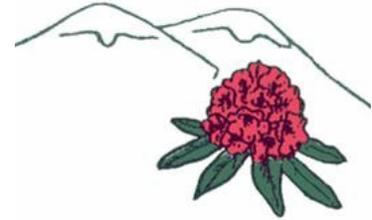


THE RHODOVINE



**THE MOUNT ARROWSMITH
RHODODENDRON SOCIETY**

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Tickets Sandra Hemsworth

Truss Show Al Bieberstein

Ways & Means Don Bridgen

This Month

Wednesday March 10th

Ron Knight

Dwarf Rhododendrons

Is your garden stuffed? Do you only have space for tiny additions? We have great news for you! March brings Ron Knight over to MARS from Pender Harbour. He will be giving a presentation on Dwarf Rhododendrons and maybe, if we are lucky, he'll bring some dwarves to sell!

Ron is a past president of the Vancouver Rhodo Society and at the moment is the ARS District One (BC) Director.

At Caron Gardens, back in Pender Harbour, Ron and his wife Carla grow and display hundreds of different rhodo species and hybrids.

Caron Gardens



MARS Meetings

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

Next Meeting

14th April 2010

What are trusses?

How to prepare

And

present them.

Marie and Al Bieberstein our
own Truss Show and Plant
Sale organizers



Pulmonaris which has been
flowering for a month.

February 2010

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President's message

Spring has virtually sprung! The Box Stores are playing catch-up with this early spring phenomenon, lest they be accused of not living up to their mantra to “create the need and instantly fill it”! Meanwhile the local nurseries and garden suppliers are open for business; doing their bit to satisfy our green thumb needs...

...speaking of needs.

At our February meeting the Four Experts imparted their collective wisdom on ‘landscaping with rhododendrons’, at which time they pleaded with us ‘to broadcast lime to all corners of your garden’, because after this winter ‘your soil is far too acidic’. Dutifully, I rushed down to Dolly’s Home Hardware in QB and purchased enough lime for our subdivision! I’m sure that you know how heavy a bag of lime is, well buying it locally certainly paid off for me! The young man in the store not only loaded all the bags from the shelf onto a store dolly, but then he accompanied me out to my vehicle after I had transacted the purchase and proceeded to load all the bags into my vehicle. Contrast that to buying from the box store, where they provide a buggy or flatbed, but seldom the manpower. I probably paid \$1 more per bag, but the service and proximity of the local store made it the hands down economic choice. My plea to encourage you to shop locally when you can! We are all getting busy with Spring projects but please don’t forget the Club’s ‘wants’:

1. We need your completed questionnaire at the March meeting, if not already returned.
2. We need your preference on the proposed tour up-island in late May- bus or car, weekend or midweek, and
3. We also need additional volunteers for the Garden Tour, 8/9 May.

Milner Gardens news - the second in Speaker Series of three talks will feature Gary Lewis from Phoenix Nursery in Vancouver. His

topic - Western Australian plants, including some that we can grow locally.

QB Civic Centre 25 March 7pm, \$10 tickets at the door or Coastal Credit Union, Nanoose Bay, Parksville or Qualicum Beach.

Hope to see you all at the next meeting on 10th March.

John England



Entrance to Cox Trail UBC

Members Corner

Milner at MARS

Milner executive director Geoff Ball, or one of his assistants will be at the March General Meeting to offer us single or family memberships. It's a good chance for MARS members to buy at a reduced rate.



Cilipenese 3', 5F, E, 3-4/3-4/3-4
opened 14th Feb 2010 Photo by Myrna Schebel

MARS General Meeting

Wednesday, Feb 10th, 2010 7:30 pm. at
Qualicum Beach Civic Centre

MEETING AT: 7:30 pm. at Qualicum Beach Civic Centre Minutes of the general meeting appeared in the Rhodovine and were accepted without change.

GUESTS: Judy Millicheap, John and Donna Debor, Darlene and Gordon Chilton. Judy and the Debors were welcomed as new members.

REFRESHMENTS: Ann Gutsche and Brenda Moore.

BUSINESS ARISING: 1. Seedy Saturday saw 2092 people check out the garden event at the QB Civic Centre. John England thanked everyone who participated at the MARS table. 2. Members were urged to bring the completed questionnaire to the next meeting if they haven't already done so. 3. A bus trip is being suggested for sometime in May after the Garden Tour. Members will be asked to state their preference for time at the March meeting. 4. John England stressed the importance of the MARS library. Borrowing is as easy as signing out a book. 5. John said the Executive has agreed that MARS will pay a flat rate of \$50 to any member who hosts a guest speaker to help cover expenses. 6. On behalf of MARS members who attended the 20th Anniversary dinner, John England presented Carol Hanson with an electric meat slicer as a tip for the volunteers who had so ably served the meal. In her thank you, Carol admitted she had had to borrow a knife from Milner executive director Geoff Ball to cut the roast and appreciated very much the thoughtfulness of MARS members.

CORRESPONDENCE: The annual publication from the Rhododendron Species Foundation.

TREASURER: Tony Ansdell said the expenses for MARS included rental for the hall and the storage locker and that our overall bank balance was healthy.

PROGRAM: A panel discussion on landscaping with rhodos was planned for tonight's meeting. In March ARS district chairman Ron Knight will be visiting, discussing dwarf rhodos for containers.

TRUSS SHOW: Maria Bieberstein, speaking on behalf of her husband Al, said most of the growers were lined up and a committee meeting was planned for the following week. The show is on April 17.

GARDEN TOUR: Linda Derkach reported the Garden Tour had suffered a setback when a few

gardens pulled out for several reasons, including the ill health of some owners. Barbara Kulla and Marilyn Dawson have toured the Parksville to San Pareil area for this year's tour. Linda also served notice that she will need some hearty souls to deliver and pick up signs near the Tour's dates of Mothers' Day Weekend.

WAYS AND MEANS: The door prize was R. scabrifolium. Other draw prizes were R. Aloha, R. augustinii, R. Kokardia (a Paul Wurz donation) and the frog plant labels. Door prize was won by Darlene Chilton; other winners were Maria Bieberstein, Wolfgang Ruff, Joanne Hamilton and Bert Harding. **MEMBERSHIP:** Ann Robertson said there are three new members.

After the coffee break, Program director Ann DeBrincat chaired a lively panel discussion on landscaping with rhododendrons. Panel members were Don Bridgen, Lorne Hepting, Terry Richmond, all MARS members and Paul Wurz from Hidden Acres Nursery near Campbell River. In the words of one observer, the meeting could have gone on for another hour, there was so much interest. As it was, the meeting didn't adjourn until 10 pm and people were still standing around in small groups discussing the topic. The message that was clear: there is no one way to look after rhodos. "It really depends on where you live," said Lorne Hepting, who gardens at Dashwood. Terry Richmond said it was necessary to have a plan and to know the cultural demands of your plants. Some can handle more hot sun than others. Paul Wurz suggested yellow rhodos benefit from some shade, particularly in the late day. They all agreed that good drainage, site preparation and good air flow were essential. As for companion plants, panel members suggested using hostas, oriental lilies, viburnum mariesii, cyclamen, hardy fuchsia, ferns, hellebores to name a few.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 10 pm
John England, President
Marilyn Dawson, Secretary

EVENTS

George Fraser Day

Ucluelet and Tofino

May 22nd-23rd

22nd is the 10th Anniversary of George Fraser and Heritage Fair Day to be held at the New Community Center adjacent to the Fabulous Black Rock Complex.

In Tofino Clayoquot Island will be open on Saturday 22nd and Sunday 23rd from 12.00 noon to 6.00 pm each day.

Boats leave every 15 minutes from the Government Warf at no cost.

This is a must see!!

I know you will enjoy this weekend.

Cheers Terry.

The Ultimate Rhododendron Conference.

April 9 – 11, 2010

UBC Botanical Garden Vancouver

With about a month to go, the conference is already 75% filled and instructors Ron Knight and Douglas Justice are delighted with the response. There are still spaces left at both level 1 and level 2.

Level 1 classes, with Ron, are all about rhododendron gardening and provide an excellent opportunity to more deeply involve potential and newer rhododendron club members in the wonderful world of rhododendrons.

Level 2 classes, with Douglas, are for veteran collectors who want to know more about classification, identification, culture and care of species rhododendrons. Friday April 9th is the garden tour day. Douglas Justice (Curator of UBC Botanical Garden) and Todd Major

(former Director of the Park and Tilford Gardens) will be conducting morning tours of UBC Botanical Garden. In the afternoon, Gerry Gibbens (Head gardener for the Sino-Himalayan Garden) and Roy Forster (original designer of the Rhododendron Walk) will be leading tours at VanDusen Botanical Garden. A large selection of species and hybrid rhododendrons will be offered for sale on Saturday and Sunday.

If you wish to register, please visit www.rhodos.ca to print a registration form. Mail it as soon as possible. For further information, email Ron Knight at: rcknight@telus.net. Full information at www.rhodos.ca

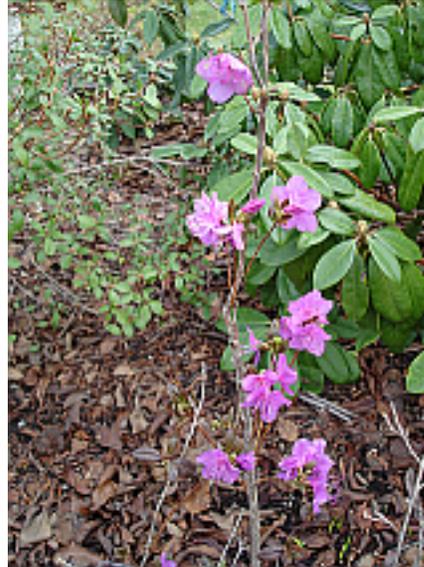


Harry Lauder's Walking stick tree
Corylus avellana "contura" February 2010

Another Hellebore Hurrah

Hellebores seem to be getting a lot of attention this year. Phoenix Perennials is offering a free workshop on the care of the plants during a three-day weekend event in Richmond March 5-7. Phoenix will offer for sale more than 90 different species and cultivars from around the world during the Hellebore Hurrah weekend. The one-hour workshop is offered on Friday and Saturday at noon when instructor Shelley Brignall will talk about cultural requirements including how to clean them up after the winter, how to dead head and how to divide. The nursery is at 3380 No. 6 Rd, Richmond. For more information call proprietor Gary Lewis on his cell 604-202-0920

Editor's Corner



R. dauricum 4', -ve25F, VE, 4/3/3 2010

This poor rhodo tries to flower every year and finally managed to give a lovely little display of flowers this February. It has been in my garden 5 years and suffered through mountains of snow and deer hunger. I have seen her cousins in other gardens, (Al and Marie's) looking magnificent but felt that her effort in spite of all the odds has been supreme and should be shared with you.

Thank you to those who sent in photos and articles, keep them coming. It certainly makes our magazine more personal.

Milner Gardens

Spring Speakers' Series

March 25th, Gary Lewis

Among Kangaroo Paws and Grass Trees:

The incredible spring flora of Western Australia. Join Gary for a trip Down Under to explore an out of this world flora you have likely never even dreamed of, a world of banksias and feather flowers: donkey orchids and spider orchids, eucalypts and myrtles and, of course, kangaroo paws and grass trees. In this talk you'll see wonderful photography from his recent trip as well as learn about why this area of the world is considered a biodiversity "hot spot."

April 29th, Des Kennedy will be the speaker on a topic yet to be determined but sure to be both informative and entertaining!

All presentations will be held at the Qualicum Beach Civic Center located at: 747 Jones Street, and will begin at 7:00 pm. Tickets are \$10.00 each, complete series for \$25.00. Tickets will be available for sale at the door on the evening of the presentations.

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The Ultimate Deer Guard

Observing deer foraging in their natural mountainous habitat is a wonderful experience but witnessing them feeding throughout your garden is not nearly so exhilarating. My program for repelling deer involves the application of a product called "Watkins Medicated Ointment" which has been marketed for decades to help alleviate stiff, sore and painful muscles. It contains 5.3% camphor, 2.8% menthol paraffin and petrolatum. Deer absolutely abhor its odor.

1. The procedure is as follows:

Cut an absorbent material (brown, green or grey denim) into 1" X 8" strips.

2. Run the strips across the Watkins medicated Ointment coating both sides. (I hold the strip with my left and pull with my right hand)

3. Tie the coated strips on lattice fencing, poles, stakes or plant material on approximately 6" centers. Strip center to center distances may require adjustment due to garden design, plant material and deer density.

Storing the ointment in a refrigerator when not in use reduces the mess and wasted ointment. A thin covering is all that is required. One application per growing season is all that is sufficient as the paraffin and petrolatum in the ointment repel rain. Sunlight softens the ointment covering spots in the strip you may have missed and amplifies the odor. Watkins Medicated Ointment is available through a system of local dealers.

Deer will hate you!!

Cheers Terry.

A Record Seedy Saturday

It all seems like history now, but on February 6th Qualicum Beach's Civic Centre was alive with 2092 souls pressing their way through the auditorium. It was Seedy Saturday. MARS was there and volunteers handed out information about rhodos and the hot pink slip with Dates to Remember, our reminder of the Truss Show, Garden Tour and Oceanside Sale. There was also a draw for a rhodo, this year Hopyy.

At the last minute our allotted space was cut from one table to half that amount because the demand for commercial booths was so high. Last year there were 55 commercial entries; this year the number climbed to 73.

As well as handing out rhodo information, the volunteers were also encouraging potential young gardeners by being a seed station for Milner Gardens Shoots with Roots program. Children from 3 years old make up their seed packets and search out the seed stations to get seeds to plant later.

Organizer Marilyn Dawson set up the table in the early morning with Barbara Kulla and they want to thank the volunteers who came out and took shifts talking rhodos and being just downright pleasant to passersby. Mega thanks to Maria Bieberstein, John and Arlene England, Ann Robertson and Cassie LaCouvee. By being there they gave Dawson and Kulla a break, time to exchange seeds and wander around and check out the specialty tables with their wares, including unusual potatoes and great garlic.

Marilyn Dawson



Seaview Sunset



To Bee



Gibraltar



Rosebud

2010

Rhododendron of the Year Awards

A new feature on the ARS District 1 Website: www.rhodos.ca is a page which summarizes the “Rhododendron of the Year Awards” for the Pacific Northwest and Southwestern British Columbia (ARS District 1) for the years 2002 to 2010.

Plants selected for the 2010 Rhododendron of the Year Awards were drawn from the American Rhododendron Society's “Proven Performers” lists. These lists are developed and updated each year by the local ARS chapters and are made up of plants that do very well in members' own gardens over many years.

Rhododendron of the Year Awards are made in four categories for each of eight geographical regions of the United States and Canada. These include elepidote rhododendrons, lepidote rhododendrons, deciduous azaleas and evergreen azaleas. Twenty-nine plants have been selected for the year 2010. See the following webpage for more information: <http://www.rhododendron.org/royawardsintro6.htm>

The purpose of the ROY awards is to educate the public about the wide range of rhododendrons that can be grown successfully in people's gardens. To be selected for a ROY award a plant must:

- have excellent foliage and flowers
- have an attractive growth habit
- prove itself hardy for the specific region
- be pest and disease resistant

Happy Easter



Coming Soon

4th April Easter Bunny.

17th April Truss Show and after show party.

8th & 9th May Garden Tour and after tour party.