

# VICTORIA RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

## 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 Road  
Victoria B.C.

Meetings are held on the first  
THURSDAY  
of each month  
SEPTEMBER – MAY

MEETINGS BEGIN AT 7:30  
PM.





AT OUR MARCH MEETING WE WERE TREATED TO EVERYTHING AND ANYTHING ONE EVER WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT AZALEAS

Atsuko Gibson, the Nursery Manager and Assistant Curator at the Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden presented a detailed and very informative presentation on azaleas and how they were the same, but, also different than rhododendrons. To summarize her talk in a few words, is impossible. Nadine, our meeting photographer, did another outstanding job, capturing the essence of Atsuko's presentation for your viewing.

### Azalea vs. Rhododendron

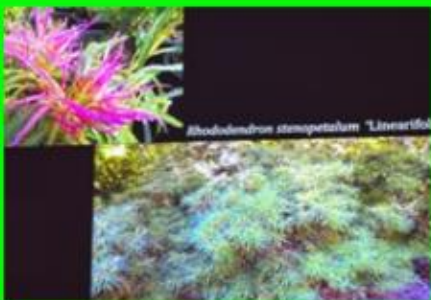
- All azaleas are rhododendrons, but not all rhododendrons are azaleas
- subgenus *Tsutsusi* and subgenus *Pentanthera*
- All azaleas are elepidotes



### Classification

#### Genus Rhododendron

- subgenus *Azaleastrum*
- subgenus *Candidastrum*
- subgenus *Hymenanthes*
- subgenus *Mumeazalea*
- subgenus *Pentanthera* ← All deciduous
- subgenus *Rhododendron*
- subgenus *Therorhodion*
- subgenus *Tsutsusi* ← Mostly evergreen
- Subgenus *Vireya*



# OUR MARCH MEETING WAS A COMBINATION OF A PRESENTATION AND OUR A.G.M.

OF COURSE...CAN YOU SAY RHODODENDRON RAFFLE?

## \*\*\* Main Business / Minutes

### CAUTION (Please read)

Remember, Our agenda is just a guide used to vote on resolutions during our AGM. I would like to see this practice continued so that members have a chance to vote on the alteration of our agenda.

Resolution 1: I move that HCF receive a \$500 donation for the maintenance of the Rhododendron Garden, administered by the Woods Garden Land Steward and HCF Head Gardener, Linda Pettit.

### Discussion: None.

Resolution 2: I move that the Joe Barber Legacy Garden in Esplanade George Park receive a \$500 donation for maintenance and operation of this garden, administered by our Treasurer.

### Discussion: None.

## RESUMPTION OF 2024 AGM



## OUR SPEAKER FOR APRIL

**SEAN RUSTEMEYER**

*From Soil'NGreen Landscaping Company*



Soil'NGreen is a landscaping company based in Nanaimo B.C. The company is dedicated to ecological practices using zero emission, battery powered equipment. They install native plant gardens that promote diversity and gardening without the use of synthetic pesticides. Sean is a graduate of Gaia college and recently completed the Master Pruner Program through PlantAmnesty in Seattle, WA. Sean will be giving a Sharpening Workshop

For those who cannot attend in person, here is the zoom info:

Time: Apr 2, 2026 07:30 Pacific Time (US and Canada)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89564381836?pwd=Noz1MxJN14taJcmJN14taJcmJN1DeUXJrxPrea.1>

Meeting ID: 895 6438 1836

Passcode: 4531137 Note: you may need to use the passcode



Learn the basics for cleaning and sharpening your own tools. The workshop will focus on the techniques and products needed to care for pruning tools – secateurs, shears, loppers - and will also cover digging and weeding tools. There will be a slideshow followed by a live demonstration on a variety of tools. There will be time for Q &A and to view the various sharpening supplies that have been used and that are available for gardeners.



“April is the cruelest month”...the first line of T.S. Eliot’s post World War Two desolation poem “The Wasteland”. This was tit-for-tat against Chaucer’s “Canterbury Tales” prologue which praises the month as a wake-up-call and pushing slumbering roots into high gear and prompting a rush of flowers. But don’t take my word for it: [poetryfoundation.org](http://poetryfoundation.org) can explain it better. Both were great writers using months as metaphors and both were right. April is when I have to get off the cozy couch, out from under fleecy blankets and start pruning and re-potting and scrubbing my balcony ...as well as see “who made it and who didn’t.”

There are eleven hybrid rhododendrons registered with names beginning with the word April. They are all cold hardy to at least minus 22 Celsius. They all start blooming in early spring. All but one are three feet at ten years of age. You can fit all of them in your garden or on a large balcony. Most are pink or white (surprise) but there are shades closer to purple or red. I think there were at least four of them in the garden at Firwood Nursery when I first started working there and they were really charming.

If you are craving some new rhodos somewhat more delicate and poetic than the big fluffy-trussed ones, look for “April Rose” or “April Gem” or “April Dawn”...Glow...Mist...Pink...reign...Rhapsody...Snow...Song...White... What a collection that would be in the cruelest month

*PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE*

# *WHO WAS ALBERT de MEZEY?*

*Thank you Ian for this information*

On Saturday, May 2, there is a Victoria Rhododendron Society open garden tour of Kildonan House, the garden of Albert de Mezey.

Albert was a Hungarian gentleman of the old world, who kissed women's hands on introduction, and charmed everyone who knew him. Albert was well known in Victoria's horticultural circles, and was a plant breeder of renown.

Born to nobility in Hungary in 1903, he was educated in Germany as an engineer, where in 1928, he fled Europe and emigrated to Canada with his sister and mother. He became wealthy by inventing and patenting factory machinery: egg handling, particle board, and plywood manufacturing equipment.

In 1945, he moved his family to Victoria, purchasing the Maclure mansion, Kildonan House. Through over 40 years in residence, he turned his garden into a renowned showplace.

At its height, the garden contained over 400 rhododendrons grown by him from seed. He made some spectacular crosses as well, documenting all of his breeding program and collections. He also collected and hybridized rock and alpine plants, as well as orchids. De Mezey was instrumental in introducing rhododendrons to Nicholas and Peggy Abkhazi and provided advice on what to purchase as well as donating some of his own crosses. They remain the stalwarts of the garden today.

Albert was a founding and Life member of the Victoria Rhododendron Society. De Mezey donated rhododendrons to Finnerty Gardens, Playfair Park, Glendale Gardens, (HCP) and the Abkhazi garden. De Mezey died in 2005, donating his estate to the Abbeyfield Housing Society.



# DROUGHT TOLERANT PLANTS FOR CONTAINERS

Flowering annual plants are a go-to for colorful containers. When choosing plants, one must keep in mind how quickly pots can dry out.

Gardeners can expect to water their containers every day. Twice a day may be necessary for smaller pots or those that sit in a sunny or windy spot.



Supertunias stand up to heat and humidity



Calibrachoa seldom need deadheading



Looking for blue? Salvia Mystic Spires is it



Echinacea, bright colors, big flowers



Lantana, bright and bubbly



Impatiens vibrant blooms



Fuchsia, exotic, pendulous blooms



Begonia flowers, striking blooms

# AWARD WINNING PLANTS FOR CONTAINERS ALL-AMERICAN SELECTIONS 2025

Adapted from Horticulture

Recognized by testing, these flowering plants offer compact and tidy habits, plus long time bloom.



This is a seed grown dahlia. Dark leaves provide a dramatic backdrop to its scarlet to maroon flowers. Awarded for its sturdy growth habit and disease resistance.



This French marigold boasts vivid colors and a compact habit. It is noted for its saturated yellow and red bicolor blooms.



These varieties are noted for bold, solid colors and deep green foliage. Compact mounds, uniformly 12 inches tall and wide.



This smaller variety lends itself to mixed containers. Grows to 8 inches tall and wide. It is noted for its heat tolerance.



This vinca will not take over your garden. It forms a foot-tall mound and blooms profusely all summer. It has clean white petals and a magenta eye.



# WHAT FLOWERS TO SOW OUTDOORS IN APRIL IN VICTORIA



April is ideal for sowing hardy annuals  
in Victoria's cool spring weather



False Queen Anne's Lace.



Calendula



Foxglove



Nasturtium



Poppies



Rudbeckia



Snapdragon



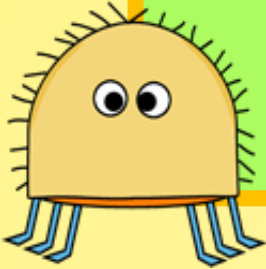
Sunflower



Sweetpea



**OK! DON'T BUG ME  
....OR ELSE...**



Organic pest controls use natural methods like beneficial insects, neem oil, insecticidal soap and homemade sprays (garlic, pepper) to manage pests without harsh chemicals, focusing on prevention, plant health and ecosystem balance to deter bugs naturally



**Aphids**



**Thrips**



**Root Weevil**



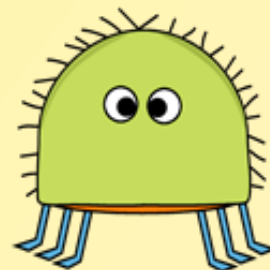
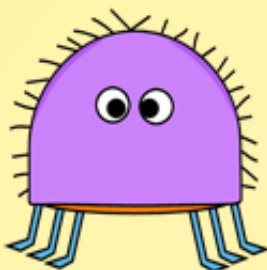
**White Fly**



**Lace Bug**



**Scale**



# DIY BUG SPRAYS AND NATURAL BUG REPELANTS

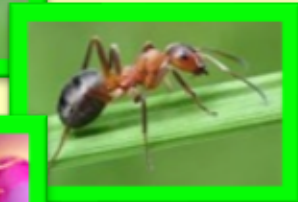
TAKEN FROM DAVID SUZIKI FOUNDATION

## CATERPILLARS, APHIDS, ANTS, BEETLES

- . 1 pureed a garlic bulb
- . handful dried cayenne peppers
- . 1 tbsp liquid castile soap
- . 1 liter water



caterpillar



ant



spider mites



aphid



## APHIDS, MOSQUITOES, SPIDER MITES

- . 10-15 drops pf peppermint, rosemary, citronella
- . 1 liter water
- . few drops liquid castile soap

## SCALE, MEALY BUGS, WHITE FLY, BEETLES AND THEIR EGGS

- . 1 tablespoon castile soap
- . 2 cups water



white fly



scale



## AZALEA LACE BUG

1. Water spray. ( Used
2. Insecticidal soap at
3. Neem or other horticultural oil HCP)



Azalea Lace Wing

**ARE YOU SMARTER  
THAN THE AVERAGE  
DEER?**

**SPINY AND THORNY  
PLANTS  
CAN COME TO THE  
RESCUE**



By strategically planting thorny, spiky, dense bushes, you can create an effective barrier to deer intruders without compromising the look of your landscape. Many ornamental shrubs have vicious thorns or spiny foliage, and with careful placement, they can add a layer of security to your garden without resorting to barbed wire, chemicals or expensive fencing. Just remember to choose plants that are suitable for your growing zone. Keep in mind the mature sizes of the plants you choose and are not invasive.



**Berberis**



**Mahonia**



**Wild Cucumber**



**Pacific Ninebark**



**Goatsbeard**



**Broadleaf sedum**

# BENEFITS OF GROWING GARDENS

There are many reasons to start gardening as there are gardeners. One might look at gardening as play time since it is joyful to dig in dirt. It reminds us of our childhoods. However, gardening helps reduce and prevent both anxiety and depression, and offers a therapeutic and calming experience.

Gardening with rhododendrons is considered highly therapeutic because it combines the general health benefits of horticulture with unique botanical and sensory characteristics that promote emotional healing and tranquility.

## "NATURE" IS WHAT WE SEE

"Nature" is what we see—  
The Hill—the Afternoon—  
Squirrel—Eclipse—the Bumble bee—  
Nay—Nature is Heaven—  
Nature is what we hear—  
The Bobolink—the Sea—  
Thunder—the Cricket—  
Nay—Nature is Harmony—  
Nature is what we know—  
Yet have no art to say—  
So impotent Our Wisdom is  
To her Simplicity.

...

WRITTEN BY  
EMILY DICKINSON



## *JUST THE FACTS MA'AM...JUST THE FACTS*

Planting rhododendrons takes some planning

Rhododendrons are a large and complex species

Rhododendrons were originally known as roses

They love acid soil

They are a national flower

Azaleas and rhododendrons are related

They can be gigantic or petite

They are practical yet poisonous

Planting in compacted or clay soil is a “no no”

Rhododendron genus is the largest of the Ericaceae family

They were known as “Chamaerhodendron” until Linnaeus named them

They need acid soil with a pH of 4.5-6

They are the national flower of Nepal

Generally speaking, azaleas have 5 stamens and rhododendrons have 10 stamens in each flower.

The largest species in the Rhododendron family is *R. protistum giganteum*, growing 80 - 100 feet

They are used to make fruit and flower wines and medicine, but some species are poisonous.





## GARDENING WITH RHODODENDRONS

### MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL BENEFITS

- . Stress Reduction and Mindfulness:** Like many ornamental plants, rhododendrons provide a “calming escape” from daily life. The act of tending them encourages mindfulness, helping to lower anxiety and stress levels.
- . Symbolism of Resilience:** Rhododendrons are often viewed as symbols of resilience and adaptability because they can thrive in challenging conditions like cold winters. This characteristic provides a powerful psychological metaphor for overcoming personal adversity.
- . Healing from Grief:** For many, these long-lived shrubs act as “living memorials”. Because they can live for over 100 years, they often represent a connection to lost loved ones who originally planted them, offering a sense of solace and continuity.

### SENSORY AND AESTHETIC THERAPY

- . Visual Uplift:** The vibrant, “sight to behold” blooms trigger positive feelings and can improve mood through visual stimulation.
- . Whimsical Inspiration:** The unique, twisted and gnarled growth patterns of the trunks and branches provide artistic inspiration and a sense of joy.

### ECOLOGICAL CONNECTION

- . Connection to Nature:** Cultivation with rhododendrons fosters a deeper bond with the ecosystem. They are magnets for pollinators, turning a garden into a peaceful haven for wildlife that gardeners find rewarding.
- . Sense of Accomplishment:** Because rhododendrons require specific conditions, successfully nurturing them provides a profound sense of accomplishment and purpose.

**APRIL SPRING CARE FOR  
RHODODENDRONS  
IN THE PACIFIC  
NORTHWEST**  
OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY



As our favorite plants are starting to burst into color and spring is a great time to give these shrubs the care they need to stay healthy, vigorous and beautiful.

Start with a health check. Pale or dwarfed leaves may signal a nitrogen deficiency. Yellow mottling on leaf margins may indicate excess potassium. Small, dark leaves can suggest low phosphorus. Yellow or yellow-white leaves can indicate too much calcium.



Now is the times for pruning and rejuvenation. Remove dead, diseased or damaged branches. For leggy shrubs, pruning can restore shape and encourage new growth. Prune now before the plants set buds for the following year.



Fertilize soon after flowering using products for acid-loving plants. Organic fertilizers release nutrients slowly and reduce the risk of root burn.



With their shallow, fibrous root systems, rhododendrons require consistent moisture. Water deeply to encourage root growth. Apply 2-3 inch mulch layer to help regulate soil temperature, retain moisture and suppress weeds.

# A FEW RHODODENDRON THOUGHTS

Adapted from gardening on the edge

OR

# HOW I MANAGED TO END UP WITH 31 RHODODENDRONS



I've never really liked rhododendrons. It seems that watering needs are important; they need to be deadheaded; special soil requirements are needed for maximum growth; and so on and so on. Yet, here I am having acquired 31 of them, if you count azaleas as rhododendrons.

The thing about these shrubs is they light up the garden like no other plant. It is like fireworks in your garden when they are in bloom. When my orange azalea is in bloom, it combines so beautifully with *R. luteum*.

Numerous hybrid rhododendrons were loved by our ancestors. Pinks whites and purples were planted all over the place, to the point that now in some areas they have become a hazard, literally killing out all native habitat.

So my garden still has rhododendrons. BUT, and it is a big BUT, I now choose by color choice and my space in my garden.



# WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF COLLECTING RHODODENDRONS ?

The hobby of collecting rhododendrons turns your garden into a living masterpiece while offering much more than just pretty flowers



#1. jaw-dropping beauty and endless variety



#2. perfectly suited to the areas of Victoria



#3. collecting connects one with other enthusiasts



#4. one is aiding conservation and biodiversity



#5. one is providing a wildlife magnet and ecosystem boost



#6. one gains personal satisfaction plus long-term value

# THE PERFECT GARDEN FOR VISITORS

IDEAS FROM SCOTT BEURLAIN

*“THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS A PERFECT GARDEN”*

Poor normal rhododendron gardeners. They are assaulted from every direction. ARS Journals, our noted speakers, with their “pitch perfect” camera shots of other gardens, tell of perfect soil conditions....how to apply mulch effectively...when to deadhead....how to arrive at perfect conditions for planting, etc. Then we go on garden tours. Why do other rhododendron gardens seem so perfect, while our own seem to be lacking that “unknown component” that we see in other gardens? The constant barrage of perfect rhododendron gardens is relentless. If one has ever opened their garden for other “rhodoholics” to see, one can identify with these words.



Some people use professional help to establish the perfect garden. But do they just think money is the solution for perfection? Maybe, just maybe that helps some people achieve some things. But regular gardeners and rhododendron collectors need to keep some perspective. We are the people who show others what can be done with our favorite plant. We open our gardens to others. We reach out to the community with public projects. We incorporate new ideas from others. We each use our available resources and the brainpower, manpower, time and money we have to do our part. We share our joy and satisfaction with others. We are called “The Victoria Rhododendron Society”.





## HOW TO BE A TOP-TIER GUEST AT A RHODODENDRON GARDEN TOUR



**SURVIVING A RHODODENDRON GARDEN TOUR REQUIRES A DELICATE BALANCE OF HORTICULTURAL REVERENCE AND NOT ACCIDENTLY “MURDERING “ A RARE HYBRID BY STEPPING ON IT**



**BECOME A PATH PURIST.** Treat the designated paths as if the garden beds are made of lava – or worse, a host’s brittle ego. Never step into a bed for a selfie: your boots are more destructive than a “foreign invasion”.

**PRACTICE “HANDS OFF “ HOBBIES.** Resist the urge to fondle the foliage. Definitely do not “spontaneously weed”, as the host will see this as a direct insult to their lifestyle.

**MASTER THE ART OF THE VAGUE COMPLIMENT.** If a plant looks like it is struggling say nothing, or ask “tell me about that plant” and let the host explain why it is “experimentally” brown.

**DON’T BE A “GARDEN BRAGGER”.** Avoid mentioning that your own rhododendrons are “bigger”. The host already suspects your garden is better. When passing a particularly dull plant, comment how it lacks integrity for such a prestigious venue.

**THE HOUR RULE.** Aim to spend an hour strolling and do not monopolize the host; they have others to drag around and explain why they “destroyed more rhododendrons than they planted” last year.

**GEAR UP OR GIVE UP.** Wear runners, not sandals, to avoid ankle-breaking encounters with slippery rocks. Bring a sun hat or a rain hat.



# THE 14 COMMANDMENTS OF RHODODENDRON GARDEN TOURING

Thanks for the ideas from the Nanaimo Rhododendron Society Newsletter, 2002

## READ BEFORE EMBARKING

- I. Thou shalt observe the agreed hours of visitation, neither entering before the appointed hour nor parting late
- II. Thou shalt not park thine vehicle on thine host's turf nor on the neighbour's carriage way
- !!!. Thou shalt not pass judgement on the small, faded signage
- IV. Thou shalt honor the gardener's choice of gnome placement
- V. If there be a surfeit of visitors in a confined space, thou shalt endure outside in patience while awaiting thine turn to enter therein
- VI. Thou shalt not utter Botanical names unless one has been addressed in Botanical Latin
- VII. Thou shalt not pinch, pluck, prune, snip, rip, clip, cut or hack any plant
- VIII. Thou shalt not pass judgement on such prettie plant, and in a loud voice utter how grand yours has grown. But, if heard by owner and appears, thou shalt utter how yours must be so advanced in years than the one on view.
- IX. Thou shalt not linger too long for the perfect photo, blocking other visitors
- X. Thou shalt not spit in thine host's garden, nor utter oaths, nor indulge in the pleasures of the demon tobacco lest the host disapprove and cast thee out .Nay! Nay!
- XI. Thou shalt not demand to relieve oneself in thine host's private chamber, nor to do so in his prettie bushes nor his handsome fountain
- XII. Thou shalt not covet the owner's "Loderi King George" nor "Polar Bear"
- XIII. Thou shalt not express displeasure at any plant or effect, lest the host be standing by. Nay, thou shalt say "What a handsome marriage of hues of violets and oranges ". If one dost utter these words, one must not smirk nor twitter, nor wink thine eye
- XIV. Thou shall bid thy host kind adieu and most thanks for deigning to open the garden and allowing thee therein

# TALKING POINTS FOR RHODODENDRON DRAGEES

...ideas and adaptation from STEVE WHYSALL

Rhodos here, rhodos there, blooming rhodos everywhere. Just stop and look around. Tell me what you see? Yep, rhododendrons – big ones, small ones, red ones, white ones, yellow, purple, pink and purple ones – blooming, blooming, blooming, here, there and everywhere. Our West Coast climate is perfect for these broadleaf evergreens, most of which originate from other parts of the world.



Our soil is acidic. It drains well, it is fertile and is full of the right nutrients. Our temperature is perfect- not too hot, not too cold and the soft sunlight that streams gently through the canopy of our rainforest trees is just what rhododendrons love.



You might think rhodos are okay when they are in bloom, stunningly beautiful, even for a time. But you might think they are a bit boring the rest of the time. Wrong. To the rhododendron lover, they have just as much beauty even when they are not in bloom.



The leaf texture, elegant shape and architecture of plants, the dependable structure they bring to the garden all year round, all these things easily compensate for their relatively brief flowering period. But even with the brevity of blooming, rhodo enthusiasts will point out that with careful planning, one can have rhodos in bloom from January to July if you choose the right ones.



## CONTINUING ADVICE FOR "DRAGEE"

Indumentum is a word one will hear from rhodo folk if they are talk about rhododendron leaves. This is often a topic of rhodo enthusiasts. It refers to the soft underside of some species rhodos. "It makes the character of the leaf much more interesting".



Species rhodos are massively admired as they are the original ones from which all hybrids sprang. Ones with gigantic leaves are special favorites. Mention sinogrande, macabeanum or macrophyllum to show your knowledge. Perhaps start by asking if *Rhododendron arboreum* is the largest rhodo that you have heard of?

Here are a few more code words to help you if you find yourself sitting next to a rhododendron aficionado.

You can't go wrong with mentioning how you have noticed that in some rhododendron gardens, there are very tiny shrubs.

Are those species or hybrids?

As well, you have seen rhododendrons in bloom in mid-winter. Are rhododendrons that hardy?

Is it true that there are scented rhododendrons?

Is there such a thing as a blue rhododendron?

What exactly is a hybrid rhododendron?



# REASONS TO OPEN YOUR RHODODENDRON GARDEN TO OTHERS



Opening your garden to others provides essential horticultural, social and personal benefits that extend beyond mere aesthetic enjoyment.



Visitors learn about plant diversity, species and hybrids, and while observing a diverse collection that helps others gain inspiration for their own gardens.



Gardens can act like community hubs, and welcoming visitors fosters a sense of belonging. It provides a shared experiences for others, especially like-minded enthusiasts.



Open gardens provide communication opportunities to better know one another and experienced gardeners can share knowledge.



# PLANNING YOUR GARDEN FOR A TOUR

A small garden, a massive garden, it does not matter. The only thing that matters is that people enjoy themselves and have fun. AND...the delights that you enjoy showing off the fruits of your labors.

First is deciding on a date. Most rhododendron gardens are best the last two weeks of April and the first two weeks of May. Now that you have chosen a date, go about letting people know the date and time.

And this is where a request is coming from our society. Now that the official ARS garden tours will soon be over, the board is asking for our members to think about inviting others to see their gardens at this best time of the year.

Those who have participated previously have survived. The feedback has been most positive. The general remarks heard after folks who have opened their garden is that they see their gardens with "fresh eyes".



Please contact any member of the board to assist with your invitation. Just know, we are excited to see all gardens big, small or otherwise.



# **“THE WHISPERING BLOOMS OF RHODODENDRONS”**

## **A Local Fairy Tale**

Within the secrets of Victoria, where gentle rains nurture the earth, there lies many hidden gems called private gardens. These gardens are not just any gardens, but are sanctuaries where rhododendrons reign supreme, their vibrant petals unfurling like secrets waiting to be shared. Every spring, these magnificent shrubs burst into a symphony of colors – pinks, purples, whites, reds, and yellows – transforming landscapes into living paintings.

PAGE 1

As dusk fell, the gardens became alive in a way no human had ever witnessed. As they hummed a soft melody, their petals glowing in the faint twilight, the rhododendrons released a cascade of pollen and scent that carried on the breeze to the Victoria Rhododendron Society members. These were invitations, not written on paper, but were dreams planted in the minds of Society members – visions of colorful blooms dancing, promising peace, wonder and a touch of magic for those who visited.

PAGE 3

And so new gardens were added each year as open gardens became a beloved tradition. Now every spring the rhododendrons send their silent invitations anew drawing others to bask in their glory. AND – if you listen closely you can hear them rustle: “Welcome, friends. We’ve been waiting or you”.

THE END



But these aren’t ordinary plants because they have the whisper of enchantment from the ancient forests that once surrounded them. Secretly they yearn for admiration. With their blooms of petals shimmering like silk, they began to make a plan. They realized that the best private rhododendron gardens were right in the Victoria area. Someone had whispered that most of these gardens were created by members of the Victoria Rhododendron Society. So, the rhododendron gardens began to make a plan.

PAGE 2

Lo and behold! The magic of opening one’s garden to share with others was a new thought – a new idea that many had not previously considered. For others, it was knowing that people really appreciated this opportunity to see what others had created, to get new ideas for their own gardens and to meet with others who shared the passion for these special plants. They said “come and visit ; pause your worries, let our beauty renew your spirit”.

PAGE 4

Displaying rhododendron trusses for our show involves selecting perfect blooms with healthy foliage, preparing them with a fresh stem cut and a 24-hour tepid water soak for hardening off.

## DISPLAYING TRUSSES FOR OUR SHOW

*adapted from our 1996 newsletter*



A day or two before the show, go around and make a list of the blooms you will pick the day before the show. Bottles in a six-pack are useful for transporting blooms. Look for ones with straight stems with the bloom at the top. Look for freshness. Choose blooms with good-looking foliage. For a truss, one nice whorl is best.





JOIN US FOR



# RHODO

# Rave

APRIL 10 - MAY 20, 2026

Garden Open 7 Days a Week  
11 a.m. - 5 p.m. Last Entry at 4 p.m.

*Abkhazi Garden*

1964 Fairfield Road, Victoria, B.C.

[www.conservancy.bc.ca](http://www.conservancy.bc.ca)



# A GIFT TO THE GORGE GARDEN

In 2003, the Blackmores were introduced to Jim Barlup hybrids. As time passed, these original plants became too large for the containers in which they were planted. Gorge Park is developing a new area close to the pavilion, where wedding photos are taken. These plants will enhance that area and provide lasting memories.

Dedicated to all special friendships  
...past and present...



# TWELVE MONTHS OF FLOWERING RHODODENDRONS

Adapted from static1.squarespace.com

Many in the Northwest have wonderful displays of rhododendrons in April and May. This big splash of color is amazing, but what if one wanted to have rhododendrons for 12 months of the year. With some planning, some plant hunting and some extra money, one can have these wonderful blooms 12 months of the year.

January is the month for the earliest blooms. (A cold winter will delay bloom).



Lee's Scarlet

Abigale – pink, tall  
Harry Carter – pink, tall  
Lee's Scarlet – red, medium  
Nobleanum album – white, tall  
Nobleanum Coccineum – red, tall  
Venustum – rose pink, tall  
R. dauricum – rosy purple or white, medium  
R. mucronulatum – bright rosy pink, medium



R. dauricum

February brings a little warmth or a little more snow. (A colder year, maybe March)



Olive

Babylon – white/red flare, tall  
Bo-peep – lemon yellow, medium  
Bric-a-Brac – pink, white, low  
Christmas Cheer – pink, medium  
Etta Burrows – bright red, tall  
Olive – Orchid pink, medium  
Peter Faulk – red, medium  
Promise of Spring – rose, tall  
Praecox – rosy lilac, medium  
Seta – light/deep pink, tall  
R. barbatum – red, medium  
R. irroratum – cream or pink/spotted, tall  
R. moupinense – white, pink, low  
R. pemakoense – pink, low  
R. praevernium – white/rose, tall  
R. strigillosum – blood red, tall



R. barbatum



Babylon



R. moupinense

March brings us the first hints of spring. These plants get a jump ahead before the crowd.



R. cilpinense



Shamrock

- R. cilpinense – white, pink, low
- Ginny Gee – pink, low
- PJM - lavender-pink, medium
- Shamrock – yellow-green, low
- Snow Lady – white, low
- Unknown Warrior – red, tall
- R. calophytum – white, pink blotch, tall
- R. ciliatum – white/pink, medium
- R. hodgsonii – rosy-purple, tall
- R. racemosum – pink, medium
- R. recurvoides – pink, medium
- R. rubiginosum – rose, tall
- R. sutchuenense – lilac or rose, tall



R. calophytum



R. hodgsonii

April brings hundreds more. Yellow and purples dominate, but white, pinks and some reds are available. Barlup hybrids include:

- Always April – pink with reddish blotch, medium
- Amber Gold – bright yellow, reddish bud, medium
- Ice Music – white/pink, red blotch, medium
- Cody – bright pink, yellow/orange splash, medium
- Sun Blush - white, yellow center, medium
- Wind River – blush pink, red/yellow flare, medium
- Satin Memories – pale pink, red center, medium
- Love Poem – pink, medium
- Dancing Embers – red/orange, medium
- Windsong – pale yellow, medium



Always April



Wind River



Ice Music



Love Poem



Windsong



Dancing Embers

**April blooming species rhododendrons**



- R. barbatum – red, very tall
- R. shlippenbachii – pale to rose pink
- R. kesangiae – pink, medium
- R. montroseanum – pink, tall
- R. sinogrande – cream/white, tall
- R. protistum – pale rose, crimson purple, tall



The month of May is when there is a plethora of hybrid rhododendrons from which to choose from. The following are Barlup hybrids whose bloom time is the month of May.



- Wild Ginger - orange, medium
- Grand Recital – White, dark blotch, medium
- Sun Song – yellow, red edge, medium
- Night Music – dark purple, black flare, medium
- Cody – coral/pink, medium
- Plus, Plus, Plus, Plus, Plus



July may be the middle of summer, but there are rhododendrons that will bloom protected by the shade of trees. Some are the best fragrant rhododendrons.



Independence Day – red, tall  
Pearce's American Beauty – red, tall  
Polar bear – white, tall, scented  
R. auriculatum – white, tall, scented  
R. diaprepes "Gargantua" white, tall, scented  
R. facteum – crimson-red, tall  
R. viscosum white or pink, tall, fragrant



In August, most rhododendrons are growing and setting buds for next year. A few hard to find plants are well worth the try.



Midsummer – rosy pink, tall  
R. arborescens – white azalea, tall fragrant  
R. nakaharae – brick red azalea, low  
R. pruniflorum – red or orange azalea, medium  
R. serotinum = white, rose tall  
R yakushmanum – hybrids (many)



September and November and our weather begins to cool. Many rhododendrons have a habit of second blooming. Stressful conditions may cause fall flowering.



Bob's Blue – electric blue, medium  
Blue Bird – blue, medium  
Elizabeth – red, low  
Yellowhammer – yellow, medium  
R. impeditum – purple, low  
R. fastigiatum – blue, purple low  
R. prunifolium – red or orange azalea  
R. yakushmanum hybrids (many)



During mild November and December, months several rhododendrons will bloom regularly. Most have only a few flowers. These will also bloom in January depending on the weather



Lee's Scarlet  
Nobleanum Coccineum – red, tall  
Nobleanum Venustum – soft pink, tall  
R. dauricum – rose-purple, medium



# *WHO OWN CANADA'S NATURAL RESOURCES? DOES IT MATTER?*

*ADAPTED FROM THE DAVID SUZUKI FOUNDATION*

Canada is among the world's most resource-rich countries. 40 % of its land is covered in forests. It holds 20% of the world's freshwater reserves. It is the fourth-largest crude oil exporter. It produces more than 60 minerals and metals and ranks in the top five of 14 of them – critical to the global clean energy transition.

Our natural resources sector is important to communities throughout the country, and to the national economy. Beyond economics, nature provides essential ecosystem services, including climate regulation, carbon storage, flood mitigation, air filtering and biodiversity support.

**Ownership matters, as does the long-term accountability that follows.**

The share of foreign-controlled assets outside the financial sector sits at 22%. In the oil and gas industry, that rises to 33%. In forestry and logging, foreign-controlled enterprises have been reported as accounting for up to 40 % of revenues, though lack of transparent reporting makes accountability difficult. Countries not headquartered in Canada direct more profit out of the country with little concern or accountability for the ecological consequences of their actions.

Most Canadians want limits on foreign ownership. A recent survey (Angus Reid ) found that almost 60 % believed outside possession of Canada's critical minerals was a greater threat than "missing out on development and jobs because lack of investment".

**We should all be asking the important questions: Who makes decisions around Canada's natural wealth? Who benefits? Who is left holding the bag?**



*R. cilpinense*, March 3, 2026 at HCP



*MARCH 11, 2026...A WET COLD DAY AT THE HCP*



*COLD AND WET AND STILL VOLUNTEERING*



*WINDSTORM DESTROYED POLYHOUSE # 3 ALL PLANTS HAD TO BE MOVED...THANKS VICRS VOLUNTEERS FOR PITCHING IN TO HELP*

# *NOTES FROM THE BOARD MARCH MEETING*



1. April Meeting is on tool sharpening, a demonstration and questions and answers
2. Jacqi Bradbury will talk on the elements of judging trusses at our show
3. Public will vote on a favorite truss, input will be noted at the truss show
4. Advertising of Show and Sale on radio and in local papers will occur
5. Signs will be made for joining our Society at Show and Sale
6. Plant sellers are to make a list of what they are selling to gather information
7. Brenda and Ian will be Show Coordinators
8. Information about open gardens is included in the April newsletter
9. Board members will encourage members to open their gardens for viewing
10. Volunteers needed for help with sales at the cash desk
11. Volunteers are needed in helping to sign up new members
12. Volunteers are needed as general assistants in interaction with the public
13. Pre-sale setup volunteers are needed
14. Take down volunteers are needed as well



*OPPORTUNITIES  
TO  
VOLUNTEER  
AT  
SHOW AND SALE  
Friday May 8  
Saturday May 9*



*FRIDAY 5-8PM.*

Members to bring trusses

*FRIDAY 4 PM.*

Sales tables set up as needed  
Indoor set up for trusses  
Fill truss bottles  
Carrying plants from sellers to tables  
Helping sellers set up their sales tables  
Help set up cashier tables and payment areas

There will be a sign up sheet at the April meeting for those who wish to volunteer some time at our annual plant sale.

*SATURDAY 8:30 AM.*

Cashier 9-12:30 12:30 - 4pm.  
Membership table 9 -12:30 12:30 - 4pm.  
Ask Me 9:00 - 12:30 pm 12:30 - 4 pm. outdoors  
Ask Me in the truss area 9:00 -12: 30 pm.  
Ask Me in truss area 12:30 - 4pm.  
Relief person in any area 9:00 - 12:30 pm  
Relief person in any area 12:30 - 4 pm.



## *VICTORIA RHODODENDRON SOCIETY BOARD MEMBERS*

President...Sharon Joseph...250-383-1756  
Vice-president...Ken Webb...250-744-1785  
Past President...Lloyd Gilmore...250-642-2256  
Treasurer...Bill Gordon...259-489-0210  
Secretary...Lois Blackmore...250-818-9307  
MAL...Ian Duncan...250-479-0210  
MAL...Dan Syroid...250-477-9210  
MAL...Brenda Macdonald...778-528-3647  
MAL...Burns Morrison...250-477-8281  
MAL...Michael Tripp...250-477-4407  
MAL...Stephen Brice...250-658-1850  
Librarian...Ellen Wellborn...250-479-1898  
Barlup Garden...Calvin Parsons...250-590-0489

