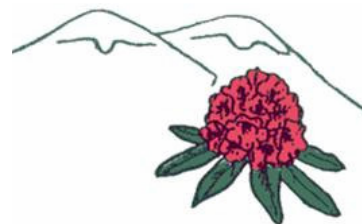


THE RHODOVINE

THE MOUNT ARROWSMITH RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

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MARS
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Next Meeting THURSDAY 11th October



We're traveling to Nanaimo .
(How to get there and rides page 2)

Both October and November meetings are joint affairs sharing speakers with the Nanaimo Rhododendron Society. On **THURSDAY 11th October**, we plan to car pool MARS members to Nanaimo to hear Dennis Bottemiller, the nursery manager and propagator with the Rhododendron Species Foundation in Seattle. Dennis grew up gardening and he's never stopped. As the chief propagator at the Rhododendron Species Foundation he's been rooting cuttings and manipulating plants for years and loving it. His talk and slide show will be on propagating. "It's not really a how-to talk but more on why it works, with emphasis on ways to manipulate the things that cause rooting to enhance the success rate," he says..

Continued next column.



With a brief seven-year stint at Seymour botanical conservatory in Tacoma, Dennis, who graduated from Washington State University and interned at the Species Garden, has spent most of his career at the RSBG. "I really enjoy all the crazy stuff Steve (Hootman) brings back from his trips into the wild. It is a great challenge to grow things that I have never seen before, and in some cases have never been in cultivation before."

MARS Meetings

Second Wednesday of the Month
7:30 pm
Qualicum Beach Civic Centre

November Meeting

Wednesday 14th November
Peter Wharton from curator of the David Lam Asian Garden at UBC Botanical Gardens and Center for Plant Research. The subject is yet to be confirmed. He has just finished a three week trip in Vietnam.

Inside this Issue

President's Message	Page 2
Rides	Page 2
How to get there	Page 2
News Flash	Page 2
Events	Page 3
Dwarf rhodos	Page 5
General meeting	Page 7
Member Gardens	Page 8
Pruning	Page 9
Coffee grounds	Page 10

Photographs by
Susan Lightburn

Message from our President

It's about 800kms to Newport, OR., the venue of the 27th Western Regional Rhododendron Conference, sponsored by District 4 of the American Rhododendron Society on the weekend 21-23 Sep. The drive maybe long but the monotony of the I-5 is rewarded by the spectacular drive along hwy 101 from Astoria to Newport. The coastal road is so scenic, the only problem is for the driver, trying to 'see it all' and still stay on the frequently winding road!

Our US hosts made us most welcome, starting with the staff at the Agate Beach Best Western Hotel which, as the name implies, is located on Agate beach, a broad, sandy beach complete with lighthouse, the Yaquina Head lighthouse, built in 1871 and now a museum.

Chapter 4 provided us with an interesting team of speakers, who entertained us throughout Friday evening, Saturday and Sunday mornings! Rhododendrons were on offer everywhere- give always, auctions, prizes and if you had no luck there, you could simply buy them. I noticed a member of MARS from Port Alberni, who shall remain nameless, departing with a car load!

There were about 245 attendees at the conference; with 36 Chapter 1 members there, BC was well represented. I was particularly impressed to see Jim and Jean Greig there, as ever at the centre of all of the various activities! What a fine pair of ambassadors they are.

A great weekend, good speakers, good wine, good weather and good company.

John England

Nanaimo HOW TO GET THERE

Rides to Nanaimo

Before heading to Nanaimo, MARS members who need rides or are providing rides will meet in the lot beside Qualicum Beach Civic Centre at 6:30 pm A few people have already signed up for a lift. If you need a ride, let Marilyn Dawson know at 752-3694 or e-mail dawson@shaw.ca as soon as possible, so there are enough vehicles available. The meeting in Nanaimo at the Beban Park Recreation Centre, Room 20, starts at 7:30, usually with a very short business session and a coffee break before the speaker.

Driving to Nanaimo and how to get there

For those who are driving, take the inland highway; turn left at the Northfield exit toward the ferry terminal. Turn left onto Bowen at the next set of lights, then right into Beban Park. It is easiest to park in the central or northern parking lots.

If you choose the old highway, make a right turn onto Bowen Road at the Tom Harris car sales corner. Go through the next set of lights and then turn left into the park just before you reach Northfield.

HELP WANTED

Barbara Kulla requires an assistant on a regular basis to help with set up and clean up of our refreshments before and after the monthly meeting. Please contact Barbara at 752-7369

Events

Let's go to Pot

With the growing number of yellow and red leaves around, there's no doubt fall is upon us. Time to clean up the garden. Time to pot up. Barbara Kulla, chairman of the **MARS Oceanside plant sale** next April is urging members to look around their gardens and see what they can part with. It's a good time to divide perennials, dig up "volunteers" and even take cuttings. At last year's two-day sale, MARS sold almost all the plants brought in, including hostas, day lilies, violas, trilliums (from seed) Japanese maple seedlings, sedums, bergenias, hellebores, the list goes on. Next year, the goal is for even more donations. Barbara suggests looking for the showiest plants and potting up the biggest ones possible. However, small plants in clean 10-20 cm pots are also much in demand. Set them in a semi-protected spot away from the worst winter weather and wait for spring. If anyone needs pots, or has extra pots, or needs more information, let Barbara know.

Qualicum Beach Garden Club

- The October meeting is on Wednesday October 3, not October 9, and the speaker is Connie Kuramoto "Easy Propagation".

- **"CLIMATE CHANGE AND MANAGING THE LANDSCAPE"**

RICHARD HEBDA PhD, noted GardenWise columnist and expert on native plants, is curator of Botany and Earth History at the Royal British Columbia Museum in Victoria.

Widespread global warming is underway and will result in ecological, social and even economic transformation. All of us will learn to do things differently as we work together to reduce carbon dioxide emissions and adapt to new conditions.

Learn how climate change is studied and what impact the change might have on our landscape and in our gardens. Learn about strategies and ways in which you and your community can begin to adapt to new opportunities and challenges as climate change takes hold.

November 13, 2007 — 7:30 pm (Doors open at 7:00 pm)

At the Civic Centre in Qualicum Beach hosted by the Qualicum Beach Garden Club

Fee: \$5 (QBGC members free with membership card or badge)



Mount Elphinstone grows beautiful *Macrophyllum* Rhododendrons.

Ron Knight has some seedlings available for club members.

If interested please contact Ron at 604-883-9807



“I thought the club should know that rhodos are all well and fine at the Rhododendron Species Foundation on Federal Way.” Susan Lightburn



John England, Bernie Guyader and Art Lightburn
Bernie gave us a wonderful talk on growing dwarf Rhododendrons.
(My apologies to Bernie for misspelling his name last Month)

**R. keiskei**

Dwarf Rhododendrons

The enormous rhododendron family, which includes both rhododendrons and azaleas, contains many dwarf plants suitable for rock gardens, their specific use depends on their soil and light preferences and their habits of growth—compact, spreading or trailing. All the species and varieties listed here are evergreen and notable either for their foliage or flowers, sometimes for both. Most have oval leaves, dull or shiny; their flowers, bell-shaped or trumpet-shaped, usually bloom in clusters from early spring to early summer.

Examples of dwarf rhododendrons include: *R. fastigiatum*; *R. indicum* ‘Balsam’ (Balsam azalea); *R. indicum* ‘Flame Creeper’; *R. keiskei* ‘Dwarf’ (dwarf Keisk rhododendron); *R. kiusianum* (dwarf azalea); *R. nakaharai* (dwarf azalea); *R. racemosum* ‘Dwarf’ (dwarf Mayflower rhododendron); *R.* hybrids ‘Dora Amateis’, ‘Moerheim’, ‘Purple Gem’. All are called dwarf rhododendrons or dwarf azaleas.

Dwarf Species

R. fastigiatum, a dwarf lepidote rhododendron, has shiny blue-gray leaves, ½ inch long, and bell-shaped lavender-rose flowers 1 inch wide. It is an open, upright plant, becoming 3 feet tall with a spread of 12 to 24 inches.

R. indicum ‘Balsam’ (Balsam azalea) and *R. indicum* ‘Flame Creeper’ azaleas are prostrate plants that form low mounds up to 4 feet across; they are useful as ground covers. Both have dull, hairy leaves, 2 inches long. The salmon-pink double flowers of ‘Balsam’ resemble roses, while those of ‘Flame Creeper’ are an intense scarlet.

R. keiskei ‘Dwarf’ (dwarf Keisk rhododendron), a dwarf lepidote rhododendron, bears pale yellow 2-inch bell-shaped flowers and has olive-green 2-inch leaves that turn wine red in winter. It is a spreading plant, growing 2 ½ feet tall and 4 feet wide.

R. kiusianum (dwarf azalea) and *R. nakaharai* (dwarf azalea) are both dwarf azaleas. *R. kiusianum* blooms while still young, bearing white, pink, rose or purple flowers 1 to 1 ½ inches across. The shiny 1-inch leaves sometimes turn red in winter. This open, twiggy plant grows slowly to 3 feet tall and 5 feet wide. *R. nakaharai* forms a low dense mound that seems to grow flatter as it matures, since its ultimate height is 6 to 9 inches, while its spread is 12 to 15 inches. The small, shiny leaves, 2 inches long, are hairy on the undersides. The 3-inch pink, salmon or red flowers are saucer shaped and, unlike most azaleas, open in midsummer.



R. "Dora Amateis"

R. racemosum 'Dwarf' (dwarf Mayflower rhododendron), a dwarf lepidote rhododendron, is a spreading semi-prostrate plant 2 feet high and up to 5 feet wide, with many-branched wiry stems. The $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch white or pink flowers begin to appear while the plant is still quite young. The 2-inch leaves are smooth on the top, gray and scaly on the underside.

Dwarf Hybrid Rhododendrons

R. hybrids 'Dora Amateis', 'Moerheim' and 'Purple Gem' are all dwarf rhododendrons. 'Dora Amateis' grows 3 to 4 feet tall and has 3-inch white flowers speckled with green; its leaves are dark green and in full sun have a bronze sheen. 'Moerheim' is a low, dense shrub, growing 3 feet high and 3 feet wide; it has 1-inch violet-to-purple flowers, and 2-inch shiny green leaves that turn maroon in the winter. 'Purple Gem' forms a dense mound and grows 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 feet tall; this variety has 2-inch lavender-to-purple flowers and 2-inch blue-green leaves that turn rust-colored as they age.

How to Grow Dwarf Rhododendrons

All dwarf rhododendrons and azaleas are hardy in Zones 6, -10, to -5° F, and many can be grown, if given protection, in Zone 5, to -10° F. In cold climates, most do better on the north side of a building or on a northwest slope. All need some sun for best flowering but in general require partial shade. They thrive in a moist, well-drained, humus-filled soil with a pH of 5.0 to 6.0, enriched with peat moss or leaf mold. Plant dwarf rhododendrons and azaleas in spring or, in areas that have mild winters, in the fall. Prepare the soil by thoroughly mixing equal parts of loam, coarse sand and ground oak leaves or redwood. Plant the root ball slightly higher than it was growing at the nursery.

To keep the soil cool and moist, mulch it with a 2-inch layer of wood chips, ground bark, pine needles or coarse peat moss. Fertilize plants in the early spring with a light sprinkling of cottonseed meal or a fertilizer specially formulated for acid-loving plants. Pruning is seldom needed except for removal of faded flowers, but if it is, branches may be trimmed immediately after flowering. Rhododendrons may be harmed in winter by drying winds and bright sun; protect their shallow roots with a mulch of oak leaves or pine needles and their foliage with a loose blanket of evergreen boughs or specially built screens



Rhododendron & Azalea Pages

Find more interesting information when you visit the sites below.

<http://rhodyman.net/rasite.html>

<http://rhodyman.net/VFARSHistory.html>

GENERAL MEETING MINUTES WEDNESDAY, Sept. 12, 2007.

MEETING: Called to order at 7:30 p.m.

WELCOME GUESTS: Rose Chamulak

MINUTES of the last executive meeting, May 1, were approved as circulated; no corrections necessary.

BUSINESS ARISING: None

Other Business: John England urged members to pay their membership fees or mail them to Bert Harding, because the ARS deadline this year is mid-November and there will be no general meeting in October, members traveling to Nanaimo for a joint session with that club. He also suggested members doing garden cleanup this fall should think of next spring's plant sale and pot up plants they don't want. He also mentioned that date for the Christmas party, Dec. 5 at the Fern Road Rotary Hall (a Wednesday).

REFRESHMENTS: Barbara Kulla's goodie crew were: Linda Derkach, Brenda Moore and Ruth Harding.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Two items from Great Plant Picks, including a poster.

A note from member Linda Derkach thanking MARS for the subsidy that helped with her trip to the ARS Convention in San Francisco where "the Gardens were fabulous."

B.C. Communities in Bloom through Qualicum Beach Chair and Town Councillor Wendy Maurer has invited members to its award reception at the QB Civic Centre from 5-7 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 28.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Bert Harding gave the treasurers report for Tony Ansdell.

MEMBERSHIP: Bert Harding reported that we have 63 regular memberships for a total of 121 members.

PROGRAM CHAIRMAN: Art Lightburn outlined plans for the joint October meeting with Nanaimo to hear Dennis Bottemiller from of the Rhododendron Species Foundation in Seattle. The joint meeting is necessary because the speaker can only handle one session at this busy time of year. Sign-up sheets for Car Pool Volunteers and Members Requiring Transportation were passed around. Full details in the newsletter, but car pools will meet at the Civic Centre Parking Lot at 6:30pm.

SUNSHINE: Maria Bieberstein was absent, but John England reported that Celsa Rasmussen had received a card for her illness

GARDEN TOUR: Art Lightburn reports that Linda Derkach will chair the 2008 tour on Mother's Day Weekend; a meeting will be called in November. Last year's tour committee members have agreed to stay on in some capacity.

WAYS and MEANS: Susan Lightburn's door prize Hotei went to Judy McMaster. Other prizes drawn went to Cassy Lacouvee who took Party Orange, Brenda Moore with Dopey and Raymer von Conruhds for some New Zealand flax.

TRUSS SHOW and Plant Sale: Bert Harding said April 19 has been reserved for the show and sale at the Parksville Curling Club.

NEW BUSINESS: John England said the executive had, after much discussion, decided that the Rathrevor-Biosphere debate was not an issue to involve MARS as a club, but that individual members can write letters.

GUEST SPEAKER: The subject was alpines and dwarf rhododendrons in the rock garden and Bernie Guyader from the North Island Rhododendron Society brought his Power Point program. He traced the beginnings of a rock garden through to its mature stage and showed how various perennials and small rhodies grow well together.

Continued on the next page.

MEETING ADJOURNED: 9:20

DATE TO REMEMBER: Our next meeting is in Nanaimo on Thursday, Oct. 11

Secretary, Marilyn Dawson
President, John England

Member's corner



Spring of this year in the beautiful garden of Velda Rhodes and Dan Swartz in Port Albernie

Members Bio

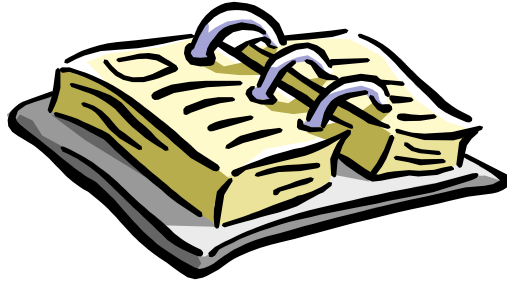
In future magazines we are hoping to get to know more about both new and old members of the club. Next month we will meet Linda Derkach.

Ron McMaster will be asking members to share for example their past experiences or favorite rhodos. In this way we will get to know one another a little better.

Tips by Ron Knight (from his recent talk at Mars)

PRUNING

TIMETABLE



Someone once said that the best time to prune is whenever you have pruners in your hand. However, although you won't kill plants with this strategy, "pruning with a purpose" implies a timetable:

MARCH:

- Trees, shrubs, and vines that bloom in summer on new wood.
- Non-flowering evergreen broad-leafed plants; evergreen and deciduous hedges.
- Hybrid roses that bloom more than once on new wood.
- Berried trees and shrubs if needed.

JUNE:

- Spring-flowering shrubs immediately after blooming.
- Needled evergreen candles may be trimmed in half.

JULY- OCTOBER:

- Summer flowering trees and shrubs as blossoms fade.
- Evergreen or deciduous hedges may be sheared.
- Mature species roses that bloom on old wood.
- Dogwoods and maples if needed.
- Long rose canes should be shortened.

ANYTIME: Dead, diseased, damaged, or disorderly stems.

A GOOD PRUNING BOOK IS YOUR BEST TOOL.



Coffee Grounds

Van Veen Nursery in Portland, Oregon, reported after using coffee grinds from Starbucks Coffee House for about 18 months that they were very satisfied with the results.

- 1) It helps to aerate their clay soil.
- 2) Slugs don't like to go through. (So you can see we have both mixed in and put on top.)
- 3) It does help to make the soil more acidic.
- 4) But it does not replace fertilizer.

They suspect that by making the soil more acidic you are actually helping the uptake of magnesium. This in turn helps iron uptake and that helps to make the plant green. So really you are starting a process, not fertilizing. Combine the coffee with horse manure and organic mulch, and watch the amount of fertilizer you use decrease dramatically. As for how we apply it, when the plant is dry and just before it rains we sprinkle it on and around. The rain takes it from there. Otherwise, we incorporate it into the new beds. No exact rate, just cover the top and work it in.

(Courtesy of Vicki at Van Veen Nursery)



Have fun with your fall garden clean up.