

# The Oak

## Newsletter of the Fraser South Rhododendron Society

Volume 24 Number 2  
February 2010



[www.flounder.ca/FraserSouth](http://www.flounder.ca/FraserSouth)

Fraser South Rhododendron Society  
is a chapter of the  
American Rhododendron Society

Meetings are held at 7:30 p.m. on the  
third Wednesday of each month  
(except June, July and August) at:  
United Church Hall  
5673 - 200th Street  
Langley BC

### This Month's Meeting

Date: Wednesday, February 17, 2010  
Topic: "Plant Propagation"  
Speaker: Dennis Bottemiller

### 2010 Officers

President:	Bill Bischoff	604-589-6134
Past Pres:	Harold Fearing	604-857-4136
Vice Pres:	John Dodd	604-530-0153
Secretary:	Sandy Procter	604-857-0440
Treasurer:	Alan March	604-532-9062
Directors:	Arlene Darby	604-597-1849
	Lori Bayes	360-966-4596
	Matt Groves	604-856-2624
Programme:	Sean Rafferty	604-990-5353
Membership:	Wenonah March	604-532-9062
Newsletter:	Brenda Macdonald	604-990-5353
Website:	Chris Klapwijk	604-581-0925



### Quick Hits

A warm welcome to our new members ...

Bev and Bent Hansen, of  
Abbotsford,  
Donna and Crest Pynch, of  
Langley,

and our not-quite-so-new-but-we-haven't-given-them-an-official-welcome-yet members, Jo and Bob Wright, from Lions Bay.

And, speaking of members, please check the attached 2010 Membership list, to ensure you are on it, and that we have all your particulars current and correct.



## FROM THE PRESIDENT

# Notes From the Chair

Welcome everyone to our new business year. Thanks also for your confidence stated in our last meeting, in electing the new FSRs executive board. That does not mean that you are off the hook, so to speak, everyone is needed during the next 12 months. As we are a multi-talented society, every member will find a task to fit her / his special expertise.

I am just a new member with this society and I was amazed from the start of my membership how well this club functioned. It was one of the reasons that my wife Carla and I became members. Little did I know how fast I could elbow my way up through the ranks to become president. With the

support of the new board and of course all of you we will enjoy an exiting year.

Already plans are made for possible trips to several horticultural interesting places in the USA. These are possibly bus or car-pool events and might include over-night stays.

Also members are needed to offer their gardens for garden tours. Please let us know ASAP so that we can plan this well ahead. We are planning to visit some 4 gardens as a group; perhaps we will do this on 2 separate weekends.

We will also contact garden clubs in our area and share our special events with them. This could mean speakers, plant sales etc. Already 2 such groups have agreed to come to our meetings. Let's make them feel especially welcome and hopefully some will join our society. In turn we will visit other nearby societies and maybe we will end up becoming members there. The idea is to give our members and theirs more opportunities to enjoy events which are of interest but not available otherwise.

Some of the positions of our recent executive board have changed. The multi-talented Dalen Bayes, best known as Santa Klaus, will take a well deserved rest, his wife Lori however is still on the board. Our so very punctual Mary-Ann Berg, secretary for many years, will use her newly won freedom and travel around the globe. She has been requested to record anything botanically interesting for presentation to our members. Larry Morton (with Karen Linton the gracious hosts to several of our ever so joyous Annual Picnics), has requested a break, he finds little extra time besides his business. Hopefully we will all be invited to their garden next June for our special event.

Speaking of our Picnic, this being one of the main money makers for our society, please start already now to consider donations to the auction. As in past years almost anything is desirable. The exception being used spouses, especially if they don't like gardening. When working in the garden this spring leading up to the Picnic, save as many plant divisions, cuttings and just about everything you normally throw away. Used pots and plant trays of any size are usually available at garden centers for free.

Joan Bengough, our librarian for many years, has requested a replacement. Thank you, Joan, for your friendly service to the society. Harold Fearing is now "Past President", and is requested to attend as many executive meeting as he can. His valuable experience will be needed during the next 12 months.

To all the above mentioned past members of the board, many thanks for your time, good will and talents, given so willingly to all of us. I know we all can still count on them to help to us in the future.

The new members are: Dixie Mueller, librarian; Sandra Procter, secretary; John Dodd, Vice President; and Matt Groves board member. Let us welcome all and thank them for taking on their respective positions.

Several members have asked the executive to search for another meeting place. The reason is mainly noise from other groups on our meeting night. Several places have been suggested and will be visited by board members. We will however keep our meeting date the same so as not to disturb our members in their in their established timetables. If you have a suggestion, please let us know. We are especially looking for a hall that can also be used for our Plant Sale that is on a ground floor with no steps. The hall should also be within Langley or just outside.

Finally, we always need material for our newsletter. Now here is a chance to whet your skills as a writer or a photographer. Well it doesn't have to be all that dramatic. A few lines, or some pictures or both. It can be of botanical interest to all our members. It can be of good humor. Just about anything that catches your interest, please share it with us. Not to worry, our editor is sworn to secrecy, if not published for whatever reasons, no one will know, ever. For now, watch those Rhododendron flower buds, they will open much earlier this year. Please let us know, at one of our meetings, which ones surprised you. Again, take pictures and e-mail them to Brenda Macdonald, our newsletter editor, and be part of one of the finest horticultural newsletter in our district.

Happy growing from,

*Bill Bischoff*



## FROM THE EDITOR

great joy in propagating plants, whether by seed or cuttings, and Dennis will show us some of the science and lore of propagation for Rhododendrons and most other plants.

## Next Month:

Mark Turner is a career photographer located in Bellingham, Washington. He is an avid outdoorsman and gardener and has been published on the covers and inside magazines such as Garden Design, Horticulture, Sunset, Birds and Blooms and others. He has also coauthored Wildflowers of the Pacific Northwest with Phyllis Gustafson, which is now in its fourth printing.

Mark will focus his talk on the composition of garden and other photographs.

## The Business Stuff:

As noted on the front page of this month's Yak, the proposed slate of Directors was elected by acclamation at January's AGM. Kudos and our heartfelt thanks to all those who have accepted these elected responsibilities, as well as to those in the other non-elected positions who do so much to make our organization the success it is.

In addition to the elections and financial report, our AGM always provides a happy and well-deserved celebration of those who have performed above and beyond the expected.

This year, the following awards were presented:

The Ella J. Crabb Memorial Award for 2009

Presented to: Cherry Groves

You cheerfully volunteered to look after organizing the refreshments at our monthly meetings, ensuring that everyone would be involved in the set up and clean up, allowing time off for all to enjoy the evening. It is with pleasure that we present you with this award.

THANK YOU, CHERRY

The Harold Johnson Memorial Award for 2009

Presented to: Bill Bischoff

Bill has contributed greatly to plant sales and meetings with his extensive supply of Cyclamens and Saxifrages.

He has generously opened his garden for tours to allow us to see his collection of some very rare and unusual companion plants, as well as Carla's incredible collection of Orchids.

In appreciation of these things, we present the Harold Johnson Memorial Award.

THANK YOU, BILL

Unfortunately the recipient of the Gerry Emerson Memorial Award was unable to come to the January meeting, so presentation of that award will take place later this year.

The Bronze Medal of the American Rhododendron Society, 2009

You have served for many years on the Executive Committee of the Fraser South Rhododendron Society as Director and Vice President.

You enthusiasm for knowledge and diversity has inspired all of us.

You readily volunteer when needed, for raffles, organizing the Plant Sale, our conference at Harrison Hot Springs, delivering plants, contributing plants for raffles and auctions, as well as treating us to wonderful photographs and stories of your adventures in China.

For your tireless contributions to the Fraser South Rhododendron Society, we are pleased to bestow upon you, our highest award, the A.R.S. Bronze Medal  
Sean Rafferty

**OTHER DUTIES AS ASSIGNED:**

☛ On duty this week as the Tea Brigade are Arlene Darby, Barb St. Hilaire, and Dixie and Margaret Mueller. Waiting in the wings for next month are Karen Linton and Donna Pyrch.

☛ The rest of us have lighter but not negligible responsibilities - don't forget to bring a little something to donate to the raffle table as well as your spare loonies and toonies to purchase the tickets.

**THE CALENDAR:**

<b>Wednesday, February 17</b>	<b>Fraser South Chapter Dennis Bottemiller of the RSF - "Propagation"</b>
<b>Thursday, February 18</b>	<b>Vancouver Chapter Dennis Bottemiller of the RSF - "Nurseryman's Nirvana"</b>
<b>Monday, February 22</b>	<b>Fraser Valley Chapter Brenda Falk of Tanglebank Nursery - "Hellebores"</b>
<b>Tuesday, February 23</b>	<b>Peace Arch Chapter Gerry Gibbens - "What I Have Learned as a Gardener"</b>
<b>Wednesday, March 17</b>	<b>Fraser South Chapter Mark Turner, photographer - "Photo Composition"</b>
<b>Thursday, March 18</b>	<b>Vancouver Chapter Don Martyn - "Magnolias"</b>
<b>Monday, March 22</b>	<b>Fraser Valley Chapter Rosemary Pruffer - "The International Plant Propagators Society Conference in San Francisco"</b>
<b>Tuesday, March 23</b>	<b>Peace Arch Chapter Garth Wedemire - "Lu Zhu - A Plant Collector's Passion"</b>
<b>Wednesday, April 21</b>	<b>Fraser South Chapter Doug Justice - "UBC Botanical Garden"</b>

*Brenda Macdonald*

# What's in Bloom ...



## **R. 'Coral Glow'**

**cross:** *mucronulatum* 'Cornell Pink' x *lutescens*

Out in the garden, the overall effect for this welcome early-bloomer is of bright pink with warm overtones, however its parentage becomes abundantly clear in the paler, forced, blossom on the left. These paler blossoms are almost two-toned, with the *lutescens* yellow showing at the stem end and the *mucronulatum* pink showing at the petal edge.

Very similar to the reverse cross *R. 'Airy Fairy'*, (*lutescens* x *mucronulatum* 'Cornell Pink') these small-leaved lepidote crosses are welcome textural additions to any garden, although they do not usually blossom quite so early as this. The last time they appeared in What's in Bloom, the photos were taken exactly two months later. North Vancouver/ 08 FEB 2010



## **R. 'Olive'**

**cross:** *moupinense* x *dauricum*

How can one not love 'Olive'? Always among the very first to burst out, her tissue-paper, mauve-pink blossoms may not be extravagant or sophisticated, but they are certainly welcome. Ours is particularly abused as it stands duty as a pea-stick all summer for an over-vigorous clematis, but it never fails to give a charming if not spectacular display. North Vancouver/ 08 FEB 2010

# Shared Wisdom

A miscellany on pests this month:

## SLUG CONTROL

From Chris Klapwijk comes a long list of websites discussing the veracity of claims that the new iron-based slug control products are “safe and non-toxic to birds, pets or wildlife”. Although clearly not the hazard that ordinary metaldehyde-based baits (why do dogs have to eat just everything?) represent, there does seem to be some concern that a pet (read, dog) eating a reasonable amount of one of these ferric phosphate baits would experience severe gastrointestinal distress, and possibly death.

Perhaps of more interest are several studies that show that while claims that ferric phosphate does not actually kill earthworms may be valid, it does have a significant and deleterious effect on the earthworm population in areas of broadcast application. Under these circumstances the earthworms simply failed to grow, the ferric phosphate having significantly decreased feeding and growth.

So like all things too good to be true, it probably is, and it is back to the bowls of beer and daily slug patrols . Here are the relevant websites:

[http://files.tlhort.com/labels/3575-sluggo\\_slug\\_bait.pdf](http://files.tlhort.com/labels/3575-sluggo_slug_bait.pdf)

[http://www.montereylawngarden.com/pdf/sluggo\\_03\\_bilingual.pdf](http://www.montereylawngarden.com/pdf/sluggo_03_bilingual.pdf)

<http://www.growercentral.com/UPLOADS/PDFS/ferramol%20brochure.pdf>

<http://www.neudorff.com/index.php?id=181>

<http://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/bpl/avj/2009/00000087/00000007/art00011>

[http://blog.oregonlive.com/pethealth/2008/07/gardners\\_beware\\_of\\_socalled\\_pe.html](http://blog.oregonlive.com/pethealth/2008/07/gardners_beware_of_socalled_pe.html)

<http://www.biosci.ohio-state.edu/~soilecol/Full%20articles/2008/Crop%20Protection%2028.pdf>

[http://www.sciencedirect.com/science?\\_ob=ArticleURL&\\_udi=B6T4B-4JKJT15-1&\\_user=10&coverDate=12%2F31%2F2006&\\_rdoc=1&\\_fmt=&\\_orig=search&\\_sort=d&view=c&\\_acct=C000050221&\\_version=1&\\_urlVersion=0&\\_userid=10&md5=f73325d8a5e3b2c97804dd3ac845cb8cf](http://www.sciencedirect.com/science?_ob=ArticleURL&_udi=B6T4B-4JKJT15-1&_user=10&coverDate=12%2F31%2F2006&_rdoc=1&_fmt=&_orig=search&_sort=d&view=c&_acct=C000050221&_version=1&_urlVersion=0&_userid=10&md5=f73325d8a5e3b2c97804dd3ac845cb8cf)



*Viburnum bodnatense*  
'Dawn', in full bloom by  
February 8th.

From Chuck Floyd, in the November issue of the PARS newsletter:

### GARDEN TIPS FROM OUR MEMBERS FOR PEST CONTROL BY CHUCK FLOYD

#### Control Aphids and other chewing insects

Mix 1 part Ivory Liquid Dish Soap to 10 parts water and put in a spray bottle. Spray any part of your plant that has aphids. I usually soak new unopened rose buds and the residue seems to hold off all chewing insects and it does not bother the Bees. I have not damaged any of my plants with the Ivory Spray.

#### Control Rhododendron munching weevils

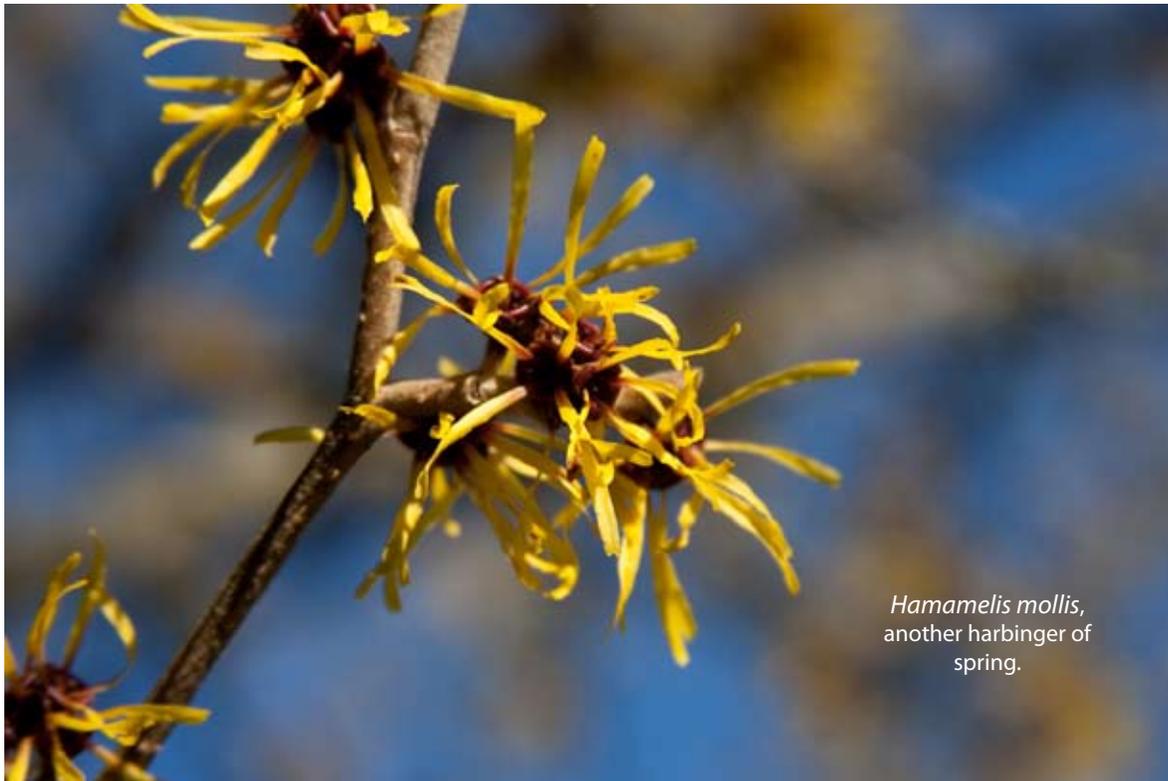
Keep ground under the plant free from loose debris. Take a small amount of shelled birdseed (it will not sprout) and sprinkle around the base of your Rhodo. Do this regularly --every time you refill your bird feeder. Ground feeding birds will get used to a meal under this plant and the weevils end up getting eaten.

#### Control Ants

Mix 1 part 20 Mule Team Borax (laundry soap) with 4 parts icing sugar. Sprinkle where you see any ant activity or lift patio stones to prevent new activity. Because it is laundry soap and sugar it is safe to handle and in limited quantity will not hurt your pets.

#### Control Moles

Move to an apartment.



And finally, clip from the Alpine List (newsgroup) on the ecologically correct way to discourage ants from a particular area, keeping in mind that trying to control ants is right up there with trying to control moles - one might as well move into an apartment. However, it is possible that this remedy might help work to keep ants away from a particularly vulnerable rockery specimen.

*In order to have myrmecochory, you have to have ants, and there are plenty of ants in the garden here. I just let them do their thing, occasionally heading them away from burrowing under plants with cinnamon sprinkled here or there. The more ants you have, the greater the opportunity for cyclamen to seed everywhere.*

*Bob,*

*Thank you for the idea about cinnamon. I was unaware of an ecologically responsible way to redirect the efforts of ants, so I've just accepted their damage in the past. I'll definitely try this, come spring.*

*Paul*

And for those of you who have not had the opportunity of googling “myrmecochory” as I have, I will pass on the knowledge that myrmecochory is the term used for seed dispersal by ants. There are a number of plants which have developed a lipid-rich covering called an elaiosome for their seeds, making the seeds very attractive to various ant species as a food source. Cyclamens and trilliums both utilize this method of seed dispersal. The foraging ants transport the seeds back to their nests in order to provide food for the developing ant larvae. The seeds are undamaged in this process and when they are discarded they have an opportunity to germinate in an area removed from the parent plant.



And this is what happens when you get your myrmecochory working properly, *Cyclamen coum* popping up everywhere in the Bischoff's garden.

Off the topic of garden pests, but possibly of interest, is this other clip from the PARS newsletter:

#### **Tropic to Tropic Nursery, Tsawwassen**

This nursery, run by Ray Mattei, specializes in bamboo plants. Ray recently sold his property to BC Hydro, closed his business and is in the process of liquidating the remainder of his stock. He has, among other things, some unique one-of-a-kind large mature timber bamboo. If interested, you should contact Ray directly at: Ph: 604.943.6562, 604.789.6562. Web Site: [www.tropic.ca](http://www.tropic.ca) E.mail: [rmattei@lightspeed.ca](mailto:rmattei@lightspeed.ca). The street address is Tropic to Tropic Plants, 1170 53A Street, South Delta, B.C., V4M 3E3. Please phone for an appointment, as Ray has a regular day job.

*Brenda Macdonald*