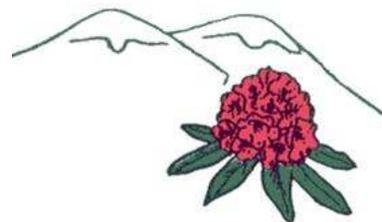


# THE RHODOVINE



THE MOUNT ARROWSMITH  
RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

MARS  
P. O. Box 342  
Qualicum Beach. BC

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**Christmas Party**

**Dollar Table** - Cassy LaCouvee

**Newsletter Editor** - Linda Derkach

**Garden Tour** – Kathy Loyer

**Truss Show** -

**Greeter** – Guy Loyer

**Historian** - Cassy Lacouvee

**Library** – Donna deBoer

**Meeting Coordinator**- Tony Ansdell

**Membership** – Tony Ansdell

**Milner Gardens** - John England

**Program Chair** - Ann DeBrincat

**PR** - Marilyn Dawson

**Refreshments** - Anne Gutsche

**Sunshine** – Maria Bieberstein

## THIS MONTH:

Our speaker is

**Susie Reynolds**  
of Meerkerk Gardens  
Whidbey Island

Susie is Garden and Nursery Manager at Meerkerk Gardens. She is visiting Vancouver Island ARS clubs to share the beauty and history of this iconic garden.



On the ARS Seattle Garden Tours in May 2013, this stunning rhododendron was a show-stopper with many admirers all trying to guess the name. Perhaps Susie can help with this???



*Rhododendron orbiculare* ssp. *cardiobasis* in Meerkerk Gardens in May 2013.

## MARS Meetings

Qualicum Beach  
Civic Centre  
2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the  
month 7:30 pm

## Next Meeting

Wednesday,  
October 9



*Rhododendron* 'Viennese Waltz' has a lovely bloom that lives up to its name...here in Meerkerk Gardens on Whidbey Island during the Seattle Convention in May.

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# Meerkerk Gardens a Woodland Gem

**Meerkerk Rhododendron Gardens** was founded by Ann and Max Meerkerk in the early 1960's. Enchanted by Whidbey Island, they began these Gardens with 13 acres.

The Rothschild's Exbury Gardens in England, Max's life in Asia and our native *Rhododendron macrophyllum* influenced the Meerkerks. Ann was active with the WA Park Arboretum and the American Rhododendron Society, Seattle Chapter.

Together, Ann and Max visualized a Pacific Northwest style woodland garden enveloped by a forest preserve. Over the years, the Meerkerks purchased an additional 40 acres to achieve this goal.



The Meerkerks began hybridizing rhododendrons and collecting unique specimens of rhododendron, flowering trees and conifers. They planted the first five acres, known as the "Secret Garden" as a miniature arboretum.

Before Ann passed away in 1979, she bequeathed the Gardens to the Seattle Rhododendron Society to care for as a "peaceful woodland garden with an emphasis on rhododendrons and companion plants".

Photos: Linda Derkach

Today **Meerkerk Rhododendron Gardens** is an independent not-for-profit organization open to the public. Fifty-three acres of inspirational woodland gardens and a forest preserve offer over five miles of trails for visitors to breathe in serene beauty and nature.



Meerkerk is also a research facility working on creating new and improved hybrid rhododendrons as initiated by Ann Meerkerk. Our genetic library is comprised of over 150 years of combined hybridizing from well-known hybridizers from around the world including historic leaders such as Lem, Brandt and Ostbow along with modern hybridizers including Fujioka, Watson, Barlup, Simmons-Otness, O'Donnell, Berg, Workman, Hachman and others.



*Rhododendron 'Mavis Davis'*

Meerkerk Gardens is a living classroom as well, offering Botany Adventure Nature Tours to Third to Fifth Graders throughout the year.

From the Meerkerk Rhododendron Gardens website:  
[www.meerkerkgardens.org](http://www.meerkerkgardens.org).

## ***Eucalyptus neglecta* is growing with great gusto in the garden of Doug Kitts....**



Doug reports that - while on a nursery-hopping trip to Victoria and the Saanich Peninsula, he found this wonderful tree - and on sale yet (every gardeners dream)!

His eucalyptus was planted in 2010 at six feet in height. Now, just three years later, it is almost 20 feet tall.

Doug has found his prize tree to be pest resistant and a fast grower (no kidding!) It has blueish, aromatic leaves and white flowers. The label from the nursery describes this eucalyptus as follows:

"Large, round blue-green juvenile foliage has a rosy-purple cast in cool weather and is prized for flower arrangements; elongated mature foliage appears after 10 to 15 years. This surprisingly hardy, versatile tree makes a quick, easy specimen. Evergreen."

Thanks to Doug for sharing this plant with us. Your newsletter welcomes MARS members to send photos and information about treasured plants in their gardens. Email [lindaderkach@shaw.ca](mailto:lindaderkach@shaw.ca)



*Paeonia obavata*, a modest woodland bloomer, produces these spectacular seed heads in fall.

### **MARS Garden Tour 2014**

Do you have or know of a great garden between Eaglecrest in Qualicum Beach and the far end of Temple Road in Parksville, and on both sides of Highway 19a????

**Please contact Kathy Loyer**

**Our Garden Tour Chair with your ideas!**

### **MARS Programs in 2013....**

**November 13**

❖ **Ron Long on Pink Mountain**

**December (Date to be announced soon)**

❖ **MARS Christmas Party**

The editors reserve the right to edit submissions to the newsletter for purposes of consistency, clarity and space restrictions.

## MOUNT ARROWSMITH GENERAL MEETING

September 11, 2013

Held at the Civic Centre in Qualicum Beach  
at 7:30 pm

**REFRESHMENTS:** Provided by: Anne Gutsche,  
Barbara Kulla, Joan Rich and Tony Ansdell

For the first meeting of the season, new President Linda Derkach welcomed members and gave a quick overview of the evening, which would begin with the speaker, Joan Gibb, archivist with Dominion Brook Park in Saanich. Only two people in the audience were familiar with this 11-acre park which was created in 1912 by the Federal Department of Agriculture as an experimental farm, demonstration arboretum and ornamental garden. Over the years it acquired rare specimens from nurseries all over the world, which were tended carefully until federal funds were withdrawn in the 1980s. Ivy and blackberry took over very quickly and the park deteriorated.

Ms Gibb said Friends of Dominion Brook Park have been working diligently since forming in 2000 to rehabilitate the park. Included in her presentation were slides of piles of ivy, including a huge root, that had to be removed. There were also photos of many huge trees, some rare, and many rhododendrons, the first of which was planted in 1913 and is still alive and well. Identification for many of them has been lost. The park welcomes visitors and MARS members were invited to visit.

**TREASURER:** Tony Ansdell, acting for Bert Harding, read out the final figures for the spring fundraisers. The Garden Tour netted \$3,883, Truss Show, \$1581 and Spring Fling \$446, giving us a sound bank balance to start the year.

**MEMBERSHIP:** Tony reminded members it was time to pay dues for next year. The rate of \$30 has been unchanged for many years.

**WAYS AND MEANS:** The door prize, *Rhododendron* 'Cunningham's Blush' was won by Don Bridgen. Other prizes were: *R.* 'Fantastica' won by Joanne Hamilton and *R.* 'Gartendirektor Glocker' won by Sandra Hemsworth.

## NEW BUSINESS:

1. An organizer is needed for a proposed bus tour in the spring of 2014. Linda asked for one or two people to volunteer.
2. More emphasis will be placed on the Dollar Table this year and members are encouraged to bring their plants to the meetings, including those that are more than a dollar. Linda said all garden-related materials are welcome, books, magazines etc., **but** if it doesn't sell, you must take it home.
3. We are in the process of cleaning out the storage area; at next month's meeting there may be extra items on the dollar table.
4. Vic Vickers has completed the year-end audit and the executive has reviewed it; any questions should be directed to Vic or Bert Harding.
5. We should have some new badges available at the next meeting. The executive has approved a new design.
6. Linda asked for a show of hands for those interested in a propagation workshop at the end of next month's meeting. Only a few seemed interested.

**QUESTIONNAIRE:** At the end of the meeting, members were asked to fill out a questionnaire on the views of the ARS journal. Editor Glen Jamieson is anxious to have feedback from all members and each chapter is asked to respond to 11 questions about content and use of the online journal. The results were tallied and sent on immediately.

Meeting adjourned: 9:15 pm



*Zauschneria californica* (aka *Epilobium californicum*) attracts hummingbirds in the late summer garden – if you are lucky enough to have hummers that stay all year!

## *Ask an Expert...*

**Problem:** Many rhododendrons that have come through past summers unscathed are showing signs of leaf burn this year. Why is that and what should be done?

**Advice from MARS member Joan Rich:**

Broadleaf evergreens – such as rhododendrons - are constantly losing water to the air. They need to have water replaced through their roots all year round.

This summer, during the month of July, there was no rainfall whatsoever combined with above average hours of sunshine. August also had many hot sunny days. Some rhododendrons may have suffered from drought while in active growth or the foliage was in soft growth.



Marginal leaf necrosis occurred on some susceptible plants, showing up as brown or burned leaves from the tips and/or edges toward the middle of the leaf. (Late application of excess inorganic fertilizer which has not been adequately watered in can cause the same symptoms.)

Also, heat and sun scald symptoms can develop rapidly during a hot spell with intense sunlight. In this case brown blotches of varying degrees appear mostly on the central portions of the top leaves, usually on the south and southwest side of the plant.



### **Treatment**

**Adequate soil moisture!** Often irrigation in summer only penetrates the top 3 or 4 inches of soil. Dig around the plant to discover whether the water has penetrated further down to the feeder roots.

Water the ground heavily in November to prevent drying out in winter. Then water again during the weeks of heat and drought that will likely occur again next summer. Frequent surface waterings give the impression the soil is wet enough. But what is really needed is adequate water with an occasional soaking in the zone where the roots are most numerous.

After non-evergreen leaf drop in the fall, mulch your rhododendrons to insulate them from temperature changes and to reduce the depth at which freezing takes place. Leave the mulch in place for the summer.

If using an inorganic fertilizer next year, occasionally irrigate heavily to leach out excessive salts.

Provide a temporary sunshade to susceptible plants next year if necessary. In the middle of the hottest days turn a sprinkler on the plant. This may help temporarily. Some of the damaged leaves will fall off during annual senescence. Otherwise, just leave well enough alone for the time being.

*Words: Joan Rich*

*Photos: Linda Derkach*

# Garden Journal...

From Linda Derkach  
MARS President

At our September meeting, we were treated to a fascinating account of the history and resurrection of Dominion Brook Park in Saanich. If you haven't read the minutes of this meeting, please go back and read...for here is a garden worth visiting. Joan Gibb invited us to tour the park next spring...a notion that tantalized many of the members present. This brings us to the possibility of a **MARS Bus Tour in 2014** to Dominion Brook Park and other public gardens around Victoria and Saanich. So now we need two or three members to work with the Executive to plan such a sojourn! Please contact me if you are interested. Just think....friends, gardens, and nurseries all together....and someone else driving!!!



*Clematis maximowicziana* (Sweet Autumn Clematis)

It is windy and rainy as I write on this first day of fall, but the late summer show in my garden continues to hold its own. Sweet Autumn Clematis has just started blooming and the Japanese maples are beginning their magical autumn show.



*Acer palmatum* 'Shigitatsusawa' is beginning its autumn journey. October will be brilliant!



*Rudbeckia fulgida* var. *sullivantii* 'Goldsturm' is a tough perennial with sturdy stems that can withstand pelting rain and wind.



Reliable and hardy, *Cyclamen hederifolium* never fails to delight in the fall garden. Later on, in the dark, cold days of winter, *Cyclamen coum* will poke through the snow-covered ground. Both are excellent performers...but don't mix them. *C. hederifolium* is large-leaved and will swamp *C. coum* which deserves its own space to thrive and delight.

Mid Island Floral Art Club  
Presents  
**FLORAL DEMONSTRATIONS**

**Date: September 28 and 29**

*Place: Milner Gardens*



**Artistic Garden Decorations**

September 28 - 10:00 am to 1:00 pm

Darlene Elwood and Helen Mussio

**Floating Designs for Garden Ponds**

September 29 - 10:00 am to 1:00 pm

Margaret Leeuw and Finola Jones CAFA



**MID ISLAND FLORAL ART CLUB MEETING**

Thursday, October 10 at 1:45 pm

**St. Stephens United Church Hall, Qualicum Beach**

Demo & Do Thanksgiving Designs –

Four of our members: Finola Jones, Leanne Opel, Annette Dexter and Kathy McRae will demonstrate designs for Thanksgiving using fruits & vegetables, dried materials plus a traditional and an abstract design. More info Catherine 250-937-1350



Our MIFAC display at Milner is truly delightful and well-worth a visit during the next few weeks, perhaps with a stop at the Camellia Tea Room. Milner is open from 10 am to 4:30 pm every Thursday through Sunday up to (and including) Thanksgiving Monday.

**Vancouver Island Master Gardeners**

present

**Dr. Thierry Vrain:**

**The Gene Revolution - The Future of Agriculture**

**Sunday, October 6, 2013**

**at Oliver Woods Community Centre in Nanaimo**

**Doors open at 2pm.**

**Admission: \$10 for non-members**

# The Alpine Gardeners of Central Vancouver Island

Present

**Paul Spriggs** of Victoria

**Saturday, November 2**

at the

Qualicum Beach Civic Centre

11 am to 3:00 pm

(Doors open at 10:30 am)



Paul will give two presentations:

1. **Island Alpine: The Mountain Flora in Our Backyard**
2. **The Art of the Crevice Garden and a Report from the Czech International Rock Gardening Conference.**

**Door Fee: \$5** includes entry in prize draw  
Bring a bag lunch. Coffee and tea provided  
*Our speaker will have alpine plants for sale.*



Paul Spriggs has owned the Spriggs Gardens Landscaping Co. for 24 years. He is a rock garden builder with a specialty in the crevice style learned from innovators of that style such as Zdenek Zvolanek and Vojtech Holubec of the Czech Republic. He designed and built the crevice beds at the Eswyn Alpine & Rock Garden, Nanoose. He has a passion for mountains and their flora and propagates many alpine plants.

More information?

Contact Valerie -

[Melanson.valerie@gmail.com](mailto:Melanson.valerie@gmail.com)

250-594-4423