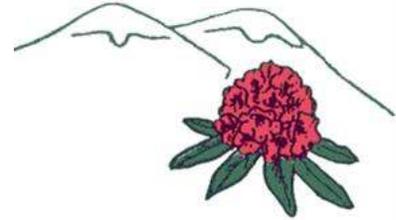


THE RHODOVINE



**THE MOUNT ARROWSMITH
RHODODENDRON SOCIETY**

**MARS
P. O. Box 342
Qualicum Beach. BC
V9K 1S8**

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Christmas Party

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Garden Tour – Kathy Loyer

Truss Show – Ray Walker

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Historian - Cassy Lacouvee

Library – Donna deBoer

Meeting Coordinator- Tony Ansdell

Membership – Tony Ansdell

Milner Gardens - John England

Program Chair – Glen Jamieson

PR - Marilyn Dawson

Refreshments

Sunshine – Maria Bieberstein

This Month: **MARS** **Christmas Party**



**Saturday,
December 5
5:00 pm**

At the home of
Jane and Ray Walker
Dinner at 6:30 pm

Please bring the potluck dish you signed up for and your favourite beverage. Cutlery, glasses and dishes will be rented.

Please also bring something for the Food Bank, and warm scarves, mitts and hats for Manna. There will be great raffle prizes but no gift exchange this year.

MARS Meetings

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

Next Meeting:

**Wednesday,
January 13,
2016**



Nerine bowdenii growing in gay profusion in Eaglecrest brings joyous colour to the subdued landscape in November.

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Upcoming Programs...

- ❖ ***January 2016***
 - *Glen Jamieson & Linda Derkach on New Zealand*
- ❖ ***February 2016***
 - *Nancy Turner, Ethnobotanist on Plants in our Changing Climate*
- ❖ ***March 2016***
 - *Panel of Experts*
- ❖ ***April 2016***
 - *Bernie Guyader on The Small Rhododendrons (tentative)*

Dates to Remember...

- ❖ ***December 5, 2015***
 - *MARS Christmas Party Home of Jane & Ray Walker*
- ❖ ***Saturday, February 6, 2016***
 - *Qualicum Beach Seedy Saturday*
- ❖ ***April 20 to 24, 2016***
 - *ARS Annual Convention Williamsburg, Virginia*
- ❖ ***April 23, 2016***
 - *MARS Rhododendron Show and Sale*
- ❖ ***May 7 & 8, 2016***
 - *MARS 25th Annual Mother's Day Garden Tour*

Membership Renewal

Members who have not renewed their membership in MARS, may do so by mailing a cheque to:

Membership, Mount Arrowsmith
Rhododendron Society
PO BOX 342
Qualicum Beach, BC V9K 1S8.

Membership is still \$30 for one or two people.

You may bring your cheque to the MARS Christmas Party or the January meeting.

Williamsburg 2016



**A Joint Meeting of the
American Rhododendron Society
and the *Azalea Society of America*
April 20-24, 2016**

***New Zealand's Dunedin Botanic
Garden on the South Island:
The Rhododendron Dell***

Linda Derkach

Interestingly, rhododendrons are not native to New Zealand, although one would think so as they certainly thrive in this ideal climate. Here is a photo essay on one glorious feature of the botanic garden during October 2014,

The Rhododendron Dell was planted as an experiment. David Tannock, the Superintendent of Garden and Reserves chose this spot in 1914 to trial rhododendrons in Dunedin Botanic Garden. Sheltered, cool and near a water source, the site was choice. It was covered in thick native forest so Mr. Tannock cleared the undergrowth, leaving behind tall trees to provide shade. The site turned out to be ideal and the plants thrived. The experiment was a success and led eventually to today's four hectare Rhododendron Dell.



Magnificent *Rhododendron falconeri* is a large shrub or small tree with handsome wrinkled, dark green foliage and rusty indumentum. Bell-shaped flowers in huge trusses of creamy-white are striking.



This forest of gnarled old rhododendrons provides a perch for the native wood pigeon and a floral canopy for visitors.



NZ hybrid *Rhododendron* 'Kiwi Magic' is a plant that many of us grow – or try to grow – on Vancouver Island. Very popular in New Zealand's milder climate, compact 'Kiwi Magic' starts off with soft pink blooms and sunny yellow centres, set off by frilly margins. One can see the *yakushmanum* and 'Lem's Cameo' parentage in this stunner.



Rhododendron 'Moonlight Sonata' is a New Zealand hybrid - a cross of *macabeanum* and 'Pamela'.



Rhododendron 'Mrs. W. T. Thistleton-Dyer' is a tree rather than a shrub – attesting to the nurturing environment of the Rhododendron Dell. Mrs. Thistleton-Dyer was the daughter of famed plant explorer Joseph Hooker. Not widely grown, this *fortunei* hybrid was developed by George Paul in Hertfordshire, England prior to 1900 – a hybrid that has stood the test of time.



A fragrant cross of *fortunei* and *griffithianum* *Rhododendron* 'Loderi Patience' thrives in NZ.



Spectacular *Rhododendron* 'Marquis of Lothian' (above and below) is one of the earliest NZ hybrids, being raised by William Martin in Fairfield just outside of Dunedin in the late 1870's. A cross of *R. thomsonii* and *R. griffithianum*, it can be found in several large gardens on the South Island.



The dell offers many glorious scenes like this of healthy old rhododendrons growing in profusion.

Drought Advice - Part I

Lessons Gleaned from Experience

Linda Derkach

With 60 collective years of experience, Al Murray and Terry Richmond offer home-grown and time-tested advice on how to keep rhododendrons alive and conserve water.

Here are some jewels I learned from this venerable duo: In an established garden.....

- If possible, remove larger trees that use too much water
- Plant more deciduous trees such as maples and magnolias that will provide shade and cool in the summer (read hot and dry) and then drop their leaves to use as a mulch and allow light in during winter
- Avoid aspen, walnut and willow trees (unless you have a stream)
- Cedar trees are a no-no
- Create a good growing medium for your rhododendrons by adding compost, bark fines, large bark, loam and manure.
- Avoid sandy soil – it drains too quickly.



According to Al, the purples are fairly drought resistant. This is borne out by this *Rhododendron* 'Catawbiense Boursault' which is a large, mature shrub that self-mulches and shades its own roots. It rarely if ever receives any supplemental water – winter or summer – drought or no.

Mulch – Mulch - Mulch

- Allow your trees and shrubs to self-mulch; let the leaves fall to provide winter protection and prevent loss of moisture from the soil; don't be too tidy – good for the worms and birds too!
- Supplement self-mulching with fir bark, sea soil
- 5" to 6" of mulch is best – do it now
- Keep mulch away from the stem or trunk



Rhododendron 'Linda' is a *williamsianum* hybrid, known for tolerating full sun. In fact, this specimen has thrived in a large pot in lots of sun for many years and produces more than 200 blooms in late April, making the foliage difficult to see!

Watering

- Hand watering is best for a small garden; then your plants get just the water they need and are being monitored all the time
- To prevent loss of water through evaporation, watering in the early morning is best, or late day after the heat and sun of the day is gone



Rhododendron 'April Glow' is another sun tolerant *williamsianum* cross with great foliage.

Mt. Arrowsmith Rhododendron Society
General Meeting held at the
Qualicum Beach Civic Centre
November 12, 2015 at 7:30 pm
Minutes

It was a dark and blustery night, yet 30 stalwart souls braved the elements to hear Terry Richmond and Al Murray of Cowichan RS talk about the weather and how gardeners can cope with what is expected to be warmer and dryer years ahead. It was the long summer drought that caught their attention so ways to garden in a water-wise fashion was very much on their minds.

Al mused that a new garden is easier to create. In that case he would favor more deciduous trees over evergreens, because they will provide shade in the summer, but being bare in winter, more light for other shrubs. He would avoid aspens and willows and favor mostly small leaf rhododendrons over larger leafed varieties. A well-established property is more challenging, particularly in planting. Tree roots are often the problem, so Al doesn't attempt to dig. He sets his rhododendrons on the ground and adds soil and mulch around the plant.

Terry said he has revised his thinking about fertilizing small rhododendrons planted in the fall. With somewhat milder winters, plants continue to grow and need some nourishment. Both were sparing in the use of fertilizer on healthy plants, but always applied it in March to ensure thick and tough foliage for summer. Epsom salts was added around the same time either in liquid form or granular to let spring rains do the work.

Their combined talk was wide-ranging, touching on choice of rhododendrons and their placement; mulches to conserve water; soil mixture, drip irrigation and good watering procedures, in essence never during mid-to-late-day.

BUSINESS: 1. MARS will be taking part in Seedy Saturday on February 6. Marilyn Dawson said we will be selling a few plants, possibly species rhododendrons; she asked for help on that day.

2. Kathy Loyer is still looking for gardens for the tour next May but the list is growing.

3. A sign-up sheet was passed around for members attending the Christmas Party on December 5 at Ray and Jane Walker's in San Pareil to indicate their pot luck offering. This year cutlery and plates will be rented; there's no gift exchange, but there will be raffle, food bank donation and warm scarves, hats etc. for Manna Ministries.

4. Linda Derkach asked for a show of hands to indicate interest in a bus tour, probably next May after the Garden Tour. She suggests a possible one-day tour to the Lower Mainland, Salt Spring Island, North Island or west to Tofino. There was interest shown in all tours but the north or west island tours drew the most hands. A two-night tour to Seattle, Bainbridge Island and Whidbey drew the greatest response.

PRIZES: The door prize was a flowering azalea. Other prizes were *R. fraseri*, *R. rex* subsp. *fictolacteum* and a dark red flowering currant (donated by speaker Al Murray) as well as *R. 'Conroy'*, *R. morii* and a dwarf skimmia. Winners were Jack Holt, Barbara Kulla, Susan Baker, Mazie Walsh, Jane Walker, Maria Bieberstein and Sandra Hemsworth.

Meeting Adjourned: 9:30

Qualicum Beach Seedy Saturday
February 6, 2016

Meeting Garden Challenges

Speakers:

Connie Kuramoto: *Water, Water, Everywhere*

Linda Gilkeson: *Do You Really Know What the Problem is?*

For more information please check our website:
<http://www.qbseedysaturday.com/>

Please contact Lori Pross at nickorlori@shaw.ca if you can volunteer to help out; work shifts are only 1 ½ hour or 2 hours long.