

THE RHODOTELLER



Frosty R. 'campylogynum' photo by Garth Wedemire

Theme: Frosty Plants

Thank you to everyone who submitted their frosty photos in December.

Meetings & Events

- Jan 3 Executive Meeting
- Jan 10 General Meeting at Comox United Church at 7:30 pm
- Feb 4 Qualicum Beach Seedy Saturday
www.qbseedysaturday.ca



Frosty rose photo by Naomi Chester

President's View

by Dave Godfrey

Wow! Another rip-roaring success for the North Island Christmas party! After a two-year hiatus, it was delightful to return to our previous format with lots of fun and games. Thanks to our executive elves for arriving early to help set up and decorate the hall. Around 5 PM members and guests began to arrive, along with their contribution to the potluck dinner.

Once again, we had guessing games to challenge the mind with music and hot apple cider to set the mood during the social hour prior to dinner. Congratulations to Keith Russell, Joe Stefiuk and Patty Matthews for winning the candy jars with their closest guesses (Keith was bang on with 80 in one small jar, and Patty and Joe only out by one with their guesses!)



A BIG thank you to Noni for making candy jars, the game sheets, and the cider; to Carolyn for cooking and carving the turkey, and to Judi Murakami for preparing the ham. And not to be missed are thanks to all those members who provided the delicious dishes for the meal and dessert; and of course, Antje for organizing it all and keeping chaos out of the kitchen.



Following the dinner, it was time once again for the Trivia game, which brought lots of questions and laughs for the 8 teams of six players. Congratulations to the winning team of the 'Mistletoes' (Joanne Williams, Jill Gould, Andrew Fowler, Dan Prain, and Helen Stefiuk) with 29 of a possible 42 points. Right behind them with 28 points was the second-place team 'Aloe Vera' (Judy

Chrysler, Dorothy Law, Sue Klapwijk, Lynn Gray, Linda Fowler, and Naomi Chester). Throughout the game, there were 5 rounds of 'Heads & Tails' with prizes ranging from \$42 to \$31. Congratulations to all the winners, and to the door prize winners: Kelly Seldon winner of the R. 'Daphnoides' and Joanne Williams winner of the hot chocolate maker. *There will be more photos of the evening posted on our webpage.*



At the time of writing, we have just about reached the Winter solstice and our days will begin getting longer. That means winter is only days away and spring is just around the corner. There's still lots of time to browse your seed or plant catalogues and start planning for another season.

In the coming weeks, I will be preparing the 2023 Members Booklet which will go to the printers in early January. So, for those who have yet to renew their 2023 membership, please do so soon in order to be included in the booklet.

For our January meeting on the 10th, we will have a presentation by Garth Wedemire on three must-see gardens in BC - UBC Botanical Garden, Finnerty Garden in Victoria, and Milner Garden in Qualicum Beach. Come join us to enjoy Garth's presentation.

That's all for this month! Take care and stay safe.



Frosty rhodo photo by Dan Ryan

Giving Back



On Thursday, December 15th, NIRS President Dave Godfrey presented a cheque for \$250 to the Comox Valley Food Bank's Deputy Executive Director, Justin LaFortune, and Executive Director David Reynolds.

On behalf of the North Island chapter members, a cheque for \$250 was also presented to Dale Erhart, President of the Comox Bay Care Society for their ongoing support to the community. Thank you to members who contributed to these worthy organizations.



Membership

by Dan Ryan

Forty-six people attended our Christmas social and potluck dinner on December 13th. We currently have 68 members including 7 Associate Members.

Thank you to all the members who took advantage of the "Early Renewal Program", the winners are Margaret and Raymond Morin. Congratulations!

The dues for membership are; regular \$40.00 and \$10.00 for an associate membership (must hold a regular membership with another ARS Chapter). You can mail your cheque, payable to NIRS, to P.O. Box 3183 Courtenay B.C. V9N 5N4 or e-transfer \$40.00 to the Club Treasurer Noni Godfrey (nonigod@shaw.ca).

Happy New Year, we are looking forward to 2023.

Ways and Means: Jan. draw & door prizes by Aubrey Ferris



R. 'Hallelujah'

Growth Habit: large (5 x 5 feet), zone 4b, colour red, filtered to full sun, blooms in May. Bright rose-red trusses are densely packed on a bed of deep forest green leaves. The leaves have a mid-rib crease and are pointed, creating a unique visual show after the flowering season ends. A year-round beauty. (Can see more on page 139 in Greer book).



R. 'Midsummer'

(Thanks to Garth Wedemire for this donation)

Colour is Pink, not fragrant, compact truss of about 13 flowers, late bloomer, height 5 feet in 10 years, good to -23°C



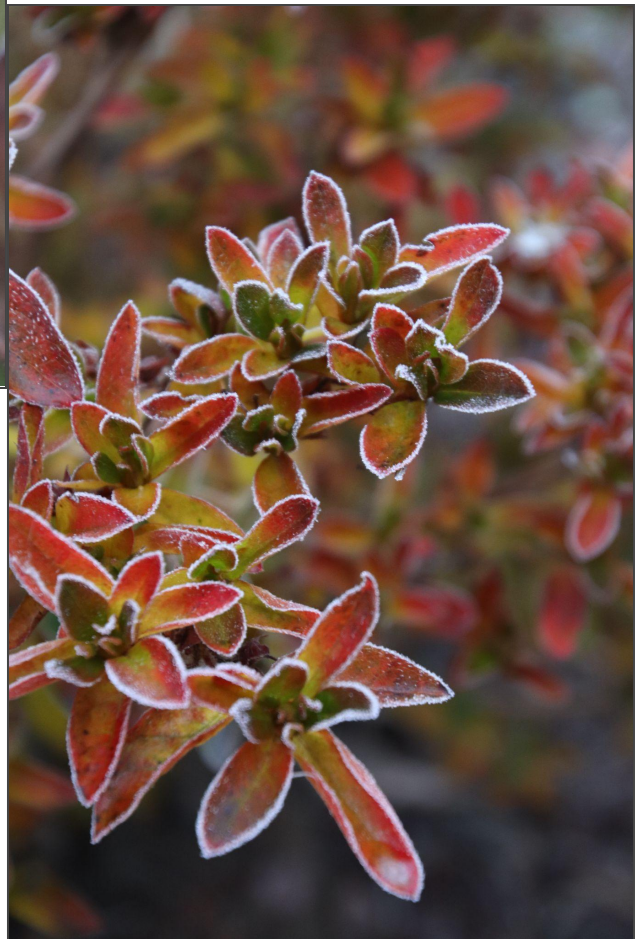
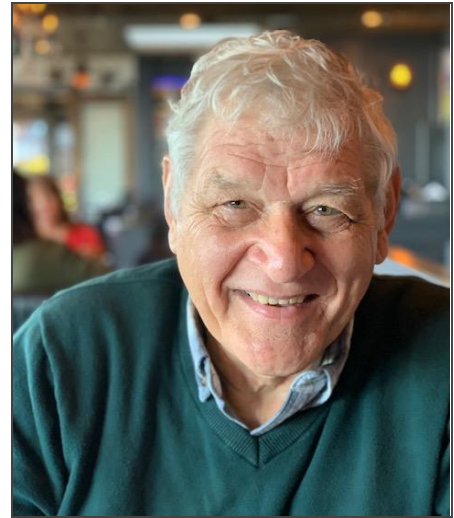
R. 'Buttermint'

Predominate flower colour is yellow, not fragrant, blooms in midseason, 3" long medium green leaves, dense and compact, best grown in some shade, grows 3 feet in 10 years, cold hardy to -21°C. (Can see more on page 106 in Greer book).

Presentation by Garth Wedemire:

"Three Public Gardens You've Gotta See"

On January 10th join us for an armchair visit to a trio of spectacular British Columbia gardens: UBC, Finnerty and Milner. Come and enjoy Garth's photographic and verbal descriptions of these "must-see" gardens.



Frosty R. 'moupinense' (above)

and Frosty 'Elsie Lee'

photos by Garth Wedemire

Member Profile

by Kathy Haigh

Kathy Haigh is feeling rather awkward writing a profile about herself, but the inquiring minds of some NIRS members felt it was time to know her better, so here goes.

Growing up Kathy saw herself as the classic prairie girl who was fascinated by oceans. She was born and raised in central Alberta and lived briefly in Edmonton, and for decades in Calgary and Cochrane. There was a two-year break from sub-zero winters when her family moved to Katy, Texas for her then-husband's job. Upon returning to the deep freeze, they decided to investigate retirement in a warmer Canadian climate. And so, once their children (now 27 and 25) were set up away at university they moved to Comox.



Kathy's education and career unfolded in an unconventional order. Immediately following high school she worked as a reservations sales agent at Wardair Canada (with computers but before the internet!) and took advantage of great travel opportunities. Then she worked at Alberta Liquor Control Board stores and head office, on the management track, which came to an end after the fallout of a nasty labour strike. By this time Kathy had been married a few years and decided to get a Business Diploma from Mount Royal College. After working for a human resources consulting firm for a bit, she pursued a Communications Studies Degree at the University of Calgary. Kathy was not only a "mature student" but she also was pregnant twice while at university. Devastatingly, her first baby died of SIDS. But she continued on her path and the next baby was born three months after convocation. After some infant health issues, and a third baby, Kathy decided that she would be a "stay at home" mother for her son and daughter. However, she engaged in several community, school and social service-types of volunteer endeavours over the next twenty years.

Shortly after moving to the Comox Valley in 2015 from Calgary, Kathy joined the Newcomers' Club which was a very efficient way to meet folks, learn about the community and participate in activities of all sorts. At one of the meetings, the guest speaker was a Project Watershed biologist who spoke about the environmental work they were doing. Kathy was intrigued by the organization's positive and action-oriented mission and soon after began volunteering at fundraising and outreach events, promoting the local work on near-shore and shoreline ecosystems. She became a Project Watershed Director in 2016 and put her fundraising, communications and business skills to work as the Kus-kus-sum project kicked off. She is currently the Chair of the Board of Directors and considers herself a late-blooming environmentalist - still volunteering her time to worthy causes.

Almost exactly three years after moving to Comox, Kathy separated from her husband (don't get her started on why!), went travelling to be with family, returned and bought her own home in Courtenay in 2019. Kathy transformed her yard from the standard lawn with one prominent tree and a peripheral flower bed to a more natural, drought-tolerant and varied landscape. With the

design assistance of Karen Cummins and a few other hired contractors, both the front and back yard were redone to eliminate lawns and create a multi-season habitat for pollinators while growing food crops as well as beautiful flowers and shrubs. Sticking with the design concept of never using a straight line if a curved line works, the vegetable beds are uniquely key-hole-shaped - just one of many ideas learned in a permaculture course. Likewise, the curved flag-stone path and curvy wrought-iron gate lend an informal tone. This outdoor renovation began in March 2020, which mostly was good timing as Kathy met many neighbours who were walking by getting their Covid-era fresh air and exercise while she was doing the same working in her yard. She now has twelve rhodos - acquired from NIRS draws and sales - all of which are small but growing nicely.

Now happily divorced and loving her independence, she enjoys spending time in nature and has taken to eco-tourism. Last August she went on a "safari" at Seal River, MB to see polar bears and beluga whales, and this past September she went to BC's Great Bear Rainforest on a sailing ship and saw numerous grizzly bears and whales and a plethora of sea life.

As an active member of the Comox Paddlers' Club, Kathy frequently takes her sea kayak out on day trips near home with friends. A few times a year she goes on adventures from other Vancouver Is. locations and to other islands (Quadra, Cortes, Spring, Cormorant, Malcolm) and/or lodge destinations (Broken Islands, Discovery Is.) and/or ship-based kayaking (Columbia III in the Broughton Archipelago). She really enjoys being on the water and watching for wildlife.

Kathy has been a member of NIRS for five years, learning much about the iconic west coast spring blooms, and is editor of the *Rhodoteller*.



Frosty R. 'luteum' photo by Garth Wedemire



Frosty azalea



Frosty daphne cneorum & leaves



Frosty nandia 'Fire Power'



Frosty pieris

All 4 photos by Diana Scott

Library News

by Noni Godfrey

It's a sign of the times they say! Nobody wants to read a book anymore; everything is online these days! How many times have we all heard these words? Well, it's finally come to our club's library. We have been having fewer and fewer members taking out the books, so your executive has concluded that we don't need the full library anymore.

My trusty helper of many years, Ruth Fowler, has decided to retire from the position as of January 2023. So, with that in mind and the fact that fewer and fewer books are required, we are going to a different system of book sign-out for a trial period. Our full list of books is on the website www.nirrhodos.ca and can be accessed at any time. Please feel free to request any books that you might wish to read from our library by putting in your request either to nonigod@shaw.ca or bringing your request to a current meeting. We will endeavour to fill your request at the current or earliest meeting.

The library cart will no longer be open during the meetings. However, the magazines will still be available for sign-out at the front of the meeting room from myself or a helper, when and if I find a new one.

In closing, I remind all that only current NIRS members may sign out books and magazines. Please make sure to sign and leave the card, or the yellow magazine slip, for the librarian. Also, please remember to bring back any books or magazines signed out at previous meetings.

"A good day is one where I can at least browse through a book and look at the pretty pictures of flowers and gardens."



Frosty PJM and conifer photo by Diana Scott

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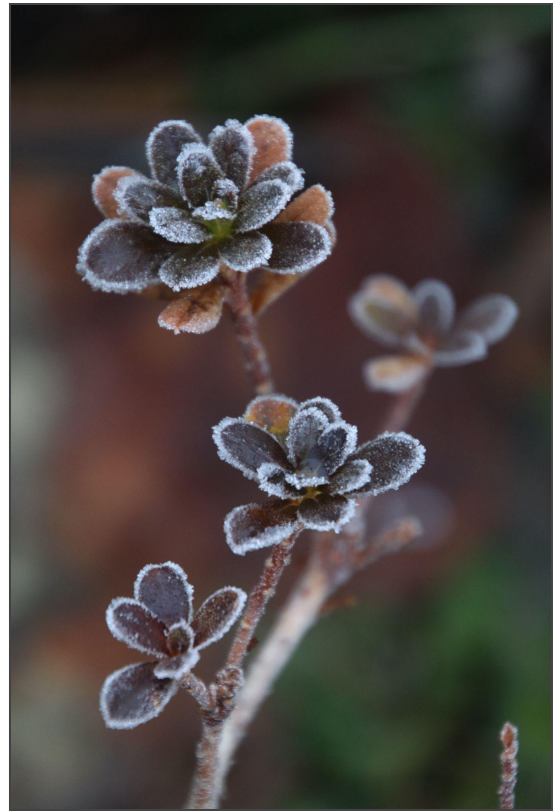
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<http://www.nirrhodos.ca>



Frosty R. 'Patricia' (top), Mahonia x media 'Charity'

photos by Garth Wedemire