

the Rhodoteller

North Island Rhododendron Society

Vol. 40 Number 2 Oct 2025



Meetings and Events

Oct 8 10:00 AM Executive Meeting at the home of Vice-President Nadine Boudreau

Oct 14 General NIRS Meeting @ Comox United Church 7:00 pm (doors open 6:30)
Goodies reminder: M. Nelson, J. Murakami, A. Bayles, S. Murakami

Oct 18 **Rhododendron Sale in Victoria**

The **Victoria Rhododendron Society** and **Ken & Madeleine Webb**

announce a

Huge Rhododendron Sale

Saturday, October 18

from 11 am to 2 pm

5008 Old West Saanich Rd, Victoria.

There will be additional plants from the Norm Todd Propagating Centre and also from John Verwolf.

We have lots of 2 gallons and need to reduce our inventory.

Everyone welcome!

Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden – Fall Catalogue The 2025 Fall Catalog is now live on our website!

This year's catalog is full of treasures — **unique companion plants, rare Rhododendron species, and hardy hybrid selections.**

Ordering timeline:

- **September 17:** the catalog will become available to the general public.

No need to log into the member section of the website, just click the link below to start shopping:

 [**START SHOPPING HERE**](#) 

Password: 2025fallplants
(case sensitive)

*International orders - please see instructions

Happy planting and thank you for supporting the Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden!



SAVE THE DATE !

American Rhododendron Society

2026 Spring Convention

Vancouver Island, British Columbia

Rhododendrons & Companions

in a Changing Climate

April 21 - 26, 2026

Highlights:

- Garden Tours in Qualicum Beach, Parksville, Nanaimo
- Pre-and Post-tours of public and private gardens in Victoria and the Cowichan Valley
- Speakers, Plant Sales, Banquet in Qualicum Beach
- Partnering with the Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden: Annual Meeting and Speakers from RSBG

*Organized by the ARS Chapters
on Vancouver Island, British Columbia*

More information coming soon!

BC COUNCIL OF GARDEN CLUBS FALL MEETING

Saturday, October 25, 2025

10:00AM to 3:00PM

**GREAT SPEAKERS, VENDORS, PRIZE
DRAWS, LIGHT LUNCH, AND MORE!**

Our speakers



DR. Elizabeth Elle,
Professor, Simon
Fraser University



Mikhayla Roth, UBC
horticultural student



Balreet Mandair, BC
Agriculture in the
Classroom

**Register
today!**

Online Registration

[https://bcgardenclubs.com/resources/meeting-
registration/](https://bcgardenclubs.com/resources/meeting-registration/)

**Bonsor Recreation
Complex
6550 Bonsor Avenue
Burnaby, BC**



As I begin this note, **an important message:**

Our upcoming, and ongoing **monthly meetings will start at 7:00, doors will open at 6:30.** Formerly we began our regular monthly meetings at 7:30.



Acer palmatum by J. Looy

Last month, we began our meeting by recognizing two longtime and generously giving members for our Rhododendron Society: Don and Dorothy Law - joined in 1990, and Lois and Jim Clyde - joined in 1993. We celebrated them with the award of "Honourary Lifetime Membership".

Fall used to be a time to "clean up the garden", and when I read my older garden books, (are books from the 1990's old?), it was a time to rake the leaves, pull out the annuals from the soil, and just generally make everything neat and tidy.

Tidying up has changed, and I believe I witnessed an improvement this year with the increase in pollinators that overwintered in the garden debris I used as mulch; I had raked it last Fall under trees and tossed it under my perennials.

As well, separate from the plants, I have really enjoyed all the activity in the two "habitat trees" we created when we cut down a couple of firs several years ago, the pilated woodpeckers, downy woodpeckers, creepers and flickers are definitely enjoying some tasty treats in our backyard as the "habitat trees" gradually return to the soil.

As we move more and more to digital or online, a couple of sites to check for good resources:

- ARS (American Rhododendron Society) for example - <http://rhodyman.net/Winter.html>
- The Vancouver Island Regional Library's virtual gardening series. These can all be accessed online through the VURL. There is one on rhododendrons presented by Chris Southwick. <https://virl.bc.ca/learn/skills/gardening/virtual-gardening/>
- RHS (Royal horticultural Society) <https://www.rhs.org.uk/plants/rhododendron>
- <http://www.lindagilkeson.ca/index.html>

Happy Gardening, and see you at 7:00, Tuesday October 14th.

Margaret Griffith-Cochrane

President, NIRS.

Items of Interest

List of Websites & Resources from Judi's Presentation on the ARS Conference

Atlantic Rhododendron and Horticultural Society

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5JTHSUvRZHQ>

Halifax Public Gardens: planting carpet beds

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5RhjkDQ5_Gg

Freeman Patterson books:

- <https://www.freemanpatterson.com/books.htm>

Lucinda Flemer, founder of Kingsbrae:

- <https://gardendrum.com/2014/07/11/canada-honours-philanthropist-gardener-lucinda-flemer/>

Cornhill Nursery

- <https://www.cornhillnursery.com/>

Seafoam Lavender

- <https://lavendercnada.com>

Sharon Bryson Willow Garden

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5JTHSUvRZHQ>

Sharon and Jamie Ellison are both on FB.

Revenue Table

by Maureen & Judy

Thank you to all who donated plants at last month's meeting. Two tables full of plants! The Revenue Table brought in about \$65.00. Please continue to bring in plants and especially tulip or daffodil bulbs you may have.

Next month we will also bring more Library books to sell at the table as well. If you are digging and dividing any perennials in your garden, please remember to pot some up for next spring's Plant Sale. Thank you to Naomi for helping me out, Judy was at home looking after her sick cat.

Making excellent garden amendments at home: All about Composting



Tyler has been a keen home gardener for many moons now, and is also responsible for the planting and maintenance of Courtenay's municipal gardens. His original training is as an Environmental Technologist, and he went on to pursue his Red Seal Journeyman Horticulturist from Kwantlen Poly Technical University. Working on farms and in nurseries he developed his appreciation for healthy soils and amendments. His talk and slide show will cover the ingredients, processes, methods and details to make the most out of your garden debris. Tyler has worked, learned and collaborated with many garden professionals, and became a Master Composter at the Victoria Compost Education Center. He loves to chat about entomology, pruning, vegetables, photography and dogs.

Propagation Updates

The shade cloth has been removed to let the last rays of the summer prepare the Rhodos for the Fall & Winter.



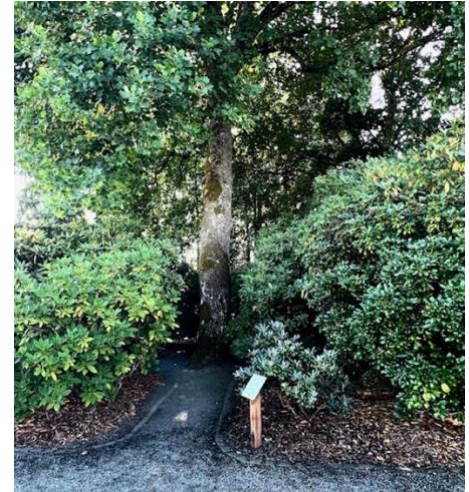
As of Oct 1, 2025 the daily watering and checking of all the Rhodos will discontinue. They will be tended to 2 – 3 times per week mostly by Wolfgang and Antje.

Great job by the volunteers - the Rhodos are doing very well and it seems our success rate is better than some other chapters doing propagation. Huge pat on the back to all.

Naomi and Carolyn, on behalf of the club, presented Wayne with a thank you card and gift card for all his work in helping the propagation group to run smoothly, performing repairs, plumbing jobs, wasp duty, etc. He was most appreciative.

Rhododendron Garden August Work party *by Maureen Denny*

Thanks to all the volunteers who attended September's work party. The next and last work party of the year will be held on October 16 at 10 am (weather permitting). Hopefully the weather will cooperate; if not the work party will be held October 23. If you have not come out to one of our fun work sessions yet, this will be your last chance until next March. Come and join us



Ways and Means Raffle

by Aubrey Ferris

Raffle Items October 2025

Rhododendron catawbiense 'Boursault'



It is a striking broadleaf evergreen shrub known for its lush foliage and vibrant spring blooms

Flower Color: Lavender to purple, with occasional reddish-brown markings.

Bloom Time: Late spring to early summer (typically June)

Height & Spread: Grows 6–10 feet tall and wide; can reach up to 15 feet with age.

Foliage: Glossy, dark green, evergreen leaves that provide year-round interest

Excellent for borders and hedges, privacy screens, accent planting and privacy screens accent planting and wildlife gardens (attracts hummingbirds and butterflies): Prefers partial shade; tolerates full sun if protected from harsh afternoon rays. *Page 108 in "Greer"*.

Vireya Rhododendron 'Elizabeth Seton'



('Dr. Hermann Sleumer' x 'Pink Delight') x ('Pink Delight' x jasminiflorum)

Growth Habit: Typically, open and twiggy, often grown in containers or conservatories

Flowers: Note that this one had white flowers this July.

Blooming: Can flower several times a year, often in spring and fall.

Foliage: Evergreen, with glossy leaves and a compact form.

Size: approximately 3 feet by 2 feet in 10 years. It's likely to be a showstopper in a greenhouse or sheltered garden.

As we return to meetings from the summer break, we welcome new members to our club and enjoy catching up with our Rhodo buddies.

NIRS memberships expire at the end of the calendar year, so we collect your renewals in the fall. Those who renew their memberships in the fall will have their name in a draw at the Christmas party to win back the price of their membership.

Membership dues of \$40 may be paid at the meeting by card using Square, cash, or cheque. You can find Nadine and I at the membership table beside the meeting check-in area.

The American Rhododendron Society (ARS) has notified the NIRS executive of a change regarding membership fees related to the ARS Journals.

- The ARS will begin issuing three Journals (JARS) effective January 1, 2026.
- All REGULAR members must change to either DIGITAL or PRINT + Digital.
- There will be no dues increase for those opting for DIGITAL JARS. All DIGITAL members must have a current email address on file to ensure delivery of their digital journals. Upon publication, a link to the digital version will be sent to all members.
- Dues for the PRINT + Digital JARS will increase. Members must pay an additional US\$10/year (CDN\$15) if they wish to continue receiving a print journal.
- If you wish to have the PRINT version of JARS you must advise me and pay CDN\$15.
- **We will assume that NIRS members want to receive only the DIGITAL version (which does not have an extra fee) unless you tell me otherwise.**

Rhododendron 'President Roosevelt'

This a popular old hybrid of unknown parentage, that apparently came from Holland before 1930. It is known for its variegated leaves, which are dark green with streak of yellow in the center. There are so few variegated rhododendrons.

This rhododendron has beautiful picotee flowers of off white with red edges. In late April to early May it has tight trusses of 12-15 flowers. It is said to slowly grow to 5 feet high in 10 years, and is hardy to -18°C.

It doesn't have a desirable growth habit, as it tends to fan out than grow upright.



It also doesn't hold its variegation well, with some leaves reverting to solid green, as seen in the photo below.

It is also known as 'Tumbling Teddy' for its weak root system that results in stem breakage from the roots, although I have not experienced this.

This plant can take some sun, but should be protected from the afternoon sun.

My plant, seen in the photo, is about 7 years old. I don't water it as much as I do other rhododendrons, due to it being surrounded by other, less demanding, plants.

Photo left, taken May 3rd, 2025 shows a mix of variegated and solid green leaves.

If you want one Green Thumb nursery in Nanaimo, lists having some on their website.

Theme for November Newsletter

Fall colors in the Garden



President

Margaret Griffith-Cochrane 250-941-5559

Secretary

Carolyn Chester 250-619-5864

Vice-President

Nadine Boudreau 250-650-1709

Treasurer

Brian Storey 250-871-8848

Director: Ways & Means

Aubrey Ferris 250-941-8888

Director: Membership

Kathy Haigh 250-702-4311

Director: Revenue Table

Judy Walker 250-339-1146

Director: Social Committee

Antje Guertler 250-338-2306

Propagation

Antje Guertler 250-338-2306

Programme Co-ordinators

Maureen Denny & Judy Walker

CVRG Co-ordinator

Maureen Denny 250-890-0522

Sunshine Lady

Joanne Williams 250-941-2540

Publicity

Sheila Borman 250-890-9500

Webmaster

Ross Griffith-Cochrane 250-941-5559

Facebook

Kathy Haigh & Naomi Chester

Library

Noni Godfrey 250-871-0717

Newsletter Editor

Sheryl Murakami 403-703-6254

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

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PO Box 3183, Courtenay BC V9N 5N4

<http://www.nirsrhodos.ca>



Echinacea by D. Scott



Sunflower by D. Scott