



THE
RHODOTELLER

www.nirsrhodos.ca

**NORTH ISLAND
RHODODENDRON SOCIETY
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2015/2016**

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APRIL 2016

COMING EVENTS

5th April 2016 -- Executive meeting

This month's meeting will be held at the home of *Ann Chevrier*.
The meeting will start at **10 a.m.**

April 2016

What a month! Starting on 12th April with our final speakers of the season talking about the growing of rhodos in our changing climate and ending on 24th April with our Annual Plant Sale. See inside for details on both of these exciting events.

Rhodo in the Banner

Identify the "**RHODO IN THE BANNER**" and become the latest winner of "*The Garth*", the prestigious award for rhododendron identification. For those of you without a clue, you will find some hints and several photos towards the end of the newsletter.

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

PRESIDENT'S

notes

"And when you get the choice to sit it out or dance...

I hope you dance.....I hope you dance"



That gorgeous blue sky out there is calling me, but sadly I must decline -- at least for the next couple of hours. We need to talk. You and I. The quote above is from one of my favourite songs of all time, "I hope you dance" sung by Lee Ann Womack. We have elections coming up at our May meeting and we're going to have a couple of major vacancies and you have a choice to make -- sit or dance. We need a new President and Vice-President. No, no, please, keep reading -- hear me out. I know you want to move on to the next article -- I know that you think someone else will do it -- you can't do it because you're too busy, you can't speak in front of people, you couldn't write the article in the newsletter, you're not an expert on rhododendrons and on and on. I know exactly what you're feeling. It's like when the teacher asked the class a question and everyone looked down at their desk, trying desperately to avoid eye contact. I know exactly what you're feeling because I've been there. When Pauline Thompson called me I went through every reason I could think of to avoid accepting this responsibility. It reminds me of when I got the news that I had cancer many years ago. Why me? I've been a good person, I eat well, I exercise, don't drink too much, etc. etc. But, of course, the real answer was "why not me".

Of course, you can do it. I did it. I went from the guy just hanging out, minding his own business, sitting in the back by the goodies table to Vice-President, just like that. I was fortunate that I had a great mentor in Paul Wurz and others like Diana Scott and Pauline Thompson, so trust me when I say you will not be alone. I was also extremely lucky to have a Vice-President like Nadine Boudreau. We bounced ideas off each other continuously and discussed ways to improve the program and ways to make it more fun. I know that the same people who were there for me will be there for you also. And you can include me in that list. And it's not just them -- look at your Board of Directors. You will be surrounded by friends both at the Executive Meetings and at our Regular club meetings.

I'm so happy that Pauline called me and put me on the spot and happier still that I chose to go for it. I had a great time as President of the NIRS but it's time for a new face, new energy, new ideas, --- Hey, I know --- why not you?

Take a moment -- think about it -- and then call Paul Wurz and say, **"I'D LIKE TO DANCE"!!**

Nice talking to you,

Jake

NIRS PLANT SALE

SUNDAY APRIL 24TH 2016

10AM – 1PM

K'OMOX FIRST NATIONS HALL

3320 COMOX ROAD (DYKE RD) **Its almost here!!!!**

IF YOU MISSED THE SIGN UP FOR VOLUNTEERING AT THE SALE AND WOULD LIKE TO PLEASE CONTACT:

NADINE: ger.nadboud@shaw.ca

OR MARGARET: mgriffico@shaw.ca

THERE IS A MORNING SHIFT 8:30ISH – 11:00

AFTERNOON SHIFT 11:00 – 1:30ISH

PLEASE REMEMBER TO START POTTING UP ANY PLANTS YOU ARE DIVIDING OR SEEDLINGS GROWING IN THE GARDEN FOR THE NIRS COMPANION TABLE. IF POSSIBLE PLEASE LABEL PLANTS, COMMON NAMES ARE FINE. LABELING HELPS THE SALES TEAM, AND IS GREAT FOR BUYERS TO BE ABLE TO RESEARCH THE PLANT THEY HAVE PURCHASED



COMMITTEE REPORTS

In order to cut some time from the business section of our meetings and make that time available to the Speaker of the evening, we are including the following information from the NIRS Committees. Your feedback on every one of our programmes is encouraged and each idea will be thoughtfully considered.

MEMBERSHIP

Jill Gould

At our March 8 meeting, we had a terrific turnout: 69 members and 3 guests. We welcomed two former members who renewed, and one new membership. Our total membership for the Club stands at 78, which includes four associate members.

Name tags for NIRS are available through me: please see me at the meeting. You have a choice of a pin or a magnetic back for the tag. Prices do fluctuate slightly, but just think: You get an extra raffle ticket if you wear your pin and bring your own mug. I am also the keeper of the pH soil tester. This is a handy gadget which belongs to the Club but which is available for all members to borrow.

One more thing I feel I must mention. We need **GREETERS** at the door prior to the meeting! Your membership person cannot do it—she's busy! And so is the Executive. So, instead of plonking down in a chair waiting for the meeting to start, consider standing at the door for a few minutes with a smile and a "Welcome!" You don't have to know everyone's name, or whether they are a member or not. You can do it with a buddy if you are bashful. It does not have to be the same volunteer(s) each meeting. Rotation works!

WAYS AND MEANS

Lois Clyde

Our Raffle Rhodos this month are "Horizon Lakeside" & R. lepidostylum.

"Horizon Lakeside" Great parents, "Nancy Evans" & "Lem's Cameo" make this a beautiful compact plant with incredible pale yellow flowers with a bright carmine throat. It's a 3 footer & good to -3 deg. F.

R. lepidostylum meaning with scaly styles. It's 18-24" in 10 years. Good to -5 deg. F. Compact shrub with fuzzy bluish green foliage. Edges have tiny bristles & undersides have dense scales. Flowers are wide funnel form & pale yellow. Great plant for your rock garden.

Our Door Prize is R. davidsonianum. "Ruth Lyons"

(after Dr. W.H. Davidson). 6' in 10 years good to 0 deg. F. Growth habit is upright & open. Flowers are widely

funnel shaped, formed along the branch between leaf clustered or at the end of branch. "Ruth Lyons" is the most sought after, flower is clear deep pink.

We also have our "Greer's Guidebooks" for sale @ \$25

"The Public Gardens of Vancouver Island" by Ian E. Efford. \$25

Plant tags @ \$12 a box

Fundamentals for Growing Rhododendrons @ \$3, great for beginners.

Lovely bags @ \$14 in a variety of colours, very handy for shopping, meetings & travel.

Not to forget our truly coveted bumper stickers "I Brake for Rhododendrons". Only 2 left!!

We now have an additional to our table, "Cards by Dick".

Sets of 6 for \$10 & individual for \$2 each.

These cards are pictures of Dick Bonney's garden. A must have!!

Hope to see you all at the meeting!



Horizon Lakeside



R. lepidostylum



R. davidsonianum

REVENUE TABLE

Fran Thornton

Do yourself and your club a favour -- check out the "Fran and Ann" table. Some very interesting deals to be had.

The support shown by our membership this season has been nothing short of terrific! This a beautiful process -- members donate, other members buy and it all goes directly to the NIRS.

Thank you very much for your participation throughout the season.

THE PROGRAMME

Co-ordinator Paul Wurz

We are privileged to have 2 very well known, and respected rhodoholics doing our program for April. By very popular demand Terry Richmond and Allan Murray have consented to put together a program on "Growing Rhododendrons in a Changing Climate due to Global Warming". Terry is a long time resident of Port Alberni and his rhodo garden experiences the intense heat of the Alberni Valley. Terry has been growing, selling and propagating rhododendrons for many years and is an active member in the Mount Arrowsmith Rhododendron Society. Terry recently was awarded the prestigious Silver Medal from the American Rhododendron Society.

Allan, along with his wife Liz, have a very large and beautiful garden in Cobble Hill. They have a wonderful selection of rhododendrons in a rural setting surrounded by a small sheep farm. Their garden is frequently displayed on various garden tours on Vancouver Island. As well as growing countless rhodos, they probably have the best selection of exotic magnolias on Vancouver Island.

Both Terry, and Allan, and their spouses are Associate Members of NIRS. This program will be interactive so do not hesitate to bring any questions or concerns to the meeting. We are looking forward to hear Allan and Terry present!

THE

SOCIAL COMMITTEE

Judi Murakami

Thanks everyone for bringing your own mug to meetings. As you know, it's very easy to handle refreshments now, as we'll need 2 people for next year.

With appreciation in advance to Connie Prain, Arlene Hooper, Carolyn Chester, Therese Hartwig, Kathy Gordon and Leslie Robertshaw for bringing goodies to the April meeting.

Looking forward to seeing all your smiling faces.

THE

RHODO GARDEN

Wolfgang Hoefgen



After we had to move our work party, due to the weather, from Thursday to Friday 10th March, we had a good group of 7 helpers eager to work. We successfully spread approximately 5 yards of mulch, did some weeding

and prepared for more mulch for our April work party. We will most likely have 10 more yards, so wheelbarrows, shovels and strong arms are needed once again. If time permits we will probably try to fertilize the plants at this work party.

It is so nice to see spring arrive with the first rhodos in bloom at our garden. *R. rosamundi*, "Peter's Beauty", *R. russatum* and *R. beesianum* are all blooming away.

Many thanks to everybody for your help and hope to see you and, hopefully, a few others on 14th April.



THE MOTHER'S DAY GARDEN TOUR

Louise Casson

As most of you are already aware, on 8th May we will be holding our 21st Annual Mother's Day Garden Tour. The plans are proceeding nicely -- 7 gardens lined up for viewing -- arrangements for tickets, signs, gifts, etc. are all coming along. This tour is just an exceptional community event and our biggest fund raiser but it cannot be successful without the assistance of our members -- we need "sitters" at each of these gardens. Linda Billings and I will have a table set up at our next general meeting -- please drop by and check out our volunteer sheet. If you're unable to attend the meeting call Louise Casson. Want to sit at a particular garden? Want a particular time of day? Get to the sheet early and talk to Louise or Linda -- if we can make it happen it will happen!

Make this a social event -- get together with a friend -- someone you would like to spend a few hours with. Or maybe even more exciting -- just take your chances and maybe make a new friend.

TIARELLA TRIFOLIATA (Foamflower)

Jill Gould

Tiarella trifoliata is a native plant widespread from coastal California to Alaska, and common in wooded areas of the Comox Valley. A member of the large Saxifrage family, which includes many valuable garden and rockery plants, *Tiarella* prefers moist but not boggy soil in coniferous forests or along stream banks. You've probably seen it before, but may have overlooked it.

It is a perennial, forming a basal rosette of maple-like but deeply lobed leaves, from which grow long stalks with tiny white flowers, appearing like specks of foam (hence the name). The stalks, anywhere from 6 to 24 inches high, carry up to a dozen or more flowers each. The leaves on the flower stalks are definitely trifoliate. In late spring or early summer, dainty long-lasting flowers appear. If you use a hand lens, you will see one of the plant's prettiest features: the long stamens, which give the flower stalk a lacy effect.

Tiarella self-seeds readily but the plant is not invasive. It can be propagated with offsets from the rhizomes. The small flowers appear to advantage when *Tiarella* is planted in groups or *en masse*. This plant could be used as an understory addition to the Rhododendron garden, taking advantage of the shade. If you own woodlands, you may find it already on your property.



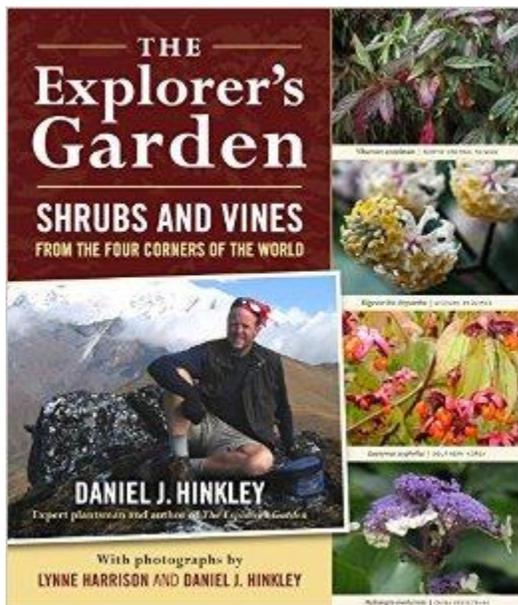
Tiarella trifoliata



Tiarella trifoliata (flower and seed pod)

A BOOK REVIEW

Noni Godfrey



[“The Explorer's Garden: Shrubs and Vines from the Four Corners of the World” by Daniel J. Hinkley](#)

- **Hardcover:** 352 pages
- **Publisher:** Timber Press; First Edition (June 3, 2009)
- **Language:** English
- **ISBN-10:** 0881929182
- **ISBN-13:** 978-0881929188

Dan Hinkley's quest for distinctive plants has led him on expeditions to China, Korea, Nepal, Chile, and remote areas of North America. His first book, *The Explorer's Garden: Rare and Unusual Perennials* presented the most fascinating perennials found during Hinkley's treks around the globe, describing the assets each plant brings to the garden, and explaining how it is best cultivated and propagated.

[The Explorer's Garden: Shrubs and Vines from the Four Corners of the World](#) is

Dan's second book on the Explorer's Garden Series. A great read, giving his perfect experiences on the way plants grow in their native lands and how he discovered them growing, often up banks or cliffs.

His masterful prose is a delight to read, many fine details emerge of his worldly travels. Extremely well documented are his chapters in this book; whereby he takes a genus and gives you wonderful information on it. Take for example his thoughts on the shrub- 'viburnum'; a great lot of info is given in this chapter and the reader comes away, actually blown away with details of this perfect shrub. The photos throughout are a delight, clear and beautifully presented.

"There are few gardeners where validation of a plant's worthiness I would take so seriously", I quote Dan's words here, from his forward to Marina Christopher's recent book; definitely applies to Dan's treasured book.

Illustrated with Hinkley's own splendid photographs, as well as those of Lynne Harrison, this new edition includes a new preface by the author and a completely updated list of sources for plant material.

DID YOU KNOW?

I'm very gung-ho about the development of the species garden at Milner. Think about it -- we'll have our own rhododendron species garden almost in our backyard. I'm sure you remember that the NIRS donated \$1,000 towards the garden just a couple of years ago. Recently, I asked a question about personal donations -- could it be done and how to do it. This is the opportunity of a lifetime to help create a rhododendron garden of this magnitude. A garden full of magnificent rhododendrons that will attract visitors from all over this region for generations to come. The following is the reply I received from Tony Ansdell of MARS.

"If the donation is made directly to the Milner Garden and Woodland Society, the donor will receive an Income Tax receipt.

Go to:

<https://www2.viu.ca/milnergardens/documents/Formonlinedonationsandlegacies.pdf>

You will see the donation form

Complete the form

(At this time the form does not have a place to direct the donation to the Species Garden

Just write "Direct this to the Species Garden" above the set of pictures.)

Send it to:

Geoff Ball,

Milner Gardens and Woodland Society

2179 West Island Highway,

Qualicum Beach, B.C. V9K 1G1

For bookkeeping simplicity, Geoff asks that you hold your donations until after April 1."



Fellow members of the American Rhododendron Society: Warning: Do NOT use AmazonSmile!



Amazon has a program that promises to give 0.5% on each purchase to the charity of your choice. The program has 2 serious problems. First, the ARS is listed 55 different times but only one listing can actually earn money. But, even more serious, if you use AmazonSmile, there is a large probability that it would not pay the 5.5% to the ARS that the ARSStore.org earns.

Due to the possibility that the ARS would lose most of the over 5.5% it receives on each purchase and also the probability that the wrong 1 of the 55 different ARS 501(c)(3) numbers could be used which would mean the ARS would get nothing, use of AmazonSmile is too risky. Let's use ARSStore.org and not AmazonSmile and get over 5.5% rather than hoping we get 0.5%.

ARSStore.org has earned over \$1,200 for the American Rhododendron Society without a penny coming from AmazonSmile. Perhaps in the future Amazon will integrate the two programs, but now, the Amazon ARS Store earns much more than what AmazonSmile gives. Don't combine the two. **Do NOT use AmazonSmile!**

THE RHODO IN THE BANNER

Win "**The Garth**" -- a fun, and hopefully educational contest to determine your ability to identify rhododendrons. You might know this one just by the photo but don't forget this contest is all about using whatever resources are available to you

All entrants e-mailed to jakeellis@shaw.ca with the correct answer will be entered in a draw which will take place at the next meeting.

PRIZE! PRIZE! PRIZE!

The Clues

1. All the clues you need to identify this rhodo are in the photos. Good Luck!



WHO AM I ?

HELP WANTED

Jake

One final thought about the upcoming elections.

"Belonging" to a club really does come with some implied obligations. Everyone in the NIRS has a life separate from the club with limited time to give. You're working, you're looking after the kids or grandkids during the day, you like to go away for a month to Arizona? Regardless of your situation we can make it work if you would like to take on a role on the Executive or as a Director. Or what about just volunteering for the Social Committee -- preparing the coffee, tea and ensuring we have goodies for our meetings? The "ladies in the kitchen" have indicated that they will have completed their commitment after our June Picnic. By the way that could just as easily be the "men in the kitchen. We are also going to have an exciting opportunity opening up for Editor of this newsletter. If you would be interested in becoming our next President, Vice-President or a Director please call our Elections Co-ordinator Paul Wurz. If you're interested in volunteering for the Social Committee or becoming the next Editor of this newsletter you can just give me a call.

All of the positions described above are very important to this club. A healthy club cannot just leave it to the same people, year after year to provide the leadership -- things tend to go stale after awhile. New people bring with them excitement, innovative ideas, and energy. We have so much talent sitting in the audience of our meetings -- please get up at our next meeting and yell, "Why Not Me".