



R. occidentale RSBG



This Month's Meeting

Date: Wednesday, December 10th, 2014 @ 6:00 pm, set-up @ 5:30 pm

Fraser South Rhododendron Society Annual Potluck Christmas Party

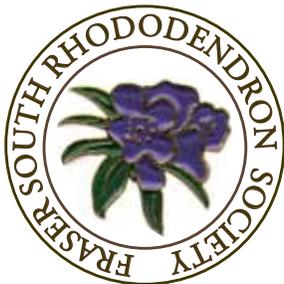
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<http://frasersouthrhodos.ca/>

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

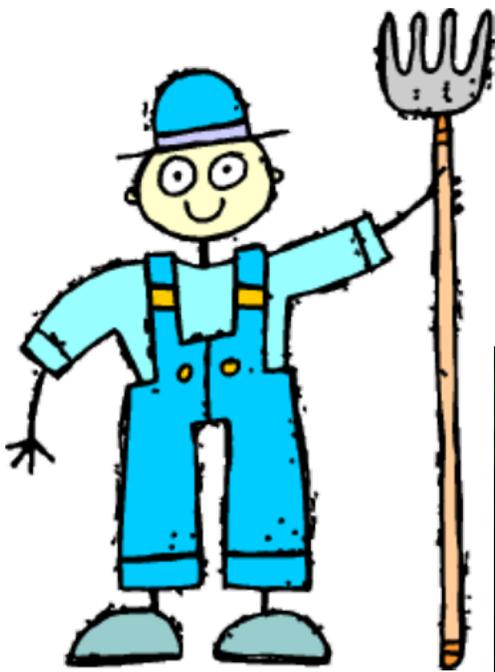


Quick Hits

Our Christmas
Potluck will be
on Wednesday,
December 10th, at
6:00 pm with set-
up at 5:30 pm.

Be festive, be merry and be there.





President's Remarks :

Welcome to the darkest month of the year. Now the good news; when our hemisphere turns a corner in three weeks, spring cannot be far behind. (Can it?)

But the immediate concern at our place, thanks to the present cold snap, is that our rhododendrons are looking like limp rags on a clothes line. We're especially biting our nails over recently-planted *R. edgeworthii*, which editor Sean once referred to as an annual in his North Vancouver garden.



R. edgeworthii RSBG

So let's calm our nerves and talk about other plants. I'm thinking specifically of our archetypical Christmas plant, the poinsettia. Of course, we know it is home to lands without frosts and with equal days and nights, the very opposite of our own Christmas season. Native to southern Mexico and Guatemala, its botanical name is *Euphorbia pulcherrima*, or "the most beautiful euphorbia."

I have also seen it growing wild as six-foot shrubs in remote Andean hedgerows in Bolivia where it is known as Corona del Inca, Inca's Crown. In Spain and Chile it is known as Flor de Pascua, commonly and erroneously interpreted as

Easter Flower. Why? Because Pascua is the accepted name for Christmas, while Easter is referred to as La Semana Santa, Holy Week, a much more important celebration than Christmas in Latin America.

Poinsettias were introduced into the USA by Joel Poinsett, American ambassador to Mexico in 1825. Present nursery poinsettias were developed in California in the early 1900's by the grafting of two poinsettia varieties to produce a fuller, more compact plant. Today more than 100 varieties of poinsettias are available. A poinsettia left on its own will take on a more open, weedy look, as we well know. So if you want to extend the useful service of your poinsettia this season, ensure it receives good morning sun.



Euphorbia pulcherrima

On other matters, please come to the Christmas party on December 10 with your plate, cutlery and, most importantly, your pot luck dish, the contents of which should be limited only by your lively imagination. Make a note: 6pm on December 10.

Those wishing to join our bus trip to Seattle for the Seattle Flower Show in February (it's about much more than flowers), should bring a cheque made out to FSRS (full name) for \$40/pp and pass it on to treasurer Harold Fearing for safekeeping. See elsewhere in this YAK for full details.

And finally, I wish you all a very joyous Christmas with family and friends.

Chris Hodgson



FROM THE EDITOR

provided lots of reference points for further study.

I understood that in some government regulations, for a plant to be designated “organic”, it had to meet the criteria described in five or six separate sections, each with fairly weighty wording. Not an easy guide to carry around and apply in the supermarket.



Dr. Taylor posed the question, “Which of these bananas was genetically modified?” A typical sort of question to ask a student. It could be A or B or neither. Most in the audience voted for B, the brown bananas. After all, what looked more natural and healthy than those two yellow bananas. This was the answer expected by Dr. Taylor and he confirmed that the brown bananas were indeed genetically modified. Then in true professorial fashion, he revealed that he had made yellow bananas brown by placing them in a refrigerator. The lesson learnt was that you can’t tell the difference by looking at them.

Dr. Taylor received generous applause after the talk and answered numerous questions.

Scot Henney

Last Month:

Doctor Iain Taylor spoke to us on The Myths of Organic Gardening and Scot Henney, erstwhile contributor to the Yak, offers his view of the evening lecture.

The speaker at the November meeting of our chapter was Dr. Iain Taylor, Professor Emeritus, Botany UBC. The title of his presentation was “Myths of Organic Gardening.”

We were not treated to a simple listing of the myths, 1, 2, 3 and so on. The topics touched upon ranged widely from ancient agricultural practices to genetic engineering.

The slides shown were few in number, mainly textual. I was taken back to the days of my undergraduate years when we were expected not to just regurgitate a lecture but to use it as a base for our own research. Dr. Taylor

The farming practices developed over thousands of years had developed sustainable forms of agriculture involving crop rotation, the application of manures and the growing of legumes which took from the air certain valuable elements and fixed them in nodules on the roots, for later take-up by other plants.

Methods of genetic engineering were described, when parts of the genome of a plant are introduced, removed or modified to confer perceived benefits in disease or insect resistance or tolerance of applied chemicals. I did not gain the impression that Dr. Taylor was totally opposed to genetic engineering, however he seemed to favour the age-old methods used by farmers the world over.

With a slide showing two yellow bananas and two brown bananas,

This Month:

Is our annual Christmas Potluck dinner which will occur at 6:00 pm, with set-up at 5:30 pm on Wednesday December 10th and I wish all of you to hearken back to Brenda's rules for the occasion:

1. Be festive, in a sort of laid-back rhododendron club sort of way.
2. Come early, festivities start at 6:00, but you can come earlier if you want to help set up.
3. Bring a dish of food to share, with serving utensils if required.
4. Beverages will be provided: tea, coffee, Punch Bowl A, and Punch Bowl B. We do not have a license for the consumption of liquor, however.
5. It is easier to be festive when clustered around Punch Bowl B.
6. Bring your own plates, mugs, and cutlery.
7. Wear something festive, but not necessarily elegant. We are a garden club after all. A crown of holly leaves or seasonal conifer branches is perhaps more Martha Stewart than we need, but that great red and green checked mackinaw you use when you wander out to knock the snow off the rhodo branches might be just the thing. Add a belt of highly polished garden forks so that you can jingle like Santa and you will be fabulous!
8. Be merry, or at the very least, be festive.

Brenda Macdonald



Next Month:

Is our Annual General Meeting and Dessert Extravaganza. It is also the meeting for members to bring along slides that they feel may be of interest to the rest of the membership. It will be an enjoyable evening of sampling some divine desserts, fine camaraderie and contemplation of the state of the good ship FSRS.

The Business Stuff:

Road trip on the horizon! President Chris, writes:

“Dear FSRS members. A bus trip to the Seattle Flower Show is planned for Thursday, February 12, 2015. It will depart the United Church Hall, 5673-200th Street, Langley, at 8:00 am sharp. The bus will be a fully-equipped



coach with individual reclining seats, an on-board washroom and intercom system. We hope to be able to entertain participants en route with some interesting garden videos. Members can reserve a seat by presenting a cheque for \$40 per person to Harold Fearing, treasurer, at the FSRS Christmas party on Dec. 10. The cheque should be made out to the Fraser South Rhododendron Society. Your cheque will not be cashed until sufficient participants have signed up to cover cost of the bus and the trip is confirmed, but from that point no refunds will be made for any reason. Day tickets for the show of US \$15 per person will be charged at the gate (based on a minimum group of 20). This will be a one-day tour, returning to the Langley United Church parking lot at 8 pm at the latest. Our understanding is that phyto certificates will be available, but we're waiting for confirmation. This is a huge show and fills the entire Seattle Convention Centre, with every aspect of gardening interest on display. Please check [here](#) for full details.

A valid passport, Nexus card or enhanced driver's license will be required at the border. Out-of-country medical insurance is strongly recommended.

We need a minimum of 40 participants to make this work. Assuming we can't meet our minimum number at the Xmas party, this same offer will be sent out after December 10 to members of VRS and Mt. Lehman Garden Club.”

Chris Hodgson

The American Rhododendron Society 70th Anniversary Convention

May 6-10th 2015

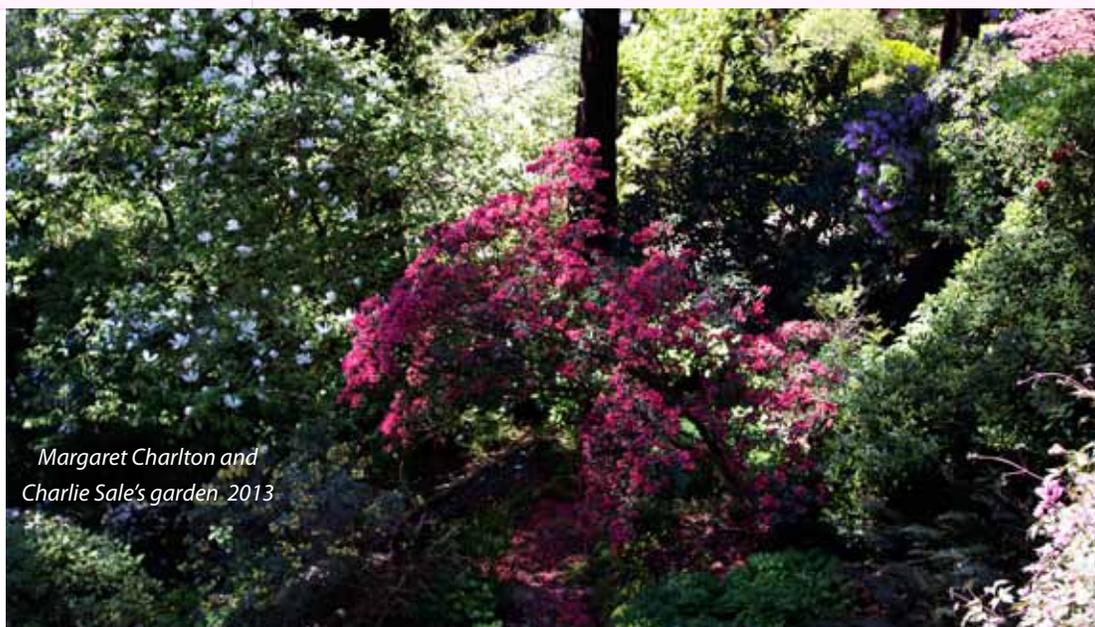
Mary Winspear Centre, Sidney, BC, Canada

The Rhododendron Chapters on Vancouver Island will be hosting the ARS 2015 Convention in Sidney, from May 6th through 10th. Registration is now available online. Please register now to avoid any disappointments. There is the most impressive group of speakers, from all parts of the world, which will set the gold standard for all subsequent conventions to try and emulate, there will be twenty-eight marvelous gardens to tour and terrific plant sales. This will be a fabulous event and everyone should make every effort to attend. Please visit their [website here](#). The wise among you will start to book their hotel rooms immediately.

Sean Rafferty

THE CALENDAR:

Wednesday, December 10 6:00 pm set up	Fraser South Rhododendron Society Annual Christmas Potluck
Wednesday, December. 10 7:30-9:30 pm Van Dusen	The Alpine Garden Club of BC Annual Christmas Potluck and Rare Plant Auction
Wednesday, January 14 7:30 pm Van Dusen	Alpine Garden Club of BC Botanical Illustration: Dana Cromie
Thursday, January 15 7:30 pm Van Dusen	Vancouver Rhododendron Society Annual General Meeting and members slides
Wednesday, January 21 7:30 pm	Fraser South Rhododendron Society AGM, Members slides, and Potluck Dessert Extravaganza
Wednesday, February 18 7:30 pm	Fraser South Rhododendron Society Steve Hootman, Plant hunter and Director of the Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden
Thursday, February 19 7:30 pm Van Dusen	Vancouver Rhododendron Society Steve Hootman, Plant Hunter, and Director/ Curator of The Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden
Wednesday, March 18th 7:30 pm	Fraser South Rhododendron Society Tammyanne Mathew, Sweetwater Garden Designs: Container floral design
Saturday, April 18 10:00 am-4:00 pm	Fraser South Rhododendron Society Plant Sale United Church Hall, 5673 - 200th Street Langley
Saturday, May 2 Park and Tilford Gardens	Vancouver Rhododendron Society Show and Sale Park and Tilford Gardens: 330 Brooksbank Avenue, North Vancouver
Wednesday, May 20 7:30 pm	Fraser South Rhododendron Society The Justly Famous Beer Bottle Truss Show



*Margaret Charlton and
Charlie Sale's garden 2013*

Incredible Edibles

Deconstructed Biscotti

With thanks to Margaret Hodgson for the following two recipes

3/4 cup ground almonds
3/4 cup cornmeal
1/2 cup sugar (plus 1 tbsp for top)
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
1/4 teaspoon coarse salt
1 tsp anise seeds (optional)
1 large egg
finely grated zest of half lemon
3 tablespoons softened butter (unsalted)
3 tbsp sliced almonds

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F (175°C.) Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. In a large bowl, whisk together the ground almonds, cornmeal, baking powder, and salt.
3. In a separate bowl, using beater cream together the butter, sugar, egg and lemon zest. Use beater to mix butter/egg with almond/cornmeal – it will look soft and crumbly.
4. Turn the dough out onto the baking sheet and flatten to about 1/4 inch thickness. (I use a pizza pan for 1 batch of the recipe – if I double it, I use a large cookie sheet.) Press sliced almonds onto surface. (If you wish you can sprinkle with additional 1 tablespoon of sugar on top of almonds.)
5. Bake for about 20- 25 minutes, or until golden brown. Cool on wire rack (in pan) then break into pieces. Store in an airtight container, these biscotti will keep for at least two weeks.



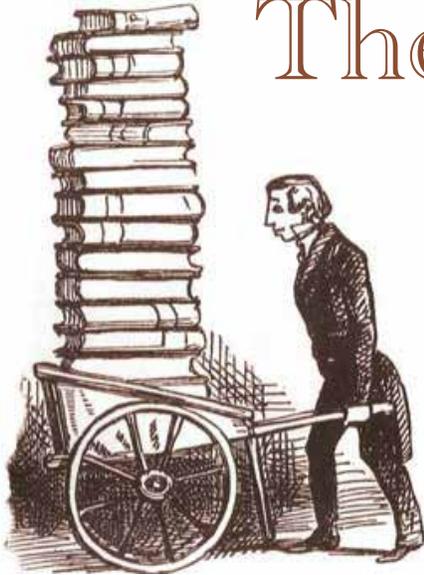
Grandma's Old Fashioned Shortbread

1 cup butter
1/2 cup brown sugar (packed)
2 cups flour

Blend all ingredients together. Cool the dough. Use a pastry roller and a cookie cutter or press into a shortbread pie tin to bake at 275F. Watch carefully to avoid overcooking. About 10-12 minutes.



The Book Cart



Rhododendrons of Subgenus Vireya by Dr. George Argent
388 pages, 232 colour plates and photographs, detailed diagrams of leaf arrangements, shapes, apices, bases, margins, venation, scale types, density, buds and bracts, as well as parts of the flower, anther arrangements, flower arrangements and fruits. Eight Chapters, Glossary, References and Index.
Hardbound, Copyright 2006 Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh.
Printed and bound in the United Kingdom by Cambridge University Press, Cambridge. ISBN 1-902896-61-0, ISBN 978-1-902896-61-8

Dr. George Argent, born 1941, tropical botanist at the world-renowned Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh, lived in Papua, New Guinea for three years, and previously in Brazil and in West Africa. His interest in vireya rhododendrons reaches back to 1977 and as a result, he made numerous expeditions to South East Asia in search of such. His research led to a great many introductions of vireyas to cultivation and also to

the discovery of new species. He was awarded the Loder Cup by the Royal Horticultural Society as well as a gold medal by the American Rhododendron Society for major contributions to the genus rhododendron. In 2013 he was named the recipient of the David Fairchild Medal for Plant Exploration.

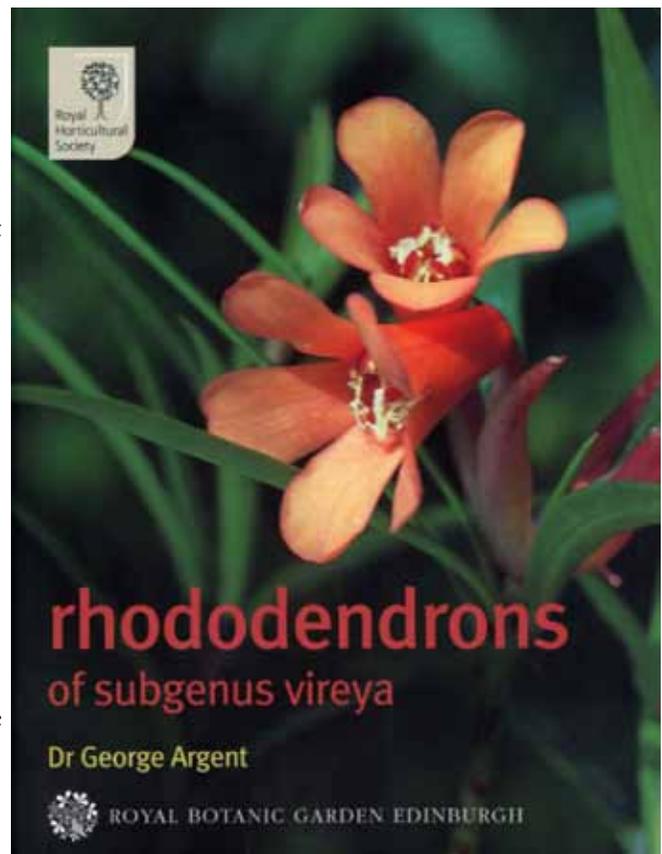
Rhododendrons of Subgenus Vireya, as it says on the jacket cover, is the “first full modern scientific account of vireya rhododendrons ever published, and it replaces the last major reference book, Sleumer’s *Flora Malesiana* (1966).

Stephen Blackmore, in his foreword address, comments that more than a third of all rhododendron species belong to Subgenus Vireya, but much less has been written about them, and never before have they received such extensive treatment. Not surprising, he continues, as the species have quite restricted distribution, are difficult to collect, and often rare.

The book is well organized, comprising eight chapters, plus an extensive glossary, reference section and index. Chapters 1 to 4 take the reader through a very good description of vireyas introduction, name changes and taxonomic concepts, subgenus, sections and series, history of vireya, conspectus of classification and artificial key to the sections and subsections.

At Chapter 5, the author gives detailed descriptive analyses with keys to the species, working through seven major sections, Pseudovireya, Discovireya, Siphonovireya, Phaeovireya, Malayovireya, Albovireya, and Euvireya, followed by five subsections, Linnaeopsis, Saxifragoidea, Solenovireya, Malesia and Euvireya. Chapters 6, 7 and 8, summarize collecting and conservation, cultivation, propagation, pests, diseases and disorders.

The glossary and reference section is such a useful section of this book. Clear detailed diagrams, useful to both professional and amateur horticulturists and botanists, help in the understanding of these beautiful rhododendrons, which in our climate are precarious and have to be either indoor plants or very well protected against occasional frost.



Margaret Hodgson

Rhododendron oreodoxa

(Epithet: Glory of the mountains)

Rhododendron oreodoxa was described by **Adrien René Franchet** in 1886 from a plant collected near Moupin, western Sichuan in 1863. It was later collected in the same area by **E. H. Wilson**, while collecting for the J. Veitch and Sons Nursery, and introduced by him in 1901-1904. The plant first flowered in the Coombe Wood nursery of Veitch in 1913.

R. oreodoxa var. *oreodoxa* and var. *fargesii* are distributed throughout Sichuan, Gansu and Hubei, while var. *shensiense* is found only in Shaangxi province. The species is found in woodlands at elevations of 7,000-10,000 feet . It is very widespread and variable in the wild with most forms being very

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



R. oreodoxa
Painting by Carlos Riefel



R. oreodoxa RSBG



R. oreodoxa RSBG

hardy, although its early blooming in March, allows for the danger of flower damage from early frosts. It grows 18 or 20 feet tall. The bright green or olive-green, oblong-lanceolate, three inch long leaves of *R. oreodoxa* are thinner than its Subsection Fortunea relatives and react to cold and water stresses with immediate curling of themselves unless actively raining. The inflorescence is 6-10 openly bell-shaped flowers of white to pink or rose and will often give a lovely two-tone contrasting effect between the medium pink, newly opening flowers and the paler pink of the already expanded blossoms.

Until it was revised in 1982, by David Chamberlain, var. *fargesii* maintained its own specific status but now has varietal status under *R. oreodoxa*. *R. oreodoxa* var. *oreodoxa* differs from *R. oreodoxa* var. *fargesii* in that var. *oreodoxa* has a glabrous ovary while that of the more common var. *fargesii* is glandular. Plants seen in cultivation as

R. erubescens are early blooming, deep rose forms of var. *fargesii*

R. oreodoxa flowers at a very young age and blooms profusely, is stunning in full bloom, is easy to cultivate and is hardy even on the east coast of North America. It is therefore surprising that it has not been used more frequently in hybridising programs. Images of a few *R. oreodoxa* hybrids may be found on page 12.

Sean Rafferty





R. 'Smiley's Pinkadilly'
R. oreodoxa var *fargesii* x *R. 'Riplet Group'*
 H. Lem, 1965



R. 'Buchanan Simpson'
R. oreodoxa var *fargesii* x unknown
 H. Hachmann, 1984



R. "Carex Group"
R. . irroratum ssp *irroratum* x *R. oreodoxa* var *fargesii*
 L. de Rothschild, 1958



R. 'Rosalind'
R. thomsonii ssp *thomsonii* x *R. oreodoxa* var *fargesii*
 Lord Aberconway, 1926



R. 'Winterpurpur'
R. 'Mardi Gras' x *R. oreodoxa* var *fargesii*
 H. Hachmann, 1985