

# VICTORIA RHODODENDRON SOCIETY NEWSLETTER MAY 2023

## VICTORIA RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

Our purpose is to promote  
and educate  
the public about  
the genus  
RHODODENDRON

We meet at the Couvelier Center  
On the grounds of the HCP Gardens  
505 Quayle street  
Victoria, B. C

For further information  
[www.victoriarhodo.ca](http://www.victoriarhodo.ca)



Meetings are held on the first  
Thursday of each month  
September through May  
beginning at 7:30 pm. with a  
social gathering after





## PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

What an April! It came with a real bag of mixed weather-unseasonably low temperatures and windy days and nights. Many gardens are about three weeks behind their normal blooming time. Recently I was out visiting at Finnerty Gardens and *Rhododendron macabeaenum* was just breaking bud. I have never seen it be so late for blooming. It looks like mid-May will be maximum flowering time this year. Our typical best time for maximum blooming is usually late April. I have many tender tuberous begonias and other tender plants that can not be hardened off because of possible frost.

Many nights are going down to the 2-3 C range. My *Lewisia* seeds, sowed in azalea pots two months ago are outside, and are just starting to come up. The seedling rhododendrons in community pots are now showing shoot development. They have received 3 shots of fertilizer since the end of March.

The only benefit to this cool weather is the extension of the daffodil bloom. We will be waiting a bit longer than normal to see the rhododendron peak flowering season. At the Norm Todd Propagation Center, the Wednesday crew has completed the roof over part of the complex to protect the soil pots and carts. It also provides a covered area for repotting when needed. As a reminder we need about 4 hundred cuttings rooted every year to grow on. Anyone wanting to help with this area of our Society and wants to do some propagating, contact any Board member. The Balcony and Container Project at HCP now has a gravel base and the paving block should be arriving shortly.

The Jim Barlup Legacy Garden will be expanding this fall with new plantings. The "Paired Goose" bronze sculpture is scheduled for delivery on May 2 and should be in place some time this summer. We are inviting members to come to view the garden on May 18 at 6:30 pm. There is a large parking lot located past the garden and one will walk through the newly planted cherry trees donated by the Takata Family in honor of their history with the park.

There are open gardens scheduled for the month of May. On Thursday, May 3, Bill and Betty are inviting you to see their mature rhododendron garden. On Saturday morning, May 6, Stephen and Marjorie are inviting you to see their garden that has been developing since 2010. On Sunday, May 7, Johanna, and Brenda and Sean and Brenda have combined to open their gardens for viewing. Wednesday, May 10, Ian and Anne are offering an invitation to view their forested garden. On May, 20, Jack McNeill is opening his garden for our viewing. With this wonderful opportunity to see how others have incorporated our beloved rhododendrons into their gardens, it is always a delightful and learning experience. We always learn something new and look at our own gardens to see if there is something new we can incorporate from what we have learned.

For our latest information on truss categories, rules of entry, etc. Please look carefully at this month's newsletter.

**ENJOY THE L-A-A-A-ATE SPRING BLOOMS!**

# OUR APRIL SPEAKER ... NORMA SENN AN ARMCHAIR VISIT TO IRISH GARDENS

We were fortunate to have a grand tour of Irish gardens in less than an hour, as Norma captured the essence of important Irish gardens for our viewing pleasure. With a sincere thank you to Nadine Minkler, here are some highlights for you to remember.



**BLARNEY CASTLE**



**JUNE BLAKE'S GARDEN**



**PATRICIA BLAKE'S HOUSE  
AND GARDEN**



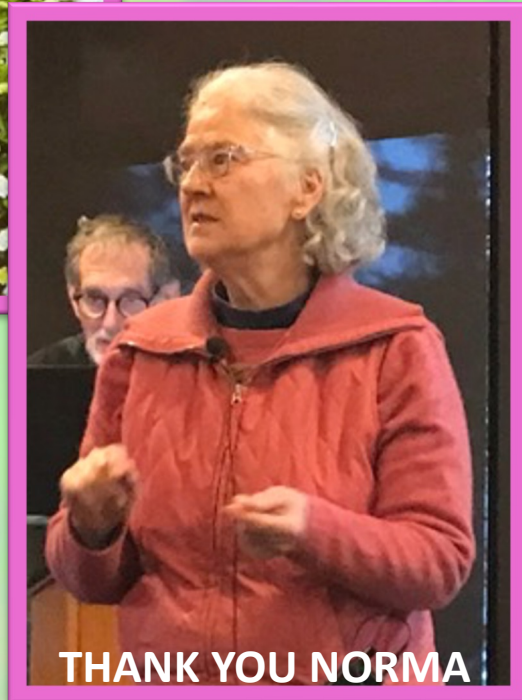
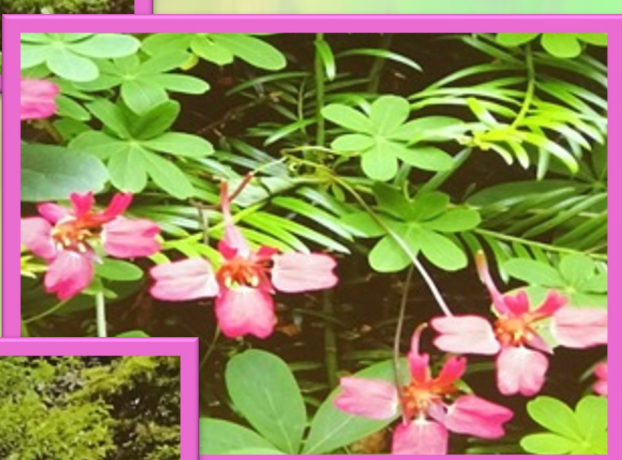
**TRITON LAKE**



**WALLED FRUIT  
AND VEGETABLE GARDEN**



**HUNTING BROOK  
GARDEN  
JIMI BLAKE'S HOME**



THANK YOU NORMA

# DON'T BUG ME! BUT...

IF THEY DO ... HERE IS A NATURAL DIY BUG SPRAY TO REPEL MOSQUITOS  
AND OTHER ANNOYING INSECTS

ADAPTED FROM LIVE SIMPLY



Natural bug repellents work by using scents that deter mosquitos, flies, gnats, ticks, and lice away from the skin. These options are not as powerful or long-lasting as picaridin (DEET), but they can be a great alternative if one wants to use natural ingredients.

To make homemade bug repellent, add the essential oil to a spray bottle along with witch hazel or high-proof vodka. Then add oil, (olive oil, jojoba oil) vegetable glycerin, or aloe vera gel. In under two minutes you will have an easy and affordable DIY bug spray.

## RECIPE

**1/2 cup of witch Hazel or High-Proof vodka**

**1 tablespoon of Olive Oil, Liquid Coconut Oil, Jojoba Oil or Vegetable Glycerin**

**72 drops of essential oils ( Citronella, Grapefruit, Lavender, Rosalina, Patchouli )**

**4 ounce Spray Bottle**

**This recipe is safe for children as well**

There is some evidence that pure vanilla extract ½ half tsp. (vanilla beans and alcohol) can be added to this recipe

# DON'T "BUG" MY RHODODENDRONS ... OR ELSE JUST KNOW WE HAVE YOU IN OUR SITES

Adapted from the Government of British Columbia  
HOME AND GARDEN PEST MANAGEMENT

## INSECTS:

### Root and Vine Weevil

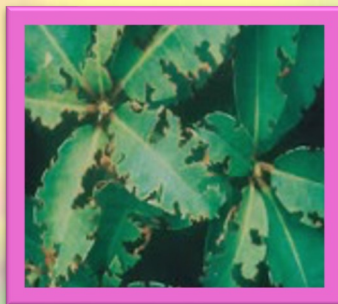
Weevil adults are primarily active at night, and attack many types of woody plants, including rhododendrons. The snout-nosed beetles feed on the edges of leaves giving them a notched appearance. Weevil larvae or grubs feed on roots, crowns and underground stems, seriously weakening or killing roots and causing gradual decline and sometimes death of plants.

Some limited management is possible by placing short pieces of board or cardboard among the plants. Weevils hide under these and can be collected and destroyed. Beneficial nematodes can be purchased and applied to soil to suppress weevil larva in late summer and fall. It is common knowledge that many rhododendron lovers water around each plant with a solution of 1 cup of Lysol to a watering can of water in early spring, as this will eliminate the larvae.

### Andromeda Lacebug

Andromeda lace bug nymphs are 1/8" long when they hatch in the late spring. They resemble dark specks and cover the undersides of leaves with brown droplets of excrement. Their damage is also apparent on leaf surfaces. They suck cell sap which stipples the leaves with creamy-white or grayish dots. Adults are square shaped bugs, 3/16 "or less, with elaborately reticulated wings resembling lacework.

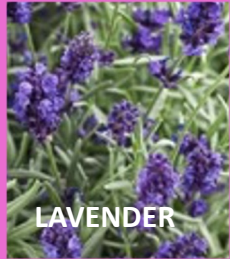
It is important to identify this problem early as lace bugs have several generations over the growing season. The damage to the leaves remains visible even after the pests have been eliminated. Spray affected foliage, top and undersides with a pyrethroid insecticide



# 10 MOSQUITO REPELLENT PLANTS

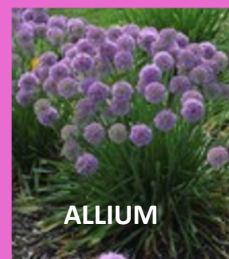
Adapted from Garden Design

**What are the best plants to keep mosquitos away? These plants make a colorful and fragrant display; plus their ability to keep uninvited bugs out if you do not want to douse yourself or garden with chemical bug sprays, plant these in an area where guests will often be sitting.**



LAVENDER

Animals never seem to touch these plants. It is because of their lovely fragrance which is found in the leaves of the plant. Tough and resistant, it needs full sun and good drainage.



ALLIUM

These bulbs, which include garlic and onions, release a strong fragrance that mosquitos do not like. These powerful ornamental onions. They are perfect "tuck in " plants and return reliably year after year.



MARIGOLD

This annual emits a smell that deters mosquitos. Grow them in pots and place them outdoors where one is entertaining. They also dissuade aphids, thrips and whiteflies.



BEE BALM

If you want to attract good bugs like bees and butterflies, and deter bad ones, bee balm or monarda is a perfect plant. Its leaves contain fragrant oils when crushed and comes in shades of red, pink, lavender, white and purple.



LEMON GRASS

Known for its distinct smell, lemon grass is the most commonly used natural ingredient in mosquito repellents. In our climate it should be planted in containers as it is not winter hardy. Grow as an annual in our climate.



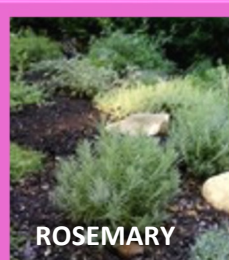
CITRONELLA

Citronella or scented geranium is another popular mosquito-repelling plant. The strong fragrance keeps several types of pests away. These easy-care perennials bloom from spring until fall.



CATMINT

Catmint is an amazing mosquito repellent if you are willing to forgo this plant's willingness to spread into other areas of the garden. However, it will do well in pots and has shown to be 10 more times more effective than DEET.



ROSEMARY

Rosemary with its woody scent is exactly what keeps mosquitos as well as cabbage moths and carrot flies away. While the pests stay away, one can enjoy this herb's scent and also using it in your cooking.



AGERATUM

This attractive annual (also known as floss flower) makes great bedding and container plants. It contains coumarin, a chemical that repels mosquitos. However, it is toxic if ingested by pets or humans.



SAGE

This plant is a must for gathering around the fire pit. Toss some into the flames and the earthy smell will ward off bugs. If dried, it can be used to make a homemade bug spray.

# PHOTOGRAPHS OF FUNGAL DISEASES ON RHODODENDRONS

We know about you as well



**BUD BLAST**

A fungal disease associated with leaf hoppers



**POWDERY MILDEW**

A fungal infection called *Microsphaera Azalea*



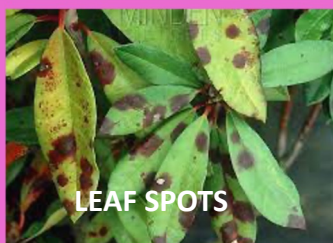
**PETAL BLIGHT**

A fungal infection called *Ovulinia Azalea*



**LEAF GALL**

A fungal disease called *Exobasidium*



**LEAF SPOTS**

A fungal disease called *Cercospora Leaf Spot*



**ROOT ROT**

Several species of *Phytophthora*: *P. connamoni*, *citricola*, *cactorum*



**WINTER INJURY**

Caused by excessive drying



**RUST FUNGUS**

Caused by the fungus *Pucciniastrum*



**HONEY FUNGUS**

Caused by several species of *Amillaria*



**STEM DIEBACK**

Caused by the fungus *Botryosphaeria*



**SUDDEN OAK DEATH**

Caused by fungus *Phytophthora ramorum*

Powder Mildew, Rust, Black Spot, Leaf Spot, Aphids, Lace Bugs, Leafhoppers, Thrips, Whiteflies





## INVITING DRAGONFLIES INTO YOUR GARDEN

*Adapted from H&TV*

Dragonflies are the top predators in the insect world. They keep a balance with the insects in your garden. One of the insects they love is the mosquito. Mosquito-munching dragonflies are carnivorous and will eat just about any small insect. All that munching gives them enough energy to fly at speeds up to 30 mph.

Attracting dragonfly delicacies in the landscape is easy. Just plant a diverse landscape of trees and shrubs around the perimeter of your yard to provide hiding places for young dragonflies. Then add a variety of blooming plants.

Another guide for attracting dragonflies is to just add water. It can be as basic as a barrel full of water, or as borrowed as a neighbour's pond. These winged-wonders spend a good portion of their lives near water. As larvae, they can spend two months to several years living under water. They then emerge and become flying adults.

A garden pond, big or small is an ideal attraction for inviting dragon flies into your garden. Rocks around the water give them hiding places for larvae during the insect's underwater growth stage. Cattails or grassy foliage allow passage for larvae out of the pond.

Ponds can be a bevy of activity, and dragonflies love to watch the action. This is an easy task for them as their eyes have 30,000 lenses with up to a 360-degree vision. As mosquitos also love water, a gardener can have the best of both worlds, as the dragonfly diet is more than 90% people-pestering mosquitos.



## AN UPDATE ON THE BARLUP LEGACY GARDEN

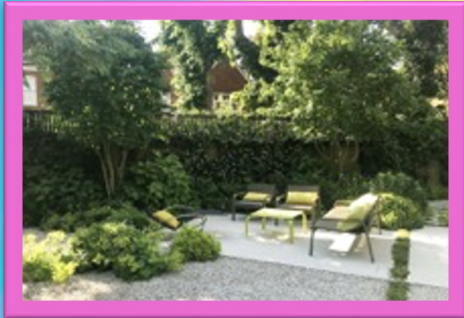


The “Paired Geese” bronze gift from Mike Peterson in honor of Jim and Judy Barlup will be arriving on May 2, 2023, kindness of Glenna Trout and John Bishop. Mike is a long-time friend of Jim and Judy. Glenna and John are also long-time friends of Jim and Judy, and they have kindly offered the costs of delivery of the statue as their gift toward the Barlup Legacy Garden. Calvin will take delivery of the statue and take them to the garden so they can see first-hand what our group has done to honor the gifts that Jim has left to the Victoria Rhododendron Society. Kindness can be displayed in many different forms.



# GARDEN DESIGN TRENDS FOR 2023

ADAPTED FROM HOUSE BEAUTIFUL FEBRUARY 2023



A return to sustainable and eco-friendly gardens, not as a style trend, but rather to the core. The design is to reflect the interplay between managed forms and nature, creating an environmentally healthy garden.



The newest thinking is a focus on mulches. Dressing the surface on planting areas to keep moisture in and competing weeds out so that the planting schemes are more resilient to the changing climate. Using recycled materials such as crushed concrete is gaining popularity and is environmentally friendly. In some areas, nut shells and fruit pits are gaining popularity as garden mulches.



Gravel gardens and hard landscaping are becoming more popular, along with the trend to more drought-tolerant plants. It allows for less maintenance and is environmentally friendly. The use of hard landscaping is a trend that is becoming a necessary element as the environment becomes hotter and drier.



Another trend that is gaining popularity is moving toward eco-friendly gardens. Using companion friendly planting, choosing resilient varieties of plants, improving soil health, adding native plants, planting nectar rich flowers and using natural pest control will improve the garden and add to the garden becoming more healthy and environmentally friendly.

THIS IS IT... IT IS WHAT WE HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR SINCE LAST MAY

# OUR ANNUAL TRUSS SHOW

*"THERE'S NO BUSINESS LIKE SHOW BUSINESS"*

## CATEGORIES

1. RED TRUSS
2. ORANGE TRUSS
3. YELLOW TRUSS
4. WHITE LARGE TRUSS
5. WHITE SMALL TRUSS
6. LAVENDER/PURPLE TRUSS
7. PINK LARGE TRUSS
8. PINK SMALL TRUSS
9. LARGE BLOTCHED TRUSS
10. SPECKLED TRUSS
11. PENDULOUS TRUSS
12. CREAM TRUSS
13. SPRAY
14. INDUMENTUM LEAF
15. WEEVIL-NOTCHED LEAF
16. COMPANION PLANT
17. HAMMERHEAD TRUSS
18. NOVICE ENTRY
19. SCENTED TRUSS
20. COMPANION PLANT
21. POTTED RHODODENDRON

## DEFINITIONS

1. "SMALL" is under 6 inches
2. "LARGE" is over 6 inches
3. "BLOTCH" has a solid color mark on the upper lobe(s), different than the base color of the flower
4. "SPECKLED" has a non-solid color that is different from the base of the flower, dots or sprinkles, either around the entire flower or just on the upper lobe(s)
5. "HAMMERHEAD" is a truss that looks like a single flower but is really two flowers that are jammed together





1. **ONE ENTRY PER CATEGORY**
2. **ENTRIES MUST BE SHOW READY**
3. **NO PREPARATION ON SITE OTHER THAN PLACING TRUSS IN VASE**
4. **ONE ENTRY PER FAMILY IN EACH CATEGORY**
5. **PICK UP AND COMPLETE ENTRY FORM ON ARRIVAL**
6. **PICK UP VOTING BEADS ON ARRIVAL**
7. **PLACE TRUSS IN CORRECT CATEGORY**
8. **FOLD ENTRY CARD TO REMAIN ANONYMOUS**
9. **PLACE VOTING CUP IN FRONT OF YOUR ENTRY**
10. **GRAB A SNACK AND HEAR HOW AL MURRAY POTS UP HIS SEEDLINGS**



OUR ANNUAL YEAR-END PICNIC WILL  
CELEBRATED ONCE  
AGAIN AFTER THE THREE YEARS OF COVID  
CLOSURE

TROPHIES FOR THE TRUSS SHOW WILL BE PRESENTED

OUR ANNUAL PLANT RAFFLE WILL RESUME  
SCHEDULED TIME IS NOON UNTIL 3PM.

MORE INFORMATION IN THE JUNE NEWSLETTER



THE VICTORIA RHODODENDRON SOCIETY IS  
ACTIVE IN ALL COMMUNITIES IN THE GREATER VICTORIA AREA



This area at the corner of Cadboro Bay Road and Beach Drive in Oak Bay was refurbished in 2022 with plants purchased from our members Ken and Madeleine Webb and Tony and Carolyn Marquardt.



**HEAR YE! HEAR YE! HEAR YE!**

**CLUB MEMBERS IN GOOD STANDING ARE INVITED TO  
GET WOOD CHIPS FOR \$10 A LOAD**

**TUESDAY MAY 30 AT 11:00 AM**

**COLWOOD GOLF COURSE WORK YARD**

**ON ALDEANE AVENUE**

**Note date and time change**

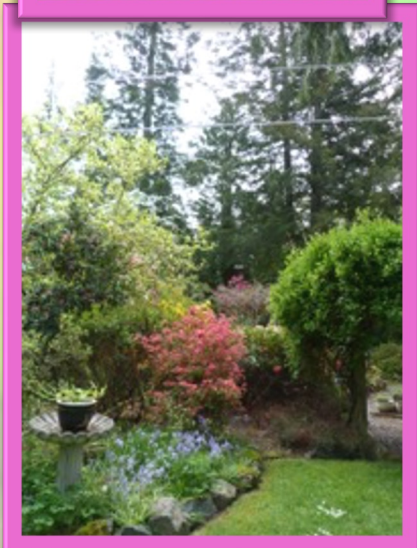


**WEDNESDAY, MAY 3, 4 PM – 7 PM**

# **THE BILL AND BETTY GORDON GARDEN**

**4821 TOWNSEND**

“Come meander the paths through the forested garden. Extensive pruning for the past two years has subdued the wild gyrations of mature planting. New extensions to the length of the gardens beckon. Many plantings have been moved within the new parameters. Come visit the property we have called home for forty years.”



**SATURDAY MAY 6, 10:30 – 12:30**

# **THE STEPHEN AND MARJORIE BRICE GARDEN**

**5435 ALDERLY ROAD**



Our garden was born out of the generosity of many people, a large number of them club members. At our second meeting in 2010, Lloyd Gilmore surprised us with two of his beautiful Jeda crosses. Shortly thereafter, Bill Gordon arrived on our doorstep with a choice *R. augustinii* which had seeded in his garden. Moe and Joanna Massa were exceedingly generous with their knowledge and plants. One of our favorites is an open pollinated macabeaenum cross which we call "Mojo", and another aptly named protistum – Lucy's Giganteum. Ken Webb's diverse creations are a large part of our garden including "Briceland", an amazing act of kindness as Ken and Madeleine brought back this beautiful plant from California. Don Whittle passed along several plants among which was his terrific creation King George crossed with Marie Starks.

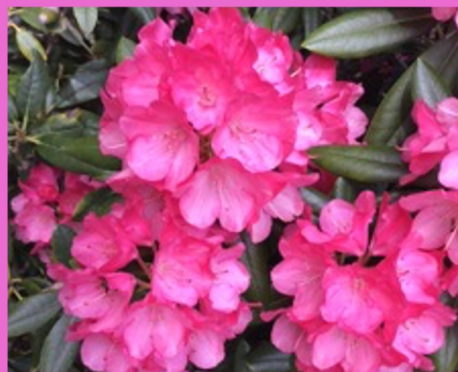
To continue these generous donations, Calvin gifted us with the unbelievably scented and elegant maddenii, along with Parson's Gloriosum. Bill McMillan gave us several plants including the sublime Babylon and the elusive Revue. Not only were these gifted to us, but Bill provided undisputed scholarly advice back in 2010 that every garden should include the early blooming Olive. We were able to strike up a deal with the extremely knowledgeable Sharon that netted us several Norm Todd specimens. Tony, with his love of *R. loderi* provided a lovely Loderi cross called Saulsalito. Karen and Burns gave us many impeccable plants they had grown from seed that still grace our garden. Dan found the delicate Razorbill and Game Chick and Al and Liz donated a charming Frazerii.

From knowing nothing to, now knowing a little more than nothing, we have been incredibly humbled and feel very fortunate by the people we have met during our journey thus far, whether it has been their insight and advice or sharing of plants; they have left a big footprint. You will be hard pressed to find some of these older hybrids or species today. Looking back on our rhododendron journey, we realize that we have focused on older hybrids and *R. loderi*. We frequently look out the window and cannot believe how far it has come along. This is the first time we have shown the garden since the ARS Covention in 2015.



**OPEN GARDEN**  
**YOU ARE INVITED TO VISIT THE MASSA GARDEN**  
**SUNDAY MAY 7... 10 AM UNTIL 5 PM**  
**5024 GLINZ LAKE ROAD**

The Massa garden was originally inspired by viewing the Ken and Dot Gibson garden in Tofino. Inspired by what they observed, when holes began appearing in their lawn, they replaced the grass area with a rhododendron. This was the beginning of a life-long passion for rhododendrons. Sometime later, they met Rick Sullivan, also a Sooke resident who told them about the Victoria Rhododendron Society. He mentioned that the Victoria Rhododendron Society was a friendly group of people who loved rhododendrons and how he always learned something at every meeting. Moe and Hannah joined the VicRS in 2001 and the rest is history. Sadly, Moe passed away in 2017 from cancer, but Hannah continues to garden with the help of Moe's son, Doug. Their efforts continue to honor Moe and the garden grows in his loving remembrance.



# OPEN GARDEN

**YOU ARE INVITED TO VISIT THE MACDONALD/RAFFERTY GARDEN  
SUNDAY MAY 7... 10 AM UNTIL 5 PM**

We moved to this area in 2014 from a densely wooded property on Lynn Creek in North Vancouver. When we arrived at this property, it was only slightly less densely wooded. Between the large spruce, fir and cedar trees was a mass of salal taller than we were. We logged many, but certainly not all of the trees and had the bulldozers that were assisting with the logging run back and forth to mow down the salal. Salal eradication is apparently a lifetime endeavour however. We brought many rhododendrons from our North Van property - younger, smaller ones and slightly older ones that were cut down to a manageable five feet for transportation. With the increased sunlight afforded by the tree removal, we now have rhododendrons blossom much more freely than previously. When we first planted them, the transported rhododendrons were dotted all over the landscape and looked like currants on a bun. Now things are so tall and full that we needed to dig some up and move them to newer areas that have been developed. Sean plants rhododendrons, almost all species, and as many big leaves as he can find. I plant for underneath, mostly woodland plants, bulbs, perennials or camplogynums or dendrocharis, which I love, or anything I do not have to look up to enjoy. Sean does very well with his blue poppies and cardiocrinums, and we both love a good primula. Sean is development, I am maintenance. It works out pretty well. We both love a good primula. We also apparently have a weakness for magnolias and maples.



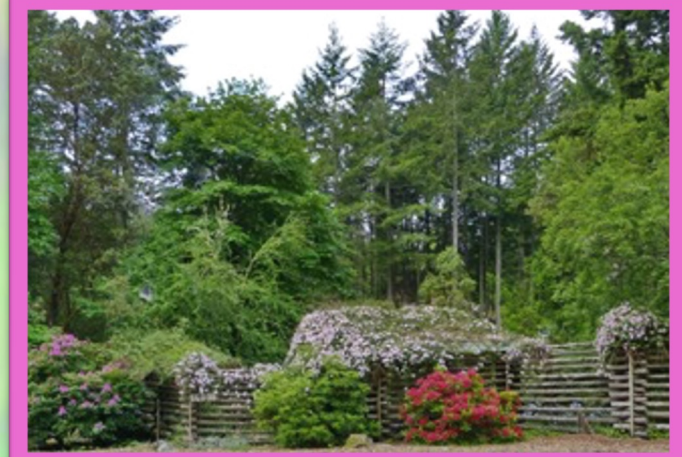


# OPEN GARDEN

## YOU ARE INVITED TO VISIT ANNE AND IAN'S GARDEN

WEDNESDAY MAY 10 ... 2PM UNTIL SUNSET  
4670 KERRYVIEW DRIVE

Thirty five years ago we built our house and began a garden – rhodos were (mostly) deer proof, so we were hooked. Summer is very dry here. We are on a well, thus each plant has its own micro-emitter. The rhodos have to coexist with native salal, ocean spray, Oregon grape and snowberry in a forest of fir, arbutus and maple. Lots of native wildflowers should be out in May – erythronium, shooting stars, calypso orchids, with sea blush and small mimulas situated on the mossy rocks.



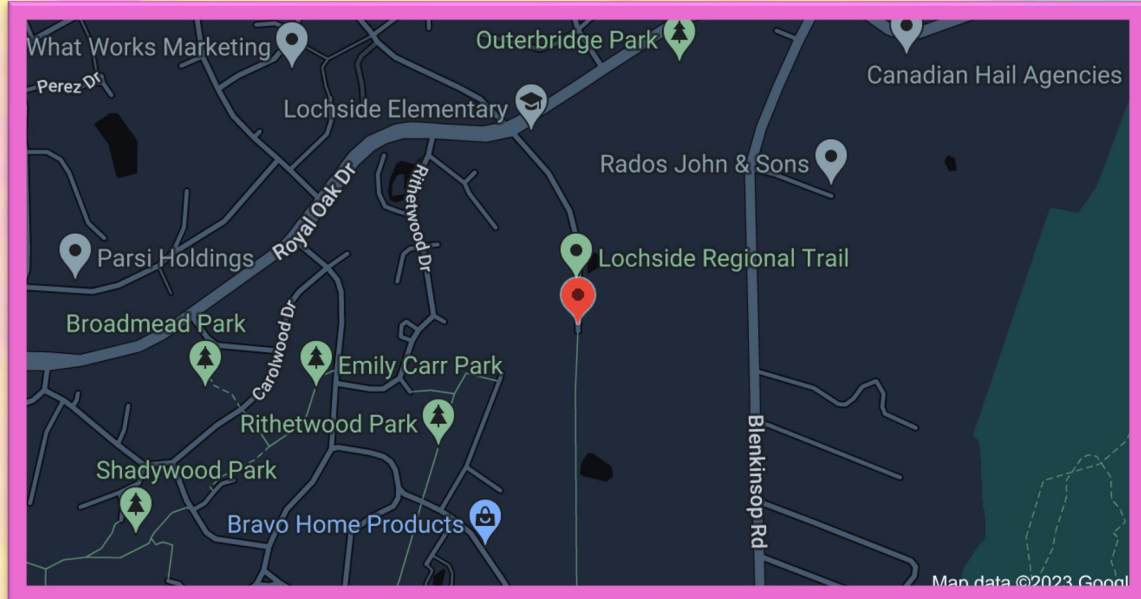


OPEN GARDEN

YOU ARE INVITED TO VISIT JACK MCNEILL'S GARDEN

SATURDAY MAY 20.... 12 - 2 PM

4565 LOCHSIDE DRIVE



## HCP Patio and Balcony Garden Project April update



Late March and early April, 20 cubic yards of road base delivered. 16 yards laid and compacted to form base for pavers and wall blocks. Patio, balcony, steps and pathway marked.

Wednesday April 19<sup>th</sup>.  
Excitement as 12 pallets of  
pavers and wall blocks arrive



April 20 to 26. Kevin, the HCP college hardscape instructor, lays the hexagonal pavers and oblong edge pieces. We now await the arrival of the wall substructure.

**THANK YOU IAN FOR THE UPDATE**

# “SLOW AND STEADY WINS THE RACE”

we celebrate the progress of the patio garden at the HCP



Your speed doesn't matter.  
Forward is forward.

It does not matter how slowly you go as long as you do not stop.

Be patient. Good things take time.

Plan your work, then work your plan.

Long term consistency trumps short-term intensity

We don't mind running with turtles.

Thanks to all who have worked on this project.

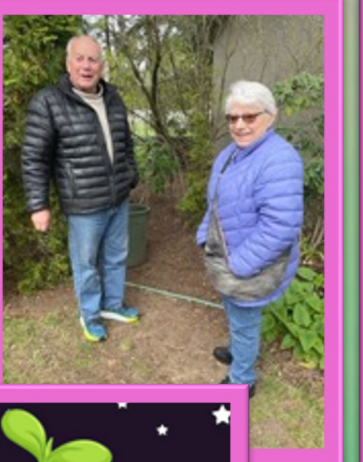
Thank you Frank for the photos





# WE CELEBRATED EARTH DAY AT THE OPEN GARDEN OF MIKE AND NADINE





THANK YOU MIKE AND NADINE FOR OPENING YOUR GARDEN TO OUR GROUP



THANK YOU MIKE AND LOIS FOR THE PHOTOS



**YOU ARE INVITED TO VIEW  
THE BARLUP LEGACY GARDEN**

**THURSDAY MAY 18 FROM 6:30 PM UNTIL 7:30 PM**

**The best way to enter the garden is from Tillicum Road, just  
south of Gorge Road**

**Drive past the garden to the lower parking lot where you  
will see the new Community building. From there, make  
your way back through the Tanaka Japanese garden to the  
Barlup Legacy Garden**



**PRESIDENT ... LLOYD GILMORE**  
250-642-2256

**VICE-PRESIDENT ... FRANK BUFFAM**  
778-432-4649

**SECRETARY ... SHARON JOSEPH**  
250-383-1756

**TREASURER ... BILL GORDON**  
250-479-0210

**PAT PRESIDENT ...BRENDA MACDONALD**  
778-528-3647



**CALVIN PARSONS**  
250-590-0489

**IAN DUNCAN**  
250-479-0820

**DAN SYROID**  
250-477-9210

**KEN WEBB**  
250-477-1785

**LOIS BLACKMORE**  
236-562-6778



**ELLEN WELLBORN... LIBRARIAN**  
250-479-1898

**IAN DUNCAN ... A/V**  
250-479-0820

**ROBERT BURKE ... A/V**  
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**BRENDA MACDONALD ...MEMBERSHIP**  
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