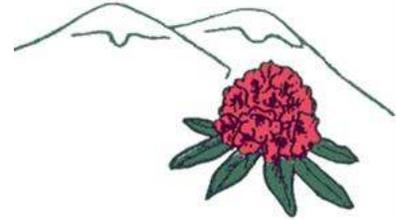


# THE RHODOVINE



**THE MOUNT ARROWSMITH  
RHODODENDRON SOCIETY**

**MARS**  
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**Library** – Donna deBoer

**Meeting Coordinator**- Tony Ansdell

**Membership** – Bert Harding

**Milner Gardens** - John England

**Plant Sale** – Marilyn Dawson

**Program Chair** - Ann DeBrincat

**PR** - Marilyn Dawson

**Refreshments** - Anne Gutsche

**Sunshine** - Judy McMaster

**Door Prize** - Sandra Hemsworth

**Truss Show** – Glen Jamieson

**Ways & Means** - Don Bridgen

## This Month:

### Beyond our Gardens

Our February speaker,  
**Agnes Lynn**  
of Victoria is a hybrid.

She is equally interested in the exotics in her garden and the wildflowers in Victoria and surrounding areas.

Agnes will take us on a tour of the areas on Vancouver Island that she loves to visit. She'll show you the diversity of native plants that we can enjoy just a short distance from our homes. We will also hear a few hints on how we can simplify our home gardens so we can have more time to enjoy the great outdoors. Husband Dave is the photographer and helps in the garden as well..



*Erythronium revolutum*, a native plant used by our First Nations, still grows in special areas of the island. It is thriving here in Milner Gardens, Qualicum Beach.

## MARS Meetings

**Qualicum Beach  
Civic Centre  
2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the  
month 7:30 pm**

**Next Meeting  
8th February 2012**



A healthy clump of *Galanthus nivalis* (Snowdrops) blooming in early spring.

Photos by Linda Derkach

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## From Your President...

We are now well into 2012 and MARS is up and running at full speed for the New Year.

Planning for the Garden Tour, Truss Show and Spring Fling are all well in hand and we can look forward to all these events being the best ever. They are humming along under the guidance of Ken Jones, Glen Jamieson and Marilyn Dawson respectively. While these events will be based on the successful formulas from previous events, there are always exciting new twists and additions each year.

Soon we will ask for volunteers to help us make these events successful. Please look to see what you can do to help. The events are as successful as the participants make them. Thanks to all who have helped in previous years and welcome back for the New Year.

Planning is creeping along for the Species Garden. This is to be expected since the plans must be reviewed and approved by many agencies. The next step for us is to receive some details, timings and costs from Milner Gardens. We will then review these and see what is involved and where we may get financial assistance. While it will take a lot of work and a lot of time to make this garden a reality, I think it is worth the effort to create a Species Garden of which we can be proud.  
Tony



*Rhododendron dauricum* var. *sempervirens*  
blooming in early May.

Photo by Linda Derkach

## Add A Little Sizzle to Your Spring with the MARS Spring Fling

Saturday, May 5  
Qualicum Beach  
Community Hall

MARS members who are planting seeds for their spring gardens are asked to plan for the Spring Fling as well. That's the sale of members' perennial plants to be held in the QB Community Hall on Saturday, May 5.

Quick sellers the past two years have been heritage tomatoes and other vegetables grown from seed. So anyone planting something special please add a few seeds for MARS.

When the snow is gone, it's also time to look around to see what needs dividing. .. two for you and one piece for the Spring Fling.

Unusual or named plants are good sellers. A named hosta, for example, will bring in more money than one that is just labeled hosta. Look for seedlings under the shelter of large trees and pot them up. If you know the name, please label it. Some Japanese maples seed readily. Other good sellers are hellebores, azaleas, pieris just to name a few.

No invasives please. That includes vinca and other such plants hostile to our environment. If you have questions about what to pot or dig up, please check with coordinators Barbara Kulla or Marilyn Dawson.

Story by Marilyn Dawson

The Editors reserve the right to edit submissions to the newsletter for purposes of consistency, clarity and space restrictions.

**General Meeting of the Mt. Arrowsmith  
Rhododendron Society**

held at the Civic Centre in Qualicum Beach,  
January 11, 2012 at 7:30 pm

**Minutes**

Minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as published in the Rhodovine.

REFRESHMENTS: Linda Derkach, Ken Jones, Bert & Ruth Harding

With President Tony Ansdell away, Ken Jones introduced himself as the new Vice-President and conducted the meeting.

CORRESPONDENCE: Two recent copies of the Bulletin, B.C. Council of Gardens; a letter from Gwen Wright thanking Mars members for their support and their condolences; the spring sale catalogue of the Rhododendron Species Foundation;

UPCOMING EVENTS: Marilyn Dawson outlined future plans.

**Spring Fling:** the sale when MARS members bring their perennials, shrubs and even rhododendrons to sell is on May 5 at the Community Hall in Qualicum Beach. She urged those who grow plants from seed to add a few seeds for the sale plant. Those who grow vegetables are encouraged to plant enough to donate food to the Food Bank as well.

**Bus Trip:** MARS is planning a trip to the West Coast in late May if there is enough interest, either by bus or by car pool. It would likely be an overnigher. Marilyn asked for a show of hands and about 24 people indicated interest. A coordinator is needed for the event.

**ARS/Nanaimo Conference:** Marilyn attended the recent meeting making plans for the September session. The web site should be up and running in a few weeks; it's almost complete. The chapter still needs more pots - the 3x6-inch ones used to transplant young rhododendrons. Members are encouraged to bring any in their possession to the next meeting.

TREASURER: Bert Harding provided a quick review of the past year's expenses and revenue. The club is in sound financial shape. Membership: Bert said several members have not rejoined and he has yet to reach them to find out a reason. As of January 1, MARS has 58 memberships, 97 members.

GARDEN TOUR: Ken Jones said the gardens in the French Creek to Qualicum Beach area have been selected. The next meeting for the committee is later this month. At the February meeting he will be asking members to sign up as garden sitters.

TRUSS SHOW: Chairman Glen Jamieson said the first committee meeting went well. There is room for more vendors given the size of the rink. The Rhododendron Show and Sale will be held on Saturday, April 21 at the Parksville Curling Rink and lots of volunteers will be needed on that day.

WAYS AND MEANS: Don Bridgen said the door prize was *Rhododendron* 'Cunningham's Blush'. Other prizes were *R.* 'Golden Wedding' and *R.* 'Britannia'.

GUEST SPEAKER: Glen Jamieson, Editor of the Journal of the American Rhododendron Society, presented Don Hyatt's Thoughts on Digital Photography and whose mantra is "take lots of pictures, pixels are free". He made particular reference to the ARS photo contest and encouraged members to submit their entries. Details are in the upcoming issue of JARS. Of particular interest was the section on composition, which gave several examples of colourful gardens presented in different ways, some more appealing than others.

**Meeting Adjourned:** At 9:10 pm

**The Norm Todd Book  
is still available...**

Please contact Marilyn Dawson at  
[dawsom@shaw.ca](mailto:dawsom@shaw.ca) or phone at 250-752-3694  
\$12 for members; \$15 for non-members

# A Garden Thug Exposed

By Linda Derkach

What has shiny, evergreen leaves, fragrant yellow flowers and luscious black berries... and threatens the delicate eco-system here on Vancouver Island?



Meet *Daphne laureola* – in fact you might even have it growing in your garden even though it is on the list of noxious, invasive plants in BC and many other places.

Daphnes are native to southwestern Europe but have been introduced as an ornamental plant to many parts of the world including this part of North America.

The bark, sap and berries of all daphnes are toxic to humans and small animals, and the sap is a skin irritant. But *Daphne laureola* has the very undesirable habit of spreading very easily thanks to hungry birds who eat the berries with impunity and then drop the poisonous seed to quickly germinate in new ground. It likes to colonize shady, moist areas of our Douglas fir/arbutus and Garry oak ecosystems, replacing native vegetation and forming a dense canopy blocking out light to the ground. I have seen huge colonies in Nanaimo gardens – having made itself immensely attractive to unsuspecting homeowners.

Plant scientists believe that *Daphne laureola* alters the soil chemistry and acidity, preventing establishment of native plant species. These kinds of habitat changes affect both native plants and animals in a very negative way.

*Daphne laureola* is sometimes even seen for sale in local garden centres, and customers are seduced by the fragrant yellow flowers, beautiful shiny leaves and amazing hardiness. But clearly it is not good for our children, pets or environment.

If you are not yet convinced that this plant should be banished from our gardens, *Daphne laureola* has the dubious distinction of being listed with the Canadian Poisonous Plants Information System, WorkSafe BC Toxic Plant Warning and the Invasive Plant Council of BC!

If you have found this plant growing in your garden, you can replace it with more desirable broad-leafed evergreens such as skimmia, hellebores and rhododendrons. *Daphne* seedlings can be pulled out by the root and larger specimens can be eradicated using large loppers to cut below the soil level. Watch for sprouting from the root, and dig out as much as you can. Be sure to wear protective clothing and gloves – and please don't ask your kids to help you with this project!!

Sources:

- WorkSafe BC Website: Toxic Plant Warning
- King County Website: Environment/Animals and Plants
- Garry Oak Ecosystems Recovery Team Website
- Photo from Wikipedia

Thanks to Barbara Kulla for suggesting this topic.

**Don't forget....  
Seedy Saturday  
Qualicum Beach Civic Centre  
Saturday, February 4**

# ARS Western Regional Conference in Nanaimo

*Co-chairs of the ARS Western Regional Conference in Nanaimo, Chris Southwick and Gayle McRae tell us how plans for the September conference are shaping up. Following are excerpts from a letter to Tony Ansdell and other chapter presidents.*

Gayle and I are contacting you, first of all to thank you and your members for your many offers of support, to let you know our plans, and to offer a visit to your club sometime over the next four to five months. We'd like to have one of our organizing committee members attend one of your meetings to give an update...and show a 10-minute PowerPoint presentation regarding the Sept. 21 - 23 conference and answer any questions.

Our Planning Committee is very grateful that all of the BC chapters have committed to help make the 2012 Fall Regional Conference a success. Through District 1 Director Mary Parker, we understand that each of the District 1 chapters will be contributing a basket which will be used in the silent auction during the conference.

The Mount Arrowsmith Club has volunteered to be responsible for the conference plant sale and raffle. Plant Sale Chair Marilyn Dawson has been at our conference meetings since the spring of 2011 and you will be delighted with the quality of plants that will be for sale.

We have some of the Vancouver Island Rhododendron Hybridizers group growing plants that will be given as table favours. Each of these plants has a Vancouver Island connection. We're organizing a group of folks to help pot up these seedlings in the spring.

The Cowichan Chapter has volunteered to organize the silent auction and North Island has volunteered to help out with registrations, seating, introducing speakers, etc. So, you can see that the excitement is growing and with your help, we know it will be a roaring success!

Information will be coming out in the spring edition of the ARS Journal that will give all of the details regarding cost, accommodation, speakers, tours, meals and special events.

Our conference website is close to being complete and will be going live around the first of April. Registration begins at that time and can be done either on-line or by mail.

Please let us know if you'd like one of us to attend one of your spring meetings....

*Thanks to Marilyn Dawson for this contribution.*

## Longing for Spring ???



This carpet of *Eranthis hyemalis* (Winter Aconite) in February, banishes gloom in a Duncan garden.

You are invited to the next meeting of the  
**Nanaimo Rhododendron Society**  
**Thursday, February 16 at 7:30 pm**  
**Beban Park Society Centre**

### **"Pushing the Limits"**

Bob Duncan, owner of Fruit Trees and More in Victoria, will talk about all kinds of fruit trees and how to grow in our climate.

More information from Glenda Allard Barr at 250-390-2822 or email [applelegal2@msn.com](mailto:applelegal2@msn.com).  
Guests welcome....admission free.

## MARS Rhododendron Show and Sale

**Saturday, April 21**

**Parksville Curling Club**

Last year's show featured some stunning plants for sale by specialty growers.....



*Rhododendron hippophaeoides* var. *occidentalis*



*Rhododendron* 'Tiffany'



*Rhododendron* 'Alison Johnstone'

## Photo Buffs....Dust Off Your Cameras

This year, we have not one - but two photo contests inviting our submissions.

First, the **ARS Convention** in Asheville, North Carolina is inviting attendees to bring prints featuring rhododendrons to the conference in May.



This photo of *Rhododendron cinnabarinum* by Linda Derkach won a medal at the ARS Convention in Vancouver, Washington.

Next, the **ARS Journal** is inviting submissions for their digital photo contest – details can be found in the Spring issue of JARS.

## Blooming Now....



*Hamamelis x intermedia* 'Arnold Promise' – still with Christmas lights and framed by a dusting of snow never fails to delight.