



The Rhodoteller

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April

North Island Rhododendron Society

2012/2013 Executive

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Helena Stewart.....339-1733

Sunshine Lady:

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Ruth Fowler890-9448

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

Coming Events

2nd April 2013 - Executive Meeting 2:00 pm

The executive meeting will be held at the home of Louise and Roger Casson: 2345 Suffolk Cres. in the Crown Isle subdivision. Directions: Driving along Lerwick, turn north on to Idiens Way and then turn right on Suffolk Crescent.

9th April 2013 - Regular Monthly Meeting

A PowerPoint Presentation of.... "Jim Barlup's Rhododendrons"

Our speaker this month will be *Lois Blackmore*, ARS member from Victoria. Lois and her husband, Roy, have been close friends with *Jim Barlup* for many years. Jim is a world renowned rhododendron hybridizer from Bellevue, Washington. He was the recipient of the ARS Gold Medal award in 2004 for his outstanding work in hybridizing and for sharing his knowledge, pollen and seed. Lois has hundreds of Jim's award winning hybrids in her garden, and she will be providing us with an interesting program on them.





...by Paul Wurz

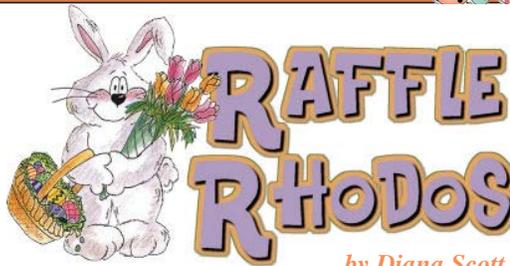
With spring approaching, most gardeners are getting the urge to head to nurseries and start buying plants. If you are in the market for rhododendrons, there should be an excellent selection available. There are some talented hybridizers out there and every year rhodos seem to get better with nicer trusses, better leaves, and improved plant habit.

When I now purchase a plant, the first thing I look for is - who hybridized it? This information is provided in "Greer's Guidebook to Available Rhododendrons". This book is a "must" for rhododendron growers. Some of my favorite "hybridizers" and a few of their better plants in my garden are my Jack Lofthouse favourites: 'Canadian Sunset', 'Viennese Waltz', 'Party Orange', and 'Tofino'. Also 'Silver Skies', 'Starbright Champagne', 'Seaview Sunset' and 'Elsie Watson' are superb rhododendrons hybridized by Frank Fujioka.

I am sure many of you have some of the 'Horizon' series produced by Brockenbrough in your garden. His best are 'Horizon Monarch', 'Horizon Lakeside', 'Snowbird', and 'Paprika Spiced'. Thompson's nursery recently came up with 'Black Widow' and 'Mango Tango' that are exceptional.

The last hybridizer I will mention is Jim Barlup, and his rhododendron hybrids many of which will be featured at the April 9th general meeting as presented by Lois Blackmore from Victoria. Lois and Roy have over a hundred of the Barlup rhodos in their garden. Make sure you attend this meeting as you will be overwhelmed by this PowerPoint presentation.

In conclusion, all five Vancouver Island Chapters do have plant sales coming up in late April and early May and all are well worth attending. Enjoy the Easter weekend, as it looks like we are in for some excellent weather, and I hope to see all of you at the meeting on the 9th.



...by Diana Scott

Our Raffle Rhodos this month feature a hybrid and a species plant. Chris, hold on to your hat - our first raffle rhodo is none other than **Rhododendron 'Mrs T. H. Lowinsky'**! This plant was hybridized by Waterer some time before 1917. Its exact parentage is unknown but is thought to contain catawbiense, maximum, and ponticum. 'Mrs. Tom' blooms



late with white flowers opening from lavender buds; its most striking feature a prominent orange-brown blotch. A vigorous and hardy grower, it

has dark glossy foliage and is heat tolerant. A must-have for every garden!

Our second raffle rhodo this month is **Rhododendron latoucheae** PW#86 donated by Ken Webb and grown on by the club. This is one of two that Ken donated and the second of our 'stock'. If our records are correct, PW#86 is seed from the Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden collected on Mt. Arfak. The RSBG site describes R. latoucheae as: "Large upright evergreen shrubs with completely smooth stems and leaves (no indumentum or scales). The new growth emerges bronze-red before ripening to dark green foliage which is leathery and shiny. The fragrant pink to lavender flowers (mid-spring) are clustered at the ends of the branches and are usually spotted. They are widely funnel-shaped and similar in appearance to those of an azalea. This is a rarely offered (or cultivated) member of a very distinct group of species. This



species is native from 1,600 to 6,000 ft. over a wide area of S China and into Japan." We are quite excited to have this rare plant as one of our prizes. Thanks Ken!

Member's Notes

...by Dave Godfrey

Once again, the attendance for our March 12th meeting exceeded expectations. Twelve guests, in addition to the 53 members, gave us a total of 65 attendees. In opening the meeting, **President Paul Wurz** noted that you can always tell when spring has arrived, when the flowers begin to bloom and **Bob & Adela Smith** return from their California retreat. It was wonderful to see them again and have them rejoin our meetings.

It's official! We now have an all-time high for membership with 71 regulars and 6 associated. We give a warm welcome to **Arlene & Brad Hooper** and **Heather & Stuart Mackenzie** as our newest members. Arlene and Heather have already taken the opportunity to get their names on the list for our May 24th bus tour to Cowichan Valley gardens. There will be more details at our April meeting; but for now, any members interested in joining the tour should contact **Secretary Pauline Thompson** to ensure a seat on the 40 passenger bus.

During the 'Show & Tell' portion of the meeting, **Bernie Guyader**, **Dick Bonney** and **Paul Wurz** all presented a variety of colourful specimens from their gardens. Bernie and Dick displayed several varieties of snowdrops, cyclamen, hellebores and vibernum which are adding colour to their late winter gardens. While Paul brought samples of blooms from some of the early rhodos he had mentioned in his March "President's View" article. In addition, he brought along some samples of bud growth from the rhodos 'Pride and Joy', 'Clayoquot Warrior' and 'Southern Skies', all exhibiting dark red buds that contrast with the green foliage.

Jill Gould also brought along a couple of potted seedlings of native Arbutus trees that she had been growing on. As Jill explained, these trees are very hard to propagate and do not transplant well when establish

in the wild for 5 or more years. They do transplant well from the one gallon pot size. She graciously donated these specimens for sale at the revenue table.

Chris Aldred reports that the revenue table continues to do well at our meetings, thanks to the generosity of many members. There will be one more opportunity to purchase some of these garden related items at our April meeting before the regular meetings end for the summer months. Again, we ask members to consider donations to either the revenue table or our annual 'Rhodo Sale and Show' on Sunday, May 5th. So, while splitting up the many perennial plants in your garden, we ask that you please pot up a few to donate to the club. If needed, the club does have a small supply of half-gallon pots available for this purpose.

Our guest speaker for the evening was **Jamey Lauinger** from "Valley Succulents", a new specialty nursery here in the Comox Valley. Jamey states that his goal is "to raise an extensive selection of rare and unusual cacti and succulents and offer these to collectors and amateurs alike", and he is doing just that!

A carpenter by trade, Jamey has built his own



greenhouses which opened to the public in May 2012. Inside and out, there are rows and rows of bizarre and wild looking plants, both cold hardy and the more tender types. Catering to Vancouver Island's cold and wet winters, Jamey carries many succulents and a few cacti that are VI hardy.

There are Agave, Saxifrage, Sedum, Sempervivum, and Opuntia for year round outdoor growing. For those of

us who are willing to provide a little winter shelter, we will be hard pressed not to want to start a huge collection of the stunningly beautiful, tender varieties. We are very fortunate to have such a knowledgeable plants man in our own neighbourhood providing one of the largest collections of succulents and cacti in BC.

In his program 'An Introduction to Cacti and Succulents', Jamey explained, "you need to know the growing periods for your plants. Many go dormant over the winter, while others do so over the hot summer months. More people kill their cacti and succulents by overwatering, than they do by not watering them enough." If in doubt... don't water! Most cacti and many succulents can go for a year or more without water.

Also, be sure to use the right soil mix for cacti and succulents to grow. Jamey recommends using free draining 1/3 soil (sterile – not garden), 1/3 perlite and 1/3 grit... with no peat! Be sure to use grit rather than sand, as sand will compact over time and will restrict water intake.



His colourful slide presentation was both informative and entertaining. From the tiniest of succulent species to the gargantuan cacti, Jamey's presentation gave many in the audience a new perspective on these wonderful plants. As an added bonus, Jamey brought along a selection of his many varieties for sale and many members took the opportunity to buy a few.

Jamey has agreed to join the growing list of nurseries offering a discount to NIRS members. Although some

of his specialty plants do not qualify for a discount, there will be many others from which to choose. So be sure to show your membership card to identify yourself as an NIRS member before paying for your order.

'Valley Succulents' will be holding its season opener on Saturday, April 20th and Sunday, April 21st from 9 am to 5 pm at 2210 Anderton Road in Comox (just passed the turn to the BC Ferry terminal.) In addition to complimentary coffee, Jamey will be offering free door prizes and a Grand Prize draw. For more details visit his website www.valleysucculents.ca (this link is now found on the NIRS website's "Links" page.)

Congratulations to **Keith Russell** for winning the door prize rhodo 'Maxine Childers' (donated to us by **Ken Webb**), and to raffle winners **Fran Thornton** (R. 'Head Honcho' donated by **Alan Campbell**) and guest **Mary Ashton** (R. 'Mary Fleming'). The funds raised through ticket sales and the revenue table help to support our speaker's program and the cost of renting the hall. Thanks go to many of our members for your ongoing support.

Speaking of support, **Diana Scott** is seeking help from our members for both the Sale on May 5th, and our 18th annual 'Mother's Day Garden Tour' on Sunday, May 12th. A total of 24 gate sitters will be required for the 6 gardens on the tour this year. If you (and your spouse/partner) are available to spend 3 hours (10 am to 1pm or 1 pm to 4 pm) checking tickets at one of the gardens, please contact Diana to join the fun. Remember, those participating do receive a complimentary ticket to enjoy the other gardens on the tour.

Our speaker this month will be **Lois Blackmore**, ARS member from Victoria, speaking on the Jim Barlup hybrid rhododendrons. Be sure not to miss this exciting meeting on April 9th, and remember to wear your name tag for that extra raffle ticket. We look forward to seeing all of you for this last regular meeting of the season!





A Grab Bag of Tips

...by Helena Stewart

Since spring and seeding are synonymous, here's a selection of tips and hints in no particular order that have been garnered from a grab bag of sources:

Recycle, recycle! All sorts of things make good starter containers for seedlings from egg shells, to egg cartons to those iced coffee cups with the clear plastic domed lids. My favourites are the domed plastic containers in which we get our rotisserie chicken. Punch a couple of holes in the bottom to allow for watering, fill the bottom with seed starter soil, place it in water for a few minutes and then seed. The domed lid keeps the soil moist until the seeds germinate. The lid has convenient airholes already punched in. (I set my little incubators on a heating mat.)

Mousepads Remember when everyone seemed to be giving away mouse pads with advertising on them? If you have a stack kicking around, they make good kneeling pads in the garden or you can attach them directly to your pant legs with duct tape.

Christmas in springtime: Plug-in, temperature controlled heating mats are great but for a large quantity of seedlings can be expensive. A gardener in Everett, Washington was growing 1,000 seedlings for a plant sale and solved the "bottom heat" problem by using Christmas non-LED rope lights under the trays that were zip-tied to her wire shelves.

Leftover seeds? To test which are viable, a simple way is to place them in a glass of water and seeds that fall to the bottom have a good chance of growing. Discard the ones that float to the top. Another method is to place 20 or so seeds from the old packet between two moist paper towels and tuck it into a plastic sandwich bag for a few days. Check to see which ones have sprouted and calculate the percentage of germinated seeds as a guide for how much to sow.

Every little breeze... It's folk wisdom that tomato seedlings grow more robust if you pass your hand over them a few times a day (I swear it works). Another good idea to help seedlings develop stiffer stems is to place them

near a gentle fan for half an hour daily. When you move them outdoors, they'll be better prepared for strong gusts of wind.

Inchworm....inchworm. Haven't tried this but it sounds like a good idea. Space the seeds in your garden by using an empty soda bottle as your measuring tool. Find the recommended distance between seeds and then cut off the tapered top of the bottle so its diameter equals that distance. When you start planting firmly press the bottle, cut edge down, into the soil and place a seed in the center of the circle it makes. Line up the bottle so its edge touches the curve of the first impression, press down again, and plant a seed in the center. Repeat until you've filled your rows.

Seed tape. Make your own seed tape by placing seeds on strips of toilet tissue. Position the seeds at the proper spacing, fold the tissue in half lengthwise, and lightly moisten it with a pump spray bottle. Press it flat, let it dry and then simply cover it with soil when you're ready to plant.

Epsom salts Researchers debate back and forth about the value of Epsom salts in the garden but we know they are great for rhodos, don't we? Gardeners have found other uses in the garden. For example, while nurturing young seedlings, water the babies with one tablespoon (15mL) of Epsom salts dissolved in a gallon of water. This, it is said, makes the plants much hardier. Also a tip to deal with worms that chew away our radishes—dig a trench before you sow radish seeds. Sprinkle the trench with pine needles and Epsom salts. This is not only a good fertilizer but seems to discourage worms.

...and a **PS on succulents** since our March speaker didn't mention this: Hens and chicks (*Sempervivum tectorum*) have been used on roofs since the Middle Ages and were originally planted to fix gaps between thatch or tiles and to protect homes from evil. In early centuries, feuding families plucked the protective plants off each other's roofs, believing they left the homes vulnerable to natural disaster and the families unguarded against demons and sorcerers. Hens and chicks were sacred to the deities associated with thunder: the Nordic god Thor and the Roman god Jupiter. During his medieval rule, Charlemagne decreed that these succulents be planted on every structure in the empire. Some of these notions are actually supported by scientific evidence. Hens and chicks are naturally fire resistant, for example, and can slow down the spread of flames.



Around Stonetree

...with Becci Russell

Here are a few pictures from our garden this month



Hellebore Mardi Gras

double form - A hybrid with slightly longer hanging petals, sometimes painted with red spots on the inside.



Daphne mezereum Alba - An upright deciduous shrub with fragrant white flowers followed by yellow berries.

Rhododendron sutchuense

An early blooming native species from China. The buds are ready to open. The flower trusses are widely campanulate, pale pink to mauve-pink, spotted red but not blotched. Open topped truss holds about 10 flowers. The leaves are oblong-lanceolate, up to 12" long, lower surface glabrous except indumented along midrib.



Edgeworthia chrysantha Akebono 'Red Dragon'

A daphne relative, this rare form of the paper bush bears orange red fragrant flowers on the ends of bare branches late winter/spring.

Primula Gold Laced

A very old heritage variety that dates back to the 1780's.



NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the North Island Rhododendron Society will be held on Tuesday, 14th May 2013 at 7:30 pm in Pauline Thompson and Robert Eberle's garden 350 Torrence Rd, Comox, BC.

Business to come before the meeting will include the Annual Financial Report, Reports from Committees, and the Election of Directors and Officers for 2013-2014.

There are four two-year board terms ending in May. Members wishing to put names forward for nomination are to contact the Nominations Chair Pauline Thompson.

Following the AGM, the elected Board will select a President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer from among the elected Directors and will assign roles to Committee Chairs.

NIRS Proven Performers

...by Diana Scott

Which rhodos do you have in your gardens that do REALLY well for you? Which rhodos might you buy next that would be sure bets to grow well here on the Island???

Each year the ARS publishes a list from each geographical region highlighting an elepidote and lepidote rhododendron and a deciduous and evergreen azalea that can be grown successfully in gardens of that area. These "Rhododendrons of the Year" (ROY) must have excellent foliage and flowers, have an attractive plant habit, prove hardy for the specific region and be pest and disease resistant. The rhodos/azaleas on the ROY list are drawn from suggestions sent in from the Chapters in each region. See the ARS website for the Northwest region's ROY for 2012 <http://www.rhododendron.org/roy12nw.htm>

Each Chapter is encouraged to have a list of Proven Performers which acts as a resource to members and the public, and becomes the primary source for selecting future Rhododendron of the Year awards.

Proven Performers should grow well in various gardens throughout the area over a long period of time with minimal care, and be available for purchase by both members and the general public. The local Proven Performers list is to be dynamic – with plants added that do well, and plant names removed that fall short.

It is time to revise our list and Adrienne McNabb and I have agreed to take on this project with input from you – our club members. We will be contacting everyone to ask for your participation; collecting information on which rhodos/azaleas are doing particularly well for you. We hope to chat with everyone and come out to your gardens if possible.

We anticipate that our new list will include some of the tried-and-true rhodos/azaleas that continue to do well in our area, while adding some newer ones that many people may not have – but might become the 'must have' rhodos of the future.

We look forward to talking with each of you over the upcoming months!



Champagne Lace

Sidney-by-the-Sea Vancouver Island's Hidden Little Treasure

2015 ARS Convention
District #1, Victoria Rhododendron Society
May 6-10, 2015

PRELIMINARY INFORMATION:

- The location of the convention will be the Mary Winspear Centre in down town Sidney, BC.
- We are in the process of confirming our 4 internationally renowned keynote speakers.
- Our committee is investigating various caterers for this convention.
- We have an extensive list of accommodations for the Sidney area and we will be checking these out before publishing our recommended list.
- We should have a website up and running in May so that you can check the planning progress.
- If you have any ideas to make this convention spectacular, please contact your chapter's representative on the planning committee.

Beautiful
Spring



THE LODERI STORY PART 8

...by John M. Hammond. (continued from the March Rhodoteller)



Whilst Sir Edmund was out deer stalking in 1915 his heart strain showed itself again due to over-exertion, and that year he made a decision to give up stalking. Meanwhile, the 53rd Division was sent to Egypt, and on May 1st, 1916, Robin was seconded as Staff-Captain. In this year General Sir Archibald Murray, K.C.B., mentioned him in dispatches for his distinguished services between June 1st and September 30th (1916). He was again mentioned in dispatches. Then his regiment moved up towards Gaza, and on March 26th, in the Battle of Gaza, he was fatally wounded. Three days later he gave up his young life in the hospital at Khan Yunis. He was re-buried on May 13th, 1919, at Deir el Belah, between Kasa and Gaza ; his body lies in Grave 72, Plot C. His General noted: "He was one of the bravest soldiers ever seen."

Sir Edmund wrote on 10th April, 1917 to his long-time companion on his hunting and fishing forays, Sir Alfred Pease, Bart., of Pinchinthorpe, Guisbrough in Yorkshire:

"Dear Alfred,

If anything could lessen my sorrow it would be a letter like yours written from the heart. The boy was everything to me: he entered into so many pursuits with keenness and worked hand in hand with me in all our little scheming in the garden, woods and lathe-room.

We were just good pals and partners; he was to me a dear friend, an able colleague and a charming companion as well as a loving son, nothing could have been further from his character than fighting and soldiering; but yet from a sense of duty he joined the Territorials some years before the War, and since that time he does his work with energy and efficiency. He has been on the Staff of 5 or 6 Generals in Gallipoli and in Egypt, and besides being mentioned in dispatches, they have all spoken very highly of his conduct.

I try and comfort myself by thinking of his 30 years of blameless life well lived, and of his work well done, but I shall always miss him terribly.

I remain,

Yours aff,

E. G. Loder."

Sir Alfred Pease later recalled:

"The stalking at Dundonnell was the last I ever had with Sir Edmund. The lease came to an end during the war, and he never took another forest. I think he felt he had no longer the energy or desire for the sport, and there was no Robin to help him to enjoy it. He had always been fond of fishing, and he took a beat on the Tay in the autumn of 1917. There is little better autumn fishing in Scotland than the Stanley Water, and Loder meant to have a real good time with the salmon.

Unfortunately it was a bad autumn and the fish were not taking. That year I had fourteen days leave in September, and Sir Edmund asked me to spend a week with him on the Tay. With only a week to spend on the river, it was long odds at that time of year that the water might be too low, but when I arrived at Stanley I found the water as good as could be, and from previous experience I felt I was in for a good time. But the fish were hopelessly stiff, and I only had hold of two fish in six days, one of which got off. Loder could not understand what had happened and why no fish were being caught. He knew he had a first-class bit of water, that the river had a good fishing height and that there were plenty of fish up.

However, in spite of this unfortunate autumn, he was badly bitten with the salmon fever, and determined, as he said, to have one real good time with the fish before he died. He therefore took the Lower Scone water for the next two or three springs, and, I think, realised his ambition. I went up for a fortnight with him in 1919, and during that time he killed a lot of fish. He had also done very well before I joined him, killing one fish over 30 lb, and several over 20 lb.

It was during this time that he was at work on his Conifer List (Sir Edmund's second publication, Conifers at Leonardslee, a privately published 15-page list of his Conifer collection and their attributes). The first and second proofs had been corrected by himself and then sent to my brother for further correction. The third and final proof arrived while I was staying with him at Perth. We set to work on the final revision, and he was not satisfied until we had both been through those proofs five times. They were then sent again to my brother. This incident will perhaps give an idea of the care he took with all his work and his intense desire to make anything he did as nearly perfect as possible. This trip to the Tay was the last sport that I enjoyed with him, and in many ways it was one of the pleasantest fortnights I ever spent in his company."

(...the Loderi series concludes in the May issue of the Rhodoteller.)





One Annoying Weed Snapweed

...by Diana Scott



Cardamine hirsuta, also known as hairy bittercress, springcress, lambscress, popweed, shotweed, pepperweed, flickweed, snapweed and many other names that are best left unsaid, is one challenging weed. A member of the mustard family (*Brassicaceae*) it is considered a winter annual/biennial native to Eurasia and was likely brought to North America as an edible bitter herb. If you've seen one in your garden – you'll likely see a million!



Snapweed, as it is commonly called in BC, is typically a brilliant green but looks almost purple in some places in my yard – particularly in the gravel. Described as having a rosette of pinnately compound leaves, it sends up a

tiny stalk of tiny white flowers, then quickly goes to seed, often while producing more flowers. The seed heads are thin stalks which like many Brassica species, will burst explosively when touched – sending seeds flying far from the parent plant. Trust me – this is true.

Sadly for those of us in the Pacific Northwest, it is not only one of the earliest flowering weeds; it will produce several generations in a season. It is frost hardy, can survive winter, and will flower as temperatures rise in early spring. The seeds remain viable in the soil for a long time, and any disturbance will bring more to the surface to germinate. On the plus side, *Cardamine hirsute* has a short life cycle. That's it for the plus side unless you think the itty-bitty white flower is attractive. On the minus side, if you find one in your garden and don't remove it, you are in for a battle!

How did you get it? Hard to say – but many sites indicate that it is very common to find them on the surface of container plants in nurseries and garden centers and that it can be introduced unwittingly via container grown plants. It is so common here, however, that it will be rare for a garden NOT to have it.

So, how does one control it? As with all annual weeds it is critical to get rid of it before seed can be produced. Although typically larger, I have snapweed that flowers and goes to seed on plants smaller than a pencil eraser. I am open to any brilliant suggestions, but after trying all the typical methods, the only thing that I have found to be even marginally effective is to pull every one out when I see

it. It is my priority in the early spring, and I have spent days on hands and knees with a garbage bag pulling the little guys out. I can't walk by one without thinking that if I don't pull it out now I will have hundreds more to deal with. Makes for a busy day in the garden...

Classic controls are hand weeding, mulching to prevent germination, torching, and applying weed killers. One site suggests applying a mulch of organic matter 15 cm deep to help suppress the weed by preventing germination. Works well, although snapweed seeds are quite happy to germinate in the mulch if seeds from a plant nearby 'pops'. I have also tried a propane weed torch on my gravel paths, however it is typically raining or quite wet when the first round of snapweed is flowering and going to seed so it takes a lot more propane than one might think. This technique has not been very effective for me. Since I have quite a number of gravel paths, I did try a contact-action weedkiller (Roundup), however that didn't work well for me either. By the time it started 'killing' the plant, the snapweed had flowered and gone to seed. They are pretty fast once they get going! My main strategy is labor intensive – picking and bagging as many as I can before they've gone to seed. In my experience, pulling and just leaving them on the soil results in wonky-looking but rerooted, flowering and seeding specimens. Bag them.

Snapweed seems to love our climate. I have been trying to love it back, but to no avail. Once established, particularly in lawn areas, it is really difficult to eradicate. It's in my lawn. I believe that snapweed and I will continue to see a lot of each other.

My advice: see it, pull it, bag it. Good luck!

Tidbits...



Volunteers Needed for our Rhodo Sale and Garden Tour!
In keeping with our Spring tradition, the NIRS major fundraising activities are just around the corner! As usual we need many volunteers to help out at our Rhodo Sale and Truss Display on Sunday, May 5th. The Sale takes place from about 9am til 1:30pm for our working members and from 10am til 1pm for the public. Most folks will have specific jobs such as helping to organize our NIRS table of member-donated plants, working in the cashier area tagging plants and assisting the cashiers, greeting the buyers and facilitating the flow of traffic, participating in the Truss Display area organizing the trusses and sharing NIRS information, assisting patrons by wheeling plants out to buyers' vehicles, and working in the kitchen making sure the volunteers have access to tea, coffee and goodies. Everyone

helps out with setup and takedown, and with general 'whatever-needs-doing'. Once again we will cap off the day with our traditional Morrison Bunwich lunch!

The Annual NIRS Mother's Day Garden Tour is on Sunday May 12th, taking ticket holders to gardens in the Comox/Courtenay area. Tour goers are also invited to admire the show at the Comox Valley Rhododendron Garden by the Air Park in Courtenay. As in the past, there will be two members required at each garden from 9:45 am to 1 pm, and from 1 pm to 4 pm to greet the visitors and check their tickets. We need 28 people to attend to the gardens, so I encourage you to find a friend to join you. Volunteers get to spend half the day greeting visitors, and the other half touring the gardens with a complementary ticket. A great way to spend the day!

For both these events there will be sign-up sheets at the April Meeting, however anyone able to help is asked to contact Diana Scott ASAP at 250-338-0208 or diascott@telus.net These are the two major fund-raisers of the year for our Chapter and the support of many members will be needed to once again make them a success!



Note from Mary Parker: Follow up to last month's article on Weevil control, Mary advises that liquid Lysol also kills the weevil larva. The recipe is 2/3 Cup liquid Lysol to a green watering can: do leaves, stems and root area. Best to do it in January and February every 2 weeks, and remember they do not always live under the plant they chew.



Garage door opener: During a fall cleanup at the CV Rhodo Garden, a garage door opener was found in the middle of one of the garden beds. If anyone is missing a blue garage door controller please contact Dave Godfrey.

Pruning Roses: An old expression...Prune your rose bushes when the forsythia is in bloom. A good thing to keep in mind real soon!

Lime and Manure: Lime and Manure are a bad combination. Don't add them to your soil at the same time. Together they produce ammonia, which can destroy plants.

Don't overdose your plants: Be careful not to add too much of a good thing to your soil. Overdose on nitrogen and your plants will produce nothing but green leaves. Too much phosphorus, and your plants will have a strong root system, but little greenery on top. Your plant will have trouble taking in other nutrients if you give it too much potassium."



April Goodie Group: Becci Russell, Barb Staton, Dan Ryan and Gloria Guyader



Recipe Requests



Better than Sex cake (Judi Murakami)



Ingredients

1 yellow cake mix 1 (20 oz) can crushed pineapple
1 1/3 C sugar 1 (3.4 oz) French vanilla pudding
1 1/2 C heavy cream 1 C flaked, sweetened toasted coconut

Directions

Grease or parchment line a 13 x 9 baking pan and preheat oven to 350°F. Prepare cake mix as per directions on package and bake for 30 to 35 minutes. While cake is baking, combine the pineapple and 1 C of sugar in saucepan; bring to boil over medium heat stirring constantly. Remove from heat and allow to cooling slightly.

Remove cake from oven and using a fork, pierce holes into cake. Pour pineapple mixture over hot cake and set aside.

Prepare pudding mix as per package directions. Spread pudding over cake and refrigerate until thoroughly chilled. Whip heavy cream and remaining sugar until stiff. Cover top of cake with whipped cream and sprinkle toasted coconut on top.



Cheddar Shortbread (Fiona Clarke)

1C butter or margarine 2C flour
1/2 tsp salt and pepper
1 1/2 C grated sharp Cheddar cheese
1/4 tsp onion powder and cayenne pepper



Beat butter and cheese together. Add the rest of the ingredients and knead until mixed. Roll out and cut into shapes. Bake at 350 degrees for approximately 20 minutes.

Until Next Month
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