



This Month's Meeting

Date: Wednesday, March 19th, 2014 @ 7:30 pm

Topic: **Wild Rhododendrons for the Pacific Northwest Garden**

Speaker: **Dennis Bottemiller**, Garden Manager and Propagator, RSBG.

Plant sales: Harold Fearing

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<http://frasersoutherhododendron.ca/>

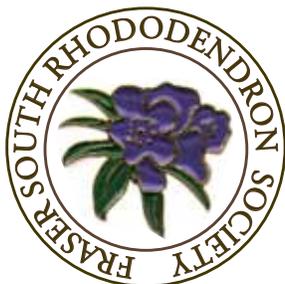
Quick Hits

Fraser South Rhododendron Society
a chapter of the
American Rhododendron Society

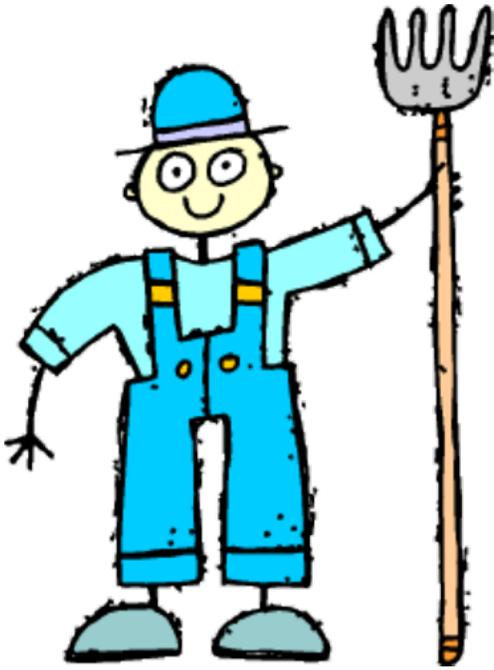
Meetings are held at 7:30 p.m. on the
third Wednesday of each month
(except June, July and August) at:
United Church Hall
5673 - 200th Street
Langley BC

We believe that all copies of the Yak prior to the year
2002 have now been located and we hope to soon have
them scanned and placed on the new website.

Slightly to your left, in beautiful cerulean blue, is a
hyperlink to the new site. While it is still in the process of
construction, we encourage you to go and have a wander
around and a look-see. No need to wipe your feet and
constructive commentary is quite welcome.



President's Remarks



One of the pleasures of gardening on the west coast is that spring lasts not just three months but six or more. This year, gardening-friendly weather started in earliest January. Come to think of it, November and December were pretty nice too, although February, not so much.

I keep a garden diary. I'm not fanatical about it, but do like to take note of when and where new treasures were planted out, when the first and last frost days occurred, etc. By mid-January this year snowdrops (*Galanthus*) were in bloom. By month end heather and Hellebores were blooming. Bluebells (*Scilla*), exotic daffodils (from Matt and Cherry Groves' daffodil farm), fall crocus (*Colchicum*), *Clematis brevicaudata* and the honeysuckle by the gate were all shooting up vigorously.

The rhodos have been budding up nicely since January and I've already mentally tagged a few fat hammerheads for entry in our truss show. I may be branded a heretic for saying so, but in my view the

expectation of bloom often beats the reality. The pleasing expectation phase can last for several months while the reality can all be over in a week or two. And then comes the dead-heading! Is there a life parable here?

I've often felt that a fourth number should be added to the rhodo classification scheme to indicate duration of bloom, but of course this depends largely on the balance of sun and shade to which each plant is exposed. And add a fifth number for the ease (or not!) of removing those sticky dead-heads. Course we're told that dead-heading is strictly cosmetic, but what's the point of it all if our gardens don't look spiffy?

A few years back Harold Fearing gave a talk at PARS about the advantages of growing species rhodos. One such advantage is that as a group their blooming period is much more extended than that of hybrids, from *R. calophytum* and *R. strigillosum* in February-March to



R. calophytum

R. auriculatum in July-August. Another advantage is the unique and beautiful form of many, even if they don't bloom for years. After ten years our *R. rex* and *R. bureauvii* (both from Les Clay) are still bloomless, but they're fantastic plants all the same.

Whatever our garden ambitions, there's always lots to do in preparation for that huge burst of growth come mid-March. We should take advantage of every spare minute of clement weather during these "winter" months to transplant, prune, manure, clean up that windfall debris and bear witness to the annual miracle of new life underfoot. The fresh air, exercise and peace of mind are an added bonus.



R. strigillosum

Chris Hodgson



FROM THE EDITOR

Following the refreshment break at the end of the lecture Garth Wedemire, dear friend of the late Mike Bale and his wife Patti, took the floor and offered us a beautiful pictorial tribute to Mike and the incredible garden that he and Patti had created. It was extraordinarily graceful and quite emotional, with images and music as only Garth can create, elevating the spirit and, inevitably, drawing tears. A wellspring of both elation and sadness. Thank you, Garth.

This Month:

Dennis Bottemiller, will speak on Wild Rhododendrons for the Pacific Northwest Garden and writes of himself:

My gardening career began early with corn.

In 3rd or 4th grade I had a burning desire to grow corn, probably because I liked it so much. Corn led to zucchini and those little space ship-shaped squashes, then lettuce and beans and tomatoes. I soon progressed to the point of growing things that were not even edible, they just looked neat.



My high school years arrived and I forgot plants.

I floundered around for a decade working on bikes, cars, boats and airplanes and finally decided to go to college to study mechanical engineering. Two years into that program I began to rediscover plants and a career counselor talked me into exploring horticulture. I happened to be at Washington State University, which has an excellent horticulture program and the people I met were a lot more fun than the ones I knew in the engineering department. So I switched.

In 1987 Scott Vergara brought me to the RSF to look around and I wound up getting an internship for the summer. I worked with Clarice Clark in the nursery and learned a great deal about propagation and managing a nursery. I graduated in 1989 with a degree in production horticulture and Richard Piacentini, then director of RSF, called me and offered me the position of propagator/nursery manager, which I accepted and held until November of 1992. I took a 7 year hiatus from the rhododendron world (although never completely removing myself) to maintain the collection of plants in the Seymour Conservatory in Tacoma. I came back here in 1999 and shortly after

that my old position re-opened and I am very glad to be back. I love my job here. I take care of all the propagation; seed and cutting, and grow them from start to finish. I really enjoy all of the new plant material that comes home with Steve from his trips. It is always a great challenge to grow things that we have never before grown.

I manage a little over 10,000 sq. feet of cold frame growing space, almost 4000 sq. feet of greenhouse space, and the shade growing area in the upper nursery. In addition I manage the catalog sales and shipping in spring and fall, with a great deal of help from the rest of our staff and a horde of volunteers. I also do lots of maintenance on greenhouses and equipment and direct volunteers in transplanting, propagation and plant distribution activities.

Last Month:

We were absolutely bedazzled by Jaquie Bunse, the bee lady. Jaquie, the Chief Apiary Inspector for the Fraser Valley spoke about her favorite insect with an amazing in-depth familiarity and such delightful vitality that she was not allowed to step away from the podium for an hour and a half. We could seemingly not get enough of her, nor her subject. Perhaps it was the sex ... a topic, under the circumstances, difficult to avoid?

Solitary bees, communal bees, honey bees, bumblebees, bee anatomy, bees as pollinators and economic drivers of agriculture and the variety of problems being encountered in that industry. Hive collapse and diseases of bees; bees in our back yards, hives in our back yards, swarms and catching them. On and on, and we still wanted more... and got it.

Truly, one of the brightest and most invigorating evenings in a long time.

Next month:

Our very own Rosemary Pruffer, will speak to us of a Propagators Convention which she attended in Oregon last year. Her lecture is entitled “Horticulture: the Crown Jewel of Oregon”. This is a subject of which I am eager to hear more about as I believe the lecture’s title to echo my feelings of that incredible state.

Other Duties as Assigned:

Our tea room baristas this month will be Sue Grant, Garth Wedemire and Bill Walsh. Their creative potations will be used to slosh down all those divine delights that you will be adding to the calorie table.

And as we all well know, the FSRS raffle table is far and away the most unique shopping venue in the world. Please help to keep it that way.

Thank you all for being so generous to the tables.

Sean Rafferty

The Business Stuff:

Rhododendron Species Foundation and Botanical Garden

Celebrates 50 years April 24th, 25th, 26th

As we prepare to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Rhododendron Species Foundation in Federal Way, Washington, I am humbled by the reality of how much has been accomplished these last 50 years. These accomplishments, of course, are only due to the efforts by you, the members and supporters and staffs of this great organization. Fifty years sounds like a lot of time, but that time is dwarfed by how much you have gotten done. From the beginning organizational meetings in 1962-64, to the first steps in collecting and propagating the original mother plants, to the maturing garden that you see today, those so distant beginnings have turned into a beautiful reality. The efforts of many very devoted people have left their mark on this garden and organization, and ultimately have left a significant contribution to the rhododendron world.

As the current President of the RSF, I wish to invite all of you to our celebration. Registration information is available on the RSBG website, www.RhodyGarden.org. Early bird registration ends March 1st and all registrations must be in by April 14th. Speakers include David Chamberlain, Douglas Justice, Steve Hootman, and Harold Greer. There will be guided tours through the RSF Botanical Garden as well as other gardens in the local area. Those who will gather at the RSF to celebrate will come together as friends to reminisce, and to raise a glass in honor of all who have contributed through the years. If you are unable to attend, please take a moment the next time you are enjoying the beauty of your own garden, and the special species rhododendrons that you so cherish, to remember the many efforts and sacrifices through history that were given in the name of making species rhododendrons available for all of us to enjoy. Celebrate the beauty of those rhododendrons, and celebrate the day that the Rhododendron Species Foundation was born.

As in any healthy, living, growing organization, the RSF is in a constant state of evolution. Yes, the RSF has many new ambitions, and the culmination of those ambitions will be realized only with your continuing support. We are working hard to develop new methods of reaching out to further strengthen and grow our membership and to find additional ways to meet the demand for needed funds, so that we may accomplish the next 50 years of dreams for the RSF. This is an exciting time for the Rhododendron Species Foundation, as we not only celebrate each of you, but as we work towards the bright future for which you have laid such a solid foundation to build upon. Among the several presentations given during the “celebration event”, you will hear about some of the plans for the future, and you will be amazed and enthused by what the future holds for the RSF. Our task is large, but with continued resolve, and your help, we will build upon that foundation to accomplish the goals that we have planned for the future.

Mike Stewart

President, Rhododendron Species Foundation

THE CALENDAR:

Wednesday, March 12 7:30 pm, Van Dusen	Alpine Garden Club of BC Rex Murfitt: Waterperry, a Unique English Estate with Saxifrages
Wednesday, March 19 7:30 pm	Fraser South Rhododendron Society Dennis Bottemiller: Wild Rhododendrons for the Pacific Northwest Garden
Thursday, March 20 7:30 pm, Van Dusen	Vancouver Rhododendron Society Dennis Bottemiller, propagator, Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden
Saturday, April 5 12:00-4:00 pm, Van Dusen	Alpine Garden Club of BC Annual Spring Show and Sale
Wednesday, April 9 7:30 pm, Van Dusen	Alpine Garden of BC Nicola Ripley: Bringing the Mountains Home
Wednesday, April 16 7: 30 pm	Fraser South Rhododendron Society Rosemary Prufer: Horticulture, the Crown Jewel of Oregon
Thursday, April 17 7:30 pm, Van Dusen	Vancouver Rhododendron Society Sean Rafferty: Rhododendrons and Companion Plants of Sichuan, China
Saturday, April 19 10:00 am - 3:00 pm	Fraser South Rhododendron Society Annual Spring Plant Sale: United Church, 5673-200 Street, Langley
April 24 - 26 Friday and Saturday 9:00 am - 10:30 pm	Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden 50th Anniversary, Federal Way, Washington. Everyone Welcome. See here for details.
Saturday, May 3 10:00 am - 3:00 pm	Vancouver Rhododendron Society, Annual Show and Sale Park and Tilford Gardens, 333 Brooksbank Avenue, North Vancouver,
Wednesday, May 14 7:30 pm, Van Dusen	Alpine Garden Club of BC Richard Ramsden: Wild Flowers of Washington and the Wild Places They Grow
Thursday, May 15	Vancouver Rhododendron Society A Walk in the Park
Wednesday, May 21 7:30 pm	Fraser South Rhododendron Society The Fraser South Justly Famous Beer Bottle Truss Show

Good News

The Executive Council of *The Yak* has funded a magnificent renovation to our corporate publishing offices. I am pleased to announce that the remodelling is now complete and has resulted in Ratzo, our beloved Office Manager, having a new, private office with her own chair, desk and laptop computer; marvellous aids to increased productivity. We are confident that the deadline issues that have plagued us in the past are now well behind and that our niggling labour/management concerns will soon dissolve. *Editor*



FSRS Awards 2013

We are very pleased to announce the recipients of the Bronze medal and FSRS Service Awards for the year 2013.

ARS Bronze Medal: Karen Linton



An army marches on its stomach according to both Napoleon and Frederick the Great. It is lesser known, yet equally clothed in authority, that the same rubric is applicable to the Fraser South Rhododendron Society.

Your accomplishments surpass both of the aforementioned leaders. You are our Queen of epicurean organization, enabling the Fraser South legions to enjoy themselves at each meeting and social function with a level of excellence superior to all other Chapters.

You have been our gracious and generous hostess sharing your beautiful home and gardens with us for many years to accommodate our annual picnic and auction, in addition to your invaluable organizational support of our annual Christmas Potluck.

It is with the greatest of pleasure that the Fraser South Rhododendron Society bestows upon you their highest honour, The Bronze Medal 2013.

ARS Bronze Medal: Larry Morton



You are the first to arrive at our monthly meetings, plant sales and all social events to help with the staging and you are the last to leave after the take down and sweeping up. Your energy and dedication imbues us all.

You have been a valued and energetic member of our club executive committee and are relied upon for shouldering any and every duty at our annual plant sale.

We are all extremely grateful for your kindness with perennially hosting our annual picnic and auction at your lovely estate.

The Fraser South Rhododendron Society is especially privileged to award you The Bronze Medal 2013 our highest honour.

FSRS Service Awards 2013

Harold Johnson Memorial Award:

Chris Hodgson

Your wisdom and energy have been an invaluable addition to our Executive Committee.

You have brought a renewed vitality and joy to The Fraser South Rhododendron Society through your revival and organization of Club garden tours. These have been more than educational and heaps of fun.

In honour of your vital contributions to our club, we are extremely pleased to present you with the Harold Johnson Memorial Award

Ella J. Crabb Memorial Award:

Joan McGiveron

You are the guardian and distributor of all rhododendron knowledge. We look to you for wisdom and relief from our perplexity. You hold the keys to unlock our bewilderment and you present us with unutterable and wondrous beauty. We are fortunate to have you as our librarian.

Without your industry, all would be lost. We offer our thanks to you for engaging the task of merging our two reference libraries into one comprehensible unit.

We enthusiastically present Joan McGiveron with the Ella J. Crabb Memorial Award

Gerry C. Emerson Memorial Award:

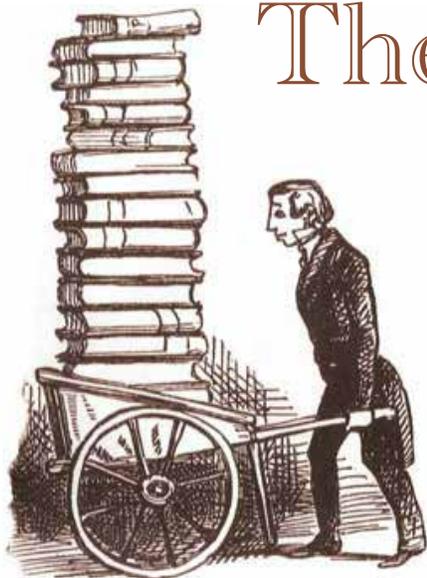
Bill Bischoff

You have been a generous contributor to our society for many years in many ways.

Your considerable donations to our raffle tables are most welcome and helpful as are the exquisite plants that you bring for us to purchase.

We are fortunate to have you serve us faithfully and admirably as President of the Fraser South Rhododendron Society and to continue serving us in your capacity as the liaison to the BC Council of Garden Clubs.

It is with great pleasure that we present Bill Bischoff with the Gerry C. Emerson Memorial Award 2013.



The Book Cart

Greenhouse Gardening by James Underwood Crockett

160 pages, approx. 83 plates colour photos, 19 pages with black and white photos or diagrams illustrating methods to be used in setting up a greenhouse. Appendices include greenhouse pests and diseases, characteristics of 102 greenhouse plants, credits and acknowledgments, Bibliography, Index. Published in North America in 1977 by Time-Life Books Inc., Alexandria, Virginia.

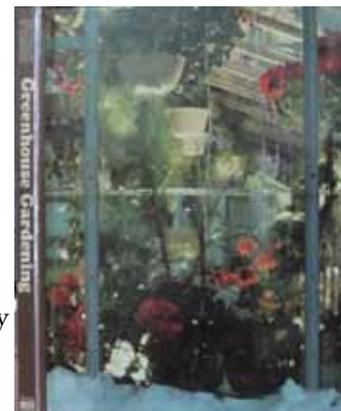
Library of Congress Card Number 77-79073.

James Underwood Crockett (1915-1979) was an eminent horticulturist, writer on gardening subjects and, on television, a teacher of plant care. Many of you will recall the popular programme, *Crockett's Victory Garden* which was carried for many years on PBS. He was a graduate of the University of Massachusetts' Stockbridge School of Agriculture. He also received an Honourary Doctor of Science from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst and has been cited by the American Association

of Nurserymen of the American Horticultural Society. He authored books on greenhouse, indoor and window-sill gardening, a monthly column for *Horticulture* magazine and a monthly bulletin, *Flowery Talks*, for florists. His weekly television programme, *Crockett's Victory Garden*, was broadcast throughout Canada and the United States.

Greenhouse Gardening is a practical guide to any gardener who is interested in year-round gardening under glass. The prospect is becoming more expensive, but a greenhouse does appeal to many of us on the coast to at least winter over many of our plants and to give our plants a head start in the very early spring.

The book is divided into five chapters, with the Appendix following. In Chapter One, the author gives a brief description of the history of greenhouses, dating from the time of the Roman Emperor Tiberius 14-37 A.D. who had a passion for cucumbers, in or out of season, and the only way to satisfy this passion was to build a structure enclosed in beds of dung and covered over with sheets of mica, this being in the pre-glass era. The Romans continued to improve on their methods, building in ducts and pipes to carry heated water and air for temperature control which allowed for the growing of grapes, peaches, roses, cucumbers and decorative plants. But as Rome declined, so did horticulture, and these ancient skills were not revived until the Italian Renaissance near the end of the 13th Century. By the end of the 17th Century, orange trees were being grown in orangeries to protect them from frost. But the real boom in greenhouse growing came in 19th Century England, after the prohibitive tax was removed from glass. Soon every wealthy family was constructing a greenhouse and adding a gardener to the staff.



Crockett uses this chapter to also give very practical advice of calculating cost of heating a greenhouse for every area of Canada and the United States with charts from the U.S. National Climatic Centre and the Environment Service of Canada. From there, his discussion moves to glass or plastic. He brings into discussion the drawbacks of flexible plastics (limited life span), and fiberglass which is translucent rather transparent. Some non-glass surfaces are uneven and catch dirt easily. It is noteworthy that the author raises many problems that gardeners may not have considered.

Crockett also describes the practicalities of 1) a greenhouse constructed from a kit 2) Assembling a prefab lean-to 3) Choosing a location 4) Systems for heating 5) the emergency alarm 6) Benches and walkways within the greenhouse

Chapter Two describes the choice of plants, methods and temperature for use in a greenhouse. Chapter Three, titled Getting Flowers the Size You Want When You Want gives practical advice of forcing bulbs, effects of light and dark, tents to block light, pinching for larger blooms and many other suggestions. The fourth chapter, The Fine Art of Creating New Plants, includes ideas of combining pools, extending living areas and conservatory areas that essentially become part of the house, as part of your greenhouse plan. In Chapter Five, the author has offered a comprehensive coverage of plants for the greenhouse.

Margaret Hodgson

Rhododendron campylocarpum ssp. *campylocarpum* (Epithet: With bent fruit)

Joseph Dalton Hooker discovered *R. campylocarpum* ssp. *campylocarpum* in 1848 in the Sikkim Himalaya, but seed was not collected and introduced until 1849. Further collections were made in Nepal, Bhutan, Assam, and south and southeast Tibet. It grows abundantly in the open, on rocky slopes, in mixed forests and in rhododendron forests, at elevations of 9,500-14,000 feet. *R. campylocarpum* ssp. *campylocarpum* is quite variable in habit and is usually an upright shrub or small tree, although it has also been found growing to twenty feet in the wild. It has elliptic leaves and nodding,

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



R. campylocarpum ssp. *campylocarpum*

Illustration by Walter Hood Fitch
From Curtis's Botanical Magazine



R. campylocarpum ssp. *campylocarpum*
images: Garth Wedemire

bell-shaped cream to yellow flowers, sometimes with a basal blotch. The style is glabrous to glandular in the basal half or sometimes less than half.

R. campylocarpum ssp. *caloxanthum* differs from ssp. *campylocarpum* in that it is much smaller growing and has a more rounded habit. Ssp. *caloxanthum* has small, orbicular leaves which are blue-green, at least when young, and has flowers which are a paler yellow than ssp. *campylocarpum*. It looks much like a yellow *R. williamsianum*. Ssp. *caloxanthum* is also native further east of ssp. *campylocarpum* along the Yunnan/Burma/Tibet border.

R. wardii differs from *R. campylocarpum* ssp. *campylocarpum* in its more saucer-shaped corolla, larger calyx and a style that is glandular to the tip. In addition the fruit of *R. wardii* is straight instead of bent.

R. campylocarpum ssp. *campylocarpum* is a very popular garden plant and does well in a variety of garden situations, but it requires perfect drainage and will suffer if watering is neglected in dry weather. The advice which is often applied to its cousin, *R. wardii*, of treating it like an alpine plant, should be equally applicable. .

Ssp. *campylocarpum* is considered by many to be the best yellow-flowered species for the garden. While there may be differing opinions on that, it is certainly among the loveliest and brightest yellows to be found.

The first flowering occurred in 1856 at the Standish and Noble, Bagshot Nursery, England, which had acquired much of the Hooker collection, and after that point the love affair between *R. campylocarpum* ssp. *campylocarpum* and the hybridisers began.

There are sixteen pages in *Rhododendron Portraits*, by Van Gelderen and Van Hooey Smith exhibiting forty-eight plates of *R. campylocarpum* hybrids. The CD of Salley and Greer's *Rhododendron Hybrids* counted to nine hundred hybrids when I got exhausted at the letter 'S', and I didn't even bother counting the number of direct and indirect hybrids on Hirsutum, but there appears to be more than one hundred. It is all quite understandable as it is such a sweet plant, although it seems that the essence of the species itself cannot quite be outdone.

Some hybrid selections may be viewed on the following pages.

Sean Rafferty





R. 'Ambassador'

R. campylocarpum ssp. *campylocarpum* x *R. unknown*
(unregistered)



R. 'Carita'

R. 'Naomi Group' x *R. campylocarpum* ssp. *campylocarpum*
L. Rothschild, 1935



image: Susan Lightburn

R. 'Moonstone Group'

R. campylocarpum ssp. *campylocarpum* x *R. williamsianum*
J. C. Williams, 1933



R. 'Devonshire Cream'

R. campylocarpum ssp. *campylocarpum* x *unknown*
W. C. Slocock, 1924



image: Garth Wedemire

R. 'Manda Sue'
R. 'Vulcan' x *R. 'Elspeth'*
G. L. Baker, 1961



images: birsutum.info

R. 'Dixie Lee Ray'
R. 'Zuiderzee' x *R. 'Naomi Pink Beauty'*
H. L. Larson, 1958



image: Susan Lightburn

R. 'Moonstone'

*R. campylocarpum ssp. campylocarpum x
R. williamsianum
J. C. Williams, 1933*



image: Garth Wedemire

R. 'Butterfly'

*R. campylocarpum ssp. campylocarpum x
R. 'Mrs Millner'
W. C. Slocock, 1931*



R. 'Ostbo's Copper'

*R. 'Fabia Group' x R. 'Mrs. W.C. Slocock'
E. Ostbo, 1958*



image: Garth Wedemire

R. 'Ladies Choice'
R. 'Moonstone Group' x R. 'Hawk Group'
J. A. Elliot, 1968



images: birsutum.info

R. 'Moonstone Yellow'
R. campylocarpum ssp. campylocarpum x
R. williamsianum
J. C. Williams, 1933



R. 'Goldfort'
R. 'Goldsworth Yellow' x R. fortunei ssp. fortunei'
W. C. Slocock, 1935