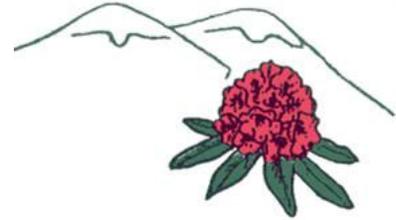


THE RHODOVINE



THE MOUNT ARROWSMITH RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

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Volume 22, Issue 6

SEPTEMBER 2010

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Truss Show Al Bieberstein

Ways & Means Don Bridgen

This Month

Wednesday, September 8

Hopefully everyone had a good summer! Perhaps you did some travelling during the nice weather. If you didn't get away from home as much as you wanted, come take another exotic adventure with **Glen Jamieson!** He will be whisking us off to **South America** this time.

As a bonus, we will have ***Cyclamen hederifolium*** seeds for sale for \$2 per packet (about 30 seeds to a pack) donated by Bill Bischoff who spoke at our February 2009 meeting on hardy cyclamens. Planting instructions for these seeds can be found on page 5 of this newsletter.

Rooting Rhododendron Cuttings

Duane Yochim of Qualicum Bay Nursery will try to root cuttings for MARS members at a cost of \$2 for each successful cutting. She has room for only 100 cuttings - first come - first served! Please contact Duane at 250-757-9865 or qbnurs@shaw.ca for her availability. Cuttings should be 5 to 6 inches long (no less than 2 inches if from dwarf rhodos). Place in a plastic bag with moist paper towel and label with your name and rhodie name.

MARS Meetings

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

Next Meeting

8th September 2010



R. 'Queen Alice'

Inside this Issue

President's Message page 2

Wind-up Party page 2

General Meeting page 3

Events page 4

Ask the Expert page 4

Editor's Corner page 5



R. 'Tortoise Shell'

President's Message

What a wonderful summer for the garden, everything has been growing well for me, including the weeds.



Goldfish Hunter

This little furry friend is heading for the pond and laughing at my dog. The rest of his family is right behind him eager for a snack. Not much left after their last visit.

For our coming year, Ann de Brincat is preparing a veritable feast of interesting speakers.

The meetings start again early this year - still the second Wednesday, but it falls on the 8th for this September at 7.30 pm.

Just a friendly reminder - the American Rhododendron Society always likes us to renew our memberships for the next year (2011) starting in September.

I look forward to seeing you all next month.
Ann.

June Wind-up Party



At the annual wind-up party of MARS held June 27 in the garden of Marilyn Dawson, Past President John England happily and confidently hands the reins over to Ann Robertson, incoming President for 2010-2011. John served MARS for three years as President, so the gift of *Rhododendron* 'Tortoise Shell' has been well-earned.

Many thanks to party-goers for great food and interesting company!

MARS General Meeting

General meeting held at Qualicum Beach Civic Centre, at 7:30 pm, Wednesday May 12, 2010

MINUTES OF the April meeting were approved as published in the Rhodovine.

Refreshments: Provided by Carol Hansen and Sharon Kevis

Guests: Mazie Walsh, Gillian Walker, Ewen MacKinnen, Louise Martyn, Rosslyn Whitehead, Ken Jones, Keith and Ann Smith, Alan and Liz Murray

BUSINESS ARISING: Proven Performers is a list of rhododendrons that do well in the MARS growing area. It was put together several years ago and needs updating. Members are asked to look over the list and add to it, or delete, if necessary. Amended list should be returned to Marilyn Dawson by June 1; email is: dawsom@shaw.ca

CORRESPONDENCE:

A letter from Diana Scott, President of the North Island Rhododendron Society thanks those Marsians who went on the tour of several gardens in the Courtenay area in late April.

The entire day was organized by the NIRS. A letter from the organizers of George Fraser Day in Ucluelet thanks MARS for the extra donation to help finance the 10th anniversary celebrations on May 22.

A newsletter from the Cecil and Molly Smith garden of the Portland, Oregon chapter contains interesting background on their rhodos.

John England sent an e-mail to the QB mayor protesting the removal of signs just days before both the Truss Show and the Garden Tour. It seems they contravened the new bylaws. The Mayor suggested places where the signs could be safely placed.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Tony Ansdell reported the scholarship donation has been sent to VIU; that being the only out-of-the-

ordinary expense this month. He included reports on our three fundraisers, Truss Show, Garden Tour and the Oceanside Sale, noting the financial results were somewhat better than last year.

TRUSS SHOW: Al and Maria Bieberstein thanked all the volunteers for their efforts in mounting another successful show. They then passed out trophies, the Novice winner being Joanne Hamilton. Best of Show, large leaf went to Judy Millicheap. Joan Rich, who won best of show, small leaf was unable to attend.

MEMBERSHIP: Ann Robertson reported six new memberships: Ewen and Linda MacKinnen, Jim and Gillian Walker, Mazie and Albert Walsh, Ann and Keith Smith, Ken and Liliane Jones, Liz and Alan Murray.

PROGRAM: Ann DeBrincat said she has several speakers lined up for the fall session including Garth Wedemeyer and Ron Knight. Possibly Steve Hootman of the Rhododendron Species Foundation in Federal Way, Wash. will be available in early 2011.

WAYS AND MEANS: The door prize was Hachman's Belona; other prizes were R. UVic 924, R. Fragrantissima, R. Sunspray and two MARS glasses. Winners were Gillian Walsh, Judy Millicheap, Sandra Hemsworth, Joanne Hamilton and Al Bieberstein.

NEW BUSINESS: The Annual General Meeting saw the following new slate elected: President, Ann Robertson; Vice President, Tony Ansdell; Treasurer, Tony Ansdell; Secretary, Marilyn Dawson. Directors are: Don Bridgen (one-year); Velda Rhodes, Ann DeBrincat and Linda Derkach (two-year terms). Directors-at-Large are Joanne Hamilton and Maria Bieberstein (one-year).

GUEST SPEAKER: Don Martyn, who gardens at Yarrow on the Lower Mainland, gave a colorful presentation on magnolias, followed by

a list of the plants that should do well in this area. They ranged from those that will eventually be 50-foot trees down to plants that might fit into the average smaller home garden.

MEETING ADJOURNED: At 9:40 pm

The **Mid-Island Floral Art Club** will meet on Thursday, September 16 at 2:00 pm at St. Stephen's Church Hall, 150 Village Way, Qualicum Beach. There will be a demonstration entitled "Fun with Foliage" by locally-renowned floral designer Helen Mussio. Everyone welcome. Guest fee \$5. Please call 248-2976 or 752-2179 for more information. Check out our website at www.mifac.org.



MARS Garden Tour May 2010

Propagation Workshop Opportunity

The Propagation Group of the Victoria Rhododendron Society is planning a one day propagation workshop in Victoria for around the middle to the end of October. If you are interested in attending or need more information, please contact Art Lightburn as soon as possible at 468-7516 or email slightbu@shaw.ca.

A Note from the Editor... with this edition of the Rhodovine, we introduce a new column entitled

Ask the Expert

Our first question comes from my neighbour Jean who asks....

I have a rhododendron that I would like to prune. Can I do it in September?

Answer:

Fall pruning is not recommended for a number of reasons. First, you will lose all your blooms for the following spring.

Secondly, if we get a cold winter, you can get die back at your pruning point, and then you would have to prune again in the spring. Also, if you get any winter damage, you would need to prune in the spring anyway. So, generally, pruning in the fall is not recommended.

However, here is one exception: If you are planning to move a medium or large rhododendron, Fall is the best time to do this – or any time in the winter as long as it isn't too cold. And before you move your rhododendron, it is advisable to prune back to reduce stress on the root stock and make it easier to move. You will lose any blooms that are cut off, but the re-location of your rhododendron will be more successful.

Question:

What else should I be doing as fall is approaching?

Answer:

Water your rhododendrons well throughout the winter if it is very dry – and before an expected cold snap. Winter winds are very drying, and your rhodies need moist soil at all times. On the East coast of the island, we often have a "winter drought" – a little rain is not enough to keep the soil moist enough for many of our plants – including rhododendrons.

Unless there is some disease that can spread, you can let the leaves fall and provide a mulch for your plants – clearing away fallen leaves is not necessary. Even for leaves that have some powdery mildew there is no evidence that it will spread to new leaves. This mirrors what happens in the wild.

However, if for esthetic reasons you don't like the look of old leaves around your plants, you can remove and replace with another more attractive mulch. Bark mulch and sea soil work fine. In some years, there is not much leaf fall, so add a little mulch each year to make sure that the roots are covered at all times. Cover the roots right to the trunk – but not up the trunk.

Fertilizing needs to wait until spring.

Many thanks to Terry Richmond for fielding these questions and providing important information!

**Helpful Hint!!
...from Terry**

If you suffer from frequent flat tires on your wheelbarrow – change the front tire to a 4.80 tent trailer tire – and you'll never have another flat!



Tree Peonies growing in the garden of Judy Millicheap on the MARS Garden Tour 2010.

**Planting Instructions for
Cyclamen hederifolium Seeds**

These seeds can be planted this year. This usually gives best results.
Sow seeds on any good draining soil. Cover seeds with 2 to 3" of grit or coarse soil.
There are some 30 seeds to each packet, enough to seed some 2 feet square, or more.
Consider that each tuber will grow to about 5" across in 5 years.
Mark the seed patch as not to disturb the plants during dormancy in July and August.
Do not let seed patch dry out. Plants will flower in the fall in about 2 years. The flowers will usually come before the leaves emerge.
Be careful not to damage the emerging flowers as they are difficult to see at first.
Pot culture is possible but pots should be dug into the soil for the winter.
Above all, have fun with these plants as the leaf patterns on each plant are unique.
Left over seed can be wintered in the fridge (not the freezer).

A message from the new Editor of your Newsletter.....

With this issue, I take over as Editor of the Rhodovine. Many thanks to Ann Robertson for her hard work on the newsletter over the past few years.

This month's newsletter is a little shorter than usual.....I am sure you are just as busy as me working in the garden, welcoming visitors and playing with grandchildren...and doing many other things!!

I will be contacting many of you over the next few months asking you to share your advice, experience and knowledge with your fellow members of MARS.

Our first project is to ask you to identify your 5 favourite rhododendrons and why you like them – so please think about this and email me at lindaderkach@shaw.ca.



Unfolding Fern at The Glades
by Ann Robertson



Cyclamen coum in my garden February 2010



Fabulous indumentum at The Glades
by Ann Robertson