

# THE RHODOTELLER



*Viburnum 'davidii'* photo by Diana Scott

## Meetings & Events

### 2024

- Jan 3 Executive Meeting
- Jan 9 General Meeting "Panel of Experience"
- Feb 20 General Meeting TBA
- May 2-5 ARS Spring Convention in Bellingham, WA



*Skimmia japonica* berries photo by Diana Scott



## President's View

By Naomi Chester

*"Anyone who thinks gardening begins in the spring and ends in the fall is missing the best part of the whole year; for gardening begins in January with the dream."* Josephine Nuese.

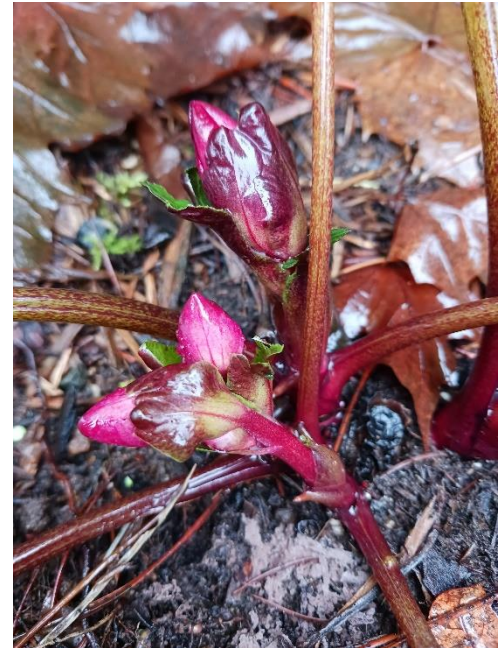
Happy New Year everyone! It was wonderful to see so many of you at our Christmas party. As ever, it was a fun highlight of our social calendar. With the festive season ending, we now turn our attention to our Winter/Spring meeting calendar. We have lots of great programming lined up to keep those garden inspirations coming.

Early January often calls us to rest and plan our Spring plantings, though I know many of us will still take advantage of any fine weather days to potter around our gardens and look out for the snowdrops, Winter aconites and signs of new growth. The cold winter days invite us to get cozy and read our gardening books and magazines plus there's the excitement of the seed catalogues! Later in the month we turn our attention to the winter pruning and tidying up of any pruning that nature took care of.

For those who haven't yet provided me with your species/hybrid rhododendron lists for the database, please consider taking some time this month to either email them to me or hand write your lists for collection at a meeting.

Looking forward to seeing you at the January meeting for our "Panel of Experience". If you have any questions that you would like answered by the panel, please email them to me as soon as possible. Thank you!

Wishing you all the very best for 2024! Naomi



*Helleborus flower buds starting to come up*



*'Ebony Pearl' photos by Naomi Chester*

## Another Wonderful Party

by Dave Godfrey

On Tuesday, December 12<sup>th</sup>, thirty-eight members and guests gathered at the church hall to enjoy another delicious potluck meal and some great entertainment.



At 4 PM, the hall was prepared by members of the executive in anticipation of the arrival of members at 5 PM. Thanks to Noni Godfrey, we had hot apple cider available along with some guessing game sheets and the usual jellybean guessing game jars for entertainment during the social hour prior to dinner at 6 PM.

The dinner was once again a wonderful assortment of homemade dishes to go along with the ham and turkey provided by the club. To

complete the meal, several members brought some mouth-watering desserts. Needless to say, there was very little left after all had been served and several had seconds.

Following the dinner, members were reshuffled to different tables to prepare for the annual Trivia game. This exercise of getting everyone organized to their assigned teams is nothing short of complete chaos, along the lines of “herding cats”!

With everyone finally situated on one of 7 teams, we began with one of five ‘Heads or Tails’ games. The average prize for each game was \$32 which meant that most in attendance participated. Congratulations to all the winners, including our dear Gwen seated in her walker.



*Christmas Party photos by Noni Godfrey*





At the conclusion of the Trivia game, team "Jingle Bells" (Jill Gould, Judi Murakami, Dan Prain, Judy Chrysler, and Ruth Fowler) were the ultimate winners with 27 out of a possible 39 points. Each received a small chocolate prize as their reward.

The winner of the "Ju Jube Jar" was Judi Murakami with a guess of 101 close to the 103 in the container. Janet Campbell won the "Jellybean" candy jar with her guess of 260, closest to the 256.

It was then time to raffle off the centerpieces carefully crafted by

some of our ladies at Nadine Boudreau's house on the Saturday prior. Congratulations to all the winners and we do ask that those who took home a centerpiece, please consider returning the tray and candle holder pieces and any decorations to one of our meetings, in order that they can be reused in future. We thank all those who attended and to help make the annual event another fun evening. We hope to see many of you back next year, especially some of those who could not attend this year.







Christmas Centerpieces photo by Antje Guertler

## Giving Back

by Noni Godfrey

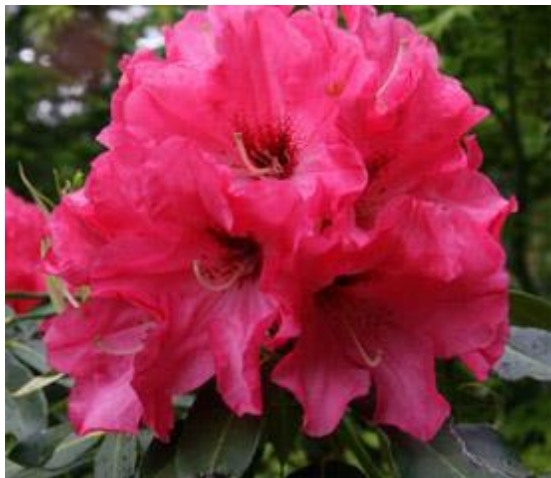
On Thursday, December 14<sup>th</sup>, NIRS Vice President Dave Godfrey presented a cheque for \$250 to the Comox Valley Food Bank's Deputy Executive Director, Justin LaFortune, and Executive Director David Reynolds.



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

## Ways & Means

By Aubrey Ferris



## January 2024 Raffle Prizes

### Rhododendron 'Isabel Pierce'

#### Predominant Flower Color:

Pink Flower openly funnel-shaped, wavy to frilled lobes, 3½" across, deep purplish pink fading paler in center, prominent reddish-brown blotch, narrow stripes of deep pink from base to edges. Ballshaped truss holds about 10 flowers.

**Parentage** : Anna x Lem's Goal

Cold Hardy Temp -15 °C

*photo by Garth Wedemire*



### Rhododendron nakaharae

**Color:** Red; Funnel-campanulate, brick-red to rose red. Inflorescence 2-3 flowered.

**Bloom Time:** Late to Very Late

**Foliage Description:** Leaves elliptic to ellipticobovate, up to ½" long, both surfaces hairy.

**Plant Habit:** Prostrate shrub, creeping and very compact: Height: 1 foot in 10 years. Cold Hardiness Temp: -21°C

## Membership Report by Noni Godfrey

For the past year of 2023 North Island had a total of 82 members which included 7 Associate members. (Associate members have a current membership in another chapter.)

To date we have 66 renewals or carry overs for the 2024 membership year which includes 7 Associates. Unfortunately, there are a few members who have yet to renew their membership.

If you haven't yet renewed, please do so as soon as possible to be included in the Members Yearbook. Also, if you have any changes in your email address, phone number or mailing address please advise as soon as possible, so updates can be made to the yearbook.

**Congratulations to the lucky winner of our "Membership Draw for 2024".  
Our lucky winner is long-time member, Jane Drown from Campbell River.**



## Our Program for January 9, 2024, Meeting:

### “Panel of Experience” by NIRS Members

Our January program will feature a round table discussion about gardening issues with questions submitted by our members. If you have a question about anything garden related, please submit it to President Naomi who will moderate our panel. Members of the panel will provide answers based on their experience. Try to send your email to [naomichester@yahoo.com](mailto:naomichester@yahoo.com) by January 5<sup>th</sup> to give panel members an opportunity to do some research. Thanks, and hope to see you there.

## Our Program for February 20, 2024, Meeting:

### “Rhododendrons Recommended by NIRS Members”

presented by Chris Southwick

Our February program will be a little different, and we hope that you all will enjoy this different format. The idea is for NIRS members to share with other NIRS members some information about a rhododendron, azalea, or a plant that they really enjoy.

Asking people to pick their “favourite” is almost impossible for plant lovers. So, get creative and think of a plant or two that you think others, particularly new members, might enjoy in their own gardens. This is a Rhododendron Society, so the emphasis should be on those plants, but if you are eager to share a special companion plant or a special tree, for example, that is fine too. Just ensure you tell me why you chose those plants.

How does this work? Well, once you have thought about which plant(s) you'd like to share, please send me an email at: [csouthwick99@gmail.com](mailto:csouthwick99@gmail.com) with a) the name of the plant, b) the reason you have picked this plant and c) a jpeg photo(s) of the plant (one closeup and one of the whole plant). If you don't have a photo of it, I will do my best to find one.

I would like to have all the information from folks by the end of January, so that I have enough time to put together a PowerPoint presentation. Once I have completed the PowerPoint, the photos will be projected at the February meeting. I will ask each member who submitted plant photos and names to say a few words about each plant they have submitted. If you are too shy, I could also do that part for you. If you can't attend that night, you could still submit your choices to me, and I will do the rest.

Thanks, I hope to hear from most everyone. Chris Southwick, NIRS Associate member.



*photo by Diana Scott*

# 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Qualicum Beach Seedy Saturday

*'Seeding the Future'*

Qualicum Beach Civic Centre

**Saturday, February 3, 2024**

10 am – 3:30 pm



- Seed Swap
- Speakers: Bonnie Zand, Michalina Hunter
- Master Gardeners answering questions
- Seed and Plant Vendors
- Informational Exhibitors
- Nursery Displays
- Door Prizes
- Seedy Café
- 50-50 Draws (cash only)
- No ATM on site

Bring  
your seeds  
for the  
seed swap!

**Admission by Donation**

Qualicum Beach Seedy Saturday Association

[www.qbseedysaturday.ca](http://www.qbseedysaturday.ca) • [info@seedysaturday.com](mailto:info@seedysaturday.com)



## Plant of the Month

By Ron Sutton

### **Rhododendron x planetum**

Here is an interesting and little-known species rhododendron that is considered a natural hybrid, that is why there is a small "X" in front of the name, signifying a cross. It was discovered growing in south central China.

Information on this plant is limited. One reputable site says it is a cross between *R. sutchuenense* and *R. oreodoxa* and listed under subsection *Fortunea*. Another site says it is probably a hybrid of *R. decorum*.

What I can say about it, is that it's a fine plant. It buds up reliably, has compact upright growing habit and can take full sun. The dull green elliptical leaves have no tomentum or indumentum.

*R. planetum* flowers here in early to mid April with lax trusses of approximately 10-12 light pink flowers. It isn't a fast grower, approximately 3-4" a year, but will be taller than 6 feet high eventually, from images I have seen. It is hardy to at least -20°C, as both parents are that hardy. It does show some nice colouring of young branch stems as seen in the photo below.

Unfortunately, this plant isn't available by any growers that I know of. My plant was purchased from Harold Fearing, who grew it from seed he got from the ARS seed exchange.

*photo taken April 15, 2020*



*photos by Ron Sutton*



Coloured branch structure  
photo taken 2 November 2023



**SAVE THE DATE !**  
**ARS 2024 Spring Convention**  
**Bellingham, Washington**  
**May 2-5, 2024**

**Four Points by Sheraton, Bellingham**  
 Hotel and Conference Center  
 714 Lakeway Drive, Bellingham, WA, USA, 98229  
 Phone: +1 360-671-1011

**Highlights:**

- Pre-Tour: **May 1: Private Gardens around Seattle**
- Convention: **Tours \* Seminars \* Workshops \* Banquets**
- Post-Tour: **May 5: Gardens around Vancouver, Canada**

**Time to check your Passport!**

**Plus:**

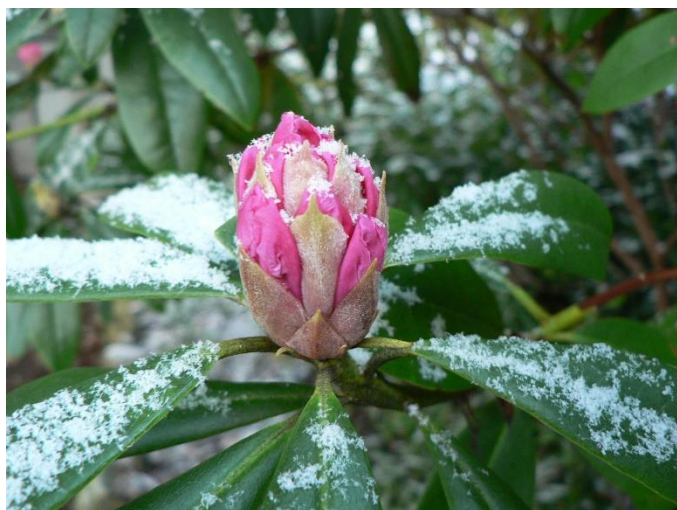
**Plant Sales \* Auctions \* Raffles \* Photo Booth \* Poster Session**

**Help get the message out!**

**Please forward to friends and gardeners in  
 your community and around the globe.**

**Visit [ARS2024.org](http://ARS2024.org) for more information and to register.**





*Frost on 'Christmas Cheer' photo by Diana Scott*



*Corylus avellana 'Red Majestic' photo by Naomi Chester*



*Viburnum photo by Kelly Selden*



*Rhododendron ? photo by Kelly Selden*



*Mahonia 'Winter Sun' photo by Judy Walker*



*Witch Hazel photo by Valerie Ferris*



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Newsletter submission deadline is the 2nd Saturday of each month.

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*Cyclamen hederifolium* photo by Kelly Selden



Frost on a rose - photo by Kelly Selden