

# THE VICTORIA RHODODENDRON SOCIETY NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2024

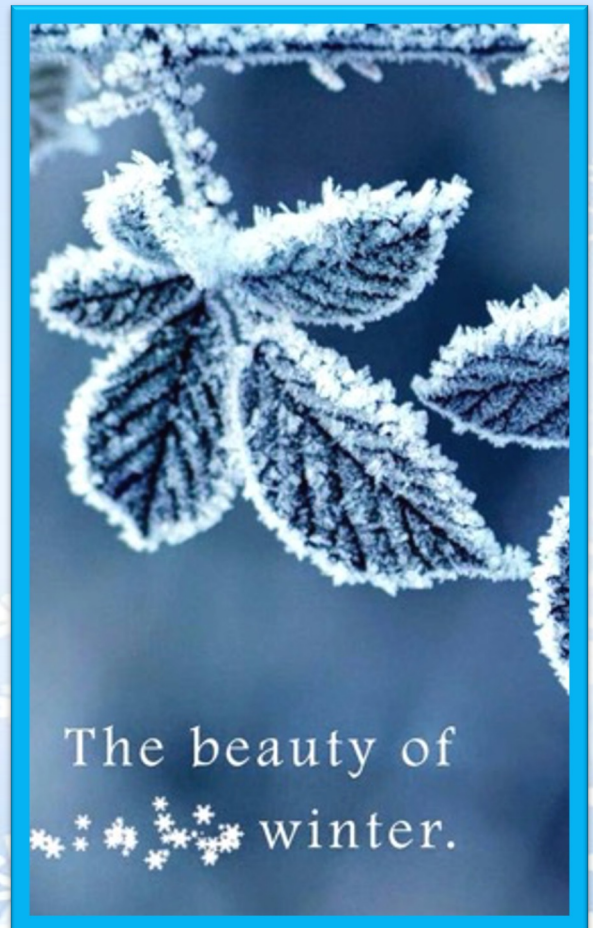


## VICTORIA RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

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  
each month  
SEPTEMBER - MAY

Our website is:  
[www.victoriarhodo.ca](http://www.victoriarhodo.ca)





## PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

Another calendar year is coming to a close as we enter the dark days of winter. I have just been to the dentist and my mouth is partially frozen and I am trying to dictate to my word processor. Such weird gibberish has never landed on a sheet of paper or on a computer screen...here I am talking effluent, rather than fluent. What the mind thinks and what went on the screen were worlds apart. Let me sleep on this and start again tomorrow.

It is another day and a fresh start. The winter is upon us. The frosts have altered the annuals to brown skeletons from their appealing summer displays. The Dawn viburnum puts forth many scented small clusters of pink flowers in mild winter weather, but they are at the mercy of the frosts. However, they do display some sporadic winter color. With the deciduous tree leaves gone we are left to admire the hardy cyclamen overwintering foliage patterns and shapes.

Then there are those rhododendrons like *pachysanthum*, *bureavii* and 'Everred' and the large-leaf types that display colorful leaves and admirable leaf shapes. I saw a snowdrop clothing its white vertical bud with its leaves...heralding of the spring to come. My bunch of single-leafed hardy cyclamen seedlings are emerging. Time to transplant them.

At our last Board meeting, Calvin proposed, and has now created, a separate email address for our club that has anything to do with propagation. The address is [VicRSpropagators@gmail.com](mailto:VicRSpropagators@gmail.com). The purpose behind this idea is to help us respond to the public's desire for certain varieties. This will also give us an inventory that will be available to members for future cutting productions.

Thank you for your positive vote at the Christmas Party in regard to the Paired Geese Bronze that is now ensconced in the Jim Barlup Legacy Garden.

Our January meeting is being presented by Glen Jamieson. His talk will be about weeds, those undesirable plants that want to thrive in our gardens. This presentation will be available in person or on ZOOM. Look for further ZOOM information further on in this newsletter. We are always looking for people to serve as Board Members. Fresh ideas are always welcomed. Please consider volunteering for this important venture. Board meetings are held via ZOOM and usually last about 30 minutes per month.

My wishes for you and your family are good health and great friendships in 2024.



# DEADHEADING RHODODENDRONS... YES?... NO?

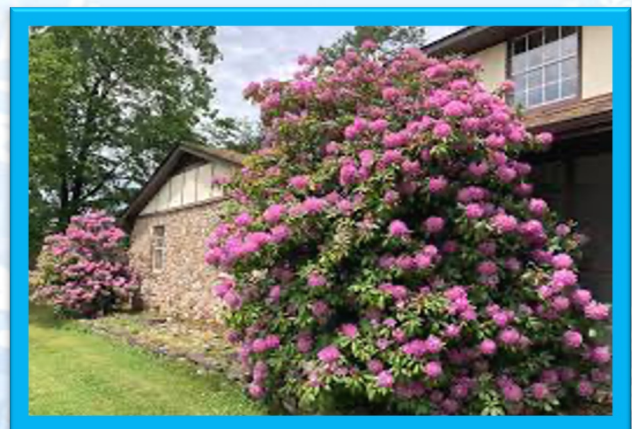
ADAPTED FROM DEADHEADING RHODODENDRONS  
DON WALLACE

Every year, after they bloom, rhododendrons are covered with seed heads. In theory, if the plant puts energy into seed production, then fewer flower buds are created for next year's bloom. This theory was validated with an experiment by Oregon's Portland Parks Department.

One large rhododendron was selected in the park that always bloomed reliably. After blooming, only the bottom of the plant was deadheaded, leaving the top half untouched. The following spring, the bottom half flowered heavily, while the top half had few flowers. To confirm these results they repeated the experiment. However, this time they deadheaded the top half of the plant, leaving the bottom half untouched. The next spring, as suspected, the top half flowered heavily, while the bottom half did not.



While this experiment would work well with the average rhododendrons in our gardens, the large rhododendrons such as *Loderi King George* or *Pink Pearl* will bloom readily without deadheading. Pick and choose which plants are reasonably and readily can be deadheaded.



NO



YES



# JANUARY GARDEN TASKS

January is a time for reflecting on the previous year's successes and failures and planning for the growing season ahead. While much of this can be accomplished indoors, keeping up with garden tasks in the winter will lay the foundation for a rewarding growing season.

## **ANNUALS**

Plant pansies, primroses and cyclamen and other cold hardy annuals. These add color until the rhododendrons begin to bloom

## **BULBS**

Bulbs can still be planted if the ground is not frozen. Check potted bulbs in extended dry or cold spells. Protect bulbs from hungry rodents by applying repellent or wire mesh.

## **LAWNS**

Rake leaves and branches from winter storms. Moss flourishes. Address this issue in early spring. Avoid stepping on frozen grass.

## **PERENNIALS**

Plant perennials on dry, pleasant days. Remove brittle stems and dead foliage. Cut ornamental grasses to within 12" from the surface. Clip dead fern fronds just above the crown. Apply slug pellets.

## **RHODODENDRONS**

Protect rhododendrons planted in pots with mulch. Prune any dead branches. Watch for chewing on leaves by weevils. Apply nematodes if need be. Spray with a systemic pesticide. Locals use 1 cup Lysol to a gallon watering can of water and spray the roots every two weeks.



# GLOBAL WARMING AND GARDENS

ADAPTED FROM GARDEN DESIGN

Global warming is a hot topic and data and predictions continue to accumulate. Though scientists still debate the issue, an overwhelming majority of researchers say climate is not only coming, it is well underway.

What can we expect? It is not the same for everyone. A basic general overview of regional issues that we are experiencing and will continue to see more of include:

- . Water shortages in the west
- . Warmer winters and less-frequent, but more violent precipitations in the east
- . Northward creep of hardiness zones and disruptions to habitat communities

Many of us are ahead of the game. We are tuned to subtle changes in our environment and we watch the weather like meteorologists. We are hypersensitive to changes in our plant materials so that they can continue to thrive in the garden

## AT GROUND LEVEL

Get our soils in good shape before planting

Compost, compost, compost

Mulch lessens the need for water and keeps down weeds

Choose the appropriate mulch for our area

Be judicious with fertilizers, since all produce NO<sub>2</sub> as a byproduct when they break down

## WATER WISDOM

Water deeper, but less often

Use automatic irrigations, but make certain the water is reaching its targets

## PLANT CHOICES

Just by adding plants, one is already green

Add native plants

Create diversity in the garden with plant materials

Consider wildlife when you garden. These provide support for the ecosystem





# BENEFICIAL WASPS AND YOU

*Adapted from National Garden Bureau*

Did you know ... wasp pollination and predatory efforts are signs of a healthy ecosystem?

Wasps extend beyond yellow jackets and hornets - nuisance and pain. The majority of wasps are solitary, and non-aggressive. These wasps keep to themselves and provide multiple eco-system services including pollination, but are especially critical for pest control in our gardens, public lands and croplands. Below are some wasp groups that are beneficial to our gardens. Wasps have a complex evolutionary history and are generally divided into two families. These are APOID and VESPIDAE.

## APOID FAMILY OF BENEFICIAL WASPS



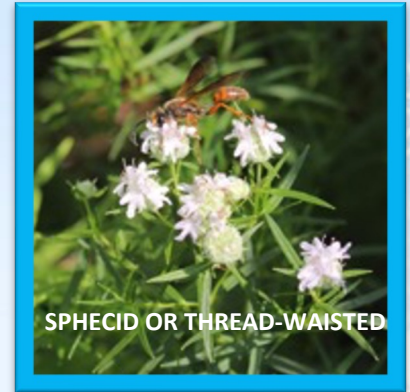
CERCERIS - WEEVIL

WEEVIL WASP series are ground nesters and prey mostly on beetles and weevils. Some species also take bees and wasps back to their nests.



BEE WOLVES OR DIGGER

BEE WOLVES OR DIGGER WASPS larvae feed on bees provided by their mother. Females cultivate beneficial bacteria in the bases of their antennae that they apply to their brood cells to protect from harmful microorganisms.



SPHECID OR THREAD-WAISTED

SPHECID OR THREAD-WAISTED Prey on grasshoppers and crickets. They nest with paralyzed adult grasshoppers that they lay a single egg on.



# PLANTS OF 2024

## GREENHOUSE PRODUCT NEWS



**ANNUAL OF THE YEAR**  
**"SUPERTUNIA VISTA JAZZBERRY"**

This is a huge, upright self-cleaning flower that lasts all season long. It took many years to develop and is a great addition for adding to flowering baskets.



**PERENNIAL OF THE YEAR**  
**SALVIA "PINK PROFUSION"**

This perennial has a pristine habit, high flower count and bright, eye catching color. It has dark pink colors on darker calyces. It will flower multiple times if cut back after each round of blooms.



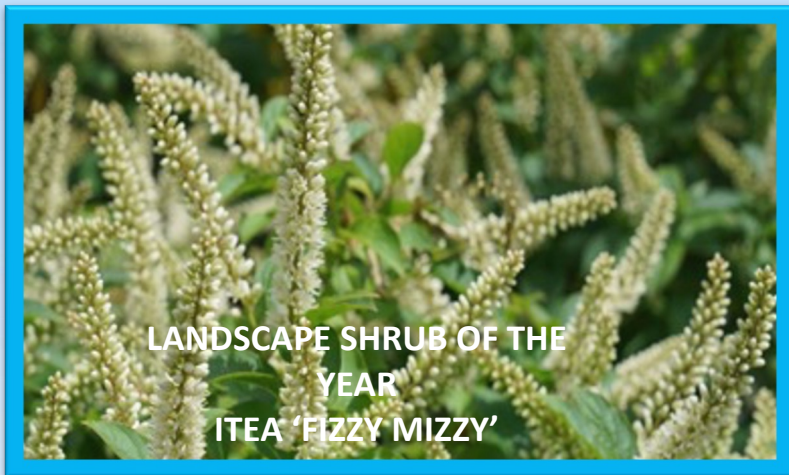
**SHRUB OF OF THE YEAR**  
**WEIGELELA 'WINEA ND SPIRITS'**

This is an update to the classic 'Wine and Roses' weigela with dramatic dark purple foliage and crisp, white-green flowers that run along the stems. The attractive foliage lasts long past the flowering season.





This is a reblooming hydrangea that blooms reliably each year. The mophead blooms emerge soft blue with a honeydew green eye before maturing to full sky blue. This durable hydrangea conserves its wood buds in the face of weather challenges.



'Fizzy Mizzy' sweetspire stands upright with its abundant, bright white flower spikes that carry a light fragrance which attracts pollinators. Its early summer bloom helps bridge the gap between spring and summer.



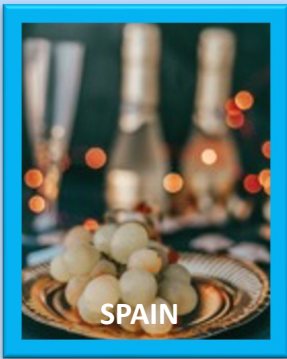
This hosta features showy tricolor leaves that form a large mound. The heavily textured tricolor leaves have a bright blue margin, apple green jettings and a creamy white center. It is a strong grower with slug resistant leaves.





# 2024

**HAPPY NEW YEAR AROUND THE WORLD**



**SPAIN**

Eat 12 grapes at midnight to bring good fortune



**COLOMBIA**

Carry a suitcase around the block to encourage travel



**SCOTLAND**

The first person to come in should be a dark haired man



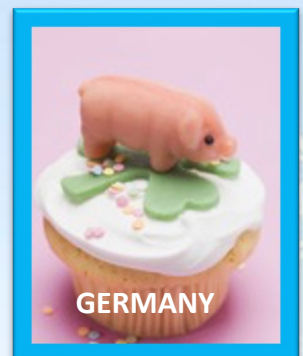
**BRAZIL**

Throwing white flowers into the sea



**JAPAN**

Eating soba noodles



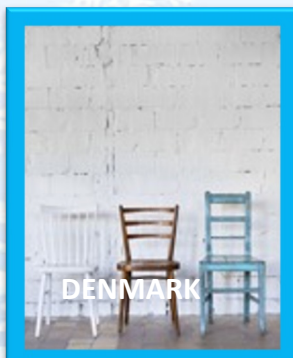
**GERMANY**

Pigs appear in marzipan treats



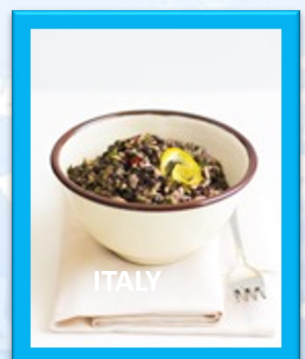
**GREECE**

Smashing pomegranates



**DENMARK**

Jumping off chairs



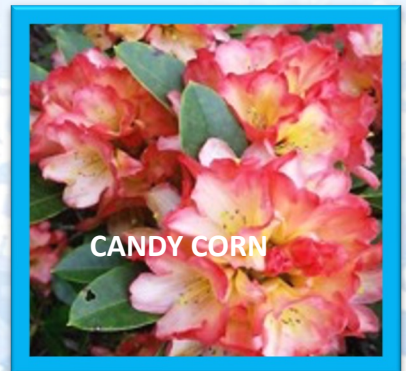
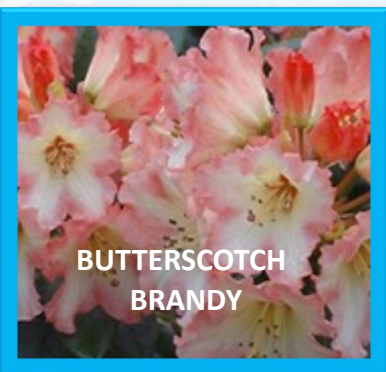
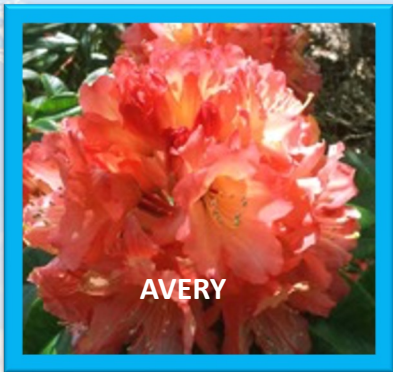
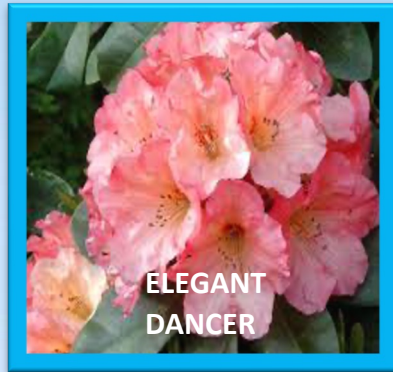
**ITALY**

Eating lentils, not pasta

# WEST COAST HYBRIDIZERS

**DON WALLACE**

Don is the owner and operator of Singing Tree Nursery, McKinleyville, California. The nursery specializes in the best plants for the Northern California market and the Pacific Northwest. He began the nursery after a fascination with propagating and hybridizing rhododendrons. The nursery is over half display gardens, and one is able to see the plants Don sells growing at the nursery. Most of Don's hybrids are available only through his nursery.





# TOP CAUSES OF DEATH IN RHODODENDRONS

ADAPTED FROM JAN KELLY ARS JOURNAL 48: #2 1994

Our hopes soar with the coming of spring as we anticipate another excellent growing season for our rhododendrons and their beautiful flowers. Perhaps we may add a new hybrid or add to the collection of species that we are growing. We know there is always room for a new rhododendron in our gardens.



To begin, excessive water claims about 75% of all rhododendrons purchased. Rhododendrons are fibrous, shallow rooted plants that need good drainage. Historically gardeners have been told to dig a hole twice as wide and twice as deep, and then fill with peat moss, soil and other amendments before planting. Not so with rhododendrons. The ideal planting for a rhododendron is to hollow out a wide and shallow hole, place the rhododendron in the hole and put soil mixed with wood chips and leaf mold to just cover the root. We know that rhododendrons around the world live in shallow beds of highly organic matter.

Another cause of rhododendron death is lack of water. As rhododendrons do not have tap roots and are near the surface they need regular watering. When first planted, they need regular watering until established. As plants increase in size and the roots develop, watering less frequently can be the norm. Sun-burned leaves can be from a lack of water, not too much sun: burned tips of leaves are indicative of a lack of water.

Rhododendron death can occur from using too much fertilizer. A good rule is to fertilize more frequently with smaller doses.

Planting too deep is another cause of rhododendron death. Soil should come just to the root ball, as planting too deep leads to the plant not growing or to eventually the death of the plant.

Rhododendrons can die from cold winter temperatures as well as hot summer sun. Very few rhododendrons can survive -25 F. Check the variety one is purchasing for temperature guides. Rhododendrons that are planted in full sun without any benefit from partial shade or filtered light are doomed to die.

Even by creating the right growing conditions, some rhododendrons will become victims of some kind of fungal disease....generally known as "die-back". Often seen in spring when the plant is beginning to grow and suddenly it drops dead. It is often seen in the summer when suddenly a branch turns brown and dies.

# PLANNING AHEAD FOR YOUR SUMMER GARDEN 2024

Adapted from Southern Living

Hanging baskets add a personal touch to the garden, bringing flowers and foliage to unused nooks and crannies. They bring gardens up to eye level, making a garden fuller and more complete. Container plants need consistent moisture. In the hot days of summer, hanging baskets will likely need watering every day. The following plants make a wonderful addition to a hanging basket.



**CALIBRACHOA HYBRIDS**

Heat and drought tolerant, prefers full sun, needs rich and moist soil, no deadheading needed



**VERBENA HYBRIDS**

Needs medium moisture, blues, yellows, purples, reds and rose colors, both upright and trailing forms, needs deadheading



**BEGONIA BOLIVIENSIS**

Tolerates heat, thrives in sun or shade, but does best in part shade. Shrugs off drought, flowers non-stop with fiery hues and pendulous flowers.



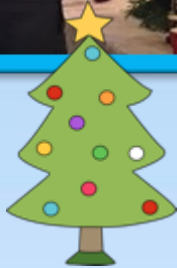
**FUCHISA SPECIES AND HYBRIDS**

Fuchsias are known for their bicolor dangling blooms with ruffled skirts that attract hummingbirds, Needs to be fully watered and protected from afternoon sun.





# MEMORIES OF OUR CHRISTMAS PARTY 2023







THANK YOU NADINE

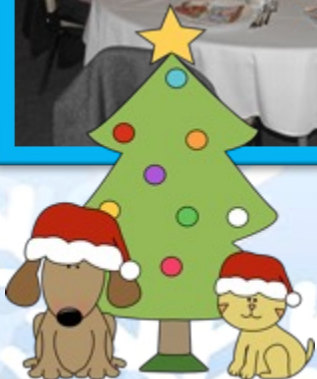
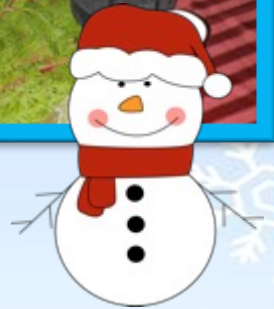




THANK YOU ANNE









# SOIL DRAINAGE TEST: THE INCH AN HOUR TEST

ADAPTED FROM PROVEN WINNERS : HEATHER WHEATLEY



Water is an essential source for plant growth and survival. However, too much water or too little water can have detrimental effects on your garden. It is important to strike a balance in water management.

## METHODOLOGY

1. Dig a hole: Use a shovel or a trowel to dig a hole 12 inches wide and 12 inches deep in the planting area.
2. Fill with water: Fill the hole with water and let it drain completely.
3. Refill and time: After the hole has drained, refill it with water again. This time, use a timer (or an app on your phone) to measure how long it takes for the water to drain completely.

## INTERPRETING THE RESULTS

If the water drains faster than 1 inch per hour, the soil may be too sandy or loose leading to dry conditions. A solution may be adding organic matter, such as compost or aged manure to improve soil retention.

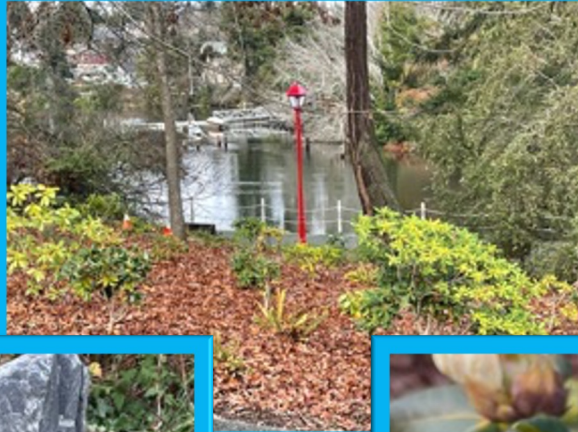
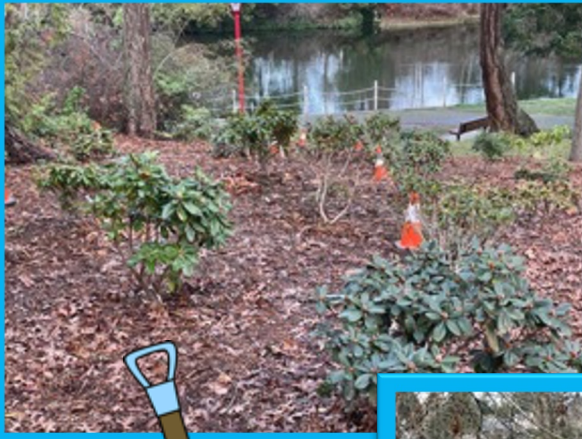
If the water drains slower than 1 inch per hour, the soil may be poorly drained. This could be due to heavy clay content or compacted soil layer. Consider moving your garden site, improving drainage or use raised planting beds. This information is especially relevant to planting rhododendrons. Poor drainage will lead to death of the plant, usually from some type of fungal infection.



# THE JIM BARLUP LEGACY GARDEN DECEMBER 11, 2023



THE NEWEST PLANTED AREA, NOVEMBER 2023



COMMAND PERFORMANCE



# A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO ALLIUMS

Adapted from The Freckled Rose



Allium is actually the Latin word for garlic. Many of us are familiar with the pastel purple allium. Actually, alliums come in white, yellow, blue and pink. They vary in height from 12" to 36" tall. Because of their scent, they are not bothered by common garden pests and are disease free. They are gardening gold to pollinators. Butterflies, bees and beneficial garden insect are attracted to their blooms. There are over 700 types of alliums to choose.



PURPLE SENSATION

Best in sun, 24-30"  
Blooms in late spring



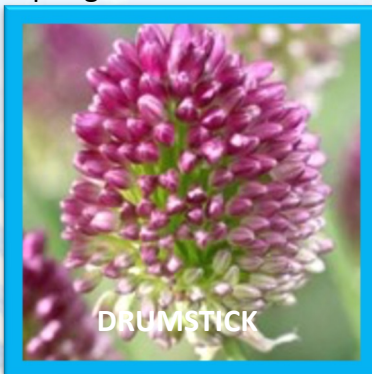
GRACEFUL

Best in partial sun/shade  
Blooms late spring, scented



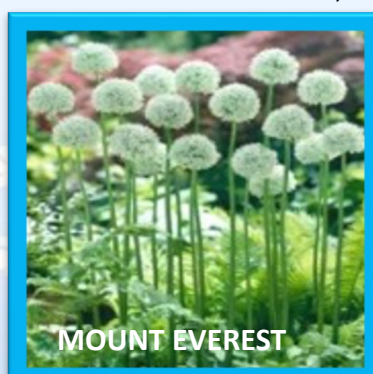
CHRISTOPHIL

Spiky florets, violet-pink  
color, 8-10" blooms, spring



DRUMSTICK

Egg shaped blooms, maroon  
and fading to green below  
20-24"



MOUNT EVEREST

Creamy white, 36", blooms  
late spring

# GARDENING STATISTICS IN 2023

Adapted from GREEN PALS, APRIL, 2023



Home gardening is booming worldwide, but the trend was positive before the pandemic. Gardening is a soothing hobby for a family, a great way to exercise and can provide self-sufficiency in times of need. The following are the statistics and facts from the latest research.

1. The covid pandemic created 18.5 million new gardeners, most of whom are millennials.
2. 42% of gardeners spent more time gardening during the Pandemic.
3. 55% of American households engage in gardening activities.
4. Millennials make up 29% of gardener demographics.
5. American adults spend \$48 billion on lawn and gardening equipment each year.
6. The average garden yields \$600 of produce in a year.
7. 35% of US. households grow vegetables, fruits and other foods.
8. Children involved in growing vegetables are more willing to eat them.
9. 65% increase in millennials involved in gardening.
10. 44% of GenZ increase in those who were gardening.
11. Two out of three gardeners tried a new gardening activity during the pandemic.
12. One third of gardeners had difficulty finding gardening goods they needed for their outdoor hobby.







ARE YOU LOOKING FOR A SPECIAL RHODODENDRON?

CAN YOU NOT FIND IT ANYWHERE?

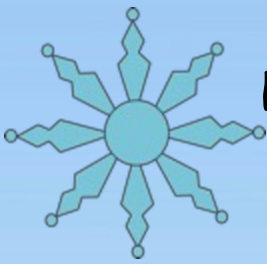


WE HAVE THE ANSWER!

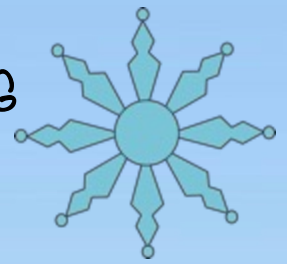


SEND A NOTE TO OUR PROPAGATORS AT  
[VicRSp propagators@gmail.com](mailto:VicRSp propagators@gmail.com)

NEXT SEPTEMBER OUR PROPAGATORS WILL ENDEAVOUR  
TO FIND CUTTINGS TO PROPAGATE FOR YOU!



# NOTES FROM THE BOARD MEETING DECEMBER 14, 2023



1. Confirmed for the January 4, 2014 meeting is speaker Glen Jamieson, "Common pests and invasive species on Vancouver Island." The meeting will be held at the Couvelier Center as well as on ZOOM.

ZOOM information:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88524518651?pwd=U2NQk05UGRzNUtxZEJekY2SVIvQT09>

Meeting: ID 885 2451 8651

Passcode:085199

2. The club will have a separate email address for those folks who want a specific rhododendron to be propagated by the VicRS. The new email address is [VicRSpropagators@gmail.com](mailto:VicRSpropagators@gmail.com)

3. The truss show is to be held in the Couvelier Center at the HCP on Saturday, May 11, 2024

Set up will occur the previous evening. It will be a "NON-JUDGED" show. More information will follow in the New Year.

4. A discussion was held concerning allowing members the ability to contact another member of the club. Because of privacy issues, each member must consent for this to occur. The board proceeded with idea and this will take place for the 2025-2026 year. Each member will be asked to sign a consent if they choose to share that particular information with other club members.

5. The speakers for the January to May sessions of the VicRS are:

January...Glen Jamieson

February...Jeff deJong

March...Growing citrus on southern Vancouver Island

April...Hand-on activity of preparing a truss for exhibition and display. Members will bring a truss and within a small group, a qualified rhododendron judge will present the basics of preparing trusses in a professional manner.

May 11 and 12... VicRS Rhododendron Display and sale at the HCP

May 20... the proposed sale at the Webb's



TO





# PLAN AHEAD FOR 2024

JANUARY MEETING Thursday, January 4, 2024, 7:30 pm. Speaker Glen Jamieson...  
a talk on invasive plants at the Couvelier Center and online via ZOOM

ZOOM <https://usweb.zoom.us/j/88524518651?pwd=U2NQk05UGRzNutxZEtJekY2SVlxQT09>

Meeting ID:88524518651

Passcode: 085199

FEBRUARY MEETING Thursday, February 1, 2024, 7:30 pm. Speaker... Jeff de Jong

MARCH MEETING Thursday, March 7, 2024,7:30 pm. "Growing Citrus on Vancouver Island"

APRIL MEETING Thursday, May 2, 7:30 pm. "Hands On".. preparing trusses professionally

MAY 10 and 11, 2024 Show and Sale at the HCP...volunteers needed, please see Ian Duncan

JUNE 23, 2024, Our annual picnic...place to be determined

Goodies for the meeting will be donated by: Jean Anderson, Ian Back, Eileen Bancroft, Ryan Barry, Glenda Elrod...please let Betty Gordon know if you will be attending the meeting in person

## YOU MAY BE INTERESTED IN THEIR NEWSLETTERS

EUGENE CHAPTER

<http://www.eugene-chapter-ars.org>

SIUSLAW CHAPTER

[sfuchsia@gmail.com](mailto:sfuchsia@gmail.com) 'Macrophyllum'

PORTLAND CHAPTER

[www.rhodies.org](http://www.rhodies.org)



# FUN FACTS ABOUT GARDENING

## SUPER INTERESTING FACTS YOU MAY NOT KNOW ABOUT PLANTS

ADAPTED FROM YATES

A sunflower is just not one flower. The head of the flower contains 1000 -2000 individual flowers.

One teaspoon of soil contains more microorganisms than there are people on the earth.

Plants really do respond to sound. Studies have shown that vibrations like music can affect plant growth.

Butterflies may be attracted to weeds as there is more of nectar and fragrance.

Bamboo is the fastest growing woody plant. It can grow 88 cm in one day.

Which fruit has seed on the outside? Strawberries

We cry when we peel onions because they release sulfuric acid.

The oldest living tree species is the Ginko bilboa, dating back 250 million years ago.

Peanuts are not nuts, but legumes related to beans and lentils.

Cranberries float because they have small pockets of air inside them.

The longest living organisms on earth are trees.

Pineapples are the only edible fruit from the bromeliad family.

In the 1600's, tulips were more valuable than gold. It caused the crash of the Dutch economy.

The tallest growing tree is the coast redwood, Sequoia sempervirens.

Archaeologists have discovered that making wine originated in Mesopotamia (Iraq) about 8,000 years ago. The ancient Egyptians were the first to record the process of wine making 5,000 years ago.

Apples, peaches, peaches, pears, strawberries, cherries, and raspberries are actually in the rose family.

The largest unbranched flower in the world is the titan arum. It smells like rotten meat to attract flies as pollinators.

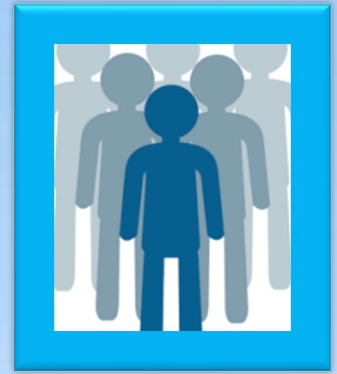




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