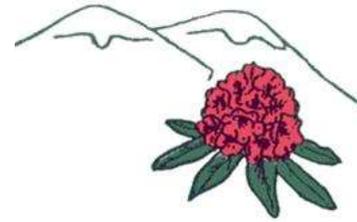


THE RHODOVINE



THE MOUNT ARROWSMITH
RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

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Greeter – Guy Loyer

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Plant Prizes – Sherry Thompson

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Propagation – Sherry Thompson

PR - Marilyn Dawson

Refreshments –

Goodies – Jane Walker

Species Garden – Tony Ansdell

Sunshine – Judy Wood

Webmaster – Diane Henders

Welcome – Joanne Hamilton

This Month:
MARS Members
Starring in

The Circle of Knowledge

Share your challenges, questions,
successes, conundrums with
friends in a collaborative and
supportive setting.



Rhododendron sutchense
at Glen and Dorothy's garden
blooming right now!

**2019 ARS Fall
Conference in
PARKSVILLE**
Register at

www.marsrhodos.ca/ars2019

MARS Meetings

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

Next Meeting:
**Wednesday,
April 10**



Eranthis hyamelis is a carpet of
gold in an old garden near Duncan.
This patch took years to grow and
spread, but well worth the effort!

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Remembering Donna....



Donna at our Plant Sale last year.

Our friend and devoted ‘Marsian’, Donna deBoer passed away Sunday, March 10 in Port Alberni. The last few years were not easy for Donna, but she bore them with courage, optimism, a ready smile and a positive attitude – a model for us all.

As conscientious members, Donna and hubby John made the trek over the hump every month, lugging heavy bins of books to ensure our members had access to their library.

It was clear to anyone the first time meeting Donna that she loved people, her beautiful smile ready to greet everyone. I cannot ever remember Donna without a smile and a friendly word for anyone who came to chat.

Donna loved her garden with a burning passion. It was a source of great joy and satisfaction. She loved rhododendrons, lilies, roses, spring bulbs – she had just about everything in her garden.

Donna was always a willing helper for MARS. Whether it be the library or volunteering at the spring plant show and

sale, she could be depended upon to make a contribution.

Donna is definitely one of my heros – a model of courage and love and constancy even in the face of enormous challenge and pain. I will miss her very much. *From Linda*

Donna had two great qualities; she was very devout, holding fast to her religious beliefs and also having a positive outlook on life. On her way home from a bout of treatment from Victoria one day, she stopped in at the house with John, of course, to pick up a couple of rhododendrons I had offered. While still very ill she was planning the next step of their garden in Port Alberni. A testament to her indomitable spirit.

From Marilyn

Remembering Donna - a serene and beautiful lady with unending faith. Our dedicated MARS librarian always looked on the bright side of life yet accepted what came her way with calm and dignity! Her garden gave her great joy. John was her “rock”. I believe that her struggles these past few years have shown me how to be a better friend. I will miss her!

From Kathy



Upcoming Programs....

❖ **Wednesday, April 10**

- Circle of Knowledge

Activities and Events

❖ **Saturday, April 20**

- MARS Rhododendron Show and Sale

❖ **May 11 and May 12**

- MARS Mother`s Day Weekend Garden Tour

❖ **Tuesday, June 18**

- MARS Bus Tour to Victoria

❖ **September 27 - 29, 2019**

- ARS Fall Conference, Parksville

MARS General Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, March 13, 2019 at 7:30 pm
QB civic Centre

Tales of plant hunting always seem to draw a crowd. And so it was at the MARS general meeting that an eager crowd of gardeners gathered to hear Jonny Larsen talk about his experiences as an amateur plant hunter. Mr. Larsen is a retired teacher from Alesund, about 600 k north of Bergen, Norway who has made several trips to southwest China in search of rare plants. He and his wife are visiting the West Coast of Canada and including visits to many chapters in ARS District One.

While rhododendron species are his passion, his presentation showed considerable interest in the culture of the areas visited as well as the inevitable hardships of climbing mountains and navigating treacherous roads in the muddy season. There were also wonderful mountain landscapes with hillsides covered with flowering rhododendrons. Anyone familiar with the difficulty of growing *R. forrestii* at home would marvel at the sight of a huge hillside covered with its red blooms.

After the break, Jonny Larsen gave a second short presentation on the life of Jean Macklin an adventurous young woman, unorthodox for the times, who became the wife of Frank Kingdon Ward, one of the early famous plant hunters. Larsen seemed fascinated with the May-December aspect of their partnership, she was 26, he 59. He had abandoned his first family and the two set out plant hunting together. Their marriage lasted 11 years; Kingdon Ward died at age 70, but not before Jean, who obviously preferred maturity to youth had taken up with another senior, Albert Henry Rasmussen a sailor and writer of note. In her second marriage, Jean maintained her interest in plants, particularly rhododendrons and meconopsis (blue poppy); she had started out a neophyte but became an accomplished plants person growing from seed acquired abroad. She died in 2011.

Business:

1. Truss Show chair Kathy Loyer canvassed the crowd for volunteers for the April 20 event.
2. Linda Derkach and Nicola Lupton busily signed up sitters at the break for the Garden Tour on May 11 and 12.
3. The door prize, a spring bulb pot, was won by Dawn House. Other plants to be drawn for were *R. 'Autumn Gold'* donated by Al and Liz Murray of Duncan, *R. 'Girard's Crimson'*, *R. 'Ruby Hart'*, *R. 'Sugar Puff'*, *R. 'Pink Porcelain'* and a dwarf nandina. Winners were Judy Millicheap, Larry Stewart, Gillian Walker, Arlene England, Linda Derkach and Doug Kitts.

Meeting Adjourned: 9:35 pm



Rhododendron 'Rosamundi' greets visitors at Glen and Dorothy's garden gate.

And the Work Goes on....

Greig Species Rhododendron Garden at Milner Gardens & Woodland

Words: John Deniseger

Photos: Craig Clarke

Volunteers from MARS, North Island and Nanaimo RS joined Art and Susan Lightburn to load and move their large, mature plants to Milner Garden. The sunny day was much appreciated!

Volunteers included John, Craig, Chris, Ron and Jamie from Nanaimo RS. Phil, Glen, Guy, Kathy and Diane came from MARS. And from the NIRS, Jill, Paul and Jake came to work.

30 rhododendrons were moved and planted, some very large and heavy! Another major planting bee of companions is planned for a few weeks hence.



**Qualicum Beach Garden Club
Tuesday, April 9, 2019**

QB Civic Centre
Doors open: 7 pm
Meeting: 7:30 pm
Guests \$3

Donna Balzer

*Growing Great Tomatoes
and Pest-Free Vegetables*

CBC radio and HGTV gardener Donna Balzer brings garden inspiration and practical insider information for growing your own vegetables this season. You will learn the basics of selecting plants and systems that are right for you and the one secret to growing pest-free food. Learn tips and tricks to grow great vegetables including tomatoes in 2019.

Eaglecrest Garden Club

Wednesday, April 17
7:00 pm
Doors open: 6:30 pm
Qualicum Beach Civic Centre
Guests: \$3
Bryan Ellis - *Pelargoniums*

Bryan is an avid plant collector with a large collection of orchids (somewhere between one and two thousand), mostly cool growing cloud forest species. His pelargonium collection is around 150 species and hybrids ranging from the classic red ball geraniums to unusual succulent species that require almost no water to survive.

He also grows carnivores, alpines, woodlanders, bog plants, tree ferns, tropicals and various hardy plants.

**ARS District One Meets in
Shirley, BC**



ARS District 1 representatives met in March in Shirley, BC - just beyond Sooke. The seven British Columbia clubs meet twice yearly to share ideas, learn from one another and plan for coming events.



This lovely blue carpet of Scilla has naturalized into the lawn at the home of Glen and Dorothy Jamieson. A lovely sight to see in early spring. Once the leaves have died back and replenished the bulbs to ensure bloom next year, it is safe to mow.

MARS Truss Show Procedures and Regulations

Here are the rules for the annual MARS Rhododendron Show and Plant Sale. Following are details of how and when to enter your trusses (rhododendron blooms).

1. Eligibility

Exhibits in most categories will be accepted from members of MARS and non-members in the area. Note the Novice category is open only to new MARS members (three years or less). All members of a household will be considered to be one exhibitor.

2. Entries

All entries shall have been grown by the exhibitor for at least 6 months and primarily cared for by the competitor. Only one entry of each name in each category per exhibitor please. For example, *R. macabeanum* could be entered in the species category and the appropriate color category, but not twice in the same category. Extra blooms are encouraged but will be for display only.

All entries should be taken from plants grown without artificial protection, except for the category 'Protected' which is for the non-hardy.

3. Definitions

- **Species:** Botanically identified plants originating from seeds or cuttings
- **Hybrid:** Plants resulting from cross-breeding of more than one species, hybrid or combination thereof
- **Truss:** A single rachis, i.e. all florets coming from one bud

- **Spray:** Multi-stems emerging from a single stem
- **Hammerhead:** Truss with multiple rachides emanating from a single terminal
- **Unknowns:** A bloom whose identity is unknown to the owner and therefore cannot be judged;
- Unknowns provide extra color for the Exhibition Table.

4. Exhibitors

- Shall make an effort to identify each truss.
- Entries will be accepted from 7 am to 8.30 am at the Parksville Curling Club.
- Entries and ribbons may be removed at 2 pm, but not before.

5. Preparation of Trusses

- Blooms should be selected when they are at the peak of their development.
- Blooms should be cut from well-watered plants during the coolest part of the day.
- Blooms should be carefully groomed. Damaged or dead twigs, leaves, bud scales and flower pips should be removed.
- Cleaning or washing of leaves is advised, but no artificial polishing is allowed.
- Use suitable containers to retain water during transportation to the show. Chemical additives to preserve bloom freshness can be used.

Participants' guide: Everyone who has blooming plants in their garden is

encouraged to bring trusses either for judging or display. All categories, except the Novice category, are open to members and non-members alike. The Novice category is open to MARS members only.

Members should familiarize themselves with the categories and, a few days before the show, look around their garden and see what can be entered.

Categories are: Red, Pink, White, Blue Collection, Yellow Collection, Foliage, Lax Truss, Spray, Species Large Leaf, Species Small Leaf, Hammerhead, Novice and Protected (such as *madenii* and *vireyas* that need winter protection here).

The Four-Step Process to Enter Blooms in the MARS Rhododendron Show

1. Register

Proceed to the Registration Table, sign in and pick up a competitor number and a number of dots. You will need a dot for each entry.

Proceed to the Labelling Table and leave your list of Truss names. Lists will be taken in order. Please don't shout out entry names. There may be a wait for plant names if a lot of people come at the same time.

2. Put Trusses in Bottles

Nearby is a table with bottles and corks. Take one bottle for each truss, put a numbered dot on the bottom of each bottle, making sure first that it is dry. Don't turn the bottle over; it's full of water. Place

a truss into each bottle using a cork to hold it securely if necessary.

3. Label Trusses

Leave trusses on the Work Table and go to the Labelling Table to pick up labels. Take trusses and labels to the Holding Table. At any stage, feel free to ask for help.

4. Position Trusses in their Categories

From the Holding Table, trusses will be taken by a designated volunteer to the judging area and placed in the appropriate category. The label is placed in front of each truss. All categories are clearly labelled.

All trusses must be in place by 8:30 am so judging can start on time. Late entries will go to the Exhibition Table. Please bring as many extra trusses as you can for the Exhibition Table.

Important Note for MARS Members Submitting Trusses

- ❖ **Please be sure to bring two lists – one for Species and one for Hybrids.**
- ❖ **Please put the names of your trusses in alphabetical order.**
- ❖ **Labels will be produced on a first come first served basis.**

MARS Truss Show

Judging Criteria

Note: For the information of our members entering the show, we are providing the criteria by which the judges are asked to make their decisions.

The MARS Truss Show is a relatively low-key affair with the aim of encouraging and educating members. Generally, the categories for judging are size, colour, form and foliage.

Size: Is the size close to what is expected of the individual variety?

Colour: Is it typical for the variety and the right colour for the category?

Form: Is the truss free of torn flowers and damaged leaves? (In this show, one or two unopened flowers are acceptable.)

Foliage: Are the leaves healthy, undamaged and representative of the variety? The stem should be fairly straight.

The entry should be cleaned of all extraneous bits, chewed leaves taken off where possible. Leaves may be cleaned but not polished.

The Hammerhead: In this show, judges are asked to adhere to the wording for the Hammerhead Trophy which is given “to the most unusual truss” rather than strictly following the rules of a hammerhead being on more than one stem. (In recent years several small-flowered entries have appeared to be hammerheads. But very close examination has shown they are not. Yet they are still unusual and might qualify to be considered for the trophy.)



Rhododendron 'Cilpinense' is one of my indicator plants - generally an early bloomer – often bursting forth near the end of February. But this year, it was the third week of March before she began to peak out, preferring to hang in suspended animation until most of the freezing weather subsided. 'Cilpinense' needs the protection of tree overhang or a covered porch to prevent her early blossoms from frost damage.



Rhododendron tsariense is a lovely compact grower with attractive dark green leaves and thick, woolly, dark brown indumentum. Bell-shaped flowers are cream or white flushed pink.

Blooming now in April in Glens' garden.

Great for a small garden.

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2019 Fall Rhododendron Conference **A Vancouver Island Celebration of Gardening**

The Mount Arrowsmith Rhododendron Society (MARS) is bringing hundreds of gardening enthusiasts together for the fall conference of the American Rhododendron Society.

Rhododendrons by the Seaside

September 27 to 29, 2019

Parksville Community and Conference Centre

Register at www.marsrhodos.ca/ars2019/

With the theme of “Rhododendrons as the World Warms,” the lineup of speakers, workshops and tours promises a busy and exciting weekend for everyone. This conference is one of the biggest bargains of the year. An early registration fee of \$95 will entitle you to 10 speakers over three days, including two workshops, choice of one of three bus tours, two continental breakfasts and lunch on Saturday. As well, there is access to a plant sale, a display of international rhododendron photos throughout the facility and a silent auction. Two keynote speakers follow the evening banquets on Friday and Saturday. Dinner is buffet style for an additional \$50 for each night.

The conference theme relates to climate change implications, but the context is for all gardeners who are interested in growing healthy plants of any type in our area. Speakers include a wide range of local and internationally-recognized experts in their fields, including Dr. Richard Hebda, Curator Emeritus from the Royal BC Museum; Dr. Linda Gilkeson, entomologist; Mike Stewart, rhododendron nurseryman; Steve Hootman, Executive Director and Curator of the Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden (RSBG) in Federal Way, Wash.; Dr. Nancy Turner, UVic ethnobotanist; Marc Colombel, author and hybridizer, France; Ron Long, botanist and wildflower photographer and Nancy Moore, landscape designer & horticulturist. Bulb and seed propagation workshops will be conducted by Bernie Dinter, nurseryman and Dennis Bottemiller, propagator extraordinaire recently of the RSBG.

For those who need a place to stay, the MARS website has a list of various accommodations near the conference site. For best choice and best price, we suggest booking early as late September is still busy with tourists.

2019 Spring, Summer and Fall Events and Activities

Date & Time	Event	Location
Wednesday, April 10 7:30 pm	MARS: <i>Circle of Knowledge</i> Sharing our expertise with each other	QB Civic Centre (QBCC)
Thursday, April 11 2:00 pm	Mid Island Floral Art Club: <i>Spring Tulip Design</i>	St. Stephen's Church Hall, QB Info: Deanne 752-1858
Wednesday, April 17 7:00 pm	Eaglecrest Garden Club: Bryan Emery on <i>Pelargoniums</i>	QB Civic Centre
Saturday, April 20 10 am to 2 pm	MARS Rhododendron Show and Sale	Parksville Curling Club
Saturday, April 27 9:00 am – 1:00 pm	Alpine Gardeners of Mid-Van Island: Giant Plant Sale	886 Primrose Street, Qualicum Beach
Monday, April 29 1:00 – 3:00 pm	Alpine Gardeners of Mid-Van Island: David Sellars on <i>The Crowning Glory of the Big Horn Mountains of Wyoming</i>	QB Civic Centre \$10 at the door Prizes - Refreshments
May 11 & May 12 10 to 4 each day	MARS Mother's Day Weekend Garden Tour	Qualicum Beach Parksville
Saturday, May 11 8:30 to noon	Qualicum Beach Garden Club Garden Sale	701 Larch, Qualicum Beach
Saturday, May 11 9:00 am to 1:00 pm	Nanoose Garden Club Plant Sale	Nanoose Library Centre Northwest Bay Road, Nanoose
Wednesday, May 15 7:00 pm	Eaglecrest Garden Club: Melanie Penn of Bilston Creek Farm on <i>Lavender</i>	QBCC
Tuesday, June 18	MARS Bus Tour	Victoria
Wednesday, June 19 7:00 pm	Eaglecrest Garden Club: Barry Roberts on <i>Hydrangeas</i>	QBCC
Wednesday, July 17 7:00 pm	Eaglecrest Garden Club: Valerie Melanson & Margot Moser on <i>Alpines for Rock Gardens & Regular Gardens</i>	QBCC
Wednesday, September 18 7:00 pm	Eaglecrest Garden Club: Margaret Mills on <i>Mason Bees</i>	QBCC
Friday, September 27 to Sunday, September 29, 2019	ARS Fall Conference Hosted by Mt. Arrowsmith Rhododendron Society <i>Rhododendrons by the Seaside</i>	Parksville Community and Conference Centre www.marsrhodos.ca/ars2019
Wednesday, October 16 7:00 pm	Eaglecrest Garden Club: Collin Bartlett on <i>Getting Your Garden Ready for Birds</i>	QBCC