



# The RHODOTELLER

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## December NORTH ISLAND RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

2007/2008 Executive:

**President**

Harry Wright .... 338-8345

**Vice-President**

Dave Crucq ..... 339-7845

**Past President:**

Paul Wurz ..... 287-4301

**Secretary**

Diana Scott ..... 338-0208

**Treasurer**

Don Law ..... 339-2735

**Director: Ways & Means**

Dave Godfrey ... 335-0717

**Director: Membership**

Brian Staton ..... 337-5228

**Director: Publicity**

Chris Aldred ..... 331-0395

**Director: Newsletter/Library**

Noni Godfrey ... 335-0717

..... Nonigod@shaw.ca

**Social Committee:**

Evelyn Wright .. 339-7493

**Revenue Table Committee:**

Louise Casson .. 334-2331

**Sunshine Lady:**

Pauline Bonney 339-7594

The club meets the second Tuesday  
of the month  
(except May through August)  
at the United Church  
Comox Avenue,  
Comox 7:30 p.m.

## Coming Events

### 4 December 2007 - Executive Meeting

The executive meeting will be held at the home of Dave and Noni Godfrey: 4686 Montrose Drive

Executive Meeting begins at 2:00 p.m.

### 11 December 2007 - Regular Monthly Meeting

Christmas Party...see "Christmas Party" article later in newsletter



## President's View

... by Harry Wright



So far there have been very few salmon in my creek this year, which means one link in the food chain will be in short supply; hope all the fish eaters will survive. The garden is on its own now until March when I will have a couple of large trees to remove. The big blow on November 11th only broke one large branch of a rhodo, but no flooding. So we dodged another bullet.

Is it really December again, already? Weather has been nice recently, and we are busy decorating the garden for our Christmas 'Open Garden'. This year we will be open December 20th, 22nd and 24th from 7 to 9 pm. No admission, but cash donations gratefully accepted for the Sunshine Lunch Club. The club supplies hot meals four days a week all year round for those less fortunate in the valley. Approximately 155 people are fed each day at a cost of around \$1,600.00 a month. We hope you will take the time to join us and help support this worthy cause.

Speaking of causes, our club will be sponsoring a Christmas hamper for another family this year. Donations of non-perishable items or cash can be brought to our Christmas party on December 11th, or you can drop them by our place, "Haida Gold Gardens", on Chaster Road.

The Social Committee has an interesting Christmas party planned for this month, so hope to see you there....






## Member's Notes *...by Dave Godfrey*

Members and guests alike enjoyed another informative and entertaining meeting on November 13<sup>th</sup>. During the meeting, Christine Aldred spoke about the club's involvement with the Salvation Army's Christmas Hamper drive. Our executive has agreed to support another family in need this year by asking for non-perishable donations from our members. Items can be brought to our Christmas party on Dec. 11<sup>th</sup>, or dropped off to either Chris' (331-0395) or Harry's (338-8345). Cash donations may also be given and this will be used to supplement the hampers with small gifts for the family (2 adults with 4 children.)

Evelyn Wright also brought to the members' attention that the Anderton Therapeutic Garden is planning a 2 acre expansion to include a Rhododendron garden. Evelyn was canvassing the membership to determine any future support for the project. Most indicated they would be willing to provide assistance when the time comes.



Following the business portion of the meeting, Diana Scott presented an educational on the "Rhododendron of the Year" (ROY) and the "Proven Performers" programs, encouraging members to become actively involved in selecting the ROY for 2011. As Diana explained, the ARS program is carried out each year to identify rhododendrons and azaleas in each region. The selection is done three years prior, in order to give growers an opportunity to propagate stock in advance of the customers seeking the proven performers each year.

Our guest speaker for the evening was none other than one of our own rhododendron growers and expert, Paul Wurz. In his presentation, entitled "Some Help in Growing Rhododendrons", Paul touched on planting, pruning, fertilizing, mulching, and disease control, among other garden-related issues.

Paul explained that a recent study has confirmed that 75% of rhododendrons die from too much water (sitting in soggy locations) with the second leading cause of death being not enough water. He explained that, contrary to some people's philosophy, overhead water, even in heat, is acceptable for most plants. After all, these same conditions exist in the Himalayas where most rhodos originate.

Foliage spraying of liquid fish, Epsom salts and Miracid (30-10-10) provides a nice presentation of overall plants; while fertilizing with granular super phosphate or a slow release rock phosphate in February or March will provide extra blooms on most plants.



As most members know, mulching with cedar or fir bark will keep out weeds and keep in moisture. Paul warned not to mulch with fresh grass clippings as these tend to be too hot for the plants, and can also add to a weed problem. Mulching also protects from rain erosion and provides aeration for the root system. Acting as a blanket for the roots, mulch keeps the plant cool in the summer and warm in the winter—much the same conditions as we appreciate.

At the conclusion of his presentation, Paul provided some slides of his favourite plants in his "Hidden Acres" gardens in Campbell River. On behalf of those present, Noni Godfrey thanked Paul for his very informative and entertaining presentation.

Paul was then asked to draw the winning ticket for the evening's raffle prize of the rhodo "Pachysanthum". The lucky winner was Nadine Boudreau, who in turn drew Dany Fortin's number for the door prize of a Gardening Tips booklet.

The next regular meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 8<sup>th</sup> with a "panel of experts" (Nadine Boudreau, Isabel Petch and Paul Wurz) available to discuss many aspects of rhododendron gardening and answer any questions members or guests may have.



### **THE 2007 ANNUAL CHRISTMAS LIGHT DISPLAY**

**Given Et Many Wrights  
769 Chaster Rd Courtenay  
Dec 20th, 22nd Et 24th 7-9 PM  
Cash donations accepted for  
The Sunshine Lunch Club**





## Rhododendron Moupinense

This is one of the earliest Rhodos to bloom in spring and well worth a trip to Harry Wright's garden to see. Unfortunately, like it's sister R. Cilipinense, a sudden unwelcome snowfall will make a mush of the flowers.

The following article was written by Lynn Watts for the January 1995 Seattle Rhodo Society Newsletter.

One of the earliest to bloom of species Rhodos, *R. moupinense* is also one of the finest of the so-called dwarfs. This beautiful, early blooming rhodo is one of the most prized of the early flowering species. In its better forms (white with a clear pink flush or clear pink with deeper pink markings in the throat), this is in my opinion, the finest of the early species.

Considered sufficiently hardy in the Pacific Northwest, the early flowers of this rhodo are frequently damaged by frosts which more often than not occur after the plant has opened its delicate flowers. We have learned over years of experience to keep a few plants in pots and to move these pots into a protected doorway when the buds start to swell in January. This simple precaution assures us of the pleasure of unblemished blossoms. Thus protected it is not unusual for the plant to continue blooming for 3-4 weeks.

Most records indicate that this rhodo was first described by Adrien Franchet in 1886 but was not introduced until 1909 by E.H. Wilson. It is native to Szechwan and eastern Tibet where it often occurs as an epiphyte on the oaks and other deciduous trees in the region. It also occurs terrestrially on rocky slopes and cliffs at elevations of 6,600 to almost 11,000 feet.

Once you have seen a true *R. moupinense* it is highly unlikely you will confuse this species with any other rhodo. Unfortunately, even in some reputable nurseries, I have seen Cilpinense mislabeled as *R. moupinense*. The true species has thick, rigid ovate to oval shaped leaves which retain only a visage of hair on the outer margin. The leaves of these true species are rarely longer than 1 1/2" and have a slightly recurved profile. The hybrid which is sometimes mistaken for the true species, on the other hand, has larger, broader leaves and a much more ciliate leaf margin. In bloom the true *moupinense* has only 1 or 2 flowers to the rachis; these have a widely funnel-shaped corolla with a long tube and widely spreading lobes giving the flower a much flatter face than the flowers of Cilpinense. Although this species comes from a relatively low altitude in China it is considered perfectly hardy in the Pacific Northwest.

This charming early blooming dwarf species rhodo should be in every collector's garden and should be grown in full sun to maintain a compact plant and to provide the optimum flower display.

*Note by MP:* I would check with Harry Wright about a couple of points. Full sun, in early April or May, can sometimes really blast the newly opened leaves of some Rhodos. Some protection while in bloom sounds like a good idea. Where is Harry's plant when the snow blows?



...by Mary Palmer

The Gardener's Peony - *Herbaceous and Tree Peonies*  
Author Martin Page, Pub. Timber Press 2005.

This book must be the most complete writing on Peonies that ever was. Lovely photos of many species and hybrids of herbaceous and tree peonies, Japanese and Chinese. Descriptions of hundreds of plants. We might not find all the names in our nurseries, but we can certainly read up on a nice frilly yellow one - and ask for it or something similar. Did you know for instance that Japanese tree peonies are almost all grafted, and Chinese tree peonies are on their own roots (and therefore can make a big, many-stemmed bush over time). They are hardier too. How to propagate, pests and diseases, it's all in this lovely book. I borrowed it from the Campbell River Library, who have recently had a large infusion of books, gardening, mystery, everything.

## Christmas Party

December 11<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 pm

"Tis the Season" and we are really looking forward to our Christmas Party on December 11<sup>th</sup>. We are trying something new this year by starting at 5:30 pm to enable folks to return home earlier in the evening. As in the past, this is a 'Sweets and Savories' party which will take the place of 'dinner'. The club will cook a small ham and provide mini buns, tea and coffee, and the Executive will bring desserts. We ask that the rest of the club members bring 'finger food' appies to add to the table.

Be prepared to play a couple of Christmas games, get to know your fellow club members a little better, and be a part of the NIRS wrap-up of our 2007 season. We will have a 'fun' gift exchange at the end of the evening with a Charlie Brown Christmas theme. We ask that each person bring a wrapped present - something garden-related if possible. It can be a re-gift, a gently used garden item to pass on, something 'goofy' - or if those are not readily available, something purchased for under \$10. What would Charlie Brown find under his spindly tree?

This will be the last opportunity to bring in your Hamper item. Chris will be taking the Hamper to the Salvation Army after the party. If you are participating, you can bring a non-perishable item on the evening of the party or take it to the Wrights or the Aldreds beforehand.

### Christmas Party Committee:

Evelyn Wright Louise Casson  
Diana Scott Chris Aldred





By  
Rose-Marie Silkins



## Snippets From Sayward

Our last newsletter of 2007 will appear at the start of Advent, the European Christian tradition of observing the four weeks before Christmas, not just with anticipation, but with serious reflection. As the weeks before December 25 build to a frenzy of materialism, serious reflection seems a pretty good idea, regardless of one's spiritual (or non-spiritual) inclinations.

There is no pleasanter way to encourage reflection than to do so while walking in the wild areas of our beautiful west coast environment, cutting branches, picking up cones, and simply appreciating being able to do so. As I was doing that last evening at dusk, the full moon rising over Johnstone Strait, I was overcome with gratitude that I was not picking up holiday decorating material in a crowded mall.

I was gathering branches because I make wreaths, which help tide my nursery over the winter. I often share with NIRS members my growing concerns about invasive alien plants, and each Christmas I find myself increasingly committed to avoiding English holly in my own seasonal projects. I have never grown an English ivy plant for any purpose, ever since my teenaged years when I demonstrated a predilection for unintentionally killing it, almost on sight. Good thing.

For the first batch of wreaths, I have been able to use native greenery exclusively. Evergreen boughs and salal are pleasant to work with, not least for the fragrance of pine, cedar and fir. Sprigs of huckleberry, rosehips, or hazelnut catkins make pleasant, understated accents.

The next lot will be made with contributions from garden plants. A few sprigs of berried skimmia are enough to dress up a conifer-bough wreath. Boxwood is very handsome on its own, and I am going to highlight it with clusters of variegated boxwood, sometimes called oregonia. I purchased some seeded eucalyptus stems to use as accents, though gardeners to the south can happily over-winter the useful *Eucalyptus gunnii* outdoors to use its juvenile foliage year-round. Highly variegated *Aucuba japonica*, a common landscape broadleaved evergreen, provides lovely accents for wreaths or arrangements, with red berries on female plants. *Viburnum x bodnantense* Dawn, that tireless workhorse of the winter garden, will contribute clusters of fragrant pink flowers. Woven into a salal or boxwood wreath with natural raffia, they look most charming.

My new project for this year is the making of broom wreaths. I have mixed feelings about this, as broom is such a menace on Vancouver Island, and cutting it just once does not slow it down. On the other hand, it doesn't speed it up either, so I suppose that using it in this way is harmless if not exactly beneficial. When I do cut branches, I also saw off the plant at ground level, which will not kill it, but will keep it from growing enough to set seeds for a season. Sam and Britta, our Fjord horses, actually eat broom with considerable enthusiasm, and we have noted that the

areas to which they have most access are becoming broom-free.

The broom wreaths are very attractive, though they seem more popular with customers when they are highlighted with a bit of gold or silver spray paint. That sounds tacky, but it actually looks quite nice, at least to me. I know I could never persuade Bruce to accept broom as an alternative to a wreath of native west coast boughs on our front door.

*Merry Christmas fellow gardeners, and best wishes for 2008.*



...by Mary Palmer

## Garden Chatter, Natter, and Notes

What makes a Rhodo? A discussion of Rhodos would not be complete without some basic information on the taxonomy and what makes a rhodo a rhodo. There are several books in our library, including Ed Reiley's book "Success with Rhodos and Azaleas", and Peter and Kenneth Cox's "Encyclopedia of Rhododendron Species" that contain information on basic rhodo taxonomy.

Over the years the descriptions and breakdowns have changed a bit as species and hybrids have been "lumped or split" into various groups. For the big picture, Rhodos are part of a family called 'Ericaceae', commonly called the heath family.

The genus (group of related plants) Rhododendron includes at least 850 species which makes it one of the largest genus groups in the plant kingdom. Within this genus, there are two basic divisions: elepidote (plants that are non-scaly and usually large-leaved), and lepidote (scaly plants with typically smaller leaves).

Virtually all taxonomic decisions made about Rhodos were made by Westerners, usually with little or no consultation from others who are familiar with the plants in the wild. The plants may have different names, and extensive descriptions usually related to the medicinal use of the plants. This past cultural/scientific imperialism is becoming a thing of the past with many of the newer finds reflecting local names and traditions.

Key characteristics used to identify Rhodos include: height, habit, branchlets, bark, buds, leaves, petioles, inflorescence, corolla, calyx, stamens, style, ovary, capsule, and seed. Identifying Rhodos in the wild, as well as in the garden, can be a very difficult task; especially when faced with the many thousand hybrids that have been developed or developed naturally from the species.





Lois Clyde



## Member Profile

Lois emigrated to Canada as a young nurse in 1969 from Sydney, Australia. Living in Dauphin, Manitoba, Lois worked in the Hospital's operating room, for the next 14 years. In 1974, she met and married Jim Clyde.

Lois tried to garden and grow lots of veggies in Manitoba, but found the Prairie winters a bit hard to take. So they moved back to Australia for a couple of years. Unfortunately, this made Jim homesick! As a compromise, they moved to Vancouver Island, where they already had friends.



The rest, as they say, is history!! Lois developed her present garden right from scratch. There was no landscaping at all when they bought the house on Seaview Road in Black Creek in 1988. One bed followed another, and in no time at all she was "hooked" on gardening. Lois still recalls shopping at Farquarson's Nursery, and buying her first rhododendron there.

Since then, rhodos have become a passion for Lois, together with fuchsias, dahlias and Rugosa roses; well, most everything, really! She has become a self-confessed plant-aholic. Lois's mother also liked growing rhodos and dahlias, so perhaps it's in her blood.

Many of us will empathize with Lois' words ... "My problem now is that I have too many gardens and not enough time to look after it all, as I still work full-time. I have many plans to expand beds and move things. So when I retire, great things will happen!"

On May 31st, 2007, at a very moving ceremony in Campbell River, Lois became a Canadian Citizen and now holds dual citizenship. As Lois explains ... "I would have done this a long time ago except the Australians would not allow dual citizenship until 2002. In the meantime 9/11 happened and all Landed Immigrants in Canada had to obtain a Permanent Residency Card to allow for travel. I decided to take out my citizenship. They lost my application (I waited almost 2 years to hear that.) So then I had to re-apply and waited another 8 months; not bad for a government agency. Now I'm fully-fledged and can legally cry during the Canadian National Anthem."

Lois is an enthusiastic member of the Rhododendron Society, and has been the club historian for many years.



## MOVING A LARGE RHODO

I found a very useful article, written by Ron Knight, in the Jan. 2006 copy of *The Indumentum*, newsletter of the Vancouver Rhodo Society.

Large Rhodos have shallow, fibrous roots and are quite happy to be moved. The best time for transplanting is late fall, which gives the plant time to establish new roots before the hot dry summer weather arrives.

"I have moved a very large rhodo on two different occasions. The first time was 10 years ago when I decided to relocate a three metre tall R. Walloper from North Vancouver to Pender Harbour. A major problem - my van would only accommodate a one metre tall plant. The solution was drastic pruning. A pair of loppers and 15 minutes reduced the once magnificent rhodo to a stick with two short side branches and a few leaves.

I dug up a root-ball about one metre in diameter, pushed it on its side, and placed the wheelbarrow, also placed on its side, against the root-ball. (Others have told me that a furniture-moving dolly works even better for this task.) It was easy after that to push the rhodo upright with the wheelbarrow, move both to the tailgate of the van, and slide the plant inside.

When we arrived at Pender Harbour, I wheeled it to a rocky hillside under some Douglas Fir trees. Since there was only a thin layer of moss over the bedrock, I prepared a planting mix of equal parts of mulch, unscreened topsoil and peat moss. Amazingly the rhodo bloomed again after two years, grew over the next decade to a height of 3 metres, and became even bushier than it had been in North Vancouver."

That is not the end of the story, and this part shows another way to move a huge old plant.. "By that time, however, I had other Walloper Rhodos in my garden and decided to give the plant from North Vancouver to a friend. He wanted the rhodo to be moved, without any reduction in height, to a spot in his garden where it would block out an unsightly view. Since Walloper had been planted in a location inaccessible to a backhoe, 3 professional gardeners were hired to help. That very wise decision allowed me to escape any heavy lifting and to take photos of the entire operation.

The gardeners arrived with a shiny new fibreglass shovel. (I've found that a flat spade, sharpened on a grinding wheel, is excellent for digging up Rhodos). They first dug a trench around Walloper. Then they poked underneath the plant as far as possible to loosen the rootball, then pushed the rhodo on its side to release roots from cracks in the bedrock below.

The next step involved pulling a large plastic tarp under the root-ball as it was rocked from one side to the other. Now, how to drag the massive plant over a perennial border without ruining the plants under it? The solution was to create a "railway track" of wooden studs and slide the Walloper along it, above the



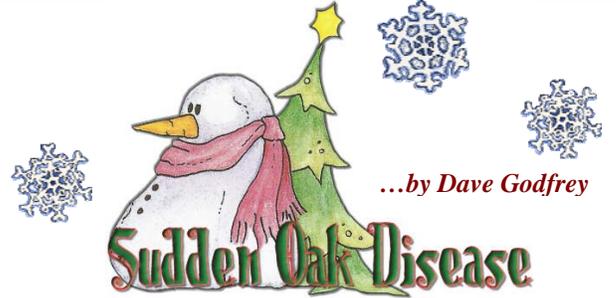


perennials. Then move the studs repeatedly, drag the tarp and plant across the lawn to the driveway. The studs were used to make a ramp up onto the flatbed behind the truck. The whole process took about 50 minutes."

Simple, eh? Really, it is a simple matter to do some drastic work on these tough old Rhodos. One in my garden, another Lem hybrid, was cut down to 6" in the fall, several years ago, grew and even flowered the next spring, and is now a very neat plant instead of straggling all over the garden bed.

In the same newsletter, Todd Major gave sage advice about transplanting, useful when moving monsters or smaller plants. Just follow these simple rules:

- Before transplanting, if the plant's roots are dry, water in advance of beginning the work.
- Use a rope or string to tie up lower branching to allow access to the root-ball.
- Do not prune branching when transplanting. There is a known correlation between plant hormones produced at the branch tip and corresponding root growth. If you prune, you will remove this vital relationship.
- Dig the largest root ball possible proportionate to the size of the plant. A larger root ball facilitates quick re-growth after transplanting, allowing the plant more root tissue to carry out basic metabolic processes and recovery. There is a limit to this rule, too big and the ball will fall apart.
- Do not transplant during the heat of summer or during hard frosts, to avoid drought stress.
- Some plants without a fibrous root system will appreciate a piece of burlap to keep the root ball together during transport.
- Cut large roots cleanly with a hand pruner, to facilitate quick healing.
- Plant the transplant 1-2" higher than the surrounding grade in its new home, to allow settling. Mulch down from the top of the root-ball to the existing grade.
- Always mulch the finished transplant, to protect the soil and provide a matrix for food producing organisms.
- Water in the transplant, once it is in its final position, to settle air out of the soil and provide water for metabolic processes.
- Do not apply fertilizer or other additives during transplanting. These might force new growth which cannot be supported by the reduced root system. Instead, add compost or manure to the planting hole and mulch."



### Sudden Oak Disease - Hits South Island

Sudden Oak Death, a fungal plant disease which is water-borne and extremely difficult to detect, has recently made its way across the border from the United States and arrived on Vancouver Island.

The disease originates in northern California, around the San Francisco area, where it has caused severe die-back and death in many types of oak trees. However, it also affects many other types of plants including rhododendrons, viburnum, and camellia, as well as maples, Douglas fir and some species of oaks. There are more than 130 known host species, most of which are nursery stock and include the Garry Oak. Sudden Oak Death disease (*Phytophthora ramorum*) afflicts plants with leaf spot or blight leaf drop, but those symptoms can have many causes, making it extremely difficult to detect except by laboratory analysis.

As reported in a recent Times Colonist article by Susan Ramsey, "Island View Nursery owner John Garcia in Saanichton has been told he must destroy about 75% of his stock because one rhododendron contaminated with the disease, sold from a retail nursery on the Island, was traced back to his wholesale operation. He, in turn, had bought the rhododendrons from a certified nursery on the Lower Mainland, a supplier he had done business with for many years".

Sean Sela, a spokesperson for the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, the agency responsible for dealing with these incidents, is reported as saying "most nurseries are at very low risk of receiving stock because plants that originate outside the country from known areas of high risk are restricted from entering Canada. The problem is more and more species are testing positive as host plants. The agency doesn't want the California experience to be repeated here".

There is no known cure for this disease and afflicted plants have to be destroyed (burned.) Everything within six feet of tested plants identified as known hosts must be destroyed, including mature trees and hedges. The report concludes by saying, "this disease is not a disease of nursery owners – it's a disease that can affect anyone with a tree or a shrub in the backyard".





**WE GET MAIL**

*The following is an email received last month through our web site. Tom is away in Nepal right now, but for those interested in taking the trek I'm sure Tom would love to hear from you.*

Dear North Island members:

My name is Tom Carter. I live in Parksville. I am a mountaineer and a senior member of the Alpine Club Of Canada. I have been going to Nepal for seventeen years and for the last ten have been organizing treks in order to help others enjoy this spectacularly beautiful country.

While accessing the high Himalaya, I almost always pass through rhododendron forests that grow between 1900m. and 3400m. These often twenty-five meter tall virgin forests cover vast areas of the foothills. Saturated with monsoon rains, the under-story is lush with bamboo, primula and over one hundred types of orchid. Over eight hundred bird species live or pass through these foothill "gardens".

In the springtime, from any hilltop, an endless sea of crimson and pink flows down into terraced farmland and up to the snow peaks towering above. Our paths are carpeted in petals!

This coming spring, I am offering a trek that will be devoted to exploring and luxuriating in "Rhododendron land". Our route will parallel the Annapurna Range. Traveling on foot in this botanical paradise, with snow peaks above and fascinating villages along our path, is a special opportunity for rhododendron lovers.

Hence, this letter. My groups are always small, with a limit of eight members and are often formed by word of mouth. My clients' ages range from fifty-five to seventy but good fitness is the basic requirement. If there is any way you could make your members aware of this trek, I would greatly appreciate it, as might many of them who have dreamed of such a journey.

Please visit my website for detailed information. Thank you very much for your time and attention.

Tom Carter and Marci Lyon

<http://www.moonmountainadventures.com>

Tel. 250-954-2345



**Season's Greetings!**



# DIERAMAS

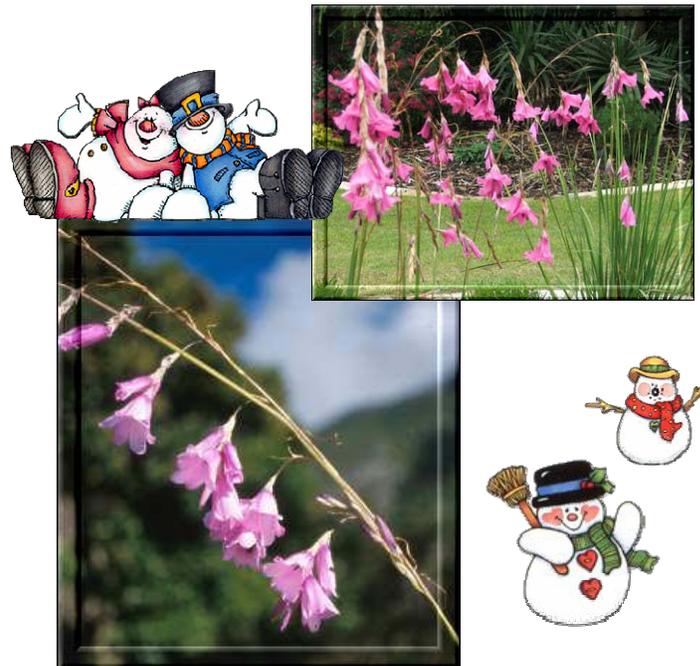
*Dieramas also commonly known as 'Angel's Fishing Rods', 'Hairbells' and 'Wand Flowers'.*

These beautiful plants are from South Africa and the Drakensberg mountains. Despite being from Africa, they are fully-hardy on Vancouver Island.

Their slender 'grass-like' form and stunning brightly coloured bells carried on graceful stems make them a desirable addition to any herbaceous border, rockery or pond edge.

Do any members have good luck with these beautiful plants? I have not, and wonder if my garden is just a little too cold - or too wet - or? Here is advice from "The Gardener's World" May, 2006.

"Dieramas are easy and long-lived perennials, and once they are established in your garden they need little regular attention. The most important thing you need to do to help your dieramas flourish is to find them a place in the garden where they'll both be happy and look good. The slightly contradictory position of well-drained but moisture-retentive soil will suit them best. If you think your soil is not sufficiently damp, dig in plenty of compost and add a deep mulch of the same around the plants each spring. This will help to conserve moisture.



Dieramas growing by a pond look magical as they arch over the water, but make sure the soil doesn't get too wet in winter as this can rot the corms.

Although they are not reliant on additional feeding in order to flower, a handful of general-purpose fertilizer, such as chicken manure pellets, shaken on the soil around the plants in spring will give your dieramas that added boost for a superb display."





### Cheesy Stuffing Cups

- 1 tbsp oil
- 3/4 cup chopped celery
- 1 cup water
- 1 pkg stove top stuffing for chicken (120g)
- 1/3 cup dried cranberries
- 1/4 cup walnut pieces
- 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese (divided)
- 1 egg, lightly beaten



Preheat oven to 350 heat oil in large skillet, add celery, cook and stir until tender-crisp, stir in water. Bring to a boil, and remove from heat. Stir in stuffing mix, cranberries and walnuts.

Add 1/2 cup of the cheese and the egg, mix lightly. Spoon mixture into 8 greased muffin cups, and sprinkle with the remaining cheese. Bake 10 minutes, or until cheese is melted and cups are thoroughly heated.

### Turkey Stuffing Bread

- 1 cup plus 1 tbsp milk (slightly warmed)
- 1 egg
- 1 tbsp butter or margarine, softened
- 2 tbsp brown sugar
- 1 1/2 teaspoons salt
- 1/3 cup cornmeal
- 3 cups bread flour
- 4 1/2 teaspoons dried minced onion
- 1 1/2 teaspoons celery seed
- 3/4 teaspoon poultry seasoning
- 1/2 teaspoon dried sage
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 2 1/4 teaspoons active dry yeast



In bread machine, place all ingredients in the order suggested by the manufacturer. Use basic bread setting. Bake normally, though you may wish to have a peek after 5 minutes, and add one or two tbsp water if you think it's necessary. (as bread machines do vary) this makes a 1 1/2 pound loaf.



### Creamy Corn Casserole

- 1 cup finely chopped celery
- 1/4 cup finely chopped onion
- 1/4 cup finely chopped sweet red pepper
- 3 tbsp butter or margarine, (divided)
- 1x 10oz can cream of chicken soup (undiluted)
- 3 cups fresh, frozen or drained canned corn
- 1x 8oz can sliced water chestnuts (drained)
- 1/3 cup slivered almonds
- 1/2 cup soft breadcrumbs



Sauté celery, onion and red pepper in 2 tbsp of the butter until tender. Remove from heat, stir in soup, corn, water chestnuts, and almonds. Transfer to 2 qt baking dish. Melt remaining butter, toss in breadcrumbs, and sprinkle over top of casserole. Bake, uncovered 350 for 25-30 minutes until bubbly. Yield 8 servings.

### Spinach Pecan Bake

- 1 med onion, chopped finely
- 1/4 cup butter or margarine.
- 3x 10 oz packages frozen spinach, thawed and drained
- 1/2 cup of half and half cream
- 1/2 cup roughly chopped pecans
- 1/3 cup dry breadcrumbs
- 1 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp nutmeg
- 1/8 tsp pepper



**Topping:**  
1/4 cup dry breadcrumbs  
2 tbsp melted butter or margarine.  
Sauté onion in butter until tender. In large bowl, combine onion, spinach, cream, pecans, breadcrumbs, salt, nutmeg, and pepper. Mix well, and transfer to a greased one and a half quart baking dish. Combine topping ingredients and sprinkle over top. Bake uncovered, at 350 for 30 minutes, until lightly browned. Yield 6-8 servings

### Christmas

*-that magic blanket that wraps itself about us,  
That something so intangible that it is like a fragrance.*

*It may weave a spell of nostalgia.*

*Christmas may be a day of feasting,*

*Or of prayer,*

*But always it will be a day of remembrance*

*-a day in which we think of everything we have ever loved.*

*-Augusta E. Rundel*