

NORTH ISLAND RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

THE SEPTEMBER 2019 EDITION



WWW.NIRSRHODOS.CA

PO Box 3183, Courtenay BC V9N 5N4

THE RHODOTELLER

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SEPTEMBER 2019

Coming Events

September 3-- Executive meeting

This month's meeting will be held at the home of **Maureen Denny, President. 1515 Balsam Ave, Comox.** The meeting will begin at **10 a.m.**

September 10 -- Regular meeting

Our guest speaker for the meeting will be, John Deniseger as he presents "Why Do I Garden?" Meeting begins at 7:30 pm. United Church, 250 Beach Drive. Corner of Comox Rd & Beach.

Sept. 21-22 -- Gardens in Bloom Garden Tour

Comox Valley Horticultural Society garden tour. Self guided tour of 10 private gardens. Tickets are \$20, Visit www.comoxvalleyhortsociety.ca for ticket outlets and more info.

Sept. 27-29 -- 2019 ARS Fall Conference -

Rhododendrons By the Seaside

MARS is hosting the conference in Parksville featuring 12 distinguished speakers. Registration is required. For more information go to www.marsrhodos.ca/ars2019

SEPTEMBER PROGRAMME

WHY DO I GARDEN?



Our guest speaker for the September 10th meeting will be NIRS associate member, John Deniseger as he presents “Why Do I Garden?”

John is a retired biologist, an avid gardener, outdoor enthusiast and past president of the Nanaimo Rhododendron Society. He is also a member of the Milner Gardens and Woodland Board and the Greig Rhododendron Species Garden Advisory Group.

As John says... “Gardeners tend to be pretty focused on how to grow their favourite plants, building compost, fertilizing, weeding, thumbing through plant catalogues, buying plants and just generally getting caught up in their own enthusiasm and passion. What draws us to something that constantly gives us aching knees, sore backs and dirty fingernails?” John will take a step back to look at gardening from a different perspective - Why do I garden?



*‘That’s a good question
John!’*

Garth working under the Rhodos at the CVRG.

PRESIDENTS NOTES

MAUREEN DENNY

What a beautiful summer we have had in the Comox Valley! Summer started out with a heat wave and I must admit I was dreading a repeat of last years heat, drought and endless cloud free days. Not the kind of weather that makes Rhododendrons, or gardeners happy. It has been a great relief to have some rain and cloudy days. I hope everyone's rhododendrons have done well.



None the less the growing conditions have been great for tomatoes and basil in my garden, as well as the 14 ft. high Delicata Squash plant that I trained vertically up a rope off the south end of our covered deck. This madly growing plant has only made two good squashes, but it sure has been fun to watch it grow, about 2 inches per day.

This is also the time of year when we get to appreciate rhododendron foliage. We can admire Indumentum and Tomentum on younger foliage. We can take a cruise around the garden and check out the bud set for next springs flowers. Some rhodos may even be popping out a few blooms with the cooler fall weather. Never a dull moment in a rhodo garden!

September is on the horizon and that means we will all be meeting again in the Church Hall for our first meeting after the summer break. However, some club members did get to mingle at the evening work parties held in June, July and August. These get togethers were certainly more fun than work and of course there were treats to share when the work was done.

Thanks to Summer and Jim, and Yvonne and Kirk for sharing their gardens at the beginning of the summer. Yvonne and Kirk's rose garden was a piece of heaven. Summer and Jim's whimsical and magical garden creations amaze us all. To me these chances to peak into other's gardens are a real highlight of being an NIRS member.

Another highlight of the summer has been the success of our Propagation Group. Monies collected at The Plant Sale and Members Plant Sales amount to \$2,322.00. It is thanks to Wolfgang and the volunteers that this endeavour has done so well. This is an amazing accomplishment when I think back to one of the first meetings of this group held at Dick Bonney's garage a few years ago. We thought a few of us would just get together for fun and learn how to take rhodo cuttings!

The REALLY BIG event on the horizon is The Fall Conference, “Rhododendrons as the World Warms” being held in Parksville on September 27, 28, and 29th in the Parksville Community Center. There is still time to sign up.

On August 29th myself, Noni and Dave Godfrey will be up bright and early to catch a ferry to Horseshoe Bay to attend the District One Meeting. This meeting is a chance for all the Chapters on the Island and Lower Mainland to get together and share our news and accomplishments for the last six months. We will even have time to squeeze in a garden tour.

Then on Tuesday September 3, the executive will gather to plan upcoming events for our fall and winter meetings. Never a dull moment! That’s all my news for now. I am excited to see everyone at the Church Hall on Tuesday September 10, 7pm.

Maureen



Maureen is always hard at work for the club, Thanks Maureen!

2019 ARS Fall Conference:



Rhododendrons By The Seaside

September 27 – 29, 2019

MARS is proud to host the 2019 American Rhododendron Society (ARS) Fall Conference. The conference features twelve distinguished speakers whose overall theme is ‘Rhododendrons as the World Warms’. Three bus tour options are included, along with a bulbs workshop and sale, two propagation workshops, [plant sale](#), [photo exhibition](#), and silent auction.

Saturday and Sunday breakfasts are included, along with Saturday lunch. In addition, a no-host bar and full-course buffet dinner are offered on Friday and Saturday evenings, providing lots of time for socializing, catching up with old friends, and making new ones.

Location: Parksville Community and Conference Centre

132 Jensen Avenue East, Parksville, BC

Dates: September 27 – 29, 2019

Time: 3:00 PM Friday September 27, 2019 to 1:00 PM Sunday September 29, 2019

Members and non-members are welcome!

Registration is required. Early registration is recommended as space is limited and some workshops are already sold out.

Check out the website: www.marsrhodos.ca/ars2019

SOCIAL COMMITTEE

Antje Guertler, Chair

This month's goodies will be provided by the executive members. There will be a 'sign up to bring goodies sheet' at the meeting for the October meeting. Please take a turn at bringing something, homemade or bought. Its nice to have a treat with our coffee or tea.

MEMBERSHIP

Nadine Boudreau and Cathie Arnold

Its time again to start renewing our memberships. The cost for a membership has remained the same, regular \$35.00 and \$10.00 for an associate membership (has a regular membership with another ARS chapter).

We are offering the "Register before November 30,2019 and be entered in draw to win your membership fee back" incentive. We like to have as many memberships renewed so we can have everyone signed up with the ARS by January1, 2020.

Welcome Cathie to membership, always great to have members work together on these committees. Speaking of which, we could use someone to help us register before the meeting as Lois is off on a fabulous safari adventure!

We are trying to speed up the process. We will have a list for you to check that all your info is correct, and if you would like to write a cheque, please make it out to NIRS.

REVENUE TABLE

Judi Walker and Naomi Chester

After the summer off from dividing and potting up plants, now is the time to check out plants to share! Dave alerted members of the deal on ½ gal pots at London Drugs and many of us took advantage- so now we have no excuse. Over the late summer and fall, please bring interesting plants, magazines and anything garden related to add to the revenue table. The items generously donated by the members provide 100% profit for the NIRS, which we use for our activities throughout the year.

Just remember to pick up anything that doesn't sell as we can't store items for another meeting!

Thank you! Your Revenue Table volunteers Judy & Naomi



Naomi



Judy

COMOX VALLEY RHODODENDRON GARDEN

Maureen Denny, Chair

The Gardens have done well this summer, with adequate rain and a good irrigation system, they are ready to put on a fine display of flowers for next spring. We held three evening work parties in June, July and August. Work consisted of some needed pruning, deadheading the fading flowers and weeding the beds. Afterwards we gathered at the A&W down the street for coffee and our own treats. Thanks to all the volunteers who pitched in to keep the gardens in good shape throughout the summer.

The next work party will be held on September 12th at 10 am. For new members wanting to join the fun the Comox Valley Rhododendron Garden is located along Cliffe Ave. behind the Chamber of Commerce Buildings. Parking is behind the Kayak Rentals. Bring your own tools (pruners, rake, trowel and a bucket). Treats are appreciated. Hope you can join in on the fun.



Diane Van Oostdam



Dan Ryan



Joanne Williams

WAY AND MEANS

Aubrey Ferris - Chair



Our *Raffle Rhodos* and door prize this month are:

augustinii: Grows from 4 to 10 ft. high

This Rhododendron grows to a tall upright shrub reaching 6' in ten years. The openly funnel shaped flowers are blue to purple, pink, lavender or white. It is a early to mid-season bloomer. The leaves are narrowly elliptic to lanceolate, up to 4 ½" long, with hairs along the veins.

Yaku Prince: Is a compact, pink flowered rhododendron that typically matures over time to 3'tall and as wide. It is reportedly a hybrid of R. 'King Tut' (seed parent) and R. degronianum subsp. yakushmanum "Koichiro Wada" (pollen parent).



Golden Wit:

This dense spreading habit Rhododendron has yellow, funnel-shaped, wavy edged flowers up to 3" across, in a primrose yellow blotched with red. Its flowering period is midseason. The foliage is glossy, medium to dark green. Golden Wit reaches 3 feet in 10 years, is hardy to -18C.

It is an Elepidote and its parentage is dichroanthum ssp scyphocalyx seedling x (Moonstone xAdrastia).

RHODOS 101

An Introduction

by Jake Ellis



This series of articles is dedicated particularly to those who have recently discovered the beautiful plant called the Rhododendron. But it might serve as a refresher also, to those of us who have been studying, talking about and growing this remarkable species for many years.

So many of our new members have seen the Comox Valley and surrounding areas in March, April and May with the rhodos all dressed up in full colour. Reds, yellows, oranges, blues, pinks, whites, purples and so many more with a mixture of these colours. If they're anything like me, once you've been exposed to this incredible sight you just must know more about this plant.

Where do they grow naturally? How big do they get? What growing conditions do they need? How do you maintain them -- pruning, watering, propagating?? And on and on. So many things to learn before you really understand why these plants are so intriguing and popular. So popular that way back in 1945 The American Rhododendron Society was formed with a mission to encourage interest in and disseminate information about the genus "Rhododendron". The ARS now has some 50 chapters spread across North America (including our own North Island chapter) as well as chapters in Denmark, Finland, Great Britain/Ireland, Netherlands, Sikkim and Sweden.

Over the coming months, we'll look at the history of the rhodos, species rhodos and hybrids. We're all aware of the rhododendron flowers but what about all the other features -- the leaves, the wood, the form, and the woolly, hairy looking stuff on the underside of the leaves (indumentum) and on the top side (tomentum). We have so much work ahead of us. I'm already busy working on Lesson One for the October newsletter but let me leave you with some amazing numbers.

Number of different rhodos in your local nursery = maybe 20?

Number of different species rhodos in the world = over 1000.

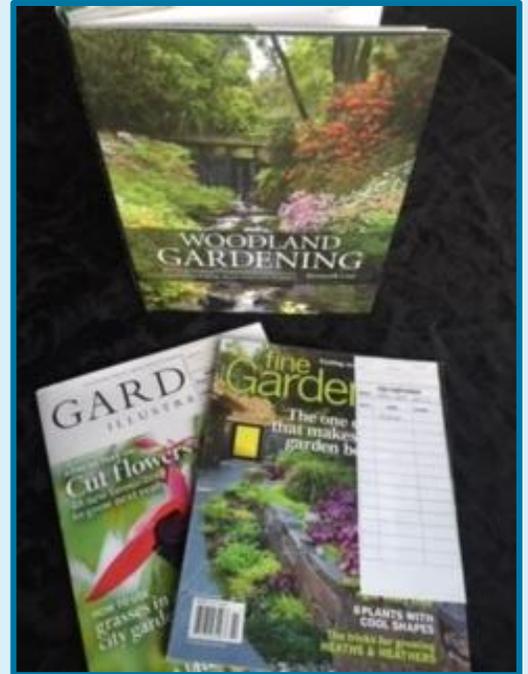
Number of different registered hybrid rhodos = over 30,000.



LIBRARY

by Noni Godfrey, Chair

We will be running the library as a team this year and we welcome new member Zelda O'Connor as part of our team. This team approach has worked very well with our annual garden tour and plant sale and we thought to give it a try with the library. No one felt comfortable taking over the position of librarian, but willing to help. To that end, I will continue with the book & magazine ordering, the computer forms and updating the data base on the NIRS web page. My trusty helper Ruth Fowler will be back again this year to run the library desk during the meetings and Zelda O'Connor will be helping and learning the ropes at the desk as well. So, come on up to the desk and have a chat with the ladies!



I have taken on the role of Treasurer this year so will be wearing a different hat during the meetings and unable to help at the library desk. My library work will all be behind the scenes.

Our three magazines, "The Garden", "Gardens Illustrated" and "Fine Gardening" continue to be very popular with the members. We encourage members to take some of these magazines home for a one-month period. Once the magazines are well circulated for a few months we turn them over to the revenue table for sale.

All our inventory is stored in the locked cupboard and the rolling cabinet in the chair storage room at the meeting hall by special permission from the church. The complete listing of our books and video tapes is on the NIRS web site under category and under alphabetical order by title. We cannot possibly put out all the books for display, so take a few minutes to search through our listing on the internet and just ask for the books you require.

In conclusion, I remind all that only current NIRS members may sign out books and magazines. Please make sure to sign and leave the card for the librarian. Also, please remember to bring back any books or magazines held over the summer, to the September meeting.

"No matter what experience you have, you should always refresh your mind with a book."

Noni Godfrey,
Library Team Leader

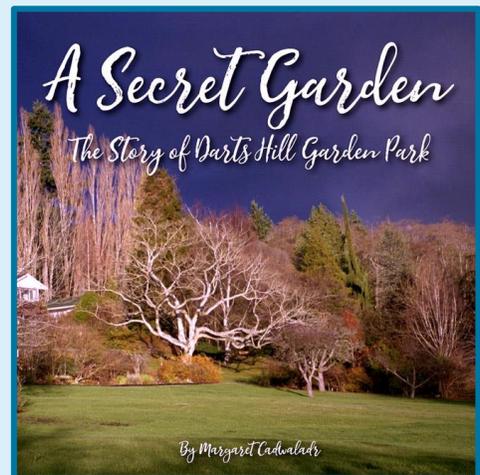
FALL 2019 PROGRAM

Dave Godfrey , Garth Wedemire and Judy Walker - Committee

As covered above, on September 10th, we have associate member John Deniseger lined up to present his program "Why Do I Garden?"

On October 8th, Margaret Cadwaladr will return to give a presentation of her latest book, "A Secret Garden: The Story of Darts Hill Garden Park". A few years ago, Margaret gave us a presentation on her book "In Veronica's Garden" about Veronica Milner and the creation of Milner Gardens.

In this book, Margaret tells the story of Francisca Darts who was a passionate plants-person. She spent her lifetime building a beautiful garden called "Darts Hill" on 168th Street just outside White Rock, B.C., which is now a Surrey Public Garden/Park.



Then on November 12th, NIRS Past President Judi Murakami will also return to give her presentation on the "Gardens of Bremen Conference 2018". Due to technical difficulties, Judi was unable to give her presentation in April and has agreed to try once again. Her colourful presentation is sure to please!

The Christmas dinner and party on the 10th will be our December program, which is always enjoyable and lots of fun. It starts early at 5 PM so be sure to mark your calendar for this one.

Also, members are reminded to submit photographs of their gardens throughout the seasons for our "Members' Photo Night" presentation at our January 14, 2020 meeting. Email your photos to Garth Wedemire at gwedemire@gmail.com and be sure to include "Summer Photos" in the subject line. Garth always provides a terrific visual and audio presentation that makes for an enjoyable program.

If any member has suggestions for future programs, please let me or Garth or Judy know, and we will try to accommodate. See you at the meetings!

EDITOR'S NOTES

Hello everyone, I hope you enjoy the newsletter. I am by no means an editor or computer whiz, or an English major, but wanted the newsletter to continue so took the job. It has been a huge learning curve- formatting, inserting pictures and text to fit on a page, and even learning how to make a page!!

I must give Noni a huge "Thank you" for teaching me so much about the word program and all its functions. If I remember ½ of what she has taught me, I should be able to stumble through future issues. Thanks also to Jake for a lesson on newsletter making and for the Rhodos 101 series. We will also be featuring a series from Paul Wurz called 'Paul's favourites' beginning in October. Rose Webber has also offered her expertise in publishing. This is what make a great club, members helping each other out.

I'm reaching out to all members to submit any tidbits, helpful tips or articles on: rhodos, tools, pest controls, companion plants, any garden experiences you have enjoyed or even disappointments. Submissions can be a short paragraph or a page full.

You don't need to be an expert to share experiences. We can all learn from each other and even have a good laugh over our garden endeavours.

Marcel Bombezin is 'Keeping on the Edge of Technology' with his chemical free idea for slug control.

