



THE JANUARY 2019 EDITION
RHODOTELLER

www.nirsrhodos.ca

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RHODODENDRON SOCIETY
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2018-2019**

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JANUARY 2019

COMING EVENTS

8th January 2019 -- Executive meeting

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

15th January 2019 -- Regular meeting

What better way to start the New Year!! Five short education segments dealing with a variety of gardening topics. Presenters will be **Judy Walker, Wolfgang Hoefgen, Nadine Boudreau, Maureen Denny and Garth Wedemire**.

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

Happy New Year!

As I write the first "Notes" of 2019 the weather has once again turned nasty, wet, windy and cold. At least the Comox Valley escaped the worst effects of the recent record setting windstorm.

During dark rainy days like this it nice to think back and remember the wonderful events that took place in our club over the past year.

We had a very successful plant sale, garden tour and of course our recent Christmas Party was so much fun with great food.

The Propagation Group did very well with fund raising. Many members opened their gardens for tours. These "Open Gardens" are always a special treat for everyone in the club.

Robert Argall, Fran Thornton and Antje Guertler received well deserved Bronze Medal awards for outstanding service to the NIRS. We had some wonderful speakers, my favourite being Susan Murray's talk on "Fabulous Gardens and Unusual Plants of Southern Africa."

Our club had two very sad events as well with the passing away of Phil Matthews and Roberts Smith.

Now I am hoping for an early spring or at least that the rest of the winter won't be too bad.

Thanks to everyone who made 2018 such a wonderful year for the NIRS. With the continued enthusiasm and support of all involved I am sure 2019 will be another great year.

See you all January 15th at the meeting.

Maureen

CHRISTMAS PARTY 2018

...by Dave Godfrey

At our annual Christmas party on Tuesday, December 11th, a record number of members (65) attended and, once again, enjoyed a festive evening full of great food, fun and fellowship.

Executive members arrived before 4 PM to start setting up the tables and chairs and decorate the hall. When the members arrived around 5 pm, they were greeted with word puzzles, candy guessing games and a glass of hot apple cider all prepared by **Noni Godfrey**.

With most members in attendance and before the dinner was served, a few special presentations were made. Past President **Judi Murakami** presented **Antje Guertler** with a special prized shopping bag she had received at the 2018 ARS Convention held last spring in Bremen, Germany.



With **Antje** still in the spotlight, President **Maureen Denny** took the opportunity to surprise her with a NIRS Bronze Medal award. Antje is currently the club's social coordinator; and as well, her work with the propagation group has been invaluable. Congratulations on a well-earned award. *(To read the full citation, visit our [Awards](#) page.)*

We also had a special presentation to long-time NIRS members **Gloria & Bernie Guyader**. In recognition of their many years of contributions in various capacities and for their ongoing support, the executive board awarded the Guyaders an "**Honorary Lifetime Membership**" to the NIRS.

With formalities aside, it was time to enjoy the delicious meal prepared by our members who brought their favorite dish along

for the pot-luck. This year, in addition to the traditional ham prepared and served by **Dale Patterson**, the club also provided a turkey prepared by **Carolyn Chester**. A big thank you goes to all who contributed delicious appetizers, salads and desserts for the dinner.

With the meal consumed, it was time to organize the teams for our annual Trivia game. Always with lots of laughs, the teams were organized, and the questions began for the various categories. Although figuring the answers to the questions was fairly straight forward, agreeing to the correct answers is sometimes a challenge!

Before, during and after the Trivia game, **Garth Wedemire and Sue Grant** once again provided fun rounds of "Heads or Tails". Congratulations to the winners of these 'flipping' games, **Jay Van Oostdam, Ruth Fowler, Antje Guertler** and **Ann Chevrier**. Ann actually won the last two rounds, but was gracious enough to allow second runner up, **Marcel Bombezin** to have the last prize.



The eventual Trivia game winning team "The Apple Blossoms" (**Jim Clyde, Dan Ryan, Antje Guertler, Doug Williams, Nadine Boudreau, Bernie Guyader, Maureen Denny** and new member, **Heike Schnoor**) had 33 of a possible 46 points. They each received a gift certificate to Art Knapp's.

Ann Chevrier was truly the big winner of the evening, as she also won one of the two candy jar guessing games with the exact number (475) that were in the jar. **Claudia Ellis** was the other lucky winner with a guess of 283, only 10 short of the actual number in the jar.

With all the prizes awarded, it was time for the draws for prizes, centerpieces and door prizes. Once again, a big thank you to **Lois Clyde** for providing the door prize wreath won by **Kathy Storey** and to **Wolfgang Hoefgen** for donating a lovely Advent wreath won by **Carolyn Chester**. Thank you also to **Zelda O'Connor** for providing the beautiful Christmas bouquet won by **Aji Fliss**.



The surprise winner of the evening was **Diane Van Oostdam** who won 'Miss Piggy'. This prized pig has been a tradition of the NIRS since 1995. Each year, the lucky winner is entrusted with her care to be displayed prominently in their garden; taking photos throughout the year to add to the photo albums that accompany her. Diane advises that she is comfortably settling into her new home already.

A big thanks once again to our executive committee who helped organize the entertaining evening and to the many members and guests who attended to enjoy the food and festivities. We hope to see many more next year!



MISS PIGGY'S NEW HOME

CHRISTMAS HAMPER 2018

by Diane Van Oostdam

Every year the NIRS sponsors a family at Christmas through "Sharing the Christmas Spirit" program sponsored by the Salvation Army and Royal LePage. This year we had a family of four: parents and 2 boys, age 15 and 9. Thanks to the member's generosity we collected \$265. cash plus a \$75 Super Store gift card purchased by the club. We also received additional food donations from club members to fill the hampers. Thank you to everyone who donated. Maureen and myself went shopping for the remainder of the food items on the suggested list . We had lots of fun!

From the funds collected we were able to purchase a \$30 WINNERS gift certificate for each of the boys, and package of socks for the Dad. One generous club member gave Mom a gift bag of special soaps and a beautiful scarf. \$40 is given to the organization to cover the cost perishable food, such as turkey, vegetables, etc..... See the pictures of what we bought and collected!!



COMMITTEE REPORTS

MEMBERSHIP

Nadine Boudreau

The December Christmas Party was well attended with 59 people signed in! Good food, good laughs were had by all; we really have a great membership. To date we have 71 members including associate members. We will be processing memberships at our January meeting, and if you would like to order a name tag, Jill Gould will take your information. We are looking forward to a fun year ahead with the club.

HAPPY NEW YEAR EVERYONE!

WAYS & MEANS

Claudia Ellis

OUR RAFFLE RHODOS THIS MONTH ARE:

'**Unique**' 4', -20C. Smooth oblong leaves become a thick mound of clover green. Bright pink buds open to beautiful, buttery cream.

'**Chionoides**' 4', -23C. Sun and cold tolerant. White dome shaped trusses are bright and numerous.

OUR DOOR PRIZE IS:

'**Lee's Best Purple**' 6', -28C. Noted for its excellent smooth, dark and glossy foliage. Deep purple flowers.



'Unique'



'Chionoides'



'Lee's Best Purple'

Due to the New Year's holiday falling on the first Tuesday of the month, our January general meeting will be held on **Tuesday the 15th**. For the evening's presentations, we will have a series of short educations. **Judy Walker** will provide information on some of her favourite garden tools, while **Wolfgang Hoefgen** will give tips on cleaning and sharpening garden tools (always a good thing to do over the dark winter months.) For those members interested in developing their property, **Nadine Boudreau** will give some ideas for garden planning. President **Maureen Denny** will provide a list of books essential for every gardener and **Garth Wedemire** will explain how to access various websites for Rhododendron information.

For our **February 12th** program, NIRS associate member **John Deniseger** will explain "**Why I Garden?**"- A topic many of us have asked ourselves over the years.

One month later, on **March 12th**, we will be welcoming **Ole Jonny Larsen** all the way from Norway. As a keynote speaker at the Bremen Convention, Jonny will be presenting to all five chapters here in District 1. For our meeting his topic will be "**Plant Hunting - the experiences of an amateur.**"

To round out our spring speakers, Past President **Judi Murakami** has agreed to give an overview on the Bremen Convention Garden Tours.

On **May 14th** we will have an opportunity to visit Nadine Boudreau's lovely new home and garden, as she has agreed to host this year's **Annual General Meeting (AGM)**. And to close another season of meetings, our annual June potluck picnic will be held on **Saturday, June 15th** at a garden yet to be determined.

In future, your executive may be using a similar approach to the Nanaimo chapter; insofar as having speakers arranged by a 'Program Committee'. We will be seeking four or five members who wish to contribute by suggesting and arranging speakers for the 2019-20 seasons. More on this in the coming months.

THE RHODO GARDEN

Maureen Denny



I just spent a few enjoyable minutes looking at the NIRS website to view the photos of the CVRG. These pictures of beautiful blooms and sunshine brought lovely memories of last year's work parties.

Thanks to everyone who volunteered their time and effort to keep these gardens in such good shape.

Looking forward to next February when our work parties will resume.

JANUARY AND STILL LOOKING GOOD!

by Judy Walker

Here are a few champions on January 2 in my garden –



Vaccinium ovatum (Evergreen huckleberry) and Skimmia japonica- in full brunt of southeaster winds and under a walnut tree.....



Mahonia x media 'Charity'... or 'Winter Sun'



Miscanthus 'Allegro'- nice and tidy, even in January, not like big Miscanthus which have usually exploded in the wind by now.

Garrya elliptica (might be cultivar 'James Roof'). Looks lovely- shiny leaves and long tassels, doesn't take much care at all – only a bit of water in summer drought.



Dear dependable Cyclamen coum

Ilex verticillata (deciduous holly)- spectacular berries this year and the robins haven't found them...yet. Likes moist spot and needs male and female plants



AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY NEWS

by Diana Scott

(reprinted and updated from the Rhodoteller June 2009)

As a member of the North Island Rhododendron Society, you are part of a notable international organization called The American Rhododendron Society. The ARS is a non-profit organization whose purpose is to encourage interest in and to disseminate information about the genus Rhododendron. Members' experience ranges from novice to expert. Society activities include public education, flower shows, seed exchanges, scientific studies, and communication through publications and local and national meetings. ARS chapters are located throughout the United States and Canada and in Denmark, Holland, Scotland, Sweden and Sikkim.

NIRS is one of 7 Chapters in District 1 comprised of: Cowichan Valley (CVRS), Fraser South (FSRS-Langley), Mt Arrowsmith (MARS-our sister chapter in Qualicum Beach), Nanaimo (NRS), North Island (NIRS), Vancouver (VRS), and Victoria chapters (VicRS). We have a District Director, Chris Hodgson and an Alternate District Director, Chris Southwick, who represent our district at the regional and national levels.

As members of the ARS each of us receives a Journal 4 times a year. These magazines provide a variety of information on Rhododendrons from tips for beginners, reports on treks to rhododendron areas, articles on specific members of the genus, highlights of gardens, information on pests and diseases, society news, publications and much more. As a journal rather than a newsletter, and a vehicle for sharing new and scientific information, it has something for every level of rhodophile! The ARS Journal (also available online) is only one of the many benefits of belonging to this respected organization.

Be sure to check out the ARS website <http://www.rhododendron.org/> for information on the Society, its Chapters, Plant Care and Data, Resources and Activities!

Need a ride to one of our meetings?



Call Sue at [1-778-995-3262](tel:1-778-995-3262)
or send her an email at grant.sk@gmail.com

MY FAVOURITE WEBSITE IS BACK UP!

hirsutum.info

by Jake Ellis

To those members familiar with this site and who use it all the time, like I do, this is truly good news. To those of you who unfamiliar with the site or who are unsure how to use it please follow me as I Google hirsutum.info our Rhodo in the Banner for January 2019-- R. bureavii. Let's see what we can learn about this beautiful rhododendron.

First, you should see some information regarding the name of this website and the its purpose. As we're looking for information on R. bureavii, you need to click on "[Rhododendron species](#)". But how do I know if it's a species or a hybrid? Because of the way it's written. A species is always identified by the genus name (Rhododendron or R.) along with the name in lower case. A hybrid would be identified by its name only (first letter capitalized and enclosed in single apostrophes) e.g. 'Jingle Bells'.

Clicking on [species](#) will bring you to a section including all the species rhododendrons currently identified on this website. Now select "[B](#)" at the top to search further for R. [bureavii](#). Scroll down the page until you find our selection.

[bureavii](#)

First you will notice some information regarding its location within the subgenera of the genus rhododendron. It then goes on to tell us this rhodo was first described by Adrien Franchet in 1887 and has been in cultivation since 1917. All this and a photo of the leaves and flower.

Now click on "[information and pictures](#)". More information. R. bureavii has been discovered growing in the wild of N and E. Yunnan between 3000-3900 meters. It tells us that it blooms in midseason and is hardy to -24C. ([hover on "H5" and it gives the hardiness scale](#)). It also says that this rhodo was observed growing in its natural habitat to the height of 23 ft.

Need more information? Then click on "Extra Information" -- but before you do that scroll down and see the photos and see the attached info -- the photographer, date, and location.(please note the 3rd photo down was taken by our own Garth Wedemire).

"[Extra Information](#)" brings on more info on this plant's natural environment, as well as the name "bureavii". It also gives a lengthy list of hybrids where R. bureavii was directly and indirectly involved.

THE RHODO IN THE BANNER



R. BUREAVII

(photo by Ken Gibson)



(photo by Garth Wedemire)

WHAT A LOVELY RHODO AND HOW ABOUT THIS WEBSITE!

hirsutum.info

P.S.

1. Bernie Guyader wants our members to be aware of a Washington State University information-packed online booklet "How to Identify Rhododendron and Azalea Problems. Thanks Bernie.

["cru.cahe.wsu.edu/CEPublications/eb1229/eb1229.pdf"](http://cru.cahe.wsu.edu/CEPublications/eb1229/eb1229.pdf)

2. Follow-up to the Christmas Party.

For those that won the centrepieces at the Party -- if you don't want or need the items that went into the making of these pieces -- the plastic tray, candle holder, ribbon bows, pinecones, etc. -- we could use them again if you bring them to Noni at the January meeting.

3. Sometime in the future we plan on showing photos of our members gardens. This would be an ideal time to take photos of your garden during the winter months.

4. Don't forget we are always looking for ideas regarding this club's agenda. What about the speakers? If you have any feedback on anything regarding the running of this club, please don't be shy. Speak or send your ideas to any member of the Board of Directors.

Good Gardening and I'll see you at the Church on 15th January 2019.