

The Yak

Newsletter of
The Fraser South
Rhododendron
Society

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November, 2013



www.flounder.ca/FraserSouth

Fraser South Rhododendron Society
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, November 20th, 2013
Topic: "Poppies From the Roof of the World"
Speaker: Bill Terry
Plant Sales: Sue Klapwijk

2013 Officers

President:	Brenda Macdonald	604-990-5353
Past Pres:	Bill Bischoff	604-589-6134
Vice Pres:	Chris Hodgson	604-541-2382
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	Nancy Moore	604-859-3690
Programme:	Sean Rafferty	604-990-5353
Membership:	Evelyn Jensen	604-857-5663
Newsletter:	Sean Rafferty	604-990-5353
Librarian:	Joan McGiveron	604-538-9347
Website:	Chris Klapwijk	604-581-0925
Social Convenor:	Karen Linton	604-888-6564
Refreshments:	Arlene Darby	604-597-1849
BCCGC Liaison:	Bill Bischoff	604-589-6134

Quick Hits

*This month, Bill Terry
will be speaking to us
on meconopsis, the
Himalayan poppies.*





Notes From the Chair

12 MONTHS OF WEEDS ...

Glancing at my husband's teapot the other night (yes, we do have his and her teapots) I was struck by the really attractive image of blackberry blossoms and fruit that wraps around the entire pot. That made me think about how the blackberries were so much prettier on the teapot than they are in an actual garden, where they most often just represent hours of hard physical labour and deep scratches. And that made me think of what a Sisyphean task most perennial weeds such as blackberry and horsetail are. However, there is little to recommend annual weeds either. They may be easier to pluck out, but like the many-headed Hydra, one removes a single specimen only to see three or twelve pop up the next day.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Two of the worst weeds for this sort of behaviour are *Capsella bursa-pastoris* (Shepherd's Purse) and *Cardamine oligosperma* (Pop Weed, Shot Weed, Spit, Weed, Wild Cress, or Pop in the Eye Weed - you decide). Both members of the Brassicaceae or Mustard family they are so remarkably similar that I did not realize for years that those I was weeding out in this garden (Wild Cress) were not the same as the ones I had been weeding out in our former garden (Shepherd's Purse).

Each has the typical Brassicaceae inflorescence of a mostly leafless scape held upright from the centre of a flattish rosette of leaves. One assumes that the tall bare flowering stalk maximizes the distance to which the seeds can be catapulted when ripe. The basal rosette of leaves is usually one layer and quite flat, but given optimum conditions (cool, damp days and a negligent gardener) you will find multiple rosettes piled on top of one another, achieving the size and heft of a small cabbage. The blossoms are very small, white, and the four petals form a typical cross formation. (The Brassicaceae family was formerly known as the Cruciferae family.) The inflorescence or flower stalk is sometimes a raceme (individual flowers attached to the main stalk on small stems called pedicels), but often a panicle, which is just a compound raceme. The real difference between the two is the shape of their seed pods - a long cylinder that dehisces or splits open along the long axis for the *Cardamine*, and a somewhat heart-shaped pod that opens up along the sides for the *Capsella*.

It is this curious seed pod that gives the *Capsella* (capsule) its common name. Apparently it resembles the small sack or purse (*bursa*) that the shepherds (*pastoris*) would take out with them into the pastures, or it is something the shepherds would put in their purses for use as a food later - take your pick. The meaning of the specific epithet *oligosperma* (*Cardamine*) is usually few-seeded. Either this was a botanist with a perverse sense of humour, or it refers to the other possible definition of *oligo*, which is small.

But it is the process of dehiscence that makes these weeds so tiresome. When the seed capsule is ripe even the slightest movement makes the capsule open up with almost explosive force, shooting the mustard-seed-sized seeds inches and sometimes feet away from the parent plant. And, according to *Farm Weeds of Canada*, Shepherd's Purse can produce over 50,000 seeds per plant. I cannot imagine that Bitter Cress is far behind.

Weeding is remarkably easy. There is little in the way of a taproot on either of these species, just a shallow mat of roots that can be easily plucked out, particularly if the soil is moist. However, keep in mind that these weeds must



Capsella bursa-pastoris

be removed entirely. One cannot just uproot them and put them in a heap and expect that that will be the end of it. They will grow even when upside down, as I discovered much to my chagrin.

I had weeded a large area of steep garden and had unceremoniously hucked the offending weeds down onto a nearby mulched pathway. (... much to the Head Gardener's disgust. This habit of mine is the bane of his existence ... why can't I simply take a bucket in where I am weeding and put the weeds in it as I go? But it isn't him in there crawling around under shrubby azaleas and low-branched rhodos, getting his hair caught on branches and his eyes poked out by twigs. And anyhow, there is no room for a bucket between all the plant material in this over-planted slope ... But perhaps this is an argument for another column.) Just keep in mind that you will have to collect them all up and ensure they are buried in the compost heap.

Once you have been dealing with these weeds for a while you will get so that you can recognize them at anything beyond the initial two seed-leaves. Just keep in mind the cardinal gardening maxim: One year to seed, seven years to weed. It is essential you remove them before the seed pods can ripen. They are weeds that will basically grow in all 12 months of our year, except when frozen, and that they multiply exponentially not arithmetically, so if you are not careful you will be buried

I remember seeing on the predominantly farming island of Kyushu in Japan an entire dry-season rice paddy carpeted by Shepherd's Purse. I was appalled at the time, thinking of all the cultivating and weeding that would have to be done in order to prevent the weeds from competing too vigorously with any newly planted rice shoots. The seed load from all those plants would have been astronomical. Now I realize that it probably wasn't much of an issue. I suspect that the field would have all the weeds plowed under and then it would be flooded, thereby preventing efficient germination and growth of the weed seeds, while the already-sprouted rice seedlings would feel right at home.

So, how to deal with these two problem plants. Unless you are flooding the entire garden like a rice paddy, the only effective way of dealing with them is with mulch. Don't try and cheat by simply piling a whole load of mulch over existing weeds. You will have to remove all the visible weeds. But once you have done that, a good 4 - 6 inches of mulch that is then tamped down to be firm but not packed will prevent that enormous number of seeds already spread about from germinating. In addition, any weeds seeds that blow in from somewhere else will be much easier to pluck out of the mulch than out of dense garden dirt.

Keep the mulch thinned out and away from the stems of your rhodos; but remember to watch for any upstarts that take advantage of the thinner covering to germinate. Also remember that every time you turn the soil over (planting, transplanting, etc.) you will be bringing up weed seeds from below

For the mulch use something moderately coarse - somewhere between garden mix and bark nuggets, such as composted bark mulch or trail mix. Unfortunately household pets such as the cats pictured below do not make effective mulch barriers as they refuse to stay in place long enough to effect the total exclusion of the light necessary to prevent germination.

Brenda Macdonald



Cardamine oligosperma





FROM THE EDITOR

taken away from the designated pathways, while hidden from the parks overseers.

His talk was powered with his terrific wit, in depth familiarity with the subject matter and a lovely ability to engage his audience. One of the best.

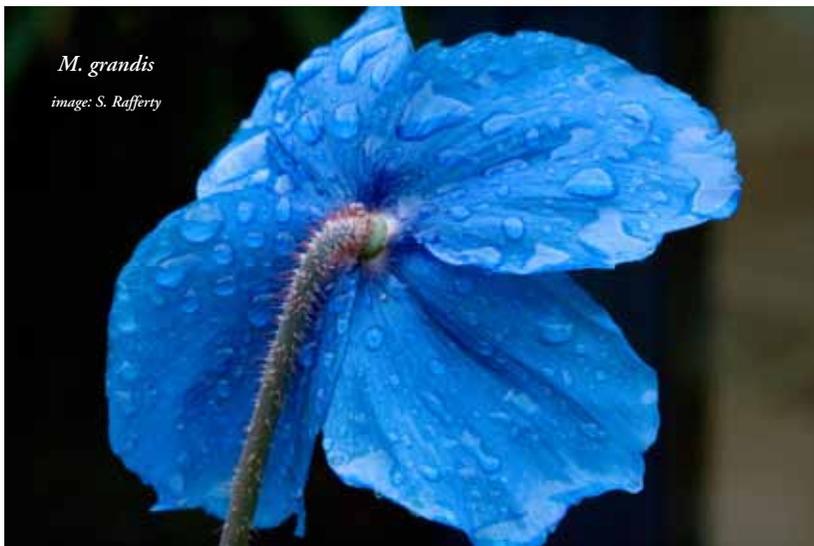
This Month:

Bill Terry, our local *Meconopsis* guru from Sechelt will speak to us about the beautiful Himalayan poppies. He will also have some of his books for sale, which will make fine gifts for the advancing festive season. He is an entertaining speaker who should not be missed. A little of Bill's background, taken from his [website](#), follows below:

I enjoyed a marvelous career in public broadcasting — thirty-five years with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. In that time, I held thirteen different jobs in radio and television, production and program management in four locations — Vancouver, Ottawa, Winnipeg and Toronto.

You might say that I specialized in presenting a moving target.

In 1994, with my wife, Rosemary, I retired to the Pacific Northwest, the Sunshine Coast of British Columbia, not far from Vancouver, Canada.



My ambition was to create the perfect garden (which is about as realistic as finding the end of the rainbow), through devoting my time to gardening and plant propagation. Since then, I have fallen into what amounts to a second career, centred on *Meconopsis*, the Asiatic Poppies and, in particular, the Blue Poppy: propagating from seed, growing, studying, photographing, traveling, lecturing, writing.

My own collection of Asiatic Poppies is probably the most diverse on the continent. By “diverse”, I’m referring to the variety of species, hybrids and named cultivars in my garden. It’s certainly not the

largest collection.

That distinction belongs to [Les Jardins de Métis](#), on the St. Lawrence estuary in the province of Quebec, Canada, which has a historic, massed show of some ten thousand plants of a single species of Himalayan Blue Poppy, *M. baileyi*, quite possibly the world’s largest single display. The story of how this came about is related in “Blue Heaven.”

Next month:

Please note well and set aside **Wednesday December 11th**, as the date for our **Christmas Potluck Dinner Party**. This will be one week earlier than our usual meeting day, and the party will commence at **6:30 pm** rather than our regular meeting time. Karen, or one of her elves will contact you beforehand, perhaps at the next meeting, to confirm attendance and probably have a discussion about culinary contributions.

And for those of us who might hope to rest our eyes and drift in the manner of Dylan Thomas's uncles after the feast, buoyant in the belief that Colleen will no longer perplex our brains with her teasers, please be informed that her replacement has been found.



The Business Stuff:

Ken Webb, District One Director, and perpetually generous donor to our raffle tables, wishes you to please pay attention to his following announcement.

2015 Convention

In preparation for our District 1, 2015 Convention, we are able to get several articles in the Journal to advertise to the world that we are holding it in Sidney, BC. Glen should be able to print any articles about gardens or garden articles with tourist attractions in our area. To all you writers out there, this is your chance to get published in a worldwide publication. This is the 70th anniversary of the ARS and we want to make it extra special. The ARS Board has just voted to increase the color pages in the Journal from 16 up to 36, so there should be lots of room for beautiful colour pictures with your articles. Anything that promotes our beautiful District 1 will be considered. Articles should be submitted ASAP over the next few months so that Glen can work them in over the next few journals. We should be able to get articles in the summer 2014 issue and fall 2014 too. So pick some of your favorite places and write a small article with pictures and submit it to Glen at ars.editor@gmail.com

Ken Webb

Director, District 1

Other Duties as Assigned:

The Fearings, Ginny and Harold, together with Colleen Bojczuk will leave their respective nurseries unattended and instead nurse us with heavenly curatives, and slake our thirst. Please assist them with their commitment by adding some tasty morsels to the calorie tables.

I am also informed, by reliable sources, that a donation to the raffle table will certainly garner a tick in Santa's 'nice' column and possibly an invitation to replace Mayor Ford in leading the Santa Claus Parade in Toronto.

Also, for those who have not yet renewed their memberships please do so as the deadline for cancellation of your ARS Journal is rapidly approaching. Thank you.

Sean Rafferty

THE CALENDAR:

Wednesday, November 20 7:30 pm	Fraser South Rhododendron Society: Bill Terry, "Meconopsis: Poppies from the Roof of the World"
Thursday, November 21 7:30 pm, Van Dusen	Vancouver Rhododendron Society Douglas Justice, Associate Director and Curator of Collections, UBCBG: "Taiwan, Guiding the International Dendrological Society"
Wednesday, December 11 6:30 pm	Fraser South Rhododendron Society Christmas Potluck Festivity (Note early start @ 6:30 pm)
Wednesday, December 11 7:30 pm, Van Dusen	Alpine Garden Club of BC Annual Christmas Potluck and Rare Plant Auction
Wednesday, January 8 7:30 pm, Van Dusen	Alpine Garden Club of BC Ric Erikson: BeeFriendly Native Bee Conservation
Wednesday, January 15 7:30 pm	Fraser South Rhododendron Society Annual General Meeting, Elections, and Potluck Dessert Extravaganza
Thursday, January 16 7:30 pm, Van Dusen	Vancouver Rhododendron Society Annual General Meeting, Elections, and Member Slides



R. edgeworthii, RSBG

image: S. Rafferty

Incredible Edibles

Cheese Pie Buddenhagen (from C. Buddenhagen in 1964)

(Ginny Fearing 2013)

Bake and cool Graham Cracker crust.

Set oven at 375°F

1 1/4 cups graham cracker crumbs

1/4 cup sugar

1/4 cup melted butter

Mix well. Butter Springform pan. Cover sides of pan with 1 cup of mixture.

Pour rest onto bottom of pan. (I just press it in without measuring). Bake at 375° for 8 minutes.

Filling:

Set oven at 325°F

2 eggs

1 Tablespoon vanilla

1 teaspoon lemon juice

1 cup sour cream

3/4 cup sugar

8 oz. package cream cheese at room temperature

Mix until velvety smooth in blender.

Pour into cooled crust (carefully) and bake at

325° for 20-25 minutes until firm (pretty firm)

Topping:

Set oven at 475°F

1/2 teaspoon vanilla

2 Tablespoons sugar

1 cup sour cream

Mix in the blender. Spoon this topping over the filling and bake at 475° from 5-10 minutes.

Chill overnight for best taste. May be frozen.

Blueberry topping added before serving

1 Tablespoon cornstarch combined with

2 Tablespoons sugar,

1 Tablespoon grated lemon rind,

1 Tablespoon lemon juice.

combine with

1 cup of blueberries in a saucepan.

Cook over low heat, mashing and stirring until thick and clear.

Add 1 cup blueberries (frozen is fine), stir and carefully spoon onto top of cheesecake.



Finley's Rhododendron Nursery a Brief History by Sue Klapwijk

The Finley Rhododendron Nursery grew out of a passion for rhododendrons and azaleas. My parents, Vernon and Gordon (aka 'Fin') Finley, loved to spend their summers touring the B. C. coast by boat, so mum wanted a garden that was colourful in spring and could withstand summer drought.

They had many friends who shared the same passion for the genus *Rhododendron*. They would continually trade cuttings, share seeds of new crosses, hybridize their own plants and purchase new varieties of plants. A dear family friend once gave Mom a tablespoon full of seeds, which were all planted. That fine dust turned into thousands of seedlings. It did not take Dad long to figure out that one might need a place to plant them out and that was the beginning of the nursery in Langley.



Above
R. 'F.B.C. 3'
(*R.* 'Fabia' x *R.* *bureavii*) x *R.* 'Crest' #3

Continued on page 9

The land was cleared, a huge lathe house was constructed to protect the seedlings and two large greenhouses were erected. This left a large open field as well as a long narrow strip by the driveway open for planting out the larger of their hybrids. They produced a number of hybrids, which they felt were good plants to propagate. None of these have been registered so far with the exception of *R.* 'Burnaby Centennial'. They always believed that a plant should not be registered until it had bloomed for about ten years to prove its worthiness and to be assured of the stability of the bloom.



Some of the tablespoon
 ([*R.* 'C.I.S.' x *R.* 'Lem's Goal'] x [*R.* 'Jalisco' x *R.* 'Yellow Creek']
 x [*R.* 'Seattle Gold' x *R.* 'Lemon Custard']

Over the years, Dad produced many cuttings. He turned his hobby into a full time occupation after his retirement from medicine. He had always said to colleagues, "If you do not have a hobby, do not retire". This "hobby" also kept Mum very busy weeding, transplanting, and selling plants. All of my siblings and their children would pitch in and help with transplanting. The "Potting Parties" were a lot of fun, and thousands of plants were moved into the greenhouses in very short order. We all loved to go to plants sales. We

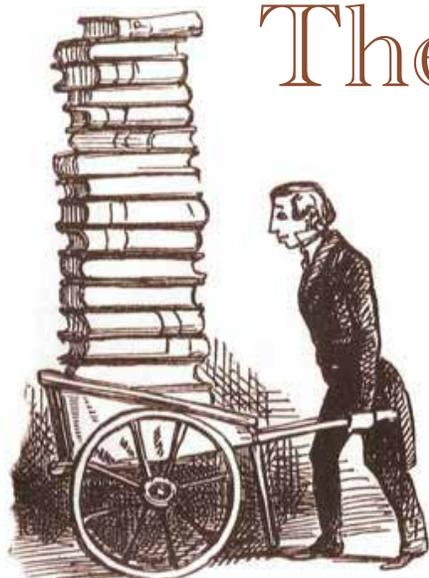
would set up the displays and truss shows, while the younger boys would always help people to their cars with their newly acquired plants. Mum and Dad continued for 20 years longer and at that point Mum preferred to go golfing and Dad was no longer able to work due to failing health.

At this time the nursery was going to be closed. I always felt that they had a lot of plants that were worthy of propagation and therefore I continued with their legacy.

Sue Klapwijk



Sue & Vern in front of *R. rubiginosum*, *R.* 'Carita,' and *R.* 'Calstocker



The Book Cart

Wildflowers of the Pacific Northwest, by Mark Turner & Phyllis Gustafson
Timber Press, Inc. Portland, Oregon, 2006.

511 pages, approximately 472 pages of colour photos identifying flowers,
1 map, 4 black and white drawings. Information about the photographs,
Bibliography, Index, Glossary. Hardbound, US\$27.95
ISBN 13: 978-0-88192-745-0

Mark Turner is a freelance editorial photographer specializing in botanical subjects, especially Northwest wildflowers and gardens. He photographs extensively for books and magazines, both in gardens and in a wide range of native plant environments. He is an avid member of the native plant societies of Washington and Oregon and has more than 25 years of experience exploring for native plants. He lives in Bellingham,

Washington. On March 17, 2010 Mark was the guest speaker at the Fraser South Rhododendron Society where his photographic presentation focused on garden design and composition.

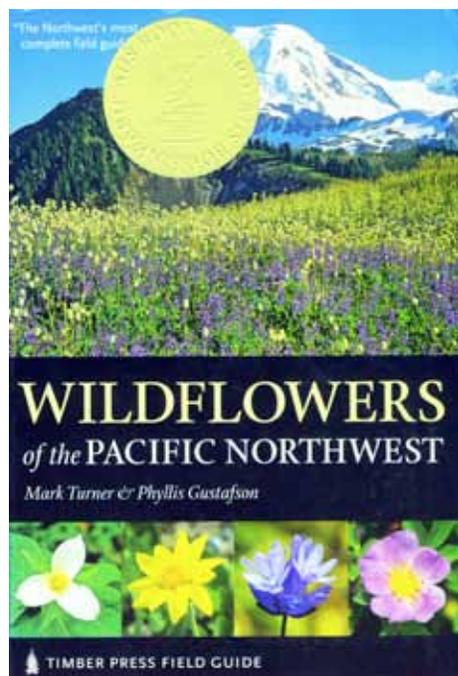
Phyllis Gustafson ran a small seed-collection business specializing in Northwest native plants and is well acquainted with the flora of the region. She also worked with native plants in the nursery trade for more than 20 years. She is an officer of the North American Rock Garden Society (NARGS) and writes frequently for their bulletin. For the last 35 years she has been active both in gardening and in exploring for native plants, mostly in Oregon but also in other climates around the world. She is often asked by plant societies around the country to lecture about the plants found on those quests. She lives in Central Point, Oregon.

Wildflowers of the Pacific Northwest is not available in our library, but copies can be purchased online through Chapters or other outlets. In this book, many woody shrubs are included, but grasses, sedges, rushes and trees are not included. The authors give a good introduction to help the reader identify wildflowers. Is the plant a shrub or a tree? How big is it? Does it grow like a vine, form a mat on the ground, make a clump of stems, or have a single stem that stands by itself? Are there any spines, prickles, or hairs? A good explanation is given of how to use the book and what terms are used in the book. Each plant entry includes a map showing the counties (United States) or forest districts (Canada) in which the plant has been found. The maps are based on herbarium specimen records from sources in Canada, Washington, Oregon, and California.

Climate, Geography and Plant Habitats are discussed in detail in relation to the mountain ranges and the lowlands between the various ranges. There is a very good map showing these areas. The major portion of the book is devoted to colour plate identification of wildflowers and is ideally organized according to colour of the flowers - white or whitish flowers, yellow flowers, orange flowers, pink to red or red-purple flowers, violet to blue or blue-purple flowers, and, finally, green and brown flowers. Within each colour identification section, further identification aids are given such as 3 or 6 petals, 4 petals, 5 irregular petals, 5 symmetrical petals (ovary superior), 5 symmetrical petals (ovary inferior), 5 irregular petals forming a tube and on it goes. The margins of the pages are tinted, allowing the reader to quickly turn to the colour coded area. There is even a ruler in both inches and mm printed on the back cover.

This is a useful book for the westcoast hiker who enjoys being able to put a name to our wildflowers in this area. The photographs are exceptional and good descriptions accompany the photographs.

Margaret Hodgson



R. macabeanum

(Epithet: after Mr. McCabe, a former Deputy Commissioner, Naga Hills, NE India.)

R. macabeanum was discovered in 1882 by Sir George Watt on Mount Japvo, Nagaland, northeast India. At that time Watt made copious field notes and a year later prepared a description of the plant which he named *R. falconeri* var. *macabeanum*. For some unknown reason this paperwork went unpublished until Sir Isaac Bayley Balfour, working from Watt's specimens, named it as a new species, *R. macabeanum*, some thirty eight years later in 1920.

The species was introduced into cultivation by Frank Kingdon Ward

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



R. macabeanum

Engraving by Stella Ross-Craig from
Curtis's Botanical Magazine



R. macabeanum RSBG
image: Garth Wedemire



R. macabeanum
image: Susan Lightburn

who visited Mount Japvo and collected seed of *R. macabeanum* in 1927 and again from a location further east, on Mount Saramati in 1935. Kingdon Ward described *R. macabeanum* as "a small, scrubby tree with large, broadly oval leaves covered with oyster-grey felt beneath. Flowers in dome-shaped trusses, sulphur-yellow with a constellation of purple spots." A lovely description which, sadly, would not find favour with the taxonomists.

R. macabeanum has fawn to white tomentose branchlets and woolly white new growth. Its leaves are broadly ovate to broadly elliptic and shiny, with a pronounced yellow midrib and a lower surface with a dense, somewhat compacted woolly indumentum. The new growth is silvery and is nicely contrasted with the persistent red flower-bud scales, as seen in the Susan Lightburn image above. Flowers are yellow, pale yellow, or yellowish-white with a purple blotch.

R. macabeanum is found growing between 8,000 and 10,000 feet, in mixed forests with birch and in pure stands of birch, and is hardy in milder gardens. However, a recent introduction (NAPE 052 - an alpine form) from the Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden which was collected from a higher elevation (12,600 feet on Mount Saramati) appears to be much hardier and even thrives in our garden, which is rather satisfying after our having lost several others over the years.

The seed from the 1927 collection of Kingdon Ward bloomed in 1937 and received an Award of Merit from the RHS. This is a cherished collector's plant and a comparatively late but much appreciated and welcomed entry to the hybridising world.



R. macabeanum RSBG
image: Garth Wedemire

Sean Rafferty



R. 'Sarita Loder x calophytum x macabeanum x basilicum'

(*[R. 'Sarita Loder' x R. calophytum]* x *R. macabeanum*) x *R. basilicum*

Elsie Watson, Kirkland, WA

R. 'Jack Morgan'

R. 'Pink Prelude' x R. 'Lem's Cameo'

E.M. Watson, Kirkland, WA





R. 'Pink Prelude'

R. 'Sarita Loder' x *R. macabeanum*

E.M. Watson, 1970



R. 'Laramie'

R. degronianum ssp. yakushimanum

Exbury x *R. macbeanum*

Jim Barlup, 1988

R. 'Chief Sealth x praestans x strigillosum'

R. 'Chief Sealth' x (*R. praestans* x *R. strigillosum*)

E.M. Watson



R. 'Ambrose Bristow'

R. 'Lionel's Triumph' x *R. macabeanum*

M.L.A. Robinson, 2004,



R. 'wardii x macabeanum'

R. wardii x R. macabeanum

No hybridiser registered



R. 'Karen Swenson'

(R. calophytum x 'Sarita Loder Group') x R. macabeanum'

Elsie Watson, 1969

*Images: courtesy of hirsutum.
info*