

VICTORIA RHODODENDRON SOCIETY NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2024

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
on the first
THURSDAY
of every month
SEPTEMBER - MAY

Our website is :
www.victoriarhodo.ca





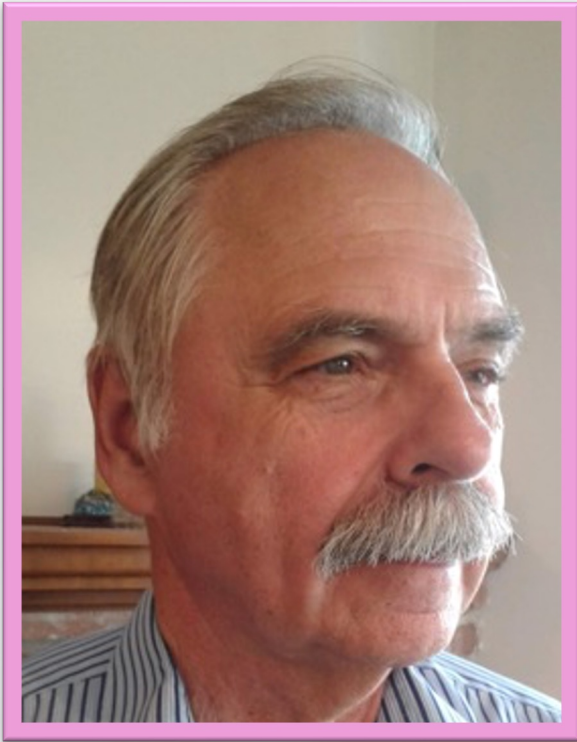
JEFF DE JONG...OUR FEBRUARY SPEAKER

“THE GARDEN IN A CHANGING WORLD”

The garden is always in transition from season to season. We adjust and adapt to make the best of our circumstances. Something else is happening all around us. Our changing world is bringing about changes in the garden. Jeff will present a talk on what we can expect from our new reality. Our gardens and the way we garden will be front and center. It is the perfect time to grow in 2024.



PRESIDENT'S REMARKS FEBRUARY 2024



What a seasonably warm fall and early winter it has been with some rhododendrons very confused and coming into flower well before their usual time of flowering. At our home, Naselle had a truss for Christmas Day...and so we went along.

Mother Nature had other ideas. Winter would not be winter without a spot of cold weather. She really showed us who was in charge on lower Vancouver Island and elsewhere in Canada. The super cold temperatures we received were record breaking. Now we wait to see if our beloved gardens have survived.

Previous to the cold snap and snow, I saw the yellow flowers of actonite hovering close to the ground. In downtown Victoria, an early spring forsythia was showing color on its lower branches, sporadically placed and in competition with a dandelion competing for best yellow category. Cyclamen corm has tightly curled pink and white buds dancing amongst its leaves waiting for warmer weather.

The snow has had a short stay with its enemies busy shoveling side walks and driveways. However, the best snow enemy by far is rain which is helping us edge toward spring. Witch hazels are welcoming us and snowdrops are on full display, telling us spring is just around the corner. Any nice day requires a walk in the garden.

The rhododendrons react to the cold weather by drooping and curling their leaves. Looking quite bedraggled, they are secretly waiting for warmer weather to show us why we are so enamored with this particular plant.

Our next meeting is February 1, at 7:30pm. Our speaker is Jeff De Jong . His topic is "THE GARDEN IN A CHANGING WORLD". Jeff is a well-know and knowledgeable speaker on many garden issues. Remember to bring your mug...free treats...plant raffle...and ZOOMED as well.

Our March meeting is the month for our AGM. If you would like to become a member of the board (one ZOOMED meeting per month) please contact any board member. Their information is within this newsletter.

CELEBRATING FEBRUARY AROUND THE WORLD



The streets of Rio de Janeiro are loaded for five sleepless days, colorful parades, costumes and ever-lasting parties. A tradition where everyone removed the temptations of wine and dine during Lent.



Chinese New Year in 2024 is the year of the dragon. Lunar New Year begins on the second new Moon after the winter solstice. Drums, fireworks and the color red play a part in the tradition of giving money packs to children.



On the 700th anniversary of Marco Polo's death, the Carnival of Venice will take place in February 2024. Twirling skirts, painted faces, jester hats, and peacock masks helps one fall into an alternate universe. This is about throwing away class differences and knowing only revelry.



The Jaisalmer Desert Festival is held three days prior to a full moon in the Hindu month of Magh. It is an extravaganza of sights, smells, tastes and the unique delights of this desert city. The Gair (famous folk dance) and the fire dance are the highlights of this festival.

WINTER WATCH FOR RHODODEDRONS IN FEBRUARY

Adapted fro Steve Henning
Valley Forge Chapter ARS



Typical rhododendron in winter



Winter trouble for rhododendrons is when the plant cannot bring enough moisture up from the roots due to frozen ground. This may result in a plant with dead and dried out leaves. For real protection, one can use an anti-transpirant. 'Wilt-Pruf' is a water-base polymer spray that is applied in late fall. This will help the plant retain moisture by a transparent film that does not allow water to escape.

The most important part in keeping your rhododendrons heathy all year long is to plant them in an ideal location. Since harsh winter winds and sun can damage the plants, placing them in partially shaded areas where they are protected from too much sun and prevailing winds will keep your plants healthy year-round.



Mulching rhododendrons helps protect the plant year-round. In summer by helping to contain moisture near the roots. Mulching also helps the plants in winter. This is especially important for long dry spells in winter, as the roots are active when not frozen and they need to be kept from drying out. If the subsoil is still frozen, be careful to only moisten the soil, as adding too much water will drown the plant.



Good mulches will not compact. Pine needles, oak leaves, pine bark chips, and pine bark shredded mulch are ideal ways to keep moisture in the ground. Never cover the top of the plant with burlap or other materials. A good mulch applied throughout the year around the base of the plant is your best defense against too much sun and too much cold.

Another concern maybe deer. When other food is not available, deer will browse on anything green. Deer sprays can be effective if applied on a regular basis.



WITCH HAZEL : CARE AND GROWING GUIDANCE

ADAPTED FROM THE SPRUCE



COMMON WITCH HAZEL

Witch Hazel (*Hamamelis*) is a hardy plant that requires cold temperatures to produce eye-catching spidery and fragrant blooms in the wintery landscape. It grows best in full sun. It needs moist, but well-draining soil, slightly on the acidic side. This makes it a great companion plant for rhododendrons.



PALLIDA WITCH HAZEL

Witch Hazel Pallida features showy fragrant buttery yellow strap-like flowers along the branches from late winter to early spring. It has forest green deciduous foliage and the serrated round leaves turn an outstanding orange in the fall. It however does produce suckers.



DIANE WITCH HAZEL

Witch Hazel Diane grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for 40 years or more. The shrub performs well in both sun and shade. The delightfully fragrant reddy-brown flowers appear along the branches in the late winter. It is often used as an accent plant and for mass plantings.



HAYE'S STARBURST WITCH HAZEL

Witch Hazel Haye's Starburst is a compact cultivar that typically grows 2 to 4 feet tall. This cultivar features rounded dome-shaped flowerheads and is densely packed with double-white florets. Bloom length extends from June to September.

WITCH HAZEL - USES, SIDE EFFECTS, AND MORE

ADAPTED FROM WebMD

Witch Hazel liquid is distilled from dried leaves, bark and partially dormant twigs of the witch hazel plant. It is considered a medicinal product.

OVERVIEW

Witch hazel is taken by mouth for diarrhea, mucuscolitis, vomiting blood, coughing up blood, tuberculosis, colds, fevers, tumors and cancer.

Some people apply witch hazel directly to the skin for itching, pain and swelling, eye inflammation, skin injury, mucous membrane inflammation, vaginal dryness after menopause, varicose veins, hemorrhoids, bruises, insect bites, minor urns, acne, sensitive scalp and other skin irritations.

In manufacturing, witch hazel leaf extract, bark extract, and witch hazel water are used as astringents to tighten the skin. They are also included in some medications to give those products the ability to slowdown or stop bleeding. Those medications are used for treating insect bites, stings, teething, hemorrhoids, itching, irritations and minor pains.

HOW IT WORKS

Witch hazel contains chemicals called tannins. When applied directly to the skin, witch hazel might help reduce swelling, help repair broken skin and fight bacteria.

POSSIBLY EFFECTIVE FOR

1. Hemorrhoids to relieve itching, irritation and burning
2. Skin irritation

INEFFECTIVE FOR

1. Menopause health problems
2. Bruises, colds, coughing up blood, diarrhea, eye inflammation, fevers, tuberculosis, varicose veins, vomiting blood

SPECIAL PRECAUTIONS

- 1 Likely safe for most adults when applied directly to the skin
- 1 Possibly safe when small doses are taken by mouth
- 2 Possibly safe for children when applied to the skin



“FEBRUARY IS THE BORDER BETWEEN WINTER AND SPRING”

The clue to this month’s garden jobs lies in the above quote.

February is the last of the precarious winter months and the time to make preparations for the coming spring. Now is the time to lift and divide any snowdrops in the garden so to have more for next year. Just make certain the leaves have turned yellow and are finished flowering. Just split the plants into small clumps and then replant in a new area.

Cut the spent stem of deciduous grasses, taking care to not trim any new and emerging shoots, then finish dress the plants with mulch.

If you have the Common Butterfly Bush, these unpruned shrubs can really take over an area. They respond well to be pruned back to a few healthy buds above the bases. You will lose about 70-90% of the plant’s previous growth.

Now is the time to cut back on any Wisteria.

This is the time to start sowing seeds.

Keep on feeding the birds as they are beginning to mate, nest and lay their eggs. The better nourished the parent birds are, especially in cold weather, the larger and healthier their offspring will be.

Turn the compost if you have one. If it is soggy, add more “brown”... pine needles and bits of mulch.

Set out your hummingbird feeders. The Anna’s are building nests and the Rufus will soon return.

Check hoses and sprinklers for winter damage.

Assess your needs for soils, fertilizers and mulch.

Replant “heaved bulbs” that were planted last spring.

Check plants for snow and wind damage.



NATURE'S GIFT FOR GARDENING MAY HOLD THE KEY TO DIVERSITY

Adapted from the University of Edinburgh...Dr. Richard Milne

Gardeners are used to cross-breeding flowers to produce new varieties and scents ... now scientists have shown the importance of nature's talent for producing new types of flowers.

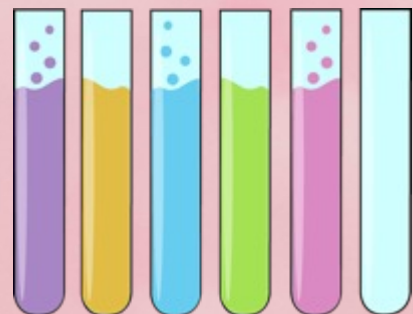
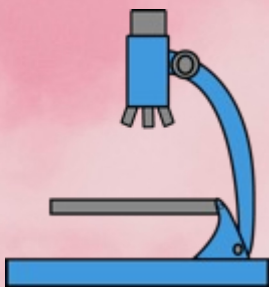
DNA analysis of wild evergreen rhododendrons in the Himalayas has suggested that hundreds of species of the plant could be derived from hybrid cross-breeds between different species. Their findings may help explain the rich diversity of the natural world, as it shows how random pairings of wild plants millions of years ago has led to the development of hundreds of new species that exist today.

Scientists have long known that single species can derive from hybrid origins. This latest finding offers rare evidence that whole groups of species can be developed from a hybrid ancestor.

Scientists sampled the DNA of 79 species Rhododendron and used the results to analyze how each species was related.

They found that although most Himalayan rhododendrons were descended from the same ancestral line, three rogue species showed traces of a second, distantly related ancestor. This species, now extinct, may have arrived in the Himalayas within the last 10 million years and interbred with species already there.

The discovery suggests that much of the diversity found in rhododendrons and perhaps other species - is a result of ancient cross-breeding, which has enabled a diverse range of offspring over many successive generations.





THE STORY OF PINK POLAR BEAR

Adapted from Millais Nurseries

July flowering rhododendrons are somewhat unusual and are typically white in color. As most rhododendrons flower in the April – May period, a July flowering pink rhododendron was a surprise for breeder Jack Bottle a rare pink R. Polar Bear. This plant features attractive large trumpet shaped scented flowers that come to flower in mid July. It is deep pink in bud, opening to a pale purplish a bunch of Polar Bear seedlings.

It is a large and vigorous shrub, with large pale green leaves. It is not the toughest of plants and needs protection from wind. It prefers a woodland setting to protect blooms from strong summer sun. Millais Nurseries propagate this plant by grafting.



PINK FORMAT



WHITE FORMAT



WHAT TO PLANT WITH HELLEBORES

MEGHAN WHINN..HORTICULTURE MAGAZINE DECEMBER 2023



The Christmas rose and the Lenten rose are prized perennials that bloom in winter and early spring in regions when the vast majority of other herbaceous plants lie dormant. Rather than let them bloom in a bare patch, provide some evergreen companions that will help them pop. This is especially important among Lenten roses as they lack foliage of their own when in bloom.

When looking for companion plants for hellebores, remember that they need similar growing conditions: part to full shade; average soil with good drainage; and moderate to low water once established.



Evergreen ferns such as hart's tongue, and Japanese shield fern provide a leafy backdrop to the hellebore's flowers. The Christmas fern is another fine option as it is tough, adaptable and is evergreen all year round, even in very cold climates.



Dwarf evergreen shrubs such as shade-tolerant Christmas box provide shelter and contrast. Rhododendrons are another good option for broadleaf evergreens to back up hellebores. Just make certain that the rhododendrons receive dappled light or a half day of sun to promote compact growth and blooming.



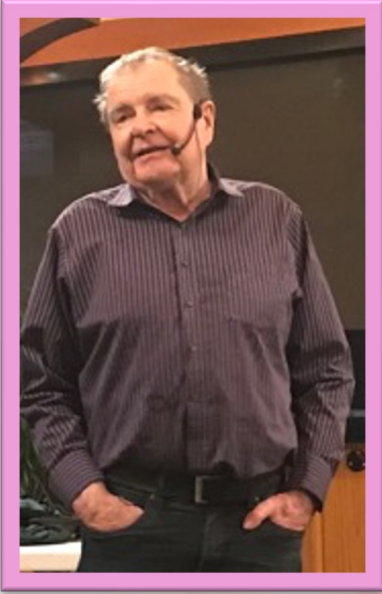
Low ornamental grasses and sedges pair well with hellebores. The sedges lend an airy texture with their slender stalks of grass and are a good contrast for dark or purple hellebores.



CELEBRATING OUR JANUARY SPEAKER GLEN JAMEISON

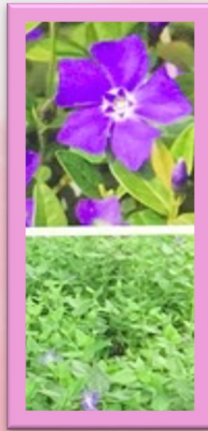


THANK YOU NADINE FOR THE PHOTOS

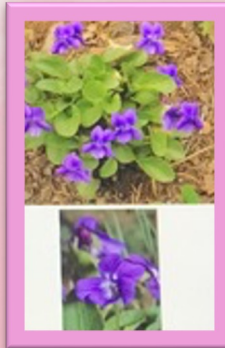


Glen did a very interesting talk on invasive species of weeds from around the world, many of which are found on Vancouver Island. He was able to weave in his experiences from his own garden, which add a new depth of understanding for our group. Included were garden weeds, water weeds and even some nursery plants that are now considered to be weeds. Examples include:

Two other categories of weeds that were covered were medicinal plants and water weeds.



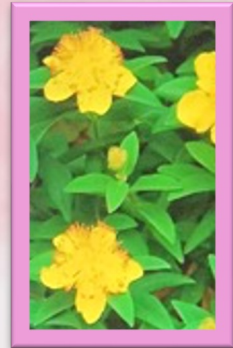
VINCA MAJOR/MINOR



WESTERN VIOLET



LAMIUM



ST. JOHN'S WART

Sometimes out of the generosity of other gardeners, we receive "gifts" that "per se" are also weeds. That is when beginners tend to make errors, all in the name of creating a garden. "GARDENER BEWARE" is a good motto for beginning gardeners. On this note of not knowing what you are receiving, Glen added his personal story of the Common Mullein, which he now deals with on a yearly basis.



ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL RAFFLE...THANK YOU CONTRIBUTORS



FIGWORT OR COMMON MULLEIN

WEEDS...WEEDS...WEEDS

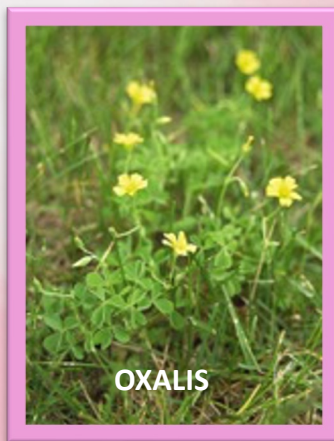
HOW TO IDENTIFY AND HOW TO ELIMINATE

ADAPTED FROM BETTER HOMES AND GARDENS

Stop pesky weeds for crashing your garden party with these ideas.



Mulch if in garden
Pull by hand
Use broadleaf herbicide



Mulch if in garden
Pull by hand
Use broadleaf herbicide



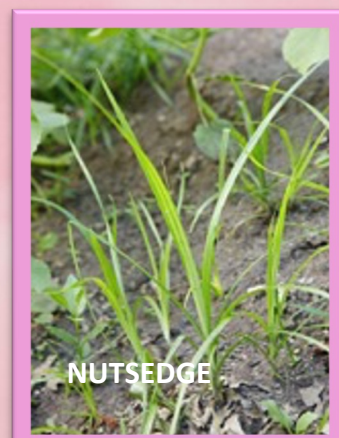
Roots when stem makes
soil contact
Pull by hand
Spot-treat with non-
selective herbicide



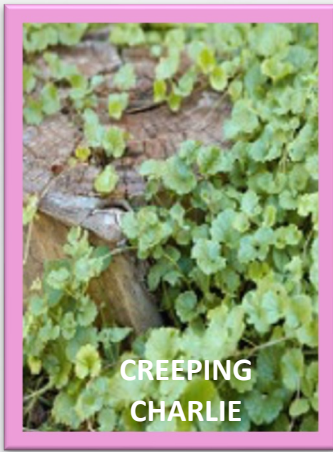
A climbing perennial
Produces white/pink flowers
on vines
Mulch
Spot treat non-selective herbicide



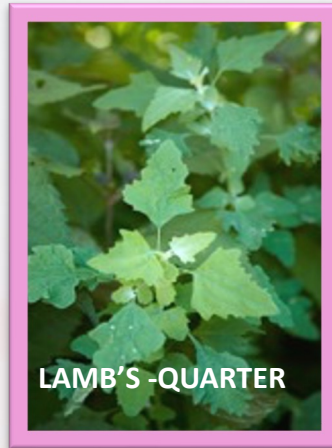
Adds nitrogen to soil
Mulch if not wanted
Dig out
Use iron-based
herbicide



Has nut-like tubers
Grows faster than turf
Mulch if in garden
Pull by hand
Important to use right
herbicide, depending on grass
type.



Grows in shaded areas
Scalloped leaves, purple flowers
Pull by hand
Use post-emergent herbicide



Sun and shade
Triangular gray underside
Pull by hand
Use post-emergent herbicide



Pull by hand
Likes moist soil
Use post-emergent herbicide



Grows in sunny area
Has extensive root system
Dig out or use broadleaf herbicide



Likes sun or shade
Love rich, moist soil
Pull by hand
Use emergent herbicide



Broad leaf annual
Grows in sun or shade
Pull by hand
Use post-emergent herbicide

HOMEMADE WEED KILLERS

For homemade weed killer for dandelions, clover and poison ivy, use horticultural vinegar
4 parts vinegar to 1 part water, 2 tablespoons of dish soap
Apply in hot weather, saturate the plant completely
Use carefully as it can be toxic on skin



Budget friendly herbicide is boiling water
The heat damages weed leaves and prevents them from regrowing
For tough weeds, apply every two weeks



DO YOU HAVE A GOURMET COOK IN THE FAMILY?

GROWING HERBS TOGETHER NEED SOME PRE-PLANNING
ADAPTED FROM GARDENING KNOW HOW

Having your own herb garden is a thing of beauty. There is nothing better than fresh herbs to enliven the most bland dish. Not everyone has space for a herb garden. Luckily, most herbs grow very well in containers. General rules of thumb to consider are choosing plants that have similar irrigation needs.

Rosemary, thyme and sage like fairly dry soil. Basil and parsley need more consistent moisture.

Mediterranean herbs that grow well together are sage, thyme, rosemary, marjoram, oregano and lavender.

Creeping thyme looks lovely growing with prostrate rosemary and a variegated sage.

Moisture loving herbs such as tarragon, cilantro and basil work well together.

Remember that parsley is a biennial and will die back after two years.

Lemon verbena and lemon thyme are a good combination



COMBO #1



Rosemary, thyme, sage, marjoram, oregano, lavender

COMBO #3



Tarragon, cilantro, basil

COMBO #4



Lemon verbena, lemon thyme

COMBO #2



Creeping thyme, prostrate rosemary, variegated sage

THE RHODODENDRON DELL AT HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Adapted from The Arnold University at Harvard

The Rhododendron Dell at Harvard University showcases the Arboretum's core collection of hybrid and evergreen rhododendrons. An overstory of hemlock, birch, oak, maple and pine provide ideal rhododendron habitat.

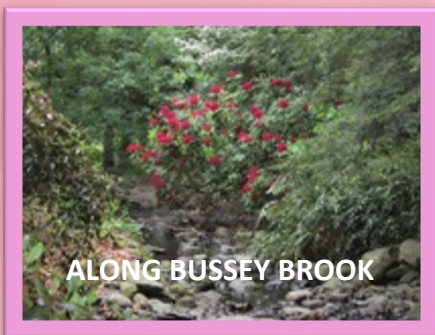
In the early 1900's, Ernest Henry Wilson evaluated many of the rhododendrons in the collection and in 1917 published a list of "ironclads" – a group of rhododendrons that had proved hardy and floriferous. Bred in the UK, these ironclads became the focus of regional plant introduction and breeding endeavors in New England. Many of the original plants, acquired in 1886 from the Woking Nursery in England, are the largest plants in the collection.



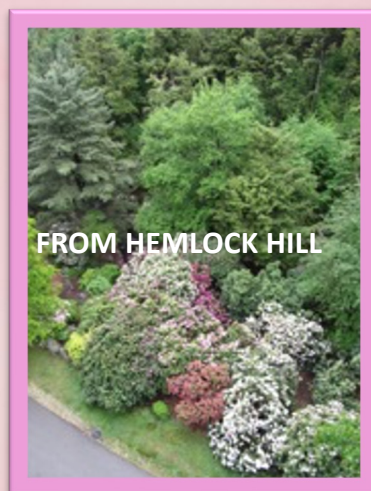
"SIR CHARLES BUTLER"



Today, the rhododendron collections in the Dell include 92 taxa. Of these, 72 are cultivars which have been selected for horticultural merit including flower color and fragrance, truss size, leaf morphology and hardiness. In total, the Dell includes 440 plants.



ALONG BUSSEY BROOK



FROM HEMLOCK HILL



R. 'BICOLOR' AND
'CATAWBIENSE ALBUM'



CATAWBIENSE ALBUM



BLUE PETER



NON-CONFORMIST RHODODENDRONS

DAVID RANKIN DEPT. CHEMISTRY, UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH, ADAPTED



Growing rhododendrons on limestone is impossible. More or less. Of course, there are one or two lime-tolerant species – The European *R. hirsurtum* -- but the vast majority of species become chlorotic and sick if there is lime in the soil. So - don't waste your time on rhododendrons – grow something else.

This is what we have been led to believe- but nature has other ideas. In Western China and the Himalaya there are many species of rhododendrons commonly found growing in limestone regions, sometimes close to rock outcrops. This contravention has been noted by plant explorers from Forrest to Kingdom Ward and, to the present day.

THEORY #1

Although rhododendrons are growing over or near limestone, they are actually growing in decayed vegetation and the nature of the underlying rock is irrelevant.

THEORY #2

The limestone is dolomitic, with a magnesium content comparable to that of calcium. Plants need magnesium for chlorophyll production and enough magnesium is absorbed, but the alkalinity can cause problems by making iron unavailable.

THEORY #3

The limestone is hard and effectively insoluble so as with theory #1, has no effect on the metals available to the plants.

THEORY #4

As most of these regions have very high rainfall the water permeating the soil effectively washes away calcium as it dissolves from the rock, making it unavailable to the plants.

THEORY # 1 IS WRONG

In most cases the plants were growing in soil which contained large amounts of limestone. Lumps could be picked out, but the analyses showed the soils contain large percentages of finely divided calcium carbonate. Then plants were growing in stabilized scree.

THEORY # 2 IS WRONG

In every case, the limestone was effectively pure calcium carbonate with less than 1% magnesium. The ratio of magnesium to calcium was not sufficient to compete with or counter the effects of calcium.

THEORY # 3 IS WRONG

All the limestone samples were described by geologists as being soft. The calcium was readily available under the conditions of all our analyses.

THEORY # 4 IS WRONG

A study of the rate at which calcium dissolved showed that even under the high rainfall, the dissolved calcium concentration will build up the soil.

A NEW UPDATE SINCE THIS WAS PUBLISHED

“SUCCESSFUL CULTIVATION OF RHODODENDRONS ON LIMESTONE”

BY COLIN MUDRIDGE AND DAVID RANKIN

Visit the [Scottish chapter of the ARS to view](#)

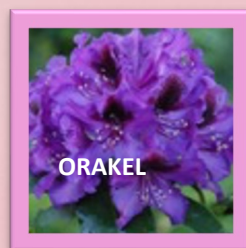
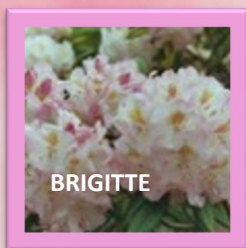
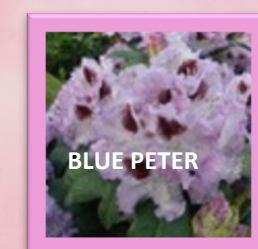
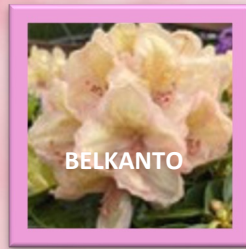
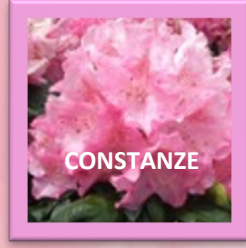
THE DILEMMA!

The lime is there in the soil and is available to the plants. So, it seems we need some more theories or, at least one. My suspicion is that there are in fact many more lime-tolerant species than we have been led to believe, or that at least there are tolerant strains. Our next project is to see whether these species growing in limestone are able to avoid absorption of calcium by their roots. Then we will have to compare these data with similar observations for supposedly less tolerant species when fed a lime rich diet.

[SEE PREVIOUS PAGE FOR INFORMATION ON THIS UPDATE](#)

INKARHO LIME-TOLERANT RHODODENDRONS

The revolutionary new “Inkarho” lime tolerant rootstock is particularly recommended for growing rhododendrons in clay soils, up to a pH7. These have been grafted onto a very special lime-tolerant rootstock that was discovered in a German lime quarry and developed over 20 years. Now, dwarf Yakushimanum varieties have been grafted on to the Inkarho root stock.





WHAT IS PLOIDY IN RHODODENDRONS?

*A Novel Method for Inducing Polyploidy in Rhododendron Seedlings
North Carolina State University (2008)*

Ploidy is a general term that refers to a complete set of genetic information. When more than one set is present, they are similar, but not identical. Cells will use all of the genetic material available to them and polyploid cells tend to be larger.

Polyploidy is the heritable condition of possessing more than two complete sets of chromosomes. (Amal; Jones). Polyploids are common among plants, as well as among certain groups of fish and amphibians.

Polyploidy is especially evident in the genus RHODODENDRON, particularly in Rhododendron and Pentanthera. Ploidy levels can influence crossability, fertility of hybrids, plant vigor and gene expression. (Ranney) In some cases, polyploids may have additional desirable ornamental characteristics including thicker leaves and larger flowers. (Barlup, Hosoda, Kehr, Leach).

Polyploidy can arise through multiple pathways including naturally and can be induced through the use of various chemicals. The objective of the study of polyploidy was to develop a population of new polyploid rhododendrons and azaleas for use in future breeding programs.

Prefixes are used to specify the number of chromosome sets in a particular organism. The symbol x is used to indicate the number of chromosomes in a set. Monoloids have $1x$, diploids have $2x$, triploids have $3x$, tetraploids have $4x$ and pentaploids have $5x$.





MARC COLOMBEL

Menez-Rohou, Fouesnant, France



Marc Colombel is the founder and president of the Society Bretonne du Rhododendron. Originally from Picardy, France, he was struck by the beauty of a very large rhododendron he saw growing against a stone house in Brittany. Recently retired from the French Airforce as a navigator, his interest was captured and he purchased the home in the 1980's. In 1985 he began a 40 year career in hybridizing rhododendrons with a particular interest in polyploid rhododendrons.



RWAIN 3 X

(RHODODENDRON WITHOUT AN IMPORTANT NAME)



RHODODENDRON BROUGHTONNI 3X
115 YEARS OLD

HOW IT ALL BEGAN

RETIREMENT, TIME, INTEREST, PASSION, DEDICATION

...CELEBRATION OF SUCCESS ...



CHOUCHOU 4X



CHOUCHOU 4X

NAMED BY MARC'S WIFE



KEIKO 4X

NAMED AFTER OUR OWN KEIKO



KEIKO 4X

MARC STAYED WITH KEIKO IN 2015 ARS CONVENTION



GREGHAM 4X

GRAND CHAMP EN BRETON



GREGHAM 4X

GRAND CHAMP IS A NAME OF A PETITE VILLE



BOUBOULE 4X



BOUBOULE 4X



NAMED AFTER MARC'S FRENCH BULLDOG



FRANK FUJIOKA 4X



FRANK FUJIOKA 4X

FRANK WAS A VERY GOOD FRIEND TO MARC AS WELL AS A FELLOW HYBRIDIZER

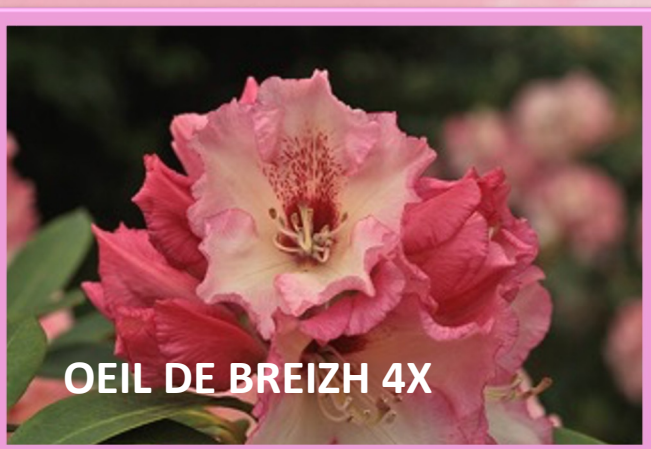


ROSE DE BRETAGNE 4X

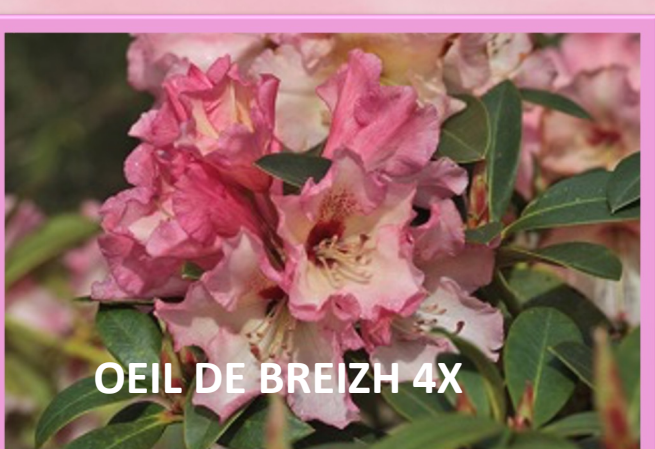


ROSE DE BRETAGNE 4X

NAMED AFTER A WINE CALLED ROSE FROM PROVENCE ... WHY NOT A ROSE FROM BRITTANY EVEN IF THERE ARE NO VINES



Oeil de Breizh 4X



Oeil de Breizh 4X

**Oeil de Breizh is pronounced Oeil de Brais
Breizh in French means Brittany**



EDDU 4X

EDDU MEANS BLACK WHEAT, A BRETON CEREAL



NOSY 4X

NAMED AFTER A SMALL ISLAND WEST OF MADAGASAR



BRETON WHISKEY



NOSY-BE ISLAND, MADAGASCAR



JIM BARLUP 4 X

NAMED AFTER OUR FRIEND AND BENEFACTOR WHOSE WORK IS NOW WITHIN A PUBLIC PARK FOR ALL TO SEE



FRANK FUJIOKA



JIM AND JUDY BARLUP



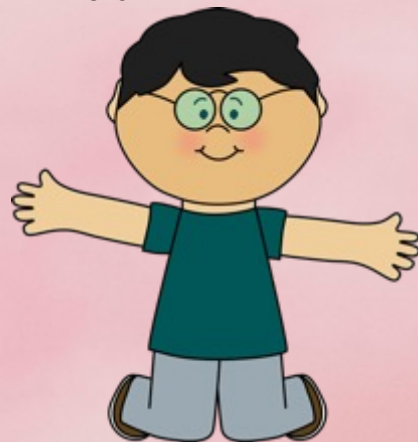
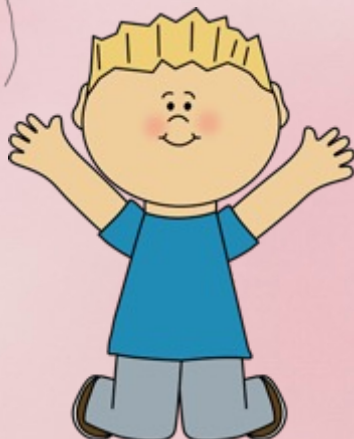
KEIKO

HONOREES



PRESENTED TO JIM AND JUDY BARLUP ON THE OCCASION OF BEING HONORED AT "THE SOCIETE BRETAGNE DU RHODODENDRON"

IT IS A HAND-PAINTED QUIMPER FAIENCE FACTORY PIECE ESPECIALLY MADE FOR THE BARLUPS





HELLO ORANGE

The color orange is part of the Plants Love You campaign by Communities in Bloom. In 2024, get ready to dive into a sea of orange as we embark on a new vibrant journey. Everyone is invited to plant orange in honor of our indigenous communities as we celebrate all ways plants love you.

Canadian Garden Council



As rhododendron lovers....here are a few suggestions.



WILD GINGER



PEACH CHARM



CINNABARINUM



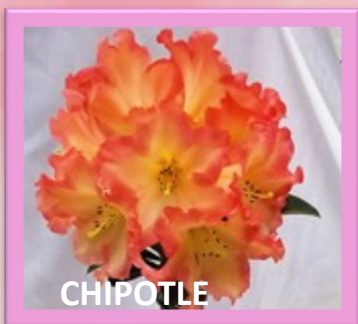
ORANGE PRELUDE



TREWITHEN ORANGE



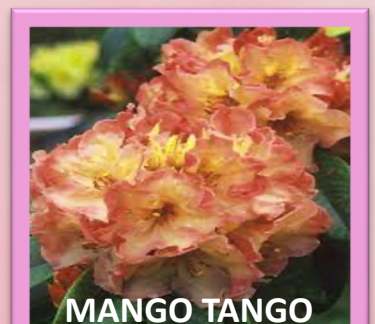
FIRE RIM



CHIPOTLE



HONEY BUTTER



MANGO TANGO

HOW TO TELL OUTSIDE TEMPERATURES THROUGH RHODODENDRON PLANTS

The story of PJM at the Duncan/Allen Garden



-1 Celsius PJM



-10 Celsius PJM



RHODODENDRONS ON THE 49th PARALLEL



American Rhododendron Society
Bellingham, Washington

MAY 1-5, 2024



Our neighbors to the south are looking for some help on the days of the convention as their organizing group is quite small. It will be a “hands-on” type of volunteer effort that does not require any formal training. We can show them OUR LOVE OF RHODODENDRONS by Vancouver Island volunteers offering a bit of assistance as needed. If you are going to the convention and want to take this opportunity to help out, please contact Ken Webb. His email is ken@mkwebb.ca His telephone number is 250-883-5746



Thank
You



American Rhododendron Society

President's Message to ARS Board of Directors and ARS Chapter Presidents

Update: January 17, 2024

New Year's Greetings, Everyone!

The ARS Executive Committee met via Zoom on Thursday, January 4, 2024. Here is a brief summary of some items discussed and decisions made.

The Changing Landscape

There is no doubt that changes are happening within our membership and our chapters of the ARS.

Chapters are grappling with many challenges including declining membership, aging chapter leaders and the lack of younger members to step into leadership positions.

In an effort to meet our challenges head-on and improve communication between and among chapters, District Directors and ARS Executive members, the Executive will discuss the possibility of holding a ZOOM meeting of Chapter Presidents, District Directors and Executive Committee Members:

The Presidents' Meeting

Planning for this possible gathering will take place at the next Executive Meeting scheduled for February 27, 2024. More information to come. Here is a chance for Chapter Presidents to let us know their challenges and share successes with everyone.

1. Availability of Rhododendrons

We have launched a project looking into the quantity and variety of rhododendron available in nurseries and garden centers around the US and Canada. Our goal is to increase availability both to our members and the public'

In order to do this, we need to assess the situation as it stands right now. Mike Stewart has agreed to assess nurseries and propagators on the West Coast of the continent, including BC. Michael Bamford is working in the southeast US and will approach key informants in the northeast to determine the situation there. Mike, Michael, Bob Weissman and myself will meet in Bellingham on May 4 to determine a plan of action. Anyone with information that would be helpful to this group, please email and let us all know.

2. Illustrated Member Benefits

I have created a two-page colored flyer illustrating the benefits of membership in the ARS. This can be tailored to highlight the local activities of any chapter. Chapter presidents and District Directors will be provided with a version that can be made specific to any local chapter if they wish.

Uses: * Post on our chapter web site
* Include in your chapter newsletter
* Print and provide to new and potential members

3. Fundraising

We have a need for additional funding projects not included in our annual budget. Applying for grants may be the answer.

We are looking for someone with experience with Grant Writing. If you know someone, please let us know.

4. Zoom Presentations to the Rescue

We encourage all chapters to continue to share information on their Zoom presentations and welcome other chapters or members-at-large to join them. With Chapters closing, members aging and not wanting to drive at night or in heavy traffic, Zoom may be a good way to maintain the interest of our members.

5. Conventions, Conferences and Regional Gatherings

At this time, we do not have a conference scheduled for the Fall of 2024 or anything beyond the 2025 Spring Convention in Nova Scotia. There are many reasons for this, most of which I think we are all aware.

Alternatives to Large Conventions and Conferences:

Simple - Inexpensive – Local or Regional

**In Partnership with other
Chapters, Garden Cubs , Master Gardeners**

Many chapters and regions are mounting smaller, less expensive, local and regional gatherings that all their members will be able to access. As an example, here are some simple, fun, local and inexpensive gatherings coming up:

District 9 (Potomac Valley, Mid-Atlantic, Mason Dixon) – Two days in Annapolis with Garden tours, dinners and talks for local members.

Mt. Arrowsmith and Nanaimo Chapters – One day *Fall Into Gardening* in October with 4 or 5 speakers, bag lunch and held at a Community Center. It keeps the costs low; jointly with Master Gardeners, members and non-members welcome.

Georgia – Chapter members tour public and private gardens on a regular basis, car-pooling, dining out, enjoying pizza or bringing a picnic lunch

Mt. Arrowsmith – Annual Bus Tour of public and private gardens – one or two days – around 50 passengers, friends and non-members welcome .Approximate cost; \$50 one day, \$90 for two days, plus a modest hotel

OUTLINES AND GUIDES FOR ALL THES EVENTS ARE AVAILABLE OR UNDER DEVELOPMENT

6. We want to hear from you.

If you have thoughts or ideas about these issues and others, please let us know..

Email: lindaderkach@shaw.ca

Best wishes, Linda Derkach
ARS President



NOTES FROM THE BOARD



Our AGM will be held after the speaker at our March meeting

ARS dues are paid; \$6000 moved from savings to chequing

Attracting and maintaining members continues to be a topic of consideration

A discussion was had about restarting the propagation group

A nomination committee for executive positions will be formed for 2024-2025

Examining the current by-laws to bring them up to date for the current societal conditions

Explore the possibility of organizing a bus tour to up-island gardens in 2025

Co-host a multi-club picnic at the Buchanan Simpson Garden owned by UVIC

Organize a *R. macrophyllum* search party at Rhododendron Lake

A meeting suggestion of members receiving seedlings to replant and grow

Note: the ARS Seed Exchange is now open

The patio garden at the HCP will continue to be built as the weather cooperates

Guest speakers were discussed: geologist, bug expert, building mason bees homes, bug hotels

Convention needs other volunteers. More information is contained in this newsletter

A suggestion that District 1 consider hosting a spring convention on a smaller scale

Ken has noted that his April 20 plant sale has a plethora of quality plants for sale



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