



The Rhodoteller

www.nirs.rhodos.ca



North Island Rhododendron Society 2014/2015 Executive

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Director: Revenue Table

Fran Thornton 339-3754

Director: Library

Ruth Fowler 890-9448

Director: at large

Garth Wedemire..... 941-5598

Newsletter

Noni Godfrey 335-0717

..... nonigod@shaw.ca

Social Committee/Sunshine Lady:

Claudia Ellis..... 337-8516

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

COMING EVENTS

Lucky

3rd March 2015-Executive Meeting 2:00 pm

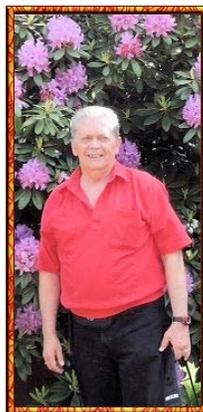
The executive meeting will be held at the beautiful home of Garth and Sue Wedemire, 669 Jubilee Court, Comox.

Directions: From the Co-op Gas bar on the corner of Guthrie and Aspen Roads in Comox, follow Aspen Rd. south to Bolt Avenue. Turn right on Bolt and continue passed Aspen Park School. Jubilee Court is the next road on the right. The Wedemire's home is at the very end of the cul-de-sac.

10th March 2015-Regular Monthly Meeting

"Highlights of the 2014 Rhododendron Exhibition"

Part 2



Earl Daneluk, of the Nanaimo chapter returns to give us the second part of his highlights from the "2014 Rhododendron Exhibition." This event is only held every four years in Germany. Part one showed us the Rhododendron Exhibition and a trip to Hachman's Nursery. Part two continues to show private and public gardens in Northern Germany and Denmark. Don't miss this colourful and informative presentation.



...by Jake Ellis

President's View

Back in the mid 70's, a Fleetwood Mac song had a couple of lines that had an impact on my life. The lines "Don't stop thinking about tomorrow" and "Yesterday's gone" really struck a chord with me.

Since then, I've always made it a point not to live in the past. It's always been about the future. I guess it shouldn't come as a surprise, however, given my age and given that I have way more past than future, that I find myself, occasionally, drifting back in time.

There are many scientific studies about what triggers memory -- smell, colours, sounds and probably many more. My stimulus may be somewhat odd but I suspect that, actually, it might be fairly common among those of us with a strong interest in gardening.

If you look up the word "garden" in the dictionary it will give some bland description about a space used for growing plants. But a garden is so much more, isn't it? It's about the design process and the sweat and the love and the care taken in preparing the site properly. But in the end, it's all about the plants. And that's what triggers my memories - plants!

I grew up in what today is close to being downtown Victoria. We had a double lot and my father used every square inch of that property as a garden. He was an excellent gardener; but his philosophy was that if you couldn't eat it, it wasn't worth growing. He grew almost every vegetable and fruit available at that time. I cannot possibly chow down on a feed of new potatoes, corn on the cob and beet tops followed up with some fresh raspberries without thinking of my Dad.

My Mom, while totally involved in growing vegetables, also, tried desperately to sneak in some flowers. No, she wasn't growing Hellebores or David Austin roses. She didn't have a landscape design or even flower beds - I just remember flowers growing wherever there was an empty spot. I remember things like Wallflowers, which for some reason, I totally disliked, along with what could have been just a wild rose - a very simple flower with lots of thorns.

But I was also introduced to other plants. Common plants that even today I love very much. One she called Montbretia which today is correctly called

Crocsmia. I loved everything about that plant, but especially that orange colour.

Another one that comes to mind was a plant that we playfully argued about. Mom insisted on calling this plant Japonica, and as I started learning more about plants I learned that it was actually Chaenomeles Japonica (a species of Flowering Quince). Later in life, much to my chagrin, I learned that at one time, strangely enough, it really was commonly referred to as Japonica. I don't seem to see this plant around much, but if I do you will always hear me say, "my Mom grew that!"

Today, I'm still making memories with plants. On a trip to Paul Wurz' nursery "Hidden Acres", a couple of years ago, I picked up a rhododendron called "Miss Frances". This beautiful Frank Fujioka hybrid has vivid, fire-red flowers, and beautiful leaves with indumentum. Not only is it gorgeous, but it reminds me so much of my older sister Frances who passed away a few years ago. She never did marry, so she truly was "Miss Frances". Her full name was Frances Isobel Rose Ellis and yes, her initials spell out the word "fire" - which is so reminiscent of her spirit and her temper.

Or how about a neat little guy in our rhodo bed called Rhododendron hirsutum 'Flore Pleno'. No, it doesn't remind me of my childhood, but it does remind me of the day that I discovered that this species made the history books as the first cultivated rhododendron of record in the western world. Reading from an article on-line by Sally Perkins, she makes note that this rhodo was included in a 1656 plant list of botanist John Tradescant's garden. And a form of this species is in my rhodo bed!

And on and on my garden memories go. Just last year, we also picked up a plant called Helleborus foetidus, known commonly as the "stinking hellebore", which sadly reminds me of my golf game.

While I still believe that life is all about the future, it might not hurt at times to take a moment, when out in your garden, and just let your plants guide you down the path to some very pleasant memories.

With few exceptions, everyone reading this newsletter has a garden -- a garden chock full of memories and I'm hoping you'll be inspired to "put pen to paper", as we said back in the day, and share some of your plant memories with the readers of our Rhodoteller.



Raffle Rhodos

...by Dick Bonney

This month's raffle is for R. 'Pink Cameo' - a Boule de Neige X catawbiense mix. Hardiness is an outstanding attribute to this lovely plant. Trusses are a lovely pink with a deep pink blotch.



As most members know, the Ways and Means table is controlled by two hard working angels named Nadine and Lois. Last month they had me proclaim a mistake on the label of one of the raffle prizes. The winner is the proud possessor of 'Buttermint', not 'Butternut' and I apologies for any mix up. For some lucky winner, this month's door prize is a collection of Slug traps - who can't use more of these? P.S. The second raffle prize is a soil testing kit.

Rhodogarden News

...by Wolfgang Hoefgen

Wow, what an impressive group we have! After a delay of one week, even the weather participated - Somewhat at least.

We moved around 4 yards of very heavy mulch, removed 2 dead rhodos, transplanted one big rhodo, and a few smaller ones to take its place.

A big thank you to everybody!

With that kind of help, even the heaviest jobs become fun. And that is what it is all about. Special thanks to the ladies who provided the delicious goodies for our coffee break. Looking forward to our next work party on March 12th at 9 AM.



All dug up...



On the move....



Its new home!

Member's Notes

...by Dave Godfrey

I must start this month by announcing a correction to our 2015 Yearbook. Please amend your calendar to show our annual potluck picnic is on "Saturday, June 13th" not the 14th as shown. Also, I failed to adjust the email address for *Diana Scott*. They are no longer with Telus, so please change Diana's email to @shaw.ca. Sorry for any confusion these may have caused.

I will have copies of our yearbook at the March meeting for those members who have not yet received one. I know I have asked this several times in the past, but if any members have changes or corrections to their contact information, please notify me so that adjustments can be made for future issues of our yearbook's roster. Thank you.

As for our meeting on February 10th, there was another terrific turnout with 61 members and 1 guest in attendance. At the meeting, we welcomed four new members to our chapter. *Cheryl & Brian Bennett, Patty & Phil Matthews, Connie & Dan Prain* and *Joanne & Doug Williams* join us for the first time. We also welcomed the return of members *Wilf & Gail Abel*.

During the business portion of our meeting *Paul Wurz* and *Art Lightburn* provided an update on the Species Project at Milner Gardens in Qualicum Beach. A landscape design has been completed and sent to the Vancouver Island University for approval. The plant selection committee is now deciding on which species rhododendrons they will include. For certain, they would like to include the parent plants of the many Milner hybrids found around the property.

Paul also gave a report on the upcoming ARS Convention in Sidney this May. According to registrar *Garth Wedemire*, there are currently over 150 members registered to attend (13 from NIRS) and they are hoping for at least 400 or more. Although there is the capability to register online, this does incur some additional fees. Therefore, in order to save these additional charges, it is recommended that members print off a copy of the registration form and mail it in along with a cheque to the address noted on the form.

Unfortunately, two top growers from the USA who were scheduled to be a part of the plant sale have decided not to attend as sellers. So the committee is seeking other alternative growers. You won't be disappointed as there will be lots to see and do during the 5 day convention. For more information visit: www.2015rhodo.ca
For our *Show & Tell*, *Dick Bonney* brought in a colourful

selection of *Sarcococca, hellebores, snowdrops* and *skimmia*. While *Paul Wurz* provided a colourful display of Lynn's *hellebores* in a float dish. He also brought in some samples of rhodos in bloom at this time of year - *Bodega 'Crystal Pink', 'Cilpinense', 'Snow Lady',* and *R. ririei*. *Summer Joy* also presented a display of *Pussy Willows* and a humorous bedpan planter of 'house leaks' as they are known in England, or as we know them *hen & chicks (sedums)*. Unfortunately the bedpan joke is lost in translation!

For our Educational program, *Jill Gould* provided us with an informative overview of insects that she called 'Bug Bites'. Having taken a course on Entomology while living in Kamloops years ago, Jill has extensive knowledge of various Hemiptera (sucking insects). These insects include shield bugs, stink bugs, leafhoppers, and spittle bugs, to name a few. While most are 'sapsuckers' which attack our plants, some like bedbugs and ticks are carnivorous which bite humans and animals. (For additional information see Jill's detailed article in this newsletter.)

Before the refreshment break, draws for the raffle and door prizes were made. Congratulations to *Kathy Storey* for winning the rhodo 'Buttermint', and to *Nadine Boudreau* winner of 'Lem's Cameo'. *Jim Webb* won a third prize of a propagation tray. One of our new members, *Dan Prain*, won the door prize - a collection of earwig traps and a hanging wasp trap.

For those in need of some 5 gallon gardening buckets be sure to stop by our revenue table. During the spring months, *Fran Thornton* and *Ann Chevrier* always have a supply available, along with many donated plants and magazines at bargain prices! All of these donated items are very much appreciated, as the monies collected help to cover the cost of our hall rental and guest speakers.

For those members in need of an NIRS name tag, please contact membership chair *Jill Gould* and she will place your order. Remember, members wearing their NIRS name badges receive an extra raffle ticket with the purchase of 3 for \$2.00 or 10 for \$5.00.

Also, if you know of any member who may be recuperating from illness at home, in the hospital or has lost a loved one, be sure to notify our *Sunshine Lady Claudia Ellis*, and she will send a card on behalf of our members.

Our program for the evening was a colourful presentation by *Barb & Brian Staton*. In the dead of winter, it was nice to take a warm look back at the trip that 12 members of our chapter took to visit gardens on Whidbey Island, Washington. Explaining the trip, Barb provided some historical information on place names, such as Puget Sound, Deception Pass and Whidbey.

The presentation featured spectacular gardens of members of the Whidbey Island chapter, as well as the

famous Meerkerk Gardens. The tour began with an evening barbeque on April 29th, 2014, in Lounsberry's Park owned by Norma & Jack Lounsberry. The next day the group toured the magnificent gardens of *Sharron & Craig Reide* and *Carla & John Stroh* before a lunch break and tour at Meerkerk Gardens. The tour continued in the afternoon with visits to the gardens of *Frank Fujioka* and *Katie & David Dickerson*.



In the evening, a delicious potluck dinner was enjoyed by members of both chapters held at the Greenbank Progressive hall. Before heading home on Thursday, May 1st, a final garden visit was made to the Bachert's "Kettle Garden" and its many unusual features. As Brian explained, `kettles` were formed at the end of the last ice age when large chunks of ice melted underground causing huge indentations in the earth's surface. This proves to be a major challenge to developing this land. In addition to some of their own photos, Brian and Barb gave credit to *Antje & Peter Guertler* and *Noni & Dave Godfrey* for sharing some of their photos. For those who missed the program, many of the pictures featured can be found on our website's gallery page. President *Jake Ellis* thanked the Statons for their wonderful presentation.

As announced at the meeting, a work party at the Comox Valley Rhododendron Garden (CVRG) was scheduled for Thursday morning (Feb. 12th) However, due to the deluge of rain that morning, garden director *Wolfgang Hoefgen* postponed the work until the following Thursday.

Despite beautiful weather during the week, it was once again showering on and off for the work party. `Mother Nature` must have it in for NIRS members, as the weather was wet for three Thursdays in a row, while dry and sunny the rest of the weeks! Not to be discouraged or put off again, the 13 members who arrived for the morning work party did manage to get some rhodos

transplanted. Also the 4 yards of mulch delivered by the City of Courtenay was distributed around most of the beds. Wolfgang advises we will once again be holding a work party next month to continue with the spring preparations.



One exciting highlight during the refreshment break was the announcement by *Corrine Ennis* that she won a Ford Fiesta car during the Variety Telethon over the weekend. Everyone was very pleased for her and joked about whether or not it came with winter tires. Corrine was traveling to Vancouver this week to pick up her bright green motoring machine. Congratulations to Corrine on her win! (Photos of the work parties will be posted to our website.)

With this early spring-like weather many of us are getting a head start on our garden work. While digging up perennials or small shrubs, please consider putting up a few in pots to donate to our Sale & Show. It comes a week earlier this year on Sunday, April 26th, and as always donations are gratefully accepted.

Speaking of garden preparations now is a good time to provide some fertilizer to your rhododendrons. *Black Creek Farm & Feed* advise that they have just received a shipment of the fertilizer recommended to us last year by *Roberta Jensen*, owner of the former Jensen's Nursery in Comox. This commercial grade fertilizer (13-16-10) comes in 25 kg bags and only needs to be spread lightly around the drip-line of the plants. These bags will go a long way for most members. Don't forget to show your membership card for a discount on your purchases at many of the garden supply centers around the valley. For your online purchases, members are reminded to consider using the ARStore link on our website `links` page to access Amazon or other major online providers. By going through the ARStore link a percentage is provided to the ARS to help offset some of their operating expenses. If you are making purchases online, why not take the extra step to help our organization. Those members interested in learning how to propagate, the next meeting of the North Island Propagation group

(jokingly referred to as the "Bunny" club) will be held on Wednesday, March 18th at the home of *Garth & Sue Wedemire* in Comox. Seventeen members attended the inaugural meeting on January 21st, and if any new members wish to learn the techniques of propagation you are more than welcome to attend future meetings.



Jake's new propagating project!

Our next regular meeting for the NIRS will be on Tuesday, March 10th, when *Earl Daneluk* of the Nanaimo chapter will be presenting part 2 of his Tour of Northern Germany and Denmark. Hope to see many of you at the meeting!

Do You Suffer From TRISKAIDEKAPHOBIA

...by *Dave Godfrey*

Triskaidekaphobia (from Greek tris=three, kai=and, deka=ten) is fear of the number 13; it is a superstition and related to a specific fear of Friday the 13th, (**paraskevidekatriphobia**)

My goodness, we no sooner make it through one month with Friday the 13th, than we must face another! But, have you ever wondered why Friday the 13th is considered so unlucky?

Some say Friday's bad reputation goes all the way back to the Garden of Eden. It was on a Friday, supposedly, that Eve tempted Adam with the forbidden fruit. Adam bit, as we all learned in Sunday school, and they were both ejected from Paradise. Tradition also holds

that the Great Flood began on a Friday; God tongue-tied the builders of the Tower of Babel on a Friday; the Temple of Solomon was destroyed on a Friday; and, of course, Friday was the day of the week on which Christ was crucified. It is therefore a day of penance for Christians.

History shows that during the middle ages, on Friday, October 13, 1307, the Grand Master and sixty of the Knights Templar were arrested, tortured, and then murdered by King Philip IV of France. According to folklore, the Templar sympathizers cursed the day itself, condemning it as evil--Friday the thirteenth--whose reputation never recovered.

More recently, there was 'Apollo 13' which was launched on the eleventh of the fourth month in the seventieth year of the century. Thus, one plus one plus four plus seven plus zero, totals thirteen. Liftoff was at 1313 central time, and the explosion took place on the 13th day of April. Although NASA claims no superstition, there has never again been a number 13 used on a manned space flight.

Not only is Friday the thirteenth considered unlucky, but the superstition also applies to apartments and hotels, 80% of which don't have a thirteenth floor. Airplanes have no thirteenth aisle, while hospitals and hotels have no room number thirteen.

Regardless of your beliefs or superstitions, Friday the thirteenth might be a good day to avoid black cats and leaning ladders. Perhaps if you search through your garden you might find a four-leafed clover, and have a bit of luck on your side. But that's a whole other legend!



MEMBER PROFILE



Wolfgang Hoefgen
...by Helena Stewart

If you make it to any of the NIRS Rhodo Garden's work parties, the new man in charge is Wolfgang Hoefgen whose quiet competence and vast horticultural knowledge is quickly apparent—and for good reason. His whole life has been dedicated to horticulture and he brings years of experience in all areas of propagating, growing and nurturing plants. What members may not realize when talking to this modest man is that his choice of life's work emerged out of a history filled with danger and autocratic control.

Wolfgang was born in March 1939 in Dresden, Germany, the seat of Saxony's Electors and kings; also known as "the jewel box" of Europe, because of its exquisite baroque and rococo architecture. His family was very much a part of the city's cultural splendor—his mother was an opera singer and his father was a concert pianist and conductor of the opera. Wolfgang laughs that all that musical talent just passed him by; instead his creative inheritance pushed him to entertain dreams of becoming an architectural draftsman. History, however, had other plans for Wolfgang.

Between February 13th and 15th, 1945 the U.S. and British air forces dropped bombs and incendiaries onto the ancient center of Dresden, blasting it into oblivion and turning the city core into an inferno. At the time, there were 1.2 million people in Dresden including 600,000 refugees fleeing both the advancing Red Army and the conflagration. Wolfgang and his family were part of that exodus.

After the war, Stalin laid claim to East Germany, draping a drab pall of repressive Communism over the lives of the citizens of Dresden. Everyone's life was controlled. In Wolfgang's case, his parents were labelled "intelligentsia" so he was not allowed to continue with school beyond the eighth

grade. (Higher education was only open to "workers.") There were not a lot of opportunities for the children of intelligentsia, but Wolfgang found an apprenticeship in a nursery that caught his interest. After receiving a diploma in greenhouse production, he piled on yet more experience with practical education in Germany, Switzerland and Austria. As is typical of a European education, Wolfgang learned everything about plant culture from how to propagate, how to mix soil and how to repair a glass house.

Wolfgang's first foray into Canada was to visit Expo '67 in Montreal, where he got a job so he could see the wonders of magical World's Fair. He managed to not only do this but saved enough money to buy a car. There was little work after Expo, but through a friend's brother he managed to land a job in a nursery in Nanaimo as a production foreman. And there he stayed for nine years. It was a fortuitous time with a huge upswing in local nursery construction, not in small part because the importation of soil from outside Canada was banned.

In 1977, Wolfgang met and married a lovely young floral designer named Wilma. The family enlarged to four when two sons were born, Peter and Christopher (whom Wolfgang describes as a computer expert.)

The next major move was to Sidney, BC where he was asked to build a nursery from the ground up on 50 acres. And like Topsy, it just grew and grew becoming very large and successful. One of the main goals was to create an efficient propagation department to introduce many new plants for the market. "It was a good time," says Wolfgang, "You could do things. People would come to you with ideas in a nursery like that."

His reputation as a propagator next carried him to a job building Pacific Northwest Propagators which specialized in grafted liners for the wholesale market and sales to all the big nurseries in BC. When the nursery folded in 2005, Wolfgang entertained thoughts of retiring and was wooed to the Comox Valley by friends Keith and Becci Russell. As you might guess, he found it hard to retire from horticulture.

Horticulture has made him understand the importance of having something in his life to care for and nurture. Asked if he regrets not having fulfilled his childhood dream of becoming a draftsman, Wolfgang says, "You must be satisfied with what you have." Edith Piaf could add a coda to that: *Non, je ne regrette rien.*

A.R.S. 2015 ANNUAL RHODODENDRON CONVENTION

Hosted by the Victoria Rhododendron Society

6 - 10 May 2015

Sidney-By-The-Sea - Highlight Speakers

Dr. Hartwig Schepker



Dr. Schepker is the Scientific Director of the Botanic Garden and Rhododendron Park in Bremen, Germany. It is home to one of the largest Rhododendron collections in the world, including hardy and non-hardy species and hybrids. Dr. Schepker is a horticulturalist with a PhD in plant ecology and has a keen interest in the natural communities of Rhododendrons and their accompanying plants.

Dr. Schepker's first rhododendron journey in 1992 brought him to the slopes of Mt. Kinabalu on Borneo. Since then he has visited several countries in mainland and southeast Asia, as well as different places in North America to document the extreme variability of the rhododendron habitat. His main objectives are to promote the important ecological functions of Rhododendrons in their native habitats and to point out the long and important role of rhododendrons in the history of gardening in Germany.

Dr. Hartwig Schepker is the Secretary of the German Rhododendron Society and co-editor of the society's publication "Rhododendron und Immergrüne" (Rhododendron and Evergreen). Dr. Schepker will be the keynote speaker following the dinner on Friday evening, May 8th.



February Educational-Bug Bites: Hemiptera

...by Jill Gould

This large order of insects includes the "true bugs". This includes shield bugs, stink bugs, leafhoppers, spittle bugs, etc. Most *Hemiptera* are "sucking" insects. While most are "sapsuckers" some, like bedbugs are--well, carnivorous.

Hemiptera means "half-wing", which refers to the wing construction. Hemiptera have a three-stage life cycle: egg, nymph and adult. The nymph resembles a small adult, and increases in size by shedding its skin, in phases called "instars"—sometime four or five times before it becomes a reproductive adult.

Many of this order are destructive as they feed on plant sap, and cause billions (BILLIONS) of dollars damage annually to agricultural crops. So we do not want to see them around our plants, but they are ALWAYS there. The problem lies in the numbers—a few, or a lot?



This picture is a typical Hemipteran—a green stink bug, which causes damage to soybean crops. Similar stink bugs can be found locally on ornamentals. Note the triangular section at the front of the abdomen. This is an identifying characteristic of Hemiptera; it is always there, though may not be as large or noticeable.

A suborder of this group (Homoptera) includes aphids and lace bugs, also mealybugs, whitefly, scale insects. Nasty critters! Most of us are familiar with aphids. Lace bugs, which are also small sucking insects, appear to have become a problem of ericaceous plants on the West Coast recently.

Certain species are a native pest of azaleas on the East Coast (azalea lace bug, rhododendron lace bug, andromeda lace bug). There is a LOT of information on the Internet on lace bugs, for anyone who wants to know. An upcoming article in our Rhodoteller newsletter will discuss lace bugs.

Control of Hemiptera: see above. How many are there, and are they really causing extensive damage to your plants? Because they are "sapsuckers" control may be difficult. Systemics may work. Systemics are insecticides that are drawn into the plant's system, so the "sapsuckers" are killed when they feed. For others, a topical insecticide may be used, such as our old standby, Insecticidal Soap. The soap has to contact the insects (such as aphids) to be effective. Since many "sapsuckers" hide under the leaf, your work is cut out for you. Scale insects and mealy bugs are covered with a waxy coating, so insecticidal soaps don't work. The main line of defence is vigilance.

Watch your plants and be guided by the situation before you panic. If you feel you must take steps, do your research first. If you don't recognize the insect, you can trap it in a pill bottle, label the bottle with date and location, and kill the insect by freezing overnight in the freezer. Take the insect in the bottle to a more knowledgeable friend or a garden centre and ask if someone can help with identification.

Don't be like a lady I once met while I was working in a garden centre, who asked me for something to kill bugs. I asked her what type of bug, and she said she didn't know, but she'd seen "bugs" on her plants and wanted to spray them with something to kill them...AARGH!

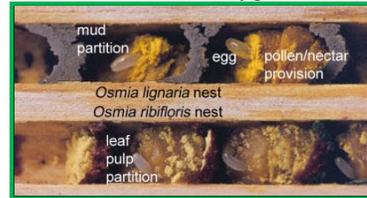
MASON BEES



The Mason Bee, also known as the Blue Orchard Bee (*Osmia lignaria*), has been used by gardeners as a pollinator for at least 20 years. There are nearly 300 species of this genus throughout the world, with a predominantly holarctic (northern latitudes) distribution. Due to the recent problems with Honey bees, there has been a growing interest in managing these native, solitary bees. *O. lignaria* and *O. texana* are attracted to artificial nesting sites, such as drilled wooden blocks or paper/cardboard straws.

Unlike honey bees or bumblebees, Mason bees are solitary; every female is fertile and makes her own nest, and there are no worker bees for these species. These bees produce neither honey nor beeswax. They are immune from certain mites, but have their own unique parasites, pests and diseases. As an added bonus - they don't sting!

There are a variety of nest box designs. Solid blocks of wood drilled to the correct diameter (5/16th of an inch or 7.5 mm, and to a depth of 6 inches or 15 cm) have been used extensively. The disadvantage of these boxes is that cocoons cannot be removed for cleaning and storage. Straws are available for purchase, or one can simply roll paper around a pencil and fasten with tape, bending one end to make a blind tunnel. These can be readily opened to remove cocoons. If the nest design allows, in November or December, these cocoons can be removed, cleaned and stored. Cleaning is recommended to reduce numbers of pollen mites which can impact the next generation. Cocoons are best stored in a cool, dry, dark location. Cocoons should not be sealed in airtight containers as some oxygen is necessary for their survival.



The emergence of bees is triggered by daytime temperatures of 10° C or more. However, if the target crop, such as pears or plums is not in flower, the cocoons

should be held in a refrigerator, at 6 to 8° C, until flower buds break on the target crop. Males emerge first followed by females a few days later.

Once the females become active it is fun to watch them enter a tunnel – head first to deposit nectar or back in to deposit pollen or lay an egg on the pad of pollen. After each egg, they create a separation wall of mud before repeating the process. Each female may fill one to three tunnels with about eight eggs in each tunnel. The deepest eggs (which are fertilized) in

the tunnel will develop into female bees. Three to five (unfertilized) eggs that are closest to the entrance will develop into male bees.

There are a couple of good sources of detailed information about Mason bees. See “Pollination with Mason Bees” by Margriet Dogterom. Dr. Dogterom also has a DVD, and an assortment of Mason Bee equipment. Her website is: www.beeiverse.com. A second reference we find useful is “How to Manage the Blue Orchard Bee” by Jordi Bosch and William Kemp.

For any NIRS members interested in purchasing some Mason Bee cocoons or nesting boxes, there is a local Courtenay couple who have some for sale (25 cocoons for \$10 and nesting boxes - also for \$10.) Call Dave and Cecile Reade at 250-339-4901.

tidbits...



Seedy Saturday

March 7. 10am to 3pm. 2015. Comox Valley Filberg Centre. 411 Anderton Avenue, Courtenay. \$5 entry fee; children under 12 are free. For more information, go to www.cvgss.org

“Biodiversity in the Garden.”

March 11. 7:30pm. Douglas Justice Qualicum Beach Civic Center

747 Jones Street, Qualicum Beach. The Mount Arrowsmith Rhododendron Society presents Douglas Justice, head of horticulture and collections at UBC Botanical Gardens. Don't miss this informative talk about the importance of biodiversity to the success of our gardens. Non-members entry fee is \$5.00

Get your ARS Journal on line.

Instructions:

1. Access the ARS Office website: www.arsoffice.org
2. Click on the link that now reads “Members: Winter 2015 Journal Issue Published”
3. If you already have a username and password, click on “login”. If you do not have a username and password, click on “Register Now” and follow instructions for obtaining them.

(To register, one has to know their ARS membership number which is found on the address label of the Journal or in our N.I.R.S. Yearbook)

Live demo at our next meeting!

RECIPE REQUESTS

Lemon Zucchini Loaf

(Jill Gould)

- | | |
|--|------------------------|
| $\frac{3}{4}$ C butter | $1\frac{1}{2}$ C sugar |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ C brown sugar | 3 eggs |
| $2\frac{1}{2}$ C flour | 3 tsp. baking soda |
| 1 tsp. baking powder | 1 tsp. cinnamon |
| 1 tsp. salt | $\frac{1}{2}$ C milk |
| 2 tsp. vanilla | Grated rind of 1 lemon |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ C. chopped dried apricots or mangoes | |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ C sesame seeds | |
| 2C chopped or shredded zucchini | |

Topping:

- $\frac{3}{4}$ C sifted icing sugar 1 Tbsp. lemon juice

Heat oven to 350°F. Grease 2 or 3 loaf pans, 8" x 4". Cream butter and both sugars in large bowl. In a smaller bowl beat eggs until light. Stir together dry ingredients in a third bowl. Beat eggs into butter mix, and then add dry ingredients $\frac{1}{4}$ C at a time, alternating with milk, until well blended. Add vanilla, lemon rind, sesame seeds, dried fruit, and zucchini. Mix well. Spread into prepared pans. It is a large quantity. If using 2 pans, bake 55 min, or until knife inserted into centre comes out clean. If using 3 pans, bake 45 minutes.

Cool on rack in pans. Meanwhile, mix icing sugar with lemon juice. Drizzle over hot loaves. Remove from pans carefully after 20 minutes—loaves are soft. Rave reviews from my Dave!



Linzer Torte (Barb Staton)

- | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1C ground almonds or hazelnuts | |
| 1C flour | $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp cinnamon |
| pinch of cloves | |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ C butter | 1/3C sugar |
| 1/3C raspberry jam | 1tsp vanilla |
| 2C fresh or frozen raspberries | |



Stir first four ingredients together in a bowl. Cream butter and sugar together until fluffy, add to flour mixture and blend well. Press into a large flan or cake

pan. Save a portion of the dough to decorate the top with lattice or cut out shapes. Spread the jam/berry mixture onto dough. Bake 375°F for 10 minutes, dust with icing sugar before serving

Easy Pineapple Cake

(Judi Murakami)

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| 2C all purpose flour | $\frac{1}{2}$ C white sugar |
| 2 eggs | 2tsp. baking soda |
| 1tsp. vanilla | |
| 1 20 oz. can crushed pineapple with juice | |

Frosting

- | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1 8 oz. package cream cheese | $\frac{1}{2}$ C butter |
| $1\frac{1}{2}$ C icing sugar | 1tsp. vanilla |

Preheat oven to 350°F. In a large bowl, mix together the flour, sugar and baking soda. Make a well in the centre and add the eggs, vanilla and crushed pineapple, with liquid from can. Mix well. Bake for 45 min. in a greased 9 x 13" pan or until toothpick inserted in cake comes out clean.

Combine frosting ingredients and beat till creamy. Spread on cool cake.



MARCH GOODIES

Maureen Denny - Myrna Trimmer

Linda Billings - Gwen Wright



Until Next Month
Noni