



THE SEPTEMBER EDITION

RHODOTELLER

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NORTH ISLAND RHODODENDRON SOCIETY BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2017-2018

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SEPTEMBER 2017

COMING EVENTS

5th September 2017-- Executive meeting

This month's meeting will be held at the home of members **Judi Murakami and Dale Patterson** 565 19th St, Courtenay. The meeting will start at **10 a.m.**

12th September 2017 -- Regular meeting

Our guest speaker this month is **Daniel Mosquin**, a Research Manager at the UBC Botanical Gardens. Daniel's topic is "**Plant Adaptations (Temperate Rainforest)**". Please see inside for further details.

2018 ARS Convention

Registration for the 2018 ARS Convention which will be held in Bremen, Germany began on 1st September. Please see inside for further details.

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

Now that the record drought has been broken with a tiny bit of rain, we can all breathe a sigh of relief with lower temperatures. Some members felt quite wilted with all that heat, but I head out to the river or Spider Lake for a swim. Great way to enjoy the outdoors and stay cool. I'm writing this on August 12th, as I'm off to Ontario to visit relatives and our editor Jake will be distributing the newsletter the day after I return, so better to do it now. I've actually been the "head gardener" this summer as Dale left July 6th to do renovations at my sister's in Burnaby. They don't have air conditioning so he was not a happy camper.

I've been enjoying fresh Greek salad with the fruits of my labours, and impressed some friends with fresh picked cantaloupe from the greenhouse. When anything starting looked peaked, I just added some wormy compost. Amazing how that just perks everything up.

Our Vice President Maureen will be attending the ARS District 1 Presidents meeting in Nanaimo while I'm on vacation and is gearing up to take over in 2018. We have a stellar executive and look forward to another exciting year. For those of you who think you couldn't possibly do this, we provide lots of support, and coffee and goodies at our executive meetings.

Our treasurer Dave reports that there have been improvements at the meeting hall, with a fresh coat of paint, ceiling projector, screen, and possible sound system. So mark your calendars for September 12th. I look forward to seeing you.

Cheers!

Judi



COMMITTEE REPORTS

MEMBERSHIP

Jill Gould

We are beginning our "Fall" season, though it hardly seems like fall with the heat! At our September meeting, we are accepting membership dues for 2018. The ARS requires membership dues to be submitted to them before December 31 of each year, so we like to get an early start. Payment of dues now means you are covered from January 1 to December 31, 2018.

You can bring cash or a cheque for \$35.00 to any of our meetings. Or, you can mail your payment to the NIRS at Box 3183, Courtenay, BC V9N 5N4. The \$35.00—such a deal—includes your Significant Other, no extra charge! New members are welcome, too. Receipts will be issued at the meetings, along with a new membership card for 2018.

This is the first of the "reminders" we give you. We do not usually send out special e-mails or bother you with phone calls, so please rely on your newsletter. If there are any changes in your personal information: new address, phone or e-mail, please let me or someone else on the Executive know so we can update our list. We have over 90 memberships so keeping track of folks can be a busy thing.

WAYS & MEANS

Past-Director Lois Clyde

Our Raffle Rhodos this month are:

"*Cunningham's White*" 4' good to -15 deg. Blooms late May. Attractive compact plant with small white flowers enhanced by a greenish yellow blotch. Plant will tolerate sunny location. Very often flowers in the Fall.

"*Shamrock*" 1' good to -5 deg. Blooms early. Extremely compact plant wider than tall. Flower is chartreuse.

Our Door Prize is:

"Blue Jay" 5' -5 deg. Blooms late. Vigorous plant with bright green foliage. Profuse lavender blue flowers with a distinct dorsal blotch.

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

"The Public Gardens of Vancouver Island" by Ian E. Efford. **ON SALE \$20!**

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. **Only 3 left!**

Not to forget our truly coveted bumper stickers "I Brake for Rhododendrons". Only 2 left!! \$1 each.

Welcome back everyone & hope you have had a great summer!

Hope to see you all at the meeting!

(photos from Hirsutum.info)



"Cunningham's White"



"Shamrock"



"Blue Jay"

PROPAGATION GROUP

report by Diana Scott

Special thanks to Wolfgang and Antje who spent many hours over the summer caring for our existing stock, with occasional help from the group to put on shade cloth and do a few 'odd jobs'. The Propagation Group met as a whole in early August to plan the upcoming season. Graciously hosted once again by Garth and Sue, the group was in awe when Noni started us off with a brief 'Show and Tell' sharing a healthy little plant grown from the seed workshop last year, and a sturdy little plant from one of the grafting workshops. We may need to give all our seeds and grafting scions to Noni! Bravo Mme Green Thumb!

After social catch-up and much discussion over propagation/growing details, the group decided to take cuttings again this year. Work parties were put together to organize the greenhouse and ready the potting materials in mid August, with cutting stock to be taken August 18th and 25th. Teams headed by Noni, Garth, and Wolfgang collected the cutting material and Wolfgang and Garth guided us August 19th and 26th in 'doing' and potting up the cuttings. We will have at least one more session as later rhodos are ready to have cuttings taken. It was great fun to walk through the gardens picking out new cutting material – we had to rein ourselves in or we would have had enough material for a commercial operation! We are now prepared to nurse the new cuttings along and we are hopeful that we will have some wonderful new stock for the coming years.



Our older plants are looking great and we are delighted with the rhodos and azaleas that will be available for our sale next spring. Cuttings from last year are also looking great and these will provide for an even greater variety of plants in the years to come. As a Special Event this fall we will be offering the plants to our members at excellent prices! This upcoming Sale will have a great selection of rhodos and azaleas, and will be a great opportunity to add to your garden this fall. (*editor-- please see info on this upcoming sale at the end of this newsletter*).

Once again we thank the Smiths and Charlie for the use of their facility, and invite any members to join us in this interesting and rewarding endeavour! To get an idea of what we've been up to, visit our NIRS website (<http://www.nirsrhodos.ca>), click the Photos tab, move down to Special Gallery and click on 'Prop Group -17', or go directly to this address <http://www.nirsrhodos.ca/ws/special-gallery/>

THE PROGRAMME

SEPTEMBER 2017

DANIEL MOSQUIN

Plant Adaptations (Temperate Rainforest)



I grew up on a grain farm near Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. Some of my earliest memories were of gardening with my parents or bird-watching in places like Oak Hammock Marsh with my aunts and uncles. Mucking about in ponds or encountering birds while riding my bike on country roads were favourite daily activities.

Trips with my parents to visit wildflowers like gentians or lady's slippers in bloom eventually honed my interests onto plants. An undergraduate degree from the University of Manitoba (with some time spent at the University of British Columbia) emphasized plant biology.

A few years after receiving my degree, I started work at UBC Botanical Garden. I have had several roles there since 2000, including managing in areas such as research, education, and IT.

After being encouraged to improve my photography of garden plants in the early 2000s, I purchased my first dSLR in 2004. With camera, lenses and other equipment in hand, I have since visited much of western North America and parts of the eastern part of the continent as well.

Plant Adaptations (Temperate Rainforest)

Most popular literature and textbooks on plant adaptations highlight those species that live in extreme environments such as deserts or alpine-tundra. This presentation examines the plant adaptations found in species associated with temperate rainforests, discussing adaptations to rain, year-round shade, and generally moderate temperature extremes. Several comparisons are made within a few plant groups to illustrate differences. This presentation has a focus on the species of western North America, particularly British Columbia.



THE RHODO GARDEN

Maureen Denny



The Garden has made it through this very dry summer and the plants are generally healthy with good bud set for next spring. The area just down from the BOVI bed was lacking water from the sprinkler system, but Tyler, our liaison with the City of Courtenay, has remediated that situation. The City gardening crew will be moving two big rhodos behind the Chamber of Commerce building to another location this fall, and one unhealthy one taken out.

We had three good evening work parties this summer. Thanks to all the volunteers who helped to keep our garden in great shape.

Our next Work Party will be held in the **MORNING of September 14th at 9am**. For any new members wanting to join the fun the garden is located on Cliffe Ave. by The Chamber of Commerce Building and the entrance to the Airpark walk way (park behind the Kayak Rentals). The best part, of course, is the social moment after the work party with coffee and goodies.

Hope to see you on 14th September. Don't forget the rakes, buckets, brooms and whatever.

A REPORT

on

The Rhododendron Species Garden within Milner Gardens & Woodland

by John Deniseger and Marilyn Dawson

The rhododendron species garden at Milner Gardens and Woodland is now a fact. During late May and early June, a small team of dedicated volunteers from MARS and NRS (Mount Arrowsmith and Nanaimo chapters) planted more than 120 species rhododendrons to launch the project physically after many, many meetings and some setbacks over several years.

Each of the five ARS Vancouver Island Chapters (District 1) have created a unique partnership with Milner and Vancouver Island University to build a rhododendron species garden within MGW. The species advisory group which includes representation from each Island chapter has put considerable effort into selecting species appropriate for our climate and specimens of verified provenance to illustrate the

tremendous variety and diversity within the genus Rhododendron, including unique and rare species that are threatened in the wild.

The 0.75-acre garden highlights 6 geographic areas representing the origin of the majority of temperate species rhododendrons: North America; Northeast Asia; Sichuan province China; Himalayas; Yunnan province China; and Europe.

On-site activity was limited last summer and fall due to an archaeological assessment of the site after the discovery of a midden, but work resumed this spring with conditional approval by the archeology team. Volunteers began by putting up a temporary deer fence. An entry arbour was designed, built and installed and the pathway through the arbour was completed. Stonework was completed in the area of the entry arbour. Milner volunteers weeded the entire area. Irrigation trenches were dug and an automatic irrigation system was designed and built. Pathways were installed and truckloads of a special soil mix was brought in stages onto the site in preparation for planting.

Just like the proverbial postman working in all conditions, volunteers braved chill and rain to get the tender plants in the ground in four sessions that included erecting shade barriers to protect from wind and hot summer sun. Once completed, a roster of volunteers has been checking the plants 3 times a week for sun and wind damage and ensuring adequate watering. Planting is on hold until the fall. Initially designed for 250 rhododendrons, we have planted more than 120 species thus far. Plans are underway to plant many of the remaining rhododendrons this coming fall as well as feature trees and hundreds of companion plants. Other upcoming plans include completion of walkways, replacing the temporary deer fence with permanent fencing, and the installation of benches and interpretative signage. A grant application has been submitted to assist with the plant accessioning and interpretative signage. The official opening of the species garden is planned for the spring of 2018.



Entry arbour into the Species Garden



Part of the planting crew

THE RHODO IN THE BANNER

The Rhododendron in the Banner this month is "Scintillation"



This 5 ft pink beauty is a R. fortunei X by Mr. C.O. Dexter of Sandwich, Massachusetts. Very hardy to -24C. But of even greater importance to me is that "Scintillation" appears in the "logo" (if that's the correct term) of the ARS Massachusetts Chapter's website "Your Gateway to Rhododendrons in New England. I absolutely love this site and urge you to log in and follow the many prompts that lead you through the rhododendron gardens of New England. Before you leave this site make sure you take a look at this chapter's Species Study Group -- the group that produced a series of members notes entitled "Species in Our Midst". Such amazing detail.

WWW.ROSEBAY.ORG



MEMBERSHIP PLANT SALE

THE SMITH'S GARDEN

PROPAGATION SITE

SEPTEMBER 16TH 10a.m. - NOON

The NIRS Propagation Group is holding a sale for our members. We have approximately 450 1 gallon, 280 2 gallon and 20 3 gal plants for sale at a reduced rate.

1 Gal.....\$7

2 Gal.....\$12

3 Gal....\$17



The ARS/DRG 2018 International Rhododendron Conference in Europe

Update! Registration for ARS-members only will begin on Sept. 1st and extend until Nov. 15th. The registration form will be made available on September 1st at 12:01 am EDT (4:01 AM GMT) at <http://ars2018.org/registration.php>. See the [registration page](#).

The 2018 ARS Convention will be hosted by the Deutsche Rhododendron Gesellschaft (DRG) in Bremen, Germany. There will be 3 optional tours before the Convention and one optional tour after the Convention. The first pre-tour in the Netherlands will be hosted by the Dutch Chapter of the ARS. It will start on Monday, May 7, 2018, in Amsterdam. The second pre-tour in Germany will be hosted by the DRG. The third pre-tour in Denmark and Sweden will be hosted by the Danish and Swedish Chapters. The post-tour in Finland will be hosted by the Finnish Chapter. Attendees are responsible to make their own way to the first hotel for each options and to make their way home from the last hotel. All tours connect with the next tour. See the other tabs on this website to learn more about the [tour options](#), the [tour gardens](#), the [hotels](#), the [speakers](#) and [registration](#).

EXTRA!

The Mount Arrowsmith Rhododendron Society's (MARS) newsletter "The Rhodovine" has just hit the streets and is now showing on their website (marsrhodos.ca). This edition has a column covering the MARS tour of gardens in the Comox Valley and Campbell River in May 2017 along with some outstanding photos. There is also a very interesting column regarding the ARS 2019 Fall Conference which will be held in Parksville.

EXTRA!