

The Yak

Newsletter of the Fraser South Rhododendron Society

Volume 25 Number 3
March 2011



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, March 16, 2011
Topic: "Rhododendrons"
Speaker: Steve Hootman
Plants: Les Clay

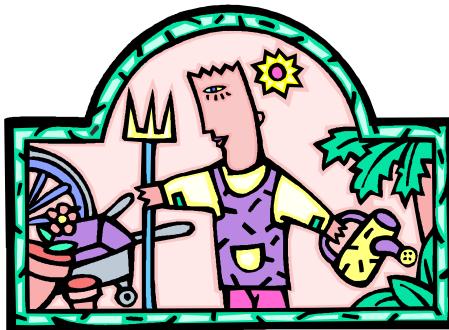
2011 Officers

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
	Matt Groves	604-856-2624
	Kathy Delory	604-576-1172
Programme:	Sean Rafferty	604-990-5353
Membership:	Mai Swan	604-852-1992
Newsletter:	Brenda Macdonald	604-990-5353
Librarian:	Joan McGiveron	604-538-9347
Website:	Chris Klapwijk	604-581-0925

Quick Hits

• President Bill and spouse Carla are hosting a garden tour for the PARS Chapter on Saturday, May 28th. All FSRS members also welcome. This is an especial treat for those who have not previously visited this gem of a garden, and who will thus be able to see how many wonderful specimens you can fit into a standard residential lot. See the calendar for details.

• As a rhododendron tyro I quickly learned that *R. KOS* was actually *R. 'King of Shrubs'*, but it took a lot more research to ascertain that *R. C.I.S.* was actually named after C. I. Seranous, one of the early Presidents of the ARS. Mystery solved, but you can see exactly what a *R. C.I.S.* looks like, along with other *R. griersonianum* hybrids on pages 6 to 9.



Notes From the Chair

FROM THE PRESIDENT

One more sign that spring is near is looking at the publications of the BC Counsel of Garden Club's newsletter, and seeing all the invitations to flower shows and plant sales. Our society is a member of this organization and you can get a copy of their bimonthly newsletter in full color by e-mail; just let us know and we will place you on the mailing list. In addition to this there are publications from other garden clubs and from garden stores. Especially on weekends, you need to do nothing else but visit these events.

Of course the most important of all these happenings is our own Plant Sale next month - Saturday, April 23rd to be precise. We will set up at the usual place, the Church parking lot. Everyone is expected to be part of this fun event. So far we have 7 vendors, the same as last year, plus a couple extras who will let us know in a week or so. More news about the sale at our next two meetings.

At our next meeting there will be invitation handouts to our sale available for you to take to other clubs and organizations. If you belong to other organizations, please let us know about their upcoming events. We in turn will publish their dates in our newsletter. I had already started to hand out our invitations at club meetings some weeks ago and will do some more during the next two weeks. The best way to do this is by asking for permission to hand these invitations directly to the members. You might even get invited to attend a very interesting meeting. Most of the clubs let you also buy plants at their sales tables or buy raffle tickets etc. I know you will have a good time visiting other societies. One warning however: no one has a better "Goody-Table" than we have.

One more event; a garden tour to nine local gardens organized by the Nanaimo Rhododendron Society for Sunday, May 22. This is a fund raiser for the upcoming ARS Fall Western Regional Conference. Judging by the gardens I saw when I was a guest at this Chapter some two years ago, I am sure it will be a day to remember. Car pooling would be one consideration. Call John Deniseger at 250-390-3605.

These are just a few of the more local events; there are several other Rhododendron club related shows you can attend. More details in our next newsletters.

Until our next meeting, happy gardening to all !

Bill Bischoff



Nanaimo Rhododendron Society presents

A Self Guided Tour of Nine Nanaimo Gardens

Sunday, May 22nd, 2011
10am to 4pm

Tickets \$15



For more info see our website at Nanaimo.rhodos.ca



Last Month:

Last month Philip MacDougall spoke to us about the Carolinian Forest, that area of eastern North American characterized primarily by a predominance of deciduous, or broad-leaf trees. Extending into Canada only as far north as the south-western part of Ontario and the city of Toronto, this life zone is home to almost all of the native deciduous azaleas for which the eastern forests are so well known. As usual, Philip's images presented a fascinating glimpse of the flora and gardens of that area.

FROM THE EDITOR

Next Month:

Next month we will get a glimpse of a an environment about as far removed from our cool and swampy West Coast as is imaginable. Garth and Sue Wedemire will be relating to us information and images from their trip to South Africa last year. It should be fascinating.

The Business Stuff:

- ✿ ‘Tis (almost) the season of the garden, which means the garden tours and visits are starting to ramp up. President Bill and the lady wife Carla will be hosting a visit from PARS Chapter on Saturday, May 28th, to which all members of the FSRS Chapter are cordially invited. Similarly, Gael and John Dodd will be hosting a visit from the Cowichan Valley Chapter to their garden on Saturday, May 14th, (time to be confirmed), to which time FSRS members are also very welcome to attend. And for the truly committed, there is an extensive sumptuous tour of the gardens of Washington DC area scheduled for May 10th to 19th inclusive, being led by Douglas Justice, Associate Director and Curator of Collections at the UBC Botanical Garden. Doug has spoken to our Chapter on several occasions and is a knowledgeable and personable leader. More information can be found by contacting Linda Sim at Renshaw Travel at 604-733-1074.
- ✿ Moreover, as well as the upcoming tour to Vancouver Island being organized by Chris Kalpwick for sometime in May, the Executive are thinking that a day-trip down to the Rhododendron Species Foundation in Federal Way, WA (bailiwick of this month’s speaker, Steve Hootman) might be a welcome diversion from our still-sodden gardens. More about this at the March meeting.
- ✿ The ARS 65th annual Spring Convention is apparently going great guns. The original hotel space has already sold out, but the convention organizers have been able to find additional space in other nearby hotels. See more info on their website at www.ars2011convention.com/, or call them at 800-548-0111.
- ✿ Harry Wright, Past President of the North Island Chapter, started a project a number of years ago of drawing up an inventory of the rhododendron species and hybrids in BC gardens. So far he has 125 gardens and over 4000 rhododendrons inventoried. The Nanaimo Chapter is on tap to host the Western Regional Conference in 2012, and Harry would like to have an updated listing on hand for that event. You can help by sending in a current listing if you have already done one in the past, or even better, consider drawing up your first ever inventory and sending it to him for addition to his database. Harry will be accepting garden inventories during all of 2011, so that he can produce the updated version in time for the 2012 conference in Nanaimo. Feel free to contact him at haidaau(use the usual @ sign here)shaw.ca

OTHER DUTIES AS ASSIGNED: .

- ✿ March’s duties in the tea room will be the responsibility of Les Belles Soeurs, Marge Mueller and Heidi Summers. Thank you, ladies.
- ✿ Time to start thinking about our annual Plant Sale, scheduled for Saturday, April 23rd. More info next month, but watch out for the sign-up sheet to be circulated at this month’s meeting. Not to put too fine a point upon it, this is a communal affair, or as my mother continues to say - many hands make light work. Sign up and feel good about yourself.

THE CALENDAR:

Wednesday, March 16	Fraser South Chapter Steve Hootman - Topic TBA
Thursday, March 17	Vancouver Chapter Steve Hootman - "Recent Rhodo Acquisitions from China"
Tuesday, March 22	Peace Arch Chapter Fred Wein Sr. - "Clematis, the Classic Climbers"
Monday, March 28	Fraser Valley Chapter Charlie Sale - "Gardens of Cornwall and Southern Ireland"
Wednesday, April 20	Fraser South Chapter Sue & Garth Wedemire - "Plants of South Africa, 2010"
Thursday, April 21	Vancouver Chapter Malcolm Pharoh - "Marwood Hill Gardens"
Saturday, April 23	Fraser South Chapter Annual Plant Sale - United Church 200 th St. at 56 th Ave.
Monday, April 25	Fraser Valley Chapter Gwen Odermatt - "Great Plant Picks"
Tuesday, April 26	Peace Arch Chapter TBA
Wednesday, May 10 to Sunday, May 15	65th Annual ARS Spring Convention Vancouver, Washington
Wednesday, May 18	Fraser South Chapter Annual Beer Bottle Truss Show
Sunday, May 22	Nanaimo Chapter Self Guided Tour of Nine Nanaimo Gardens, see info at www.nanaimo.rhodos.ca
Saturday, May 28	Garden tour at the home of Bill and Carla Bischoff, starting at 11:00am for members of PARS. All members of the FSRS are invited as well.
Saturday, June 11	Fraser South Chapter Annual Picnic

The Business Stuff

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. We delayed publishing these in last month's Yak, hoping that we would also be able to include the Harold Johnson Memorial Award, however we will wait until we have been able to make the presentation before reporting on that award.

This year, the following awards were presented:



The Gerry Emerson Memorial Award for 2010

Presented to: Arlene Darby

We wish to thank you for the years that you served as a Director of our Society, the time spent in the kitchen looking after our refreshments, helping out at our plant sales and making sure we all have name tags to wear and that we actually wear them!

With our sincere appreciation, we present to you
The Gerry Emerson Memorial Award for 2010



The Ella Crabb Memorial Award for 2010

Presented to: Ginny Fearing

In appreciation for your many contributions to The Fraser South Rhododendron Society we are pleased to present to you
The Ella Crabb Memorial Award for 2010.

Your quiet and thoughtful manner finds you assisting with kitchen duties and refreshments as well as offering help where needed.

Thank you, Ginny



The Bronze Medal of the American Rhododendron Society,
2010

You have shared your passion and enthusiasm for plants by opening your beautiful garden to us.

Your extensive travels in northern reaches as well as China show your love of nature; the beautiful pictures and tales of places many of us will never venture, warmed many a cold winter evening at our Chapter Meetings.

You have participated in many of our club activities, helping at our annual plant sales, Dalen as Santa Claus at our Christmas dinner and auctioneer at our picnic, and many of Lori's delicious pies have graced our tables.

You served on the executive committee in several capacities, Dalen as Vice-President and President and currently, Lori serves as a Director.

The Fraser South Rhododendron Society is pleased to bestow upon you our highest award, The ARS Bronze Medal for 2010
LORI & DALEN BAYES

R. griersonianum

Although somewhat too tender to be grown in many gardens as a species, *R. griersonianum* has had such a profound effect on hybridizing schemes since its first introduction in 1917 by George Forrest that its geranium red, tubular blossoms seem instantly recognizable. More tolerant of heat and shade than many other species, the attribute most sought after, besides its almost uniquely bright scarlet colour, was its very late bloom period. Although *griersonianum* matures early - often starting to bloom around six years from seed - it blossoms late in the year. Blossoming in late June and July (and even into August in shaded conditions) this was a prime plant for those wanting to extend the flowering period of a rhododendron garden.



Illustration by Lilian Snelling, 1927
Curtis's Botanical Magazine

of our most iconic hybrids, such as *R. 'Elizabeth'*, *R. 'Anna Rose Whitney'*, and the entire 'Fabia' series.

Many of these hybrids display the tubular blossoms and brick red colouration of the parent, but then there are others whose phenotype does not mimic their genotype, and you have the delicate pink 'Amor', the shockingly purple 'Griersosplendour' and the aptly named 'Winsome'.



Brenda Macdonald

Species and their Hybrids		pollen ♂	
		B	b
pistil ♀	B	BB	Bb
	b	Bb	bb

Griersonianum does not appear to be related closely to any other species. It inhabits its own subsection Griersoniana, and grows in equally solitary circumstances, singly, rather than in groups, and only in a small area of western Yunnan near the Burma border. It has a rather sprawling, lateral habit, and distinctive long, narrow, pointed leaves with long petioles and somewhat rough, brownish indumentum that wears off the top of the leaf but remains on the underside.

And long before *R. yakushimanum* became the darling of the hybridist, *griersonianum* was there, being crossed with almost everything within the genus. The Hirsutum website lists more than 130 direct and more than 340 indirect crosses - including some





above

R. 'Elizabeth'

R. forrestii Repens Group x R. griersonianum, 1933, Aberconway

below, left

R. 'Fabia'

R. dicroanthum ssp. dicroanthum x R. griersonianum, 1927, Aberconway

below, right

R. 'Anna Rose Whitney'

R. griersonianum x R. 'Countess of Derby', 1954 Whitney





above *R. 'Amor'*
R. griersonianum x *R. thayerianum*
1927, Stevenson

right *R. 'Grierosplendour'*
R. griersonianum x *R. 'Purple Splendour'*,
1937, Loder

below *R. 'Winsome'*
R. Humming Bird Group x *R. griersonianum*
1930, Aberconway



All photos harvested from the wonderful
"Hirsutum" site
www.hirsutum.info/index.html



A handful of West Coast hybrids using *R. griersonianum*:

above, left	<i>R. 'King of Shrubs'</i>	Ostbo, 1958, Bellevue, Washington
above, right	<i>R. 'Cary Ann'</i>	Wright, 1949, Canby, Oregon
middle left	<i>R. 'Old Copper'</i>	Van Veen (Sr. & Jr.), 1948, Portland, Oregon
middle, right	<i>R. 'C.I.S.'</i>	Henny, 1958, Brooks, Oregon
below, left	<i>R. 'Royston Reverie'</i>	Greig, 1980, Royston, Vancouver Island, BC
below, right	<i>R. 'Towner Crest'</i>	Weesjes, 1963, Saanich Peninsula, Vancouver Island, BC