

THE RHODOVINE



THE MOUNT ARROWSMITH RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

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Program Chair Ann DeBrincat

PR Marilyn Dawson

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Sunshine Judy McMaster

Tickets Sandra Hemsworth

Truss Show Al & Maria Bieberstein

Ways & Means Don Bridgen

This Month

Wednesday, January 12

Steve Hootman, plant explorer and Executive Director of the Rhododendron Species Foundation in Federal Way, Washington will speak on the plants, people and geography of South China and Vietnam. Steve will focus on new species of rhododendrons from this amazing and beautiful region of the world.

Steve is an enthusiastic and much sought-after lecturer. This is an evening not to be missed!!

Bring your friends and family – non-members admission is \$5 and all are welcome.

More on Steve's presentation inside....



Cyclamen hederifolium is a robust understory plant for rhododendrons – a reliable treat in the winter garden.

MARS Meetings

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

Next Meeting

12th January 2011

Help Wanted

The MARS Garden Tour signs need a little perking up with some fresh paint. If you would enjoy helping with this crafty project, please get in touch with Linda Derkach as soon as possible.

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President's Message

The beginning of 2011 is an appropriate time to review the accomplishments of 2010 and look forward to the challenges of 2011.

In 2010 we had a successful Truss Show and Plant Sale continuing the success of 2009 but with a better result from the door prizes. We had a remarkable Oceanside Plant Sale in spite of confusion around the organization of the Oceanside Garden Show. The determination of our members involved in this sale resulted in a successful event.

The Garden Tour was the best ever. A combination of an excellent selection of gardens, great organization and excellent weather made this tour outstanding. During the year we also had a fine selection of speakers, all with interesting topics, well presented. Congratulations and thanks to all who were involved in these activities.

For 2011 we will meet or exceed our 2010 success. The organization of the Truss Show and the Garden Tour is well in hand and there will be a different format for the Oceanside Plant Sale. More on all these events will come soon from the committees looking after them.

As well as the financial results of these activities, the best part is the opportunity for all members to work together and form, or continue, friendships and further their interest and knowledge of rhododendrons.

As always, our annual Christmas Party on December 1 was great fun for all!! Many thanks to the decorating crew, the kitchen crew and everyone who brought the fabulous food.

Finally, I hope you all had a Merry Christmas and I wish you all a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year.

Tony

Ask an Expert.....

This month, we have an exchange between two well-known rhododendron experts....

Don: I have found that sometimes I have had a new shoot coming right out of a bloom. What is that all about?

Ann: I have had 'fleafs' – or could it be 'lowers'? Basically they are part leaf and part flower instead of a proper flower. We are not sure what causes such weird growths, but here are some guesses.

It could be that the plant got a big dose of nitrogen (leafy growth promoter). Or perhaps the plant's growth hormones went haywire.

All plants get sports with different flower colours or foliage shape or colour. Maybe this was a genetic accident. Perhaps plants grown from tissue culture that get exposed to lots of chemicals and hormones end up doing strange things from time to time.



Rhododendron 'Cotton Candy' blooming in late May is a real show stopper.

Five... plus Five Favourites

This month we present the favourite rhododendrons of long-time MARS member Terry Richmond. Terry offers his five favourites.....plus his five favourite dwarf rhododendrons.

Rhododendron 'Naselle'

4 ½ foot sturdy structure, deep green leaves, sun tolerant, beautiful pink/apricot/yellow pastel flower colour

R. 'Senator Jackson'

30 inches, well-clothed, deep green, sun tolerant beautiful large pure white flowers

R. 'Horizon Monarch'

5 feet, very sturdy structure, fairly sun tolerant, beautiful large gold flowers

R. 'Lemon Dream'

2 feet, multi-branched structure, good green foliage, very floriferous mellow yellow flowers

R. 'Seaview Sunset'

Good multi-branched structure, fantastic glowing yellow flowers, very floriferous.

Dwarfs

R. 'Ginny Gee'

Multi branched twiggy growth, beautiful white and pink flowers, extremely floriferous

R. 'Patty Bee'

Well branched, good foliage, beautiful medium yellow flowers, floriferous

Rhododendron nakaharae

Extremely low growing – very late blooming (June, July) with orange or reddish orange flowers

Rhododendron kiussianum

Close-knit, symmetrical plant, very floriferous; comes in many solid colours and bi-colours

Rhododendron campylogynum

Well-knit plant with hanging bell-shaped flowers in colours from white to pink to plum and dusty rose.



Rhododendron campylogynum

A favourite from Joanne Hamilton....



Rhododendron 'Taurus'

Qualicum Seedy Saturday is Almost Here

As everyone knows, Seedy Saturday in Qualicum Beach heralds a new gardening season. Below is exciting information about the always excellent educational seminars planned for 2011 Seedy.

Date: Saturday, February 5, 2011

Time: 10:00 am to 3:30 pm

Place: Qualicum Beach Civic Centre

The 9th Annual Qualicum Beach Seedy Saturday kicks off the 2011 gardening season with three excellent speakers who will show you how to **Eat Your Garden** – this year's theme.

Linda Gilkeson

- *Smart Gardening: Three Keys to Growing Your Most Successful Organic Garden Yet*

Chanchal Cabrera

- *Growing Medicinal Plants and Herbs*

Dan Jason with Owen Bridge

- *Saving Seeds*

With over 50 vendors, a Farmers Showcase, traditional Seed Swap, raffles and door prizes, there's lots to do. And you can take a break now and then for a healthy snack or lunch at the Seedy Café.

Even very **young gardeners** can have fun at the Milner Gardens' **Shoots With Roots** program.



Lonicera nitida 'Lemon Beauty' - a lovely evergreen for the garden right now.

Special Pre-Show Presentation

Friday, February 4, 2011 at 7:00 pm

Linda Gilkeson

"The Bugs In Your Garden: The Good, the Bad and the Beautiful"

Admission by donation

Schedule of Events

- **Friday, February 4 at 7:00 pm**

Linda Gilkeson – *The Bugs in Your Garden: The Good, the Bad and the Beautiful*

- **Saturday, February 5**

10:30 to 11:30 am

Linda Gilkeson - *Smart Gardening: Three Keys to Growing Your Most Successful Organic Garden Yet*

- 11:45 am to 12:45 pm

Chanchal Cabrera - *Growing Medicinal Plants and Herbs*

- 1:00 to 2:00 pm

Dan Jason with Owen Bridge - *Saving Seeds*
Admission by Donation

For more information....contact

Sandy Glazier at (250) 752-9650

sandyglazss@hotmail.com

Website: www.qbseedysaturday.com



Rhododendron 'Bow Bells' on the tour of North Island gardens April 2010

Too Much Information ????????

Here's some trivia that you can use to astound your friends..... thanks to Terry Richmond for sharing.

In the 16th and 17th centuries, everything had to be transported by ship and it was also before the development of commercial fertilizers, so large shipments of manure were common.

It was shipped dry because in dry form it weighed a lot less than when wet. But once water (at sea) hit the manure, it not only became heavier but the process of fermentation began again, a by-product of which is methane gas. Because the stuff was stored below decks in bundles, you can imagine what could (and did) happen.

Methane began to build up below deck and the first time someone went below at night with a lantern – BOOOM! Several ships were destroyed in this manner before it was determined just what was happening. After that, the bundles of manure were always stamped with the term “Ship High in Transit”. This meant for the crew to stow the bundles high enough off the lower decks so that any water that came into the hold would not touch the volatile cargo and start the production of methane.

Thus evolved the term “S.H.I.T” (Ship High in Transport) which has come down through the centuries and is in use to this very day.

You probably did not know the true history of this word. Neither did I – I had always thought it was a golf term.

From Geranium, Pelargonium and Fuchsia Society of Ontario, February 2009

UBC Botanical Garden & Centre for Plant Research

Bi-annual

Collectors'

Plant Auction

UBC Botanical Garden is hosting the bi-annual Collectors' Plant Auction on **April 20, 2011**. More information will be coming in the spring.



On the North Island RS garden tour April 2010

Interested in Alpines.....?

Want to Beat the February Blues?

Attend the Western Winter Study Weekend - February 25-27, 2011.



Along the Silk Road

2011 Western Winter Study Weekend

February 25-27, 2011
at the Mary Winspear Centre
2243 Beacon Avenue
Sidney-by-the-Sea, British Columbia

Speakers:

Stephanie Ferguson: expert rock and crevice gardener from Calgary, Alberta

Vojtěch Holubec: author of *The Caucasus and its Flowers*, consummate grower of alpines and seed collector

John Massey: owner of Ashwood Nurseries, UK ; renowned for his expertise on Asian and European hepaticas

Hans Roemer: bulb collector and ecologist

Yvonne Rorison: avid photographer of flowers on all continents

Bill Terry: Meconopsis expert and author of *Blue Heaven – Encounters with the Blue Poppy*

Dr. Bobby J. Ward: from Raleigh, North Carolina, author of *The Plant Hunter's Garden*

Plus: Workshops, Plant Sales, Seed Sales, Displays, Open Gardens

Registration: Early Bird (before January 28, 2011) \$135. After Jan 28/2011 fee is \$155.

Hosted by the Vancouver Island Rock & Alpine Garden Society

For more information and Registration Form, please visit the website

<http://www.virags.ca/winterstudyweekend.htm>

Or contact: Registrar – Kathy Lalli
(kathylalli@hotmail.com, 250-478-9251)



Rhododendron 'Cotton Candy's Sister' has decided to bloom this year. Hopefully this promising bud will survive the expected harsh winter.

This is your Newsletter! Please send me your ideas and your digital photos!

Do you have a question for our experts??? lindaderkach@shaw.ca

Garden Journal....

From your Newsletter Editor

I love to wander around my garden throughout the year – especially when my goal is to enjoy and not to work!

And at any time, there are always delights and surprises.....here are some I found in mid-December that prove a garden in winter can be interesting and beautiful.



Rubus pentalobus (Creeping Raspberry) is a robust evergreen native plant that makes a very attractive ground cover. It makes a good substitute for invasive English ivy that is destroying some of our native habitat.



The bright orange hips of *Rosa rugosa* can last all winter and withstand bitter winds and blankets of snow.



The metallic purple berries of *Callicarpa bodinieri* 'Profusion' shine on for months and provide a longed-for touch of colour on an otherwise drab day.



Rhododendron 'Snow Lady' underplanted here with *Cyclamen hederifolium* 'Silverleaf' is almost ready to burst – she must have heard that in just a week the days start getting longer!



Skimmia japonica 'Roseum' is a very hardy broad-leaved evergreen worthy of every garden – with a bonus of rosey buds in the depths of winter.

Plant Explorer Steve Hootman Visits Vancouver Island Rhododendron Societies

One of the major plant explorers in the world, **Steve Hootman**, is no stranger to many MARS members, although it has been a few years since he addressed the club.

All that will change as the Executive Director of the Rhododendron Species Foundation (RSF) makes a return visit to Vancouver Island in early January, visiting rhododendron societies in Nanaimo, Qualicum Beach and Comox.

Hootman, who holds a coveted gold medal from the American Rhododendron Society, has made several expeditions to Asia, often to areas that have been closed to the world for years. Now with more open policies, certain portions of China and North Vietnam have opened up to horticulturists and Hootman is credited with discovering rhododendron species unknown in the West and bringing back plant material to propagate in the RSF.

MARS is a member of the RSF, and many members have visited the botanical garden over the years. All the plants successfully propagated at the Federal Way garden are eventually offered for sale.

On this visit, Hootman, an enthusiastic lecturer, will talk about plant exploration in South China and North Vietnam and also give a short discourse on the growth of the RSF.

The RSF has undergone tremendous expansion in recent years, and has just opened the Rutherford Conservatory which houses vireyas and other non-hardy rhododendrons.

We are very fortunate to have Steve share his expertise in Qualicum Beach. Don't miss this rare opportunity – and bring your friends and family. Non-members - \$5. Everyone welcome!



Polypodium glycyrrhiza (Licorice Fern) is a wonderful evergreen native fern. You may have noticed it hanging off the rocks along the island highway at Goldstream Park.



Acer griseum (Paper Bark Maple) is a spectacular small tree that is a stellar performer all year round. The beautiful copper-coloured peeling bark glows in the winter sun.