marty!

 **Please look out something "garden related" for the Show Raffle and bring to the set up or on the 28th. Thank you from Margaret**



painting of **Mike Snowden** by **Raymond Piper**

We were treated to a vision of Rowallane garden in Northern Ireland of the Rev. Moore and his nephew, Mr. Armitage Moore's by the recently retired Head Gardener, Mike Snowden, BEM. AHRHS.

In a special book I have by J.G. Millais, he wrote: "There is a letter from Mr. Armitage Moore who has a good garden under the Mourne Mountains in Co. Down at Rowallane, Saintfield:

"The whole place is a sort of natural rock-garden on a very generous scale. The soil is mainly a good friable loam free from lime, well drained and reasonably undulating the ground well laid out and furnished with suitable timber. During the last fifteen years I have done a considerable amount of planting of conifers, and ornamental trees and shrubs. I have also made a rock-garden which competent critics think well of. My head man has been with me all this time and I will only say of him now that I have seldom met a better propagator or more skilled cultivator. We have always been keen about Rhododendrons, and we began growing some Himalayans from seed some ten or eleven years ago, mainly arboreum, Griffithianum, companulatum, Falconeri. camplocarpum, Thomsoni, etc. Since then we have made steady progress, and of late I have been endeavouring to form as complete a collection as possible of the newer Wilson and Forrest introductions. In this I have been assisted by both Kew and Glasnevin, and a moderate capacity to purchase new plants wherever I could obtain them but it is difficult as an outsider to get hold of the these latest and best introductions...."

and then Mr. Armitage Moore goes on to give a complete list of the selection of species growing at Rowallane, Saintfield, June 1918. One has to remember the difficulties of obtaining plants during the First World War and the

attitudes of the establishment of the English toward the Irish!

Mike Snowden, who has so ably followed in the footsteps of the Head Gardener glowingly reported on by Mr. Hugh Armitage Moore, spoke about the ice age glacial deposits which left Ireland striated, boulder-strewn and undulating. Mike explained that the Rev. Moore had incorporated the natural landscape by planted sheltering trees. They later shielded rhododendrons, magnolias and many other specimen plants collected and planted by his nephew during that golden age of plant expeditions to Asia. Today the fifty -two- acre garden under the direction of the National Trust astounds visitors: the moist temperate climate and expert care have created a rhododendron paradise where individual plants grow to forty feet. Mowed grass paths lead from area to area. the walled garden in which the Reverend J. Moore produced fruits and vegetables was later used by his nephew, Hugh Armitage Moore, for propagating material which eventually went out into all areas of the garden. It is now purely ornamental. Other areas are the hospital, the paddock, old and home wood and also the spring ground which contains Wilson's best fifty azaleas. Mike reintroduced meadows where wild orchids and other native flowers flourish. he had a small staff of four, and together they managed the hustle and bustle of a famous garden open to the public. The main house is now the Regional office of the National Trust. There is a fine balance to maintaining the spirit of the garden and overseeing the economics of running such a place. It is truly a garden for all seasons, as evidenced by his slides. Mike has promised us an article for a future newsletter.

Margaret deWeese

And to **Don and Joyce Whittle** who hosted the Snowdens, to **Carol Dancer** who showed them Government House Gardens, to **Keiko Alkire** and **Valerie Murray** who showed them the Abkhazi Garden and all those who welcomed them to their gardens, a HUGE thank-you from the club and the Speaker chairperson!



**R. 'Cowichan'**

photo by Margaret deWeese

Would people be interested in a tour in the Fall to the Cowichan Valley? We'll visit one or two gardens and stop at the Cherry Point vineyards, run by the Cowichan Tribes, to have a tasty tour of their award winning wines and. Possibly we may meet up with our sister club, the Cowichan Valley Rhododendron Society, Please let us know if you are interested.

## AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

### Rhododendron of the Year Committee

To all ARS District 1, 2, & 3 Chapter Presidents,

It is time to choose the 2010 Rhododendron of the Year (ROY). I am contacting each Chapter President and suggesting you assign to one of your members the job of soliciting candidate rhododendrons for 2010 Rhododendron of the Year.

If you are a new Chapter President you may not know about the ROY program or why we ask for candidates 3 years in advance. Let me give you a brief explanation.

The ROY Program was set up to establish the best rhododendron performer in each of the geographical regions. It has become obvious that rhododendrons do not perform equally well in different regions. Climates, soil conditions, even insect populations affect how rhododendrons perform.

The reason for establishing the ROY 3 years in advance is to allow growers and nurseries to propagate and have the winning candidate rhododendrons available when they are announced as "Rhododendrons of the Year."

Each Chapter has designated rhododendrons that are Proven Performers in their area. From that list, they should select the best performer in each of the categories, (Elepidote, Lepidote, deciduous azalea, and evergreen azalea). It is best to have all members vote for his or her choice, and you provide me with the total count for each candidate. I will then mesh your results with the count from the other Chapters to determine the ROY for our region.

You must select candidates that have not been the ROY in previous years, Following is a list of previous winners:

Year	Elepidote	Lepidote	deciduous azalea	evergreen azalea
2002	Ken Janeck,	Ginny Gee,	R schleppenbachii,	Hino Crimson
2003	Taurus	PJM	Homebush	Purple Splendour
2004	Percy Wiseman	Dora Amateis	Arneson's Gem	Fascination
2005	Horizon Monarch	Ramapo	Nifty Fifty	Hilda Niblett
2006	Pt. Defiance	Wee Bee	Washington Centennial	Silver Sword
2007	Nancy Evans	Blaney's Blue	Cecile	Mitsuki
2008	Marie Starks	Vibrant Violet	Yukon	Girard's Fuchsia
2009	Fantastica	R. augustinii	R. occidentalii	Komo Kulshan

I will need your results by May 1 2007. I will merge your votes with the votes from the other Chapters to make the final selection.

**You can put your vote on our website [victoriarhodo.ca](http://victoriarhodo.ca)**

**Please fill in YOUR four selections. It is rhododendron homework!!! Ypu can also write down your four on paper and submit to Bill McMillan before May 1sr.**

Please print the following poster and stick it on your car window, or on a convenient but visible pole to help advertise our Show and Sale. There are many competing garden events on April 28th!

**VICTORIA RHODODENDRON SOCIETY**  
**SATURDAY**  
**APRIL 28, 2007**



**Sale Opens**

**10:30 am**

**Show**

**11:00 am**  
**to 4:00 pm**

**Rhododendrons**  
And  
**Companion Plants**

**SHOW & SALE**

**CADBORO BAY UNITED CHURCH**  
**2625 ARBUTUS RD.**