



The  
**Rhodoteller**

[www.nirsrhodos.ca](http://www.nirsrhodos.ca)

**North Island  
Rhododendron  
Society  
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2015/2016**

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**MAY 2016**

**Coming Events**

**3rd May 2016 -- Executive meeting**

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

**10th May 2016 -- Annual General Meeting**

The Annual General Meeting will be held at the residence of Ann Chevrier on 10th May starting at 7:30 p.m. Details to follow in a separate notice.

**Rhodo in the Banner**

Thanks to all who participated throughout this season in the contest that came to be known as "**The Garth**". The aim of the contest was to identify the rhodo shown in the banner of this newsletter. It was fun and educational for me -- hopefully for you also. The rhodo in this month's banner is a freebee -- the name is '**Electra**' and it was chosen merely because I have one and it's beautiful. More photos and information on this lovely rhodo can be found on the last page.

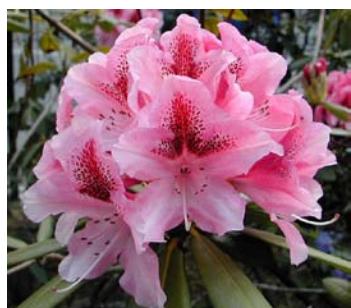
*The North Island Rhododendron Society meets at 7:30 p.m. the second Tuesday of each month (except May through August) at the United Church in Comox.*

# NIRS PLANT SALE

A BIG ROUND OF APPLAUSE TO ALL THOSE INVOLVED IN MAKING THE PLANT  
SALE A SUCCESS.

To all the members who donated plants, to all the volunteers who helped with set up, truss show, pricing and sales, cash area, clean-up, kitchen help, advertising, putting up posters.....whew...yes it takes a whole club to put it all together, **THANK YOU, THANK YOU, FOR MAKING IT A FUN AND PROFITABLE DAY.** Claudia will report the results shortly, but the after-sale count looked great.

We had some awesome plants available from our vendors, and the mason bees were a great addition. And we were thrilled to have our speakers ready and our information booth to give advice and answer questions.



Nadine, Margaret, Claudia



## 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*

Despite worry that the Club may be getting too big for its venue, the membership now stands at 81, which is almost the same as last year. We must be a fun bunch, because most people have stuck with us. There were some dropouts but we made up for that by recruiting new members.

The other good news is that our dues remain at \$35.00 per member, which includes a "significant other". It has been a hot topic for your Board as to whether to increase the dues as it is in Canadian dollars, and we have to submit membership dues to the ARS in US funds. Something to ponder for future years. So far we have held the line.

Any new members from this point in the year will be assigned to 2017 membership, as we don't meet in the summer (although we are not idle—we do a lot of other things). This is because in September we start signing people up for 2017. Why so early? Well first of all we have a Members booklet to produce, which we try to distribute by the end of January, and it all takes time. Secondly, some folks do take a lot of reminding. I will remind people at meetings, and in the Newsletter, and after that it's your decision!

I will continue as Membership person for the next term, if you'll have me. I finally figured the job out, and I am actually having fun!

### WAYS AND MEANS

*Lois Clyde*

We have had a wonderful year & would like to thank everyone for their participation in our monthly raffle & miscellaneous items & books.

We have had a great selection of rhododendrons for the raffle & door prizes. Thank you to Ken Webb who donated many rhododendrons to us last year & President Jake who has been taking wonderful care of them for us. Also thanks to Paul Wurz for his fine selections for the raffle.

We have also had several donations from members & associate members as well. We really have appreciated the support & income for the club.

I would really like to give a big round of applause to Dick Bonney for his recent donation of cards. The photos on the cards depict Dick's garden over the years. We have sold many already but still a few left.

Raffle Prizes this month are *Chionoides & Vulcan*.

*Chionoides* is a 4' hybrid, good to minus 10 deg.

Blooms fairly late. Tolerant of sun & cold. White dome shaped trusses are bright & numerous.

*Vulcan* is a 5 footer good to minus 15 deg.

Blooms late. Bright fire red trusses. Excellent hybrid.

As our AGM is at Ann Chevrier's our usual fare will not be available, but please do bring your toonies for the raffle!  
In the event of inclement weather & we are at the hall I will bring it along.  
Hope to see you all at the AGM!



Chionoides



Vulcan

## THE PROGRAMME

Co-ordinator Paul Wurz

The program planners for the past year have been Paul Wurz and assistant Garth Wedemire. With feedback from our membership Garth and I felt confident that essentially all of the programs offered for the members for 2015-16 were very well received - I cannot comment on any special highlights for the year as all presentations were outstanding. We thought our programs might have been a bit "heavy" on distant content re: New Zealand, the Himalayas, Victoria, England etc. but we did receive positive feedback on all of these programs. Garth and I kept the cost of the speakers within budget and hosting the guest speaker for a pre-meeting meal was well worthwhile. We did work with MARS and NRS program coordinators in setting up our programs.

It looks like Garth and myself will be the coordinators for next year and we welcome suggestions and feedback for the coming year.

## THE SOCIAL COMMITTEE

*Judi Murakami*

The social committee is wrapping up duties and our last list has circulated. Thanks to everyone who brought those delicious treats throughout the season and thanks to the following for offering to bring goodies to the AGM:

Patty Matthews, Bernice Morrison, Brian Staton, Maureen Denny, Connie Prain, Leslie Robertshaw, Kathy Gordon, Gwen Wright, Peter & Antje Guertler, Joanne Williams and Lily Vanderhorst.

## THE RHODO GARDEN

*Wolfgang Hoefgen*



After 12 to 18 months, I'm still learning what it takes to look after our garden. But with so many dedicated and knowledgeable people to help, it becomes a labour of love. Especially with all the positive comments from so many people who walk along the paths every day.

Over the last 12 months we had 8 work party's with a total of 73 helpers attending up to 2hr each time. Not to forget the social get-together, with coffee and some delicious goodies (after work).

Spring started with weeding, spreading mulch, about 20 yards, also some gravel for the walkways and fertilizing and continued over the next months with weeding, pruning and everybody's favourite, deadheading. Some poor plants were taken out and some just moved to better locations.

The parks board solved some of our problems by pruning some of the big trees for more light, and providing extra watering during a very dry summer.

Many discussions took place throughout the season regarding a few spots that needed filling.

One possibility was to add 2 to 3 medium size trees and just recently we did add a Gingko and a Liquid Amber. We have also continued to raise the bricks along the paths and the labeling of each rhodo in the garden. Plans are proceeding to have a sign in each of our 7 beds which will allow easier identification of our rhododendrons.

The large wooden sign was seriously showing the results of exposure to west coast weather and was recently re-painted and will be back in the garden shortly.

All this work should ensure that the CVRG looks at its best for the 20th Anniversary celebration of the Rhodo Garden in May 2017. Hopefully, the original organizers will be proud of what they created and will be happy knowing that it is still in good hands.

Thanks should go to the whole of this chapter for the support and all the eager helpers every month.

**Our next work party will be May 5th 9AM to finish mulching and fertilizing. This work party will be one week earlier than normal so the garden will look good for Mother's Day.**

Again, many thanks to all the helpers.



## THE MOTHER'S DAY GARDEN TOUR

*Louise Casson and Linda Billings*

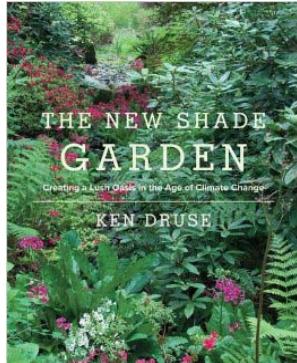
Last month we ran the following:

"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."

Now, Linda and I would like to tell you that our Garden Tour plans are coming along nicely. We are very pleased with the response we received from our members. Keep on Volunteering!

## A BOOK REVIEW

*Noni Godfrey*



### **"The New Shade Garden: Creating a Lush Oasis in the Age of Climate Change"**

by Ken Druse

- **Hardcover:** 256 pages
- **Publisher:** Stewart, Tabori and Chang (April 14, 2015)
- **Language:** English
- **ISBN-10:** 1617691046
- **ISBN-13:** 978-1617691041

There is a new generation of gardeners who are planting gardens not only for their visual beauty but also for their ability to reduce carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. In *The New Shade Garden*, Ken Druse provides this generation with a comprehensive guide to creating a shade garden with an emphasis on the adjustments necessary for our changing climate.

Ken Druse is the author of more than a dozen award-winning gardening books, including *Natural Companions* and *Making More Plants*. His work is also featured in the *New York Times* and *Martha Stewart Living*. He currently resides in New Jersey.

Druse offers advice for common problems facing today's gardeners, from addressing the deer situation to watering plants without stressing limited resources. Detailing all aspects of the gardening process, the book covers basic topics such as designing your own garden, pruning trees, preparing soil for planting, and the vast array of flowers and greenery that grow best in the shade. Perfect for new and seasoned gardeners alike, this wide-ranging encyclopedic manual provides all the information you need to start or improve upon your own shade garden.

"Druse's words, offered in the tone of a neighbor happy to advise, make this book worth more than mere coffee-table topping." (*Publishers Weekly*)

"Reading Druse is like talking to a generous old friend who knows exactly when you're about to give up and comes to the rescue." (*New York Times*)

## THE RHODO IN THE BANNER

As you take a closer look at this delicately beautiful flower, I think you'll understand when I say, "I'm in love with Rhododendron 'Electra'. All R. augustinii are beautiful but this cross of the ssp chasmantium and ssp augustinii really does seem exceptional. The ARS site describes her as "violet blue, paler in the throat, with a narrow ray of olive green markings on a white ground". They say she grows 5 feet in 10 years which is faster growing than me. Took me 14 years, I think. As much as I hate to share her, I think you should go a-courtin', also."



### **Rhododendron 'Electra'**

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#### **Another Message from your Elections and Nomination Chairperson**

**Paul Wurz**

As mentioned in the last newsletter, Jake and Nadine will be stepping down after the summer "Potluck" and this will leave a massive vacancy in our rhodo executive. Our President, Vice President and newsletter editor will have completed their tenure on the executive. We are asking for some nominees or volunteers to step up and take on these important positions. As Jake says you do not need to know much to be President! (And it can be a very exciting experience) Both Jake and myself will be very willing to contribute and assist for anyone that will "**step up**".

NIRS is currently one of the most vibrant and growing clubs in the entire American Rhododendron Society. If you have any interest or questions, please contact me by e-mail or phone.