

VICTORIA RHODODENDRON SOCIETY NOVEMBER 2023 NEWSLETTER

THE 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.
on the first **THURSDAY** of
every month
September – May

Our website is
www.victoriarhodo.ca



IT WAS ONE OF THOSE EARLY NOVEMBER
MORNINGS THAT ARE AS BEAUTIFUL AS ANY
IN SPRING. THERE WAS GOLD EVERYWHERE,
DRIFTS OF IT ON THE ELM TREE, FLAKES OF
GOLD UNDER OUR FEET, GOLD DUST ON THE
HEDGES, LIQUID GOLD IN THE REFRACTED
FALLING LIGHT.

– ELIZABETH GOUDGE

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS



As we are in the last half of Fall, other species of salmon are migrating up many of our rivers that are swollen by the recent rains. The colors of the salmon are reflected in the autumn foliage, especially like the maples of *Acer Palmatum*. A rainbow of autumn colors breeze through the air. The Steel Berry leaves are darkened, while the native snowberry is white adding depth to our rainbow of autumn colors.

There is a moderately heavy flower bud set on the rhododendrons, with some showing color. On some plants, I have never seen have a fall flowering and these are not the typical Elizabeth red plants. The vibrant colors of the pink flowering nerines are now threatened by frosty weather.

This time of the year is also propagation time for rhododendrons. My propagation journey has been delayed this year because of a diagnosis of prostate cancer. I do have in my beds, cuttings from my own program and garden as well as some from the HCP. These latter plants are supposedly harder to root. These include Senator Jackson and Loderi cuttings. I am waiting in suspense to see if I will be successful. Chemainus and variegated Kabarret are showing signs that they may be easier to root. As most members know, these will eventually find their way as mature plants to be raffle prizes or plant sale items.

On Thursday, November 2, our meeting will be a hands-on project. We will be experimenting with the members having an opportunity to try their hand at growing rhododendrons from seed. This is your chance at trying the methods and materials needed to grow rhododendrons from the beginning. Course and fine soils will be provided as well as peat moss. I will also supply sphagnum moss, the seed needed for planting, and the plastic labels needed for identification.

Your part will be as follows.

Bring a three or four inch plastic pot. As well, bring a plastic bag to carrying your new experiment home safely. If you have a fine water sprayer to moisten your seeds, that will be a bonus. Hope to see you there on Thursday evening.

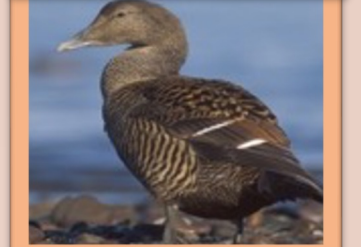


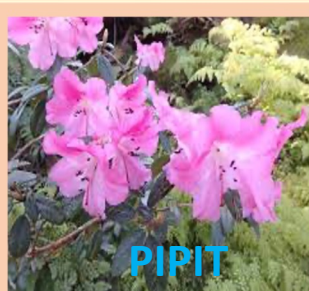
THE GLENDOICK BIRD SERIES

Adapted from *Hybridizing Rhododendrons and Azaleas at Glendoick*



The bird series of small rhododendrons at Glendoick began when George Sherriff, a plant hunter, returned to Scotland, and Peter Cox spotted a dwarf yellow rhododendron with enormous yellow bowl-shaped flowers in his garden. Peter was given some pollen from that plant (*R. ludlowii*) and he placed it on (*R. rucola* var. *chryseum*) and the first “Bird” rhododendron was hatched. Peter named it ‘R. Chikor’. As an added bonus, Chikor received the Award of Merit by the RHS. This started the theme of naming small rhododendrons Peter hybridized after birds, which also happened to be another interest of Peter’s. At the time of this article, there were almost 25 “BIRD” rhododendrons.





The feeding of common birds is a popular and accessible means of connecting with wildlife in urban areas. Research shows that the main motivations for feeding birds are the psychological benefits, concern for bird welfare and connecting to nature.

In 2016, a bird watching study by Cox and Gaston found participants feeling relaxed and connected to nature, and those who watched birds longer each day and fed them regularly showed that the relationship between the number of species people could identify, their liking for birds, and feeling of being connected to nature multiplied significantly.

In 2022, a study (Hammond et al) using real time sampling found that the effects of seeing or hearing birds as opposed to not seeing or hearing them was that the real time exposure was significantly more effective in leading a happier life and increased with the length of observation time.



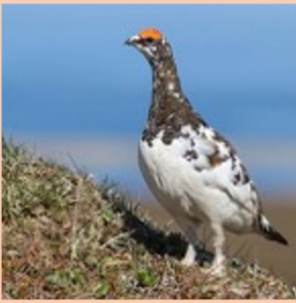
PTARMIGAN



QUAIL



RAZORBILL



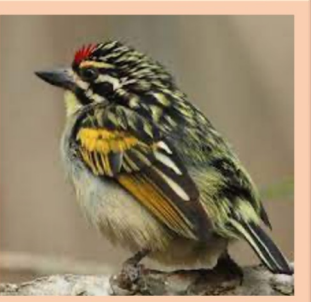
SWIFT



TANAGER



TINKERBIRD



TREEKEEPER



WIDGEON



WREN

DO OUR BIRDS STORE FOOD FOR THE WINTER?

The **Cornell** Lab  of Ornithology

Chickadees, nuthatches, some woodpeckers, jays and crows store or “cache” food for the winter. Doves, sparrows, blackbirds, finches do not store food at all. Those that do store food may hide hundreds or even thousands of seeds every year. Many species not only remember their hiding places, but what kind of tidbit they hid in each particular place.

Caching seeds not only helps a bird get through the winter, but also serves as an important way that seed can disperse and help keep forests stay strong.

SEED STORERS



Chickadee



Crow



Blue Jay

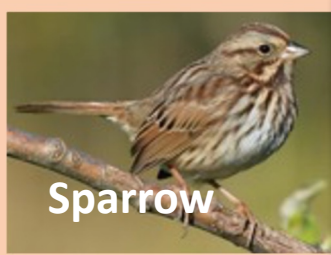


Nuthatch

NON STORERS



Eurasian Dove



Sparrow



Blackbird



Finch

WINTER FOOD FOR NON-STORERS

Hulled Sunflower Seed
Peanut Hearts
Cracked Corn
Suet

Black Oil Sunflower Seed.
White Millet
Mealworms
Peanuts

Niger
Safflower
Oats
Nectar



“Complexity responses of Rhododendron species to climate change in China reveal their urgent need for protection”

Adapted from Forest Ecosystems 2023

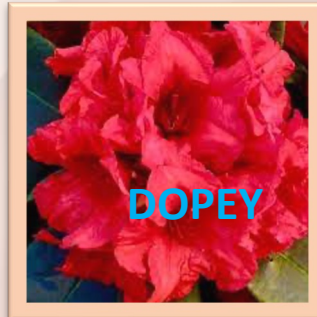
- . Global climate change has been widely recognized as an important factor that threatens biodiversity
- . Rhododendrons are indispensable components in alpine and sub-alpine vegetation in southwest China
- . The response of this broad taxonomic group remains not to be fully understood
- . By the 2090s, suitable habitats of about 87% of rhododendron species will be reduced
- . 77 % of rhododendron species are manifested as a northward migration
- . Some rhododendron species are at high risk of habitat loss
- . Reintroduction of endangered species needs to become active immediately
- . Rapid climate change will alter the structure and function of marine, freshwater and the terrestrial ecosystems
- . Plant species diversity will be affected as to community composition and richness of species distribution
- . High altitude regions are more sensitive to climate change and will lead to serious reduction of species
- . Rhododendrons are indispensable components in the alpine and subalpine vegetation in southwest China





SNOW WHITE AND THE SEVEN DWARFS RHODODENDRON VERSION

“ONCE UP A TIME... THERE WAS A GIRL WHO MET 7 DWARFS



“BUY THESE AND YOU TOO, WILL LIVE HAPPILY EVER AFTER”



MONGABAY

Mongabay is a conservation portal that reports on environmental science, energy and green design. It provides information on tropical rainforests and deforestation statistics for countries around the world. It works in the public interest by creating and advancing knowledge about matters that can impact everyone, notably the conservation of nature, the value of biodiversity and the role of healthy ecosystems in sustaining humanity. This article is adapted from that web-site.



NORTHERN SPOTTED OWL

The northern spotted owl has declined precipitously since pre-colonization. Owls depend on old-growth forests with widely spaced trees where they hunt, nest and roost. Their historic distribution is along North America's Pacific coast from California to British Columbia.

After a century of logging old-growth forests, less than 3% of the most productive big-treed forest is left in B.C.

In the US, where 90% of the population was historically found, the US federal government levied the Endangered Species Act to shut down logging in vast tracts of the owl's remaining habitat.

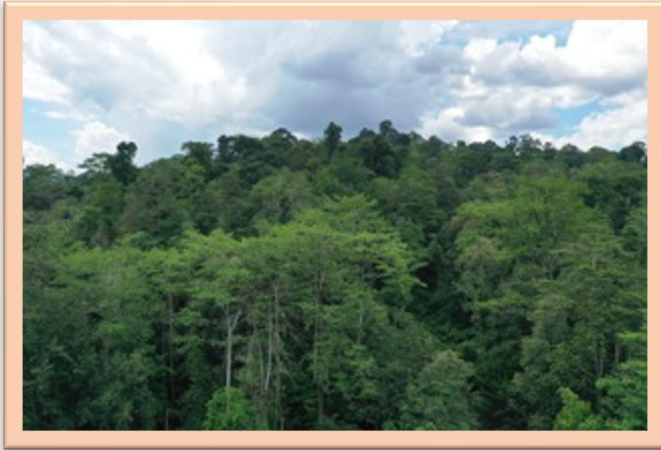
Neither Canada nor B.C. had comparable legislation, despite listing the owls as endangered in 1986. By 1990 there were fewer than 100 breeding pairs. A recovery team implemented a management plan that claimed it had a 60% chance of stabilizing and improving the population. Of the 350,000 hectares within the management plan, 850,000 were set aside for the owls.

In 2022, the Wilderness Committee documented 452 cutblocks, areas where logging is pending or already approved, overlapping fully or partially within the areas of the spotted owl recovery plan, dubbed critical habitat.

After 15 years of painstakingly building up a captive population in incubating eggs and hand rearing chicks, in 2007 three spotted northern owls were released. In May of 2023, two males were found deceased and the remaining owl is a female.

FOREST RESTORATION CAN FARE BETTER WITH A HUMAN HELPING HAND

ADAPTED FROM MONGABAY, JEREMY HANCE, SEPTEMBER 2023



A two-decade old experiment in the tropical rainforest of Sabah, Malaysia Borneo, is beginning to reveal that human-assisted restoration of logged forests can increase the speed of the eco-system's recovery.

The researchers found that planting a diverse suite of seedlings, instead of only one species led, in one decade, to greater biomass and forest complexity.

In 2002, three researchers set out to conduct a large-scale experiment in terms of area and time. Their goal was to explore the role of tree diversity in the restoration of lowland rainforest. These notes are based on their research. The greater forest species diversity in general – and specifically for restorations - delivers more ecosystem services, possibly including carbon sequestration.

However, there is a possibility that the particular life cycle of the type of trees used in this study (Dipterocarpaceae family...a hardwood tropical species found in Southeast Asia), could have specifically enhanced diversity in this case.

The key finding: human-assisted forest restoration gets better results than leaving nature to its own devices.



EVERYTHING YOU EVER WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT MINIATURE DAFFODILS

ADAPTED FROM THE AMERICAN DAFFODIL SOCIETY



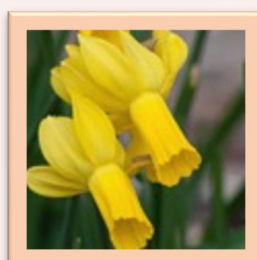
Miniature daffodils are named, numbered or species daffodils that have all parts proportionately small. A single miniature daffodil bloom is a flower less than 50mm (1.97in) in natural spread. For multi-floreted miniature daffodils, the measurement for the floral mass is 72mm. (2.83in).



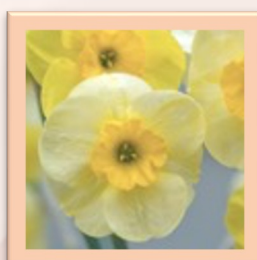
BABY BOOMER



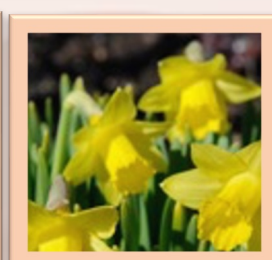
ELKAR



RAPTURE



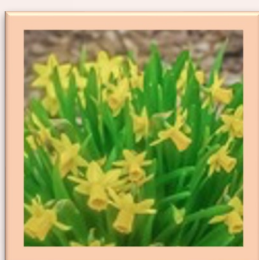
SUN DISC



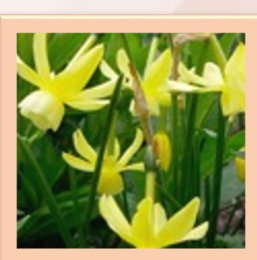
TETE-TETE



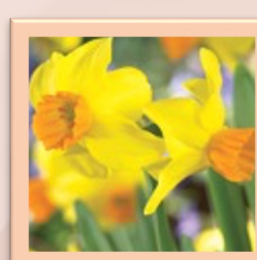
CANALICULATUS



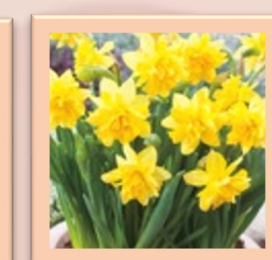
LITTLE GEM



HAWERA



BITTERN



TETE BOUCLE



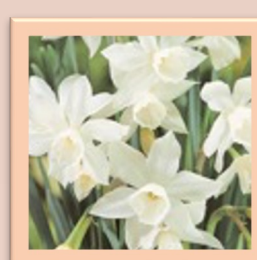
JETFIRE



RIP VAN WINKLE.



PIPIT



THALIA



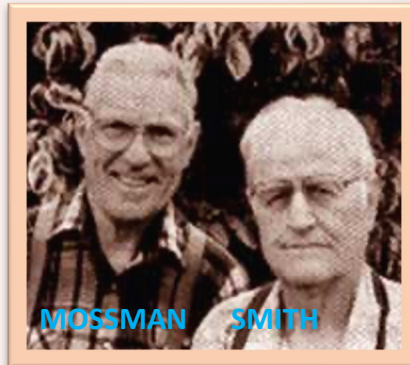
MINNOW

CELEBRATING WEST COAST HYBRIDIZERS CONTINUED

BRITT SMITH

Adapted from Gwen Bell's article QBARS V31

Britt Smith entered into rhododendrons in response to a life-long conviction that retirement should be a physical activity that was constructive. That was what he wanted to do. Being familiar with the hybridizing activities of Halfdan Lem, Hjalmar Larson, Bill Whitney and Bob Bovee and having been invited by Frank Mossman to participate in exploring the habits of *R. occidentale*, he worked with Frank in application of pollen from Exbury Gardens. After some time, he switched to using *R. lacteum* as one of the parent plants. The two registered rhododendron by Smith are the Bittenhill plants. However, Frank Mossman and Britt Smith worked tirelessly on creating beautiful azaleas. Britt Smith passed away in December 2007



FRANK MOSSMAN

Frank Mossman's keen interest in the western azalea *R. occidentale* was a life long adventure. He and Britt Smith traveled extensively through northern California and Oregon searching and recording the characteristics and beauty of *R. occidentale*. He travelled to Borneo and New Guinea, always looking for the Genus *Rhododendron*. Both Mossman and Smith spent twenty years working together to create new hybrids. It is interesting to note that many of their hybrids were not registered. Frank Mossman passed away in November 2016.



CELEBRATING WEST COAST HYBRIDIZERS

WALTER ELLIOT

Walter Elliott's hybridizing journey was between tried and true moderate sized hybrids that were successful in gardens and the trade. His early search was for a bright yellow with a good habit and was fragrant. As he progressed with his hybridizing, he amended his goals for plants that had a good growth habit and fragrance. Two of his hybrids were given to the University of Washington with the promise that those plants would be propagated. However, nothing came of this and never reached the public. Bill Whitney and Hjalmer Larson were his mentors. He donated hundreds of seeds to the AS seed exchange with the hope that "there have been some pleasant surprises". Walter passed away in 1998.



STEVE MCCULLOUGH

Steve McCullough had distinct goals for his hybridizing program: plants that set flower early and were dependable; compact plants with excellent foliage, flowers that were right and had interesting colors and trusses that were upright, not lax. His suggestions for beginners was listen learn, and ask dumb questions from other hybridizers.



CELEBRATING WEST COAST HYBRIDIZERS

ELSIE WATSON

Elsie Watson was a founding member of the Seattle Hybridizers Study Group. One of Elsie's goals was working with purples and the near-blues. Out of the cross (Blue Ensign x Purple Splendour) which she made in 1965, she registered Blue Hawaii, a ruffled lavender purple with a greenish gold blotch. Working with R. Anna, Katrina was born, considered to be a brilliant magenta. Over the years she experimented with many parents to reach a goal of purplish-pink flowers with a dark blotch. One of her findings was that R. yakushimanum was the dominant plant in many crosses.



FRANK FUJIOKA

Frank's efforts at hybridizing rhododendrons began after visits to Halfdan Lem. "Mr. Lem was the inspiration because of the magic he could create. I realized that hybridizing would provide infinite goals for the rest of my life so I did not have to worry about 'the meaning of life'." He said that at the peak of his insanity, he was making 250 crosses each year. Frank continues to hybridize to this day.



RHODODENDRON PROBLEM ONE SHOULD NOT IGNORE

ADAPTED FROM EPIC GARDENING OCTOBER 2023

Are your rhododendrons looking a bit worse for wear now that summer is behind us? Here are some common issues that can impact how your rhododendrons are looking.



YELLOW LEAVES

This condition is called chlorosis which is caused due to a lack of chlorophyll. Look for nutrient lockup due to alkaline soil PH, damaged or compacted roots or poor drainage. It also may be one of aging and dropping of leaves.



BROWN SPOTS ON LEAVES

Brown spots can be caused by a variety of issues. But the most common issue of leaf spot are fungal or bacterial diseases. These are manageable, but if left untreated can damage or kill the rhododendron. For fungal disease, use a sulphur or copper based fungicide. Cut and destroy any damaged leaves. For bacterial disease, make certain that one waters only the root of the plant, and cut off and destroy any damaged leaves.



DIE BACK OF BRANCHES

If you notice that one or more of your branches has died, prune away the affected branches and destroy them. You can tell if there is fungal disease by scratching the bark away, and if still green your plant is healthy. If red, it is a fungal disease and must be sprayed.



LEAVES ARE CURLING

It is a common sight to see your leaves curling in winter. The leaves do this when the temperatures drop as it helps the rhododendrons from losing too much water. In summer, if there is leaf curl, it means that the shrub is suffering from drought stress. A good soaking around the roots will modify the curling leaves.



BUDS NOT OPENING

Occasionally your rhododendron your plant may produce beautiful buds that will not open. This is usually due to a late spring frost. Applying an anti-desiccant can help in the future, or if a plant is particularly delicate, a covering of burlap will give the plant some protection.



NO FLOWER BUDS

Rhododendron flower buds are produced in very late spring, soon after the bloom period. If spring comes and you see there are no flowers, it likely that pruning may be the cause. Pruning needs to happen right after blooming season. The good news is that the flowers will return the following year.



LICHEN ON BRANCHES

Lichen is a common sight on shade trees and shrubs. Luckily lichen itself is not an issue for rhododendrons. However, lichen grows on plants that are growing in less than optimal conditions. Often, airflow is not optimum. Consider pruning your plant for better air flow and sunlight.



ROOT ROT

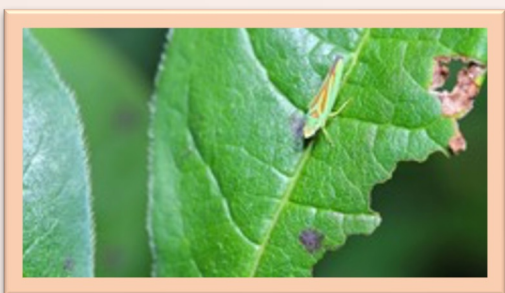
Rhododendrons are susceptible to root rot. Chlorosis can be caused by root rot particularly if yellowing is accompanied by drooping or wilting of the softer branches. One must decide if the plant is worth saving. If only a few roots are mushy, trim off the damaged roots and replant the rhododendron in soil that drains more readily. Note that most rhododendron require about an inch of water per week.





WINTER BURN

If you notice some brown or rust-colored leaves when spring comes around, it is likely you have some winter burn on your shrub. It is not a disease or the result of an insect infestation. It may be that the plant is planted in the wrong location or the weather conditions in that particular winter. Plants planted in direct sunlight in winter or planted under a deciduous tree may need protection with a wind or frost blanket.



INSECT DAMAGE

For the most part, insects that attack rhododendrons do so for their lush foliage. Black vine weevil, lace bugs or spider mites each have their own methods, but the end result is leaf damage.



PETAL BLIGHT

Petal blight is a fungus that poses a challenge for rhododendrons as it particularly attacks their lovely flowers. Once the flowers have bloomed, you may notice small brown spots on the flower petals, and from there, it will spread. Removing the infected flowers may help it from moving to another truss. Infected petals will fall to the ground and cleaning them up is the best way to keep the disease from returning the following year. Adding mulch to your rhododendron garden will keep the water from splashing up onto the plant.





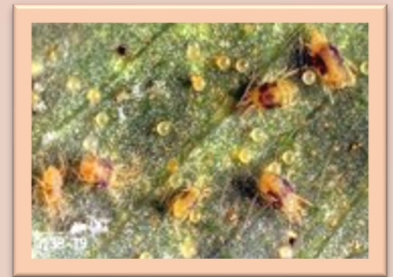
BLACK VINE WEEVIL

The black vine weevil feeds on rhododendrons throughout its life cycle. Weevil larvae or grubs live in the soil and feed on the roots of the plant. Adult weevils chew holes in and leave holes in the edges of the leaves. The insect is about 3/8 inches long, oval in shape, black to dark gray and have a snout. The grub survives the winter and begins to emerge in April or May. The local remedy that works is to begin soaking the roots of the plant in February with a cup of lysol to a watering can of water once a week.



LACE BUGS

Lace bug adults and nymphs damage rhododendron leaves by piercing the undersides of leaves and sucking out plant juices. As the nymphs molt, the cast off skins remain attached to the lower leaf surface. Damage in the upper sides of the leaf look like small, pale spots. To help prevent lace bug damage, maintaining your plant's vigor gives the plant a better chance of surviving another attack. As they are wingless, a strong jet of water will dislodge them from another attack. Horticultural oils or insecticidal soap are effective strategies for these pests.



SPIDER MITES

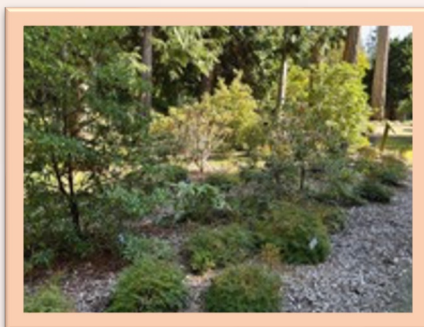
Spider mites are not insects, but are closely related to spiders. Azalea mite or southern red mite are very small and are typically found on the undersides of leaves. Mites suck plants causing leaves to change leaves to a dull green color. Insecticidal soap and horticultural oils are proven remedies when sprayed on the top and bottom surface of the leaves.

MILNER RHODOEDRON SPECIES GARDEN ADVISORY GROUP MEETING, SEPTEMBER 30, 2023

THANK YOU CALVIN

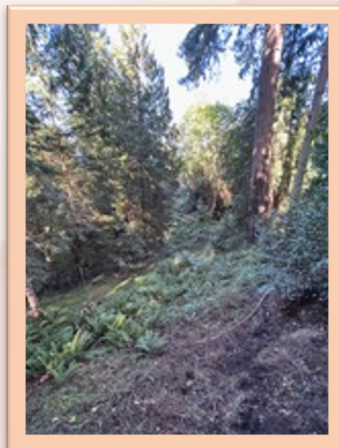
John Desinger updated the committee on the financial situation of this advisory group. There is still \$10,551.42 remaining in the Island Rhodo Societies Fund, from the original \$20,000.00. Geoff Ball gave a funding overview for Phase 2, which now stands at approximately \$76,500 with \$10,551.42 coming from the Rhodo Society Funds, \$50,000 from Kingfisher Foundation as part of a larger donation to Milner, \$6,000.00 for interpretive program, \$10,000.00 from the Rhodo Society Funding. He reminded the group of Milner's Legacy Fund, where interest only is spent.

PHASE ONE UPDATES



Pam Murray brought samples of the temporary interpretive signage. Sturdier signage will be in place later this year.

PHASE TWO



Jim Cadwaladr, landscape architect, presented a detailed report on the area that breaks down into three sections, ranging from steep to almost flat. There are 71 trees, 30cm or greater and many smaller trees, shrubs and ground cover. He cautioned to do it right, the terrain is so challenging that slow, methodical early movements are necessary. It will take time to remove trees and stabilize the area. He recommended that the removal of 30 trees, mostly Big Leaf Maple and Grand Fir. This will allow more sunlight into the entire 2,700 sq. meters which will nurture the eventual plantings.

CONGRATULATIONS SHARON

The Victoria Rhododendron Society was pleased to award the Abkhazi Trophy to Sharon Joseph for her long-time service as secretary to our society.



In 1986, Princess Abkhazi donated a beautiful Chinese silver tray to the Victoria Rhododendron Society, the only remaining possession she had left after being interned in Shanghai during WWII. After the war, she made her way to Victoria and married Nicholas Abkhazi, a deposed Georgian Prince. Together they created a home and a beautiful garden, filled with a combination of various grasses, shrubs and flowers. Most notably are the many large rhododendron that grace the garden. The garden has become a visitor's paradise in our city.

Thank you Jeannie for the photos.

OUR OCTOBER MEETING



Adventures awaited us as Calvin took us on he and Jeanie's river boat cruise in Europe, then flew us all "downunder" all in search of "WHERE IS RHODO?" Lake Como was very much a part of our adventure, as was a trip to the Dandenong Range, near Melbourne.

This is where one will find the National Rhododendron Garden of Australia. It is a 42 acre public garden.



Lake Como's acidic soil is ideal for azaleas and rhododendrons. We were able to see old photographs of the garden leading to the lake as well as the garden as it is today.



Thank you Jeannie for the photos.

Snow Survey and Water Supply Bulletin – June 15th, 2023

The June 15th snow survey is now complete. Data from 3 manual snow courses and 96 automated snow weather stations around the province (collected by the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy's Snow Survey Program, BC Hydro and partners), and climate data from Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) and the provincial Climate Related Monitoring Program have been used to form the basis of the following report.

Executive Summary

- As of June 15th, the provincial snow pack was substantially below normal, averaging 4% across B.C. (June 1st: 29%).
- Only four automated snow weather stations (ASWS) and one manual snow survey measured snow water equivalent for June 15th.
- 17 ASWS sites melted to snow free conditions earlier than any year on record.
- Flood risk from snowmelt is largely over for the season, as most rivers have experienced their peak flows and are now rapidly declining. Flood risk from extreme rainfall events remains, particularly for the B.C. Interior.
- Several factors have generated high risk of province-wide drought in summer 2023, including lingering effects of fall 2022 drought, unusually dry and warm conditions prevalent in winter 2022-23 and spring 2023, exceptionally rapid and early 2023 snowmelt, and high likelihood of above normal temperatures this summer.

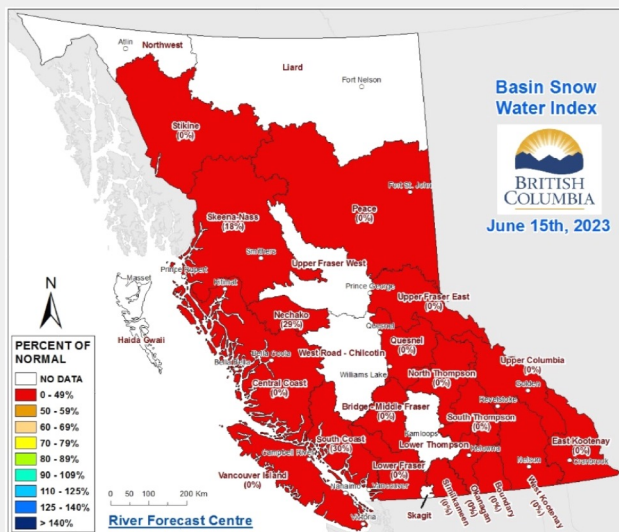


Figure 1. June 15th, 2023 Basin Snow Water Index Map of British Columbia. Larger and colour-friendly versions available in full report.

Table 1. June 15th, 2023 Snow Basin Indices in B.C.

Basin	% of Normal	Basin	% of Normal	Basin	% of Normal
Upper Fraser West	N/A [#]	North Thompson	0	South Coast	30
Upper Fraser East	0	South Thompson	0	Vancouver Island	0
Nechako	29	Fraser River	3	Central Coast	0
Middle Fraser	0	Upper Columbia	0	Skagit	N/A [#]
Lower Thompson*	N/A [#]	West Kootenay	0	Peace	0
Bridge*	0	East Kootenay	0	Skeena-Nass	18
Chilcotin*	N/A [#]	Boundary	0	Liard	N/A [#]
Quesnel*	0	Okanagan	0	Stikine	0
Lower Fraser	0	Similkameen	0	Northwest	N/A [#]

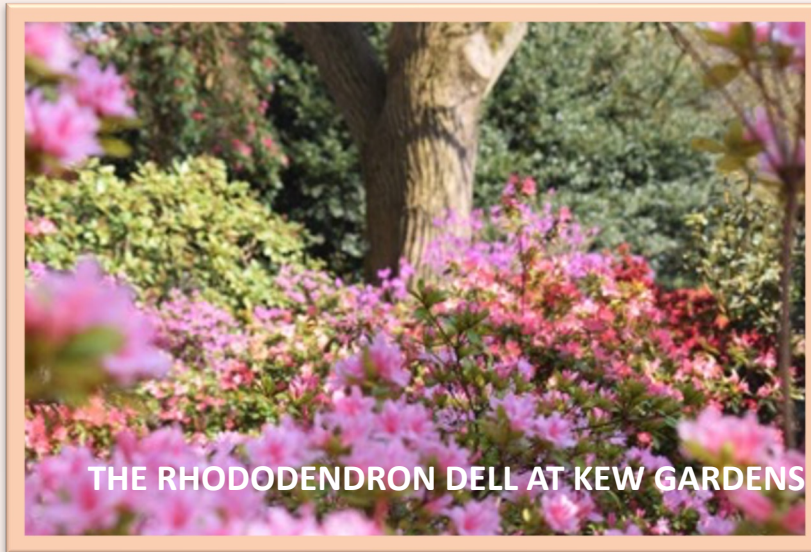
British Columbia 4% of Normal

* Sub-basin of Middle Fraser [#] Insufficient data to calculate a Snow Basin Index

This is the final Snow Bulletin of the 2023 season. The next Bulletin will be issued in early January 2024.

ENGLISH GARDENS TO VISIT IN THE SPRING

Late April to June is the best time of the year to bask in the blazing beauty of rhododendron gardens in England. Rhododendron gardens to visit include:



The Rhododendron Dell is one of the oldest parts of the garden, having been designed by Capability Brown in 1773. An incredible selection of Sikkim rhododendrons were added in the mid-1800's, and over 150 years later the plants in this secluded spot are thriving. In total, 208 cultivars burst into bloom from March until June.



This romantic 18th Century garden in Kent boasts the focal point of a moated castle. In spring, the old castle can be glimpsed amid a cloud-like swathe of rhododendrons and azaleas.



Many exotic and rare trees occupy these grounds in Gloucester. Beyond the rolling lawns adorned with spring bulbs lies an eight acre wood, full with rhododendrons, corylopsis, magnolias and acers.



This 64-acre public garden, entrusted to the University of Liverpool in 1948, is set on the Wirral, with splendid views over the River Dee and North Wales. Its diverse plantings include rhododendrons and camellias.



ORANGE PRELUDE

(Lem's Tangerine x (Lem's Cameo x Lem's Cameo x Ken Janeck) x (Brandt's Tropicana x Whopper x Brandt's Tropicana)

Hybridized 1998

Registered 2007

Vivid reddish orange in bud

Opening to an orange-yellow

Changing upward to a vivid reddish orange



TETON TWILIGHT

(Coral Blossom x Christina Dee)

Hybridized in 2005

Registered in 2012

Deep pink in bud

Opening up to a light purplish pink

Dark purplish edges

Dark red base with red dots toward edges



WILD GINGER

(Apricot Fantasy x Hill's Low Red)

Hybridized in 1994

Registered in 2004

Moderate reddish orange in bud

Opening inside to a pale yellow on margins

Deep pink streaks on mid-veins

Moderate olive green leaves

Flowers in Mid-May

JIM BARLUP HYBRIDS

WAYS TO BRIGHTEN UP YOUR GARDEN IN WINTER

ADAPTED FROM GARDENER'S WORLD



With a little imagination and creativity, it is easy to add interest to your garden. For the greatest impact, concentrate on a few key areas you see on a daily basis. These may include beds and pots close to the house, as well as your front garden which you walk through regularly. The following are some of the best ideas to inspire you. Many require little effort and some are great value for the money. Whether you step outside or look from a window, embrace winter and enjoy your garden at every opportunity.



BRIGHTEN IT UP WITH SIMPLE LIGHTING

Outdoor lighting can bring the garden into play, and transform the view from the windows. Solar lights can provide a few hours of decorative light. A few tea lights in clear jars adds interest for short term use. Strings of Christmas lights in one color draped in a tree adds a special touch.



ADD ONE OR MORE TOPIARY BOX BALLS

Even one piece of topiary will add interest to a pot or bed. Formal shapes such as balls, pyramids and cubes work well. Box and yew are traditional plant choices for formal shapes. For a less formal and more relaxed shape, cloud-pruned shapes may be the way for a less formal appearance.



GROW SCENTED PLANTS BY YOUR FRONT DOOR

There are many fabulous winter flowering shrubs that deliver a rich fragrance. Daphne, mahonia, sarcococca and viburnums fit nicely as fragrant plants. If planted in pots, they can be moved to center stage for winter. As well, potted bulbs for fragrance can be potted indoors. Hyacinth Miss Saigon, Narcissus Derringer and Daffodil Cheerfulness are scented bulbs when in bloom.



WARM UP WITH A FIRE PIT

To use your garden in winter, some type of warmth is needed. Gas fire pits, propane and natural gas, are a welcoming sight on a cold winter evening. Heat lamps as well are a convenient way to add warmth on a patio or deck.



MAKE A HOTEL FOR BUGS AND OTHER INSECTS

Making a bug hotel is a fun and easy project that enhances the garden visually and benefits wildlife. They can be simple or fancy and can be of any size. Think nooks and crannies. Small holes make ideal hibernating homes for ladybugs and bees. Using hollow bamboo cut into short lengths with hollow ends exposed provides an ideal hibernating home. An old wooden box or container on its side makes a perfect frame for your hotel. Many bug hotel materials will be found within your garden.



DO RHODODENDRONS WAKE UP IN THE MORNING WANTING A CUP OF COFFEE?

Adapted from gardeningknowhow.com



Coffee grounds make an excellent fertilizer for rhododendrons and other plants that prefer acidic soil. They are often underestimated as a natural fertilizer because they contain a comparatively high amount of nitrogen for a purely plant-based product. The nitrogen, sulfur and phosphorous rich protein of raw coffee beans is an impressive 11 percent. The roasting process completely decomposes the vegetable protein, as it is not heat-stable. However, the other ingredients are largely contained in the breakdown products. In addition, humic acids are formed during roasting and thus have a slightly acidic PH value. Use the grounds by spreading them flat on the ground and cover with a little mulch. If left uncovered, they decompose slowly and are hardly effective as a fertilizer.

Grounds must be collected in a bucket in an airy, dry place. It is best to hang them firstly in a sieve so that the fresh grounds can dry quickly and start growing moldy.



Coffee grounds should not be used as fertilizer for house plants because the powder hardly decomposes on the root ball and sooner or later it will go moldy. However, cold black coffee is a free fertilizer. Dilute 1 to 1 before using. Do not use more than a half cup per week as the soil will become acidic, as will the root ball.

Another use for cold coffee is that it destroys fungus gnats as it is poisonous to the larvae living in the soil. Another use for the cold water coffee mix is that it can be used as a spray to combat aphids.

PERENNIAL SEEDS TO PLANT IN THE FALL

ADAPTED FROM GARDEN GATE 2023

Did you know that perennial seeds are better planted in the fall? They need to be planted before the ground freezes. The goal is not to have the seeds germinate in the fall, but to give them a period of stratification, or exposing them to cold and moist conditions. The alternating freeze and thaw of winter helps break down the seed coat and starts the growing process. Not all perennials do well with this technique. However, listed below are seeds you can plant in the fall.

BLACK-EYED SUSAN



DELPHINIUM



LUPINE

DELPHINIUM



BLACK-EYED SUSAN

ORIENTAL POPPY



LUPINE

PENTSTEMON



ORIENTAL POPPY

PERENNIAL GERANIUM

PERENNIAL GERANIUM

PENTSTEMOM

PERENNIAL SUNFLOWER



PERENNIAL SUNFLOWER

PINCUSHION FLOWER

PINCUSHION FLOWER



PRARIE CORNFLOWER

PRAIRIE CONEFLOWER

PURPLE CORNFLOWER



WILD COLUMBINE

WILD COLUMBINE



PURPLE CONEFLOWER

DO YOU HAVE LEFT OVER PUMPKIN FROM HALLOWEEN?

HERE ARE SOME RECIPES FOR YOU TO TRY

Copied from espace por la vie montreal

PUMPKIN MUFFINS



- 1 ½ cups all purpose flour
 - 1 1/2 cups whole wheat flour
 - 2tbsp. baking powder
 - 1tsp. cinnamon
 - ½ tsp. nutmeg
 - ½ tsp. allspice
 - 1 tsp. salt
 - 1 cup brown sugar
 - 1 cup raisins
 - 2 eggs
 - 1 ½ cup milk
 - ½ cup vegetable oil
 - 1 cup cooked pureed pumpkin
- Pre-heat oven to 400
Mix dry ingredients
Add brown sugar and stir to combine
Add raisins
in a clean bowl, whisk eggs
Add milk, oil and pureed pumpkin
- Add dry ingredients and stir until moistened
Divide batter evenly and fill well-oiled muffin tins
Bake approximately 25 minutes



SPICED PUMPKIN LOAF

- 2 1/2 cups flour
 - 1 1/2 tsp. baking powder
 - ½ tsp. baking soda
 - ½ tsp. cinnamon
 - ½ tsp. cloves
 - ½ tsp. ginger
 - ½ tsp. nutmeg
 - ¼ tsp. orange zest
 - 2 eggs
 - 1 cup sugar
 - 4 tbsp. vegetable oil
 - 1 1/4 cups cooked pumpkin puree
- Mix dry ingredients and orange zest
- Beat eggs, oil and sugar
- Add pumpkin puree, mix thoroughly
Pour into a greased 9" x5' loaf pan
Bake at 350 degrees for 1 hour



NOTES FROM THE BOARD

A reminder that the 2023-2024 VicRS /ARS dues are needed to be paid

\$35 per person/family for those who wish to receive the journal

\$25 per family or single person and do not wish to receive the journal

\$10 for those who belong to another chapter of the ARS

Please note these dues are assisted by the VicRS to the tune of \$50 American per membership

Please note that the following members are to bring snacks for the meeting on Thursday

If one is not able to do this, please contact Betty Gordon at 250-479-0210

COFFEE, TEA AND HERBAL TEA , as well as cream, milk and sugar are supplied

NORM THOMAS

STAN WARLOW

EKWELLBORN

JEANANN ANDERSON

IAN BACK

The Milner Advisory Board is seeking new members for the coming year. If you are interested in serving, please contact John Deniseger of the Nanaimo Rhododendron Society



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