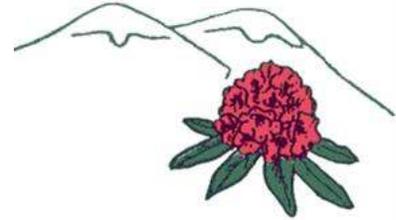


THE RHODOVINE



THE MOUNT ARROWSMITH

MARS

RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

P. O. Box 342

Qualicum Beach. BC

Volume 27, Issue 7

SEPTEMBER 2015

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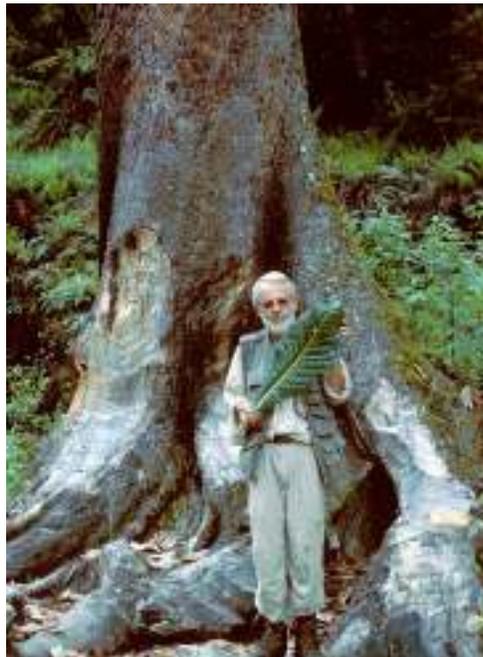
Program Chair – Glen Jamieson

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Bieberstein

This Month: The Siren Song of Species Rhododendrons



Bob Zimmermann
will share information
about collecting in the
wild, and the
irresistible excitement
of growing species
rhododendrons.

More inside.....

MARS Meetings

2nd Wednesday of the
month at 7:30 pm
Qualicum Beach
Civic Centre

Next Meeting:

**Wednesday,
September 9**



Rhododendron yuefengense is a fairly new introduction available from the Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden in Federal Way, Washington. Pink/white blooms contrast with attractive blue/green oval leaves...and it's easy to grow.

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Two Faces of the Summer of 2015....

from Linda Derkach, MARS President

Just when it seemed like summer stretched endlessly before us....and the sunny blue skies would never end, here we are on the cusp of Autumn. Many of us will never forget this year for its wonderful warmth, bright days, visits with grandchildren.....and the numerous buckets of gray water - dishwater and shower water - taken to our thirsty plants during the course of this drought! The new motto at our house is - "if it's yellow let it mellow...if it's brown..." - well you know the rest! All this is fairly new to us "wetcoasters". And in the garden, a similar story....



Lagerstroemia indica (Crepe Myrtle) is a lovely tree or shrub seldom seen here, but I have seen it flourishing in California. Although it is hardy in Zones 4 and 5, it rarely blooms except in the hottest summers. Finally - after ten years in a pot

and kept alive over-wintering in my cool greenhouse - my plant has bloomed! And it would have been even more spectacular save for the nibbling of some hungry deer on one side. But the half dozen, deep pink blooms were enough to thrill me.

And then there are our golden lawns and languishing water-lovers who have a new taste for soapy water - in a drought anything will do!



They say gold is the new green! And our lawns will eventually come back. But amazingly, many of our west coast stalwarts have turned out to be (and always were) quite drought tolerant, including Rugosa roses, geraniums, hostas (who knew!), and (of course) many of the garden-worthy west coast native plants. Many of these survived on very little water and continue to thrive. Even my rhododendrons did very well - especially large, old plants whether in the ground or in pots. Three or four inches of mulch protected the shallow roots and

retained moisture. Apparently, this is but an appetizer for future summers, so we must adjust and get used to it.

While I have a large number of drought-tolerant perennials, I will be seeking out even more and letting some old friends go. But I will go the extra distance for my hydrangeas, for without them the summer garden would have been a total bust! And since they are now used to being sloshed with buckets of soapy, greasy dishwater, I am sure they intend to hang on through whatever next summer brings.

And so to lovely Autumn...we look forward to getting together with like-minded passionate gardeners and learning new things at our upcoming MARS meetings. Our September speaker, Bob Zimmermann, is an expert with a life-time of experience and knowledge to share.

Look forward to seeing you all on Wednesday, September 9.

Friendly Reminder...

When you borrow the label maker or soil tester from MARS, please be sure to return to our Secretary Marilyn when you are done. Thanks!

Bob Zimmermann on Species Rhododendrons

Bob has been growing rhodies for over 45 years. He started propagating on the kitchen stove in Berkeley.

Now he works out of his nursery Chimacum Woods on the Olympic Peninsula. He produces species rhododendrons from seed, much of it collected in the wild.

Bob has made four trips to China and one to Tibet. He's also collected in Japan, Italy and Cape Cod.

Bob and wife Beth have a working garden of over 7 acres where they try to discover what suits these plants best.

Here is a wonderful opportunity to learn more about species rhododendrons from one of North America's premier experts.



Rhododendron kesangiae is a spectacular, large-leaved species seen here in the wild side of Meerkerk Garden, on Whidbey Island near Seattle.

Species Garden Reaches Milestone: Clearing the Site



On a typical summer day in June, 11 stalwart gardeners gathered at Milner Gardens and Woodland to start clearing the site for the proposed rhododendron species garden. They came from North Island and Nanaimo rhododendron chapters as well as MARS to lug brush and wood chunks to the roadside for pickup. This was small stuff we were told; the large trees that must be removed will come down after the gardens close for the winter.

Small stuff, indeed! On arrival at 8:30 a.m. the group was met with daunting piles. Where to begin? Yet little by little, the group dragged branches and huge chunks of wood and tripped only occasionally on tree roots and who knows what else. Within two hours that site looked amazing and we congratulated ourselves on how efficient we were.

On to the next chores; while some worked on taking out old fencings, others moved over to the adjacent property to a site which will be the holding area for plants purchased early. Fencing and rotting posts had to be removed; the old black cloth with weeds clinging had to be removed to make way eventually for new fencing and heavy mulch. It was a dirty, hot and sneeze-worthy job and we all smiled happily when it was finished.

International Visitors Enjoy Milner



Following the ARS Sidney Convention in May, 20 rhododendron enthusiasts made a one-day trip to view gardens in Parksville and Qualicum. The group included folks from China, England, US and Canada.

Mid Island Floral Art Club Meeting

**St. Stephen's United Church Hall
150 Village Way, QB
Thursday, September 10
1:45**

Sticks with a Modern Twist

**For Info call Joanne
250-757-8969**

Martians on the Go

Inveterate traveller Glen Jamieson travelled to Sikkim in May and shares these photos with us.



Glen seems very pleased to have found this exquisite specimen of *Rhododendron cinnabarinum* ssp. *cinnabarinum* Blandfordiiflorum Group, Subsection Cinnabarina in the Yumthang Valley.



Glen in Dzongri Dhoring at an altitude of 4,250 m (13,945 feet) with Tibetan prayer flags.



The Buddha Park of Ravangla, also known as Tathagata Tsal.



Don't touch that bean!

This is a reminder from the folks at **Seedy Saturday**.

Now is the time to be saving all those seeds (veggie and flower) to share with other gardeners at

Seedy Saturday **February 6, 2016.**

Lots of information on the internet about saving seeds...check it out. Watch for more news about Seedy Saturday in future newsletters or check out our website:

qbseedysaturday.com
or like us on facebook.

Wild Flowers Abound Near Port Alberni



Vel Rhodes and Dan Schwarz share these photos of *Platanthera dilatata* discovered in the Beaufort Range in June. Also known as the bog orchid, they are fragrant and native to the Pacific northwest. They are growing here in a natural seepage area.

