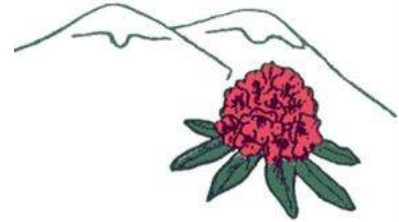


THE RHODOVINE



**THE MOUNT ARROWSMITH
RHODODENDRON SOCIETY**

MARS
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PR - Marilyn Dawson

Refreshments - Anne Gutsche

Sunshine - Judy McMaster

Door Prize - Sandra Hemsworth

Truss Show – Glen Jamieson

Ways & Means - Don Bridgen

Please Note:

**Our Meeting This Month is
on Thursday, April 12 – not
Wednesday**

Our speaker for April is
Bernie Dinter
of Dinter's Nursery in Duncan.

Bernie photographed the well-known and mature garden of Peter Stone. He will share these photos with us.

Bernie is a member of the Cowichan Rhododendron Society.

He might even bring a few plants to sell.



Cheerful *Viola odorata* with emerging leaves of *Dicentra formosa* confirm that spring is here despite the cold and snow.

MARS Meetings

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

Next Meeting
Thursday
April 12, 2012



Rhododendron lutescens brightened up the first day of our Open Gardens, blooming here in the garden of Wolfgang and Vivienne Ruff.

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From Your President...

April and May are the middle of a high activity period for MARS. We have the Truss Show, the Spring Fling and the Garden Tour all within this period.

For these events to be successful, we need the help of many volunteers. The Truss Show needs volunteers for handling and displaying the Trusses for the show, cashiers for the checkouts, volunteers to handle the delivery and pickup of tables, and many other duties. Contact Glen Jamieson (250-248-5593) to help with this event.

The Spring Fling needs donations of plants for sale. As you attend to your garden after the winter, please look for plants you can donate. Help with the sale is also welcome. Check with Marilyn Dawson (250-752-3694) for more information.

Finally, the Garden Tour needs sitters at all the gardens. As I write this, we need seven more volunteers for periods of three hours each. Contact Ken Jones to volunteer.

We are part way to staffing these events because we have many club members who have already volunteered. Thanks to them all. These events are important to us all because, without them, we could not operate the club for the next year. All the membership fees we collect go to the ARS so our members can also be ARS members. As a result, we rely on these events to finance MARS operations.

I am very optimistic that these events will go well this year. Hopefully we will have better weather than we had last year, especially for the Garden Tour

Tony

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

Important Events and Dates to Remember

Members' Open Gardens

On April 28 and 29 from 10 to 4 you are welcome to tour the gardens of:

- * Marilyn Dawson
- * Beate Kuhn

MARS Rhododendron Show and Sale

Truss Show and Sale of rhododendrons and their companion plants by many unique nurseries in our area

Saturday, April 21
Parksville Curling Rink

MARS Spring Fling

Sale of perennial plants from members' gardens

Saturday, May 5
Qualicum Beach Community Hall

MARS Garden Tour

A self-guided tour of 14 beautiful gardens in the Qualicum Beach area

Saturday, May 12 and Sunday, May 13

MARS Trip to Tofino

Two-day tour of beautiful gardens in Tofino

Wednesday, May 16 and Thursday, May 17

More information on all these events to follow.....

MARS Members Welcome Fellow Martians to Their Gardens

One of the best things about belonging to a garden club is hanging out with other passionate gardeners and sharing our efforts with those who we know will appreciate our labour of love.

So starting with **Saturday, March 31 and Sunday, April 1**, members of MARS were welcomed to the gardens of Al and Maria Bieberstein and Wolfgang and Vivienne Ruff.

Many of you know these gardens, and have experienced them on several of our garden tours. This year, they were open at a different time of year, so you know different plants were in bloom at the end of March.



Al and Maria Bieberstein were the first to offer their garden for fellow Martians to tour. They are shown here in early March with *Rhododendron* 'Anna' x yak.

Several rhododendrons were in bloom in the garden of Wolfgang and Vivienne Ruff – despite the rain, cold and snow of our opening weekend.

And along with rhododendrons were many other spring flowers including Hellebores, Narcissus, Omphalodes and Mahonia.



Rhododendron sutchuenense blooming on March 31 in the Ruff garden.



The magnificent leaves of *Rhododendron sinogrande* need no blossom to impress, even amongst the dozens of unique and graceful species and hybrids growing in the Ruff garden.



Rhododendron repens x *calophytum* promises to be spectacular in a few weeks, seen here in the Bieberstein garden.

Rhododendron Show and Sale
Saturday, April 21, 2012
Parksville Arena

Please take a moment to read the following rules for competition and exhibition at our annual Rhododendron Show and Sale, and then go out into your garden to see what you can bring to make this show a great success!

Rhododendron Show
Procedures and Regulations

Here are the rules for the annual MARS Rhodo Show and Plant Sale. Following are details of how and when to enter your trusses, i.e. rhodo blooms.

1. Eligibility

Exhibits in most categories will be accepted from members of MARS and non-members in the area. Note the Novice category is open only to new MARS members (three years or less). All members of a household will be considered to be one exhibitor.

2. Entries

- All entries shall have been grown by the exhibitor for at least 6 months and primarily cared for by the competitor.
- Only one entry of each name in each category per exhibitor. In other words, *R. macabeanum*, for example, could be entered in the species category and the appropriate color category. Extra blooms are encouraged but will be for display only.
- All entries should be taken from plants grown without artificial protection, except for the category, Protected, which is for the non-hardy.

3. Definitions

- Species: Botanically identified plants originating from seeds or cuttings.
- Hybrid: Plants resulting from crossbreeding of more than one species, hybrid or combination thereof.
- Truss: A single rachis, i.e. all florets coming from one bud.

- Spray: Multi-stems emerging from a single stem.
- Hammerhead: Truss with multiple rachides emanating from a single terminal.
- Unknowns: A bloom whose identity is unknown to the owner and therefore cannot be judged. Unknowns provide extra color for the Exhibition Table.

4. Exhibitors

- Shall make an effort to identify the exhibits.
- Entries will be accepted from 7 am to 8.45 am at the Parksville Curling Club.
- Entries and ribbons may be removed at 2 pm, but not before.

5. Preparation of Trusses

- Blooms should be selected when they are at the peak of their development.
- Blooms should be cut from well-watered plants during the coolest part of the day.
- Blooms should be carefully groomed. Damaged or dead twigs, leaves, bud scales and flower pips should be removed.
- Cleaning or washing of leaves is advised, but no artificial polishing is allowed.
- Use suitable containers to retain water during transportation to the show. Chemical additives to preserve bloom freshness can be used.

Participants' guide: Everyone who has blooming plants in their garden is encouraged to bring trusses either for judging or display. All categories, except the Novice category, are open to members and non-members alike. The Novice category is open to MARS members only.

Members should familiarize themselves with the categories and, a few days before the show, look around their garden and see what can be entered.

Categories are: Red, Pink, White, Blue Collection, Yellow Collection, Foliage, Lax Truss, Spray, Species large leaf, Species small leaf, Hammerhead, Novice, Protected, (such as *madenii* and *vireyas* that need winter protection here.)

The Four-Step Process to Enter Blooms in the MARS Rhododendron Show

1. Register

Proceed to the Registration Table, sign in and pick up a competitor number and a number of dots. You will need a dot for each entry. Proceed to the Labelling Table and leave your list of Truss names. Lists will be taken in order. Please don't shout out entry names. There may be a wait for plant names if a lot of people come at the same time.

2. Put Trusses in Bottles

Nearby is a table with bottles and corks. Take one bottle for each truss, put a numbered dot on the bottom of each bottle, making sure first that it is dry. (Don't turn the bottle over; it's full of water). Place a truss into each bottle using a cork to hold it securely if necessary.

3. Label Trusses

Leave trusses on the Work Table and go to the Labelling Table to pick up labels. Take trusses and labels to the Holding Table. At any stage, feel free to ask for help.

4. Position Trusses in their categories

From the Holding Table, trusses will be taken by a designated volunteer to the judging area and placed in the appropriate category. The label is placed in front of each truss. All categories are clearly labeled.

All Trusses must be in place by 8:45 am so judging can start on time. Late entries will go to the Exhibition Table.

Please bring as many extra trusses as you can for the exhibition table.



Rhododendron 'Checkmate'

ARS Western Fall Regional Conference, Nanaimo, B.C.

RHODOS IN PARADISE - DESTINATION VANCOUVER ISLAND

September 21 - 23, 2012

For full details:
Check out our brand new
website at
<http://arsnanaimo2012.ca/>

Registration is open now!
We encourage you to
register early!

The Mid Island Floral Art Club will meet on

Thursday, April 12 at 2:00 pm at

St. Stephens Church Hall,

150 Village Way,

Qualicum Beach.

Demonstrations on armatures and
structures to enhance floral designs.

All welcome.

Guest fee \$5.00

Call 250-752-8525 or 250-752-2179.

For more info www.mifac.org

MOUNT ARROWSMITH RS GENERAL MEETING
March 14, 2012
Held at the Civic Centre in Qualicum Beach
at 7:30 pm

Minutes of the February meeting were approved as published in the Rhodovine.

GUESTS: Kim Hammond, Heinz and Judy Jeske, Richard Kuhn and Chris Southwick

BUSINESS ARISING: 1. Tony Ansdell alerted members that both April and May meetings will be held on Thursday at the Civic Centre instead of the regular Wednesdays.

2. Members were reminded that anyone who has never attended an ARS convention can apply for the \$400 subsidy to attend the May meeting in Asheville, N.C. If there is more than one applicant, there will be a draw at the April meeting.

3. Tony told members that a MARS steering committee and Milner have so far located a suitable area for a species garden; there are lots of ideas, but no concrete details to present as yet. We are at the feasibility stage, he said.

4. Kim Hammond from Milner Gardens was on hand this evening to renew or sign up new members at a reduced rate.

CORRESPONDENCE: Marilyn Dawson said there was nothing to report on that front, but there was lots going on with our spring plans.

The Spring Fling, where members pot up their own plants and bring them to the Community Hall on Memorial Avenue in Qualicum Beach, is on Saturday May 5 from 8:30 am until 12:30. Tables are still available for \$15 and we are looking for hobbyists wanting to sell their wares, including garden related items, crafts and food items.

Tofino Spring Tour: The date is set for May 16 and 17 and members are expected to carpool. Ken Gibson is advising us and helping with arrangements.

Member Garden Visits: This is a new venture, whereby a few members open their gardens to MARS members on specific days. Al and Maria Bieberstein and Wolfgang and Vivian Ruff are first up, opening their gardens on March 31 and April 1 from 10 am to 4 pm. Others who have offered their gardens for later are Beate Kuhn, Lorne Hepting and Marilyn Dawson. Other members are urged to do the same.

MEMBERSHIP: Bert Harding said Kim Hammond has joined MARS. We now have 98 members and 6 associates.

TREASURER: MARS has paid our ARS fees, which reduced the bank balance considerably, but we are still in good financial condition to face the next few months.

TRUSS SHOW: Chairman Glen Jamieson said he expects most members to help on the day of the Truss Show, April 21 at the Parksville Curling Club. The steering committee meets Thursday to work out some fine details.

GARDEN TOUR: In Ken Jones absence, Linda Derkach said the board was at the back of the room and encouraged members to pick their sitting spots early. There are 14 gardens on tour. Another meeting is coming up next week.

PROGRAM: Ann DeBrincat said nurseryman Bernie Dinter will be talking to the club about Peter Stone's garden at the April meeting. She is still working on the May program.

NANAIMO CONFERENCE: Chris Southwick, co-chair of the 2012 Nanaimo ARS Conference with Gayle McRae, was on hand to tell members about the upcoming conference in September and ask for our support. She brought with her a DVD that promotes Nanaimo and the mid-Island as a great place to visit. She said the web site should be up and running by April 1; early registration is encouraged because there is a discount. There was a sound problem with our equipment, so the DVD played without music. Tony said later it will be replayed in May with the sound.

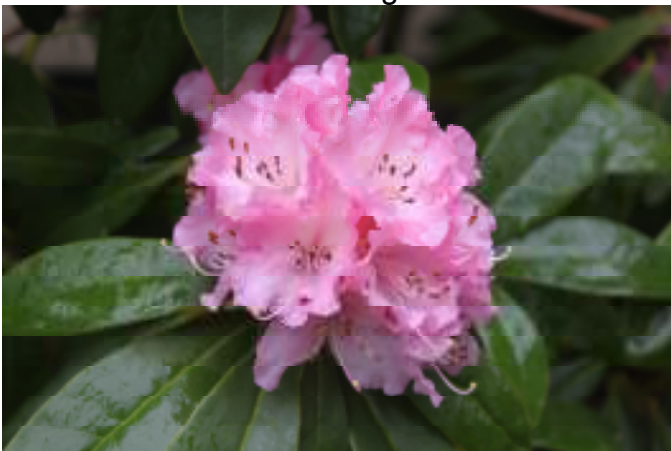
WORKSHOP: Tonight's program was planting rhododendron seeds. Ann DeBrincat had arrived with a pile of pots and potting mix, sheets of instruction and a wide range of rhododendron seeds from the ARS, both species and hybrids. Members lined up to fill their pots as directed by Ann and Don Bridgen who was very helpful tapping the tiny seeds out of their packets into each pot. A steady hand is needed for that job, to prevent the entire package being dumped into one pot. Some people were content to plant one pot, but there were many who happily left the building carrying several pots.

MEETING ADJOURNED: 9:15 PM

More photos from our March Open Gardens...



The lovely orange indumentum of *Rhododendron fictolacteum* lights up this beautiful scene in the Ruff garden.



Rhododendron 'Anna x yak' puts on a lovely show in the Bieberstein garden.



Owners of *Rhododendron* 'Maureen' can anticipate reliable and lovely blooms on a compact and well-shaped shrub. This

specimen has won many awards for the Bieberstein's.



Hellebores – both creamy-white and deep purple – are reliable early spring companions for rhododendrons.

Photos by Linda Derkach

And on the West Coast of the island....



In the garden of Ken Gibson in Tofino, *Rhododendron thomsonii* is magnificent blooming against the snow-capped peaks of Strathcona Park.

Thanks to Mary Parker for this contribution.