



### **This Month's Meeting**

**Date:** Wednesday, March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016 @ 7:30 pm

**Topic:** Mycorrhizae

**Speaker:** Dr. Shannon Berch

**Plant sales:** Sue Klapwijk

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<http://frasersouthernrhodos.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:  
**Langley Mennonite Fellowship Church**  
**20997- 40<sup>th</sup>-Street**  
**Langley BC**



## Quick Hits



Truffle snuffling: see page 4



Plans are under way for the Annual Plant Sale on April 16<sup>th</sup>. It will be held at the usual location, The United Church on 200<sup>th</sup> Street from 10 AM to 3 PM.

At the March meeting you will be asked to sign up for "Duty" on the day of the Sale. Positions are Cashiers, Customer Assistants, Set-up, Take-down, and Members Plant Table. We are asking for your donations of plants, anything not sold by our Sellers. This donation table is a great help for our finances especially now the US dollar makes life difficult.

On Thursday, May 19<sup>th</sup>, FSRS will join VRS on a tour of the UBC Botanical Gardens. Douglas Justice, Associate Director and Curator of Collections will guide us through the Garden with a focus on the Carolinian Forest.

Chris Hodgson is organizing a bus, so if you'd like to join this outing, please bring a cheque for \$20.00 to the March meeting and have Chris sign you up. See you at the meeting, March 16<sup>th</sup>.

*Evelyn Jensen*

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

### In Bloom Today





## FROM THE EDITOR

and found it both fascinating and delightful. She was also extremely generous with her time in answering all questions, both during and following her presentation.

Furthermore, Dr. Berch “is carrying out a research and demonstration project aimed at introducing Mediterranean truffle production to British Columbia. This project is assessing oak and hazelnut fine root colonization by ectomycorrhizal fungi, including the target *Tuber melanosporum* and *Tuber aestivum*, in truffle orchards on south Vancouver Island, the lower Fraser Valley, and the Okanagan Valley.”

With some *European white truffles* selling for \$3,600 a pound and the Fraser South membership’s penchant for epicurean delicacies, I am surprised that one of our bright lights has not yet engaged in puppy or piglet training to snuffle out some of these mouth-watering riches. Or if they already have so ventured, might they bring along to the next meeting, a few shavings to share?

*Sean Rafferty*

## This Month:

**Dr. Shannon Berch** will travel from Vancouver Island to inform us about *mycorrhizae*, the beneficial fungi which form a symbiotic relationship with the roots of almost all plants. She will pay particular attention to *ericoid mycorrhizae* which is the most significant beneficial fungus for the growth of *Rhododendron* and all other ericaceous plants. Those who are interested in how this essential, interactive relationship operates in the roots of rhododendrons should make plans to attend this lecture. Last year, I had the pleasure of attending one of Shannon’s lectures in Victoria



## Last Month:

we were very pleased to welcome Paul Reimer, president of Reimer’s Nurseries Ltd. in Chilliwack, to our meeting. The nursery specializes in growing magnolias, beech, Japanese maples, and dogwoods. His topic for the evening was magnolias.

Reimer’s Nursery was started in 1937 by Paul’s grandfather Nickolai. It continues to be a family run company, with the 4<sup>th</sup> generation represented by Paul’s son Adrian, who is the Sales Manager.

Paul discussed the history of hybrids (and hybridizers) and, along with lovely photographs, the merits and problems of various cultivars. We learned some interesting facts; magnolias are normally pollinated by beetles and that it is very challenging to hybridize the perfect red flower. We were also advised about trees to avoid in our climate, such as *M. ‘Yellow Bird’* which grows too late in the season and tends to split.

He told us about newer, smaller cultivars (such as *M. ‘Genie’*), as well as several columnar, compact varieties that he was particularly interested in growing (like *M. ‘Cleopatra’*). With regards to pruning, he advised that the shaping of younger trees should be done in winter, while regular pruning (if needed) of older trees should be done after flowering.

Magnolias generally prefer acidic soil, and complement rhododendrons very well.

It was a very interesting and informative presentation.

*Nancy Moore*



## Next Month:

[Dr. Sara Harris](#), Professor of Teaching, Earth, Ocean and Atmospheric Sciences, UBC will speak on local and global climate change. Was the 2015 drought an anomaly or the new normal?

## The Business Stuff:

The American Rhododendron Society will be holding its spring 2016 convention in Williamsburg, Virginia, from April 20 - 24. To visit the convention website and register, please click [here](#).

There will also be a Fall Western regional Conference in Newport, Oregon. September 23-24. I shall post their website as soon as it is up and running. The conferences organised at Newport are some of the best that I have attended.

Also, another convention you should make plans for is in California in 2017:

Eureka Chapter will host American Rhododendron Society

2017 ARS Spring Convention

“Rhododendrons in the Redwoods”

Mark your calendar now for April 27 through 30, 2017, for the American Rhododendron Society’s annual spring Convention. The Eureka Chapter will host the convention which will bring visitors to world famous Humboldt County, California from across the nation, Canada, and around the world.

For many, seeing the Redwoods (*Sequoia sempervirens*) is high on the must-see ‘bucket list’, as is the rugged North Coast of California with its *Rhododendron macrophyllum*, and also Stagecoach Hill, the home of the Smith/Mossman expedition for *Rhododendron occidentale*.

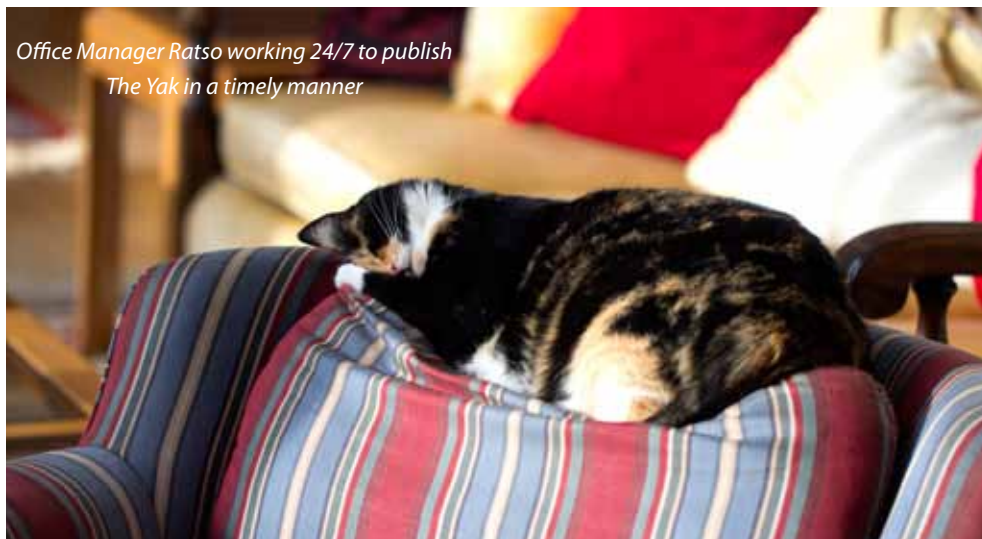
The Red Lion <http://www.redlion.com/eureka> will be our host hotel with a wonderful rate of \$99 per night per room for the duration of the convention with that rate being extended for visitors coming before or staying after the convention. The rate will include airport shuttle and breakfast. In addition to the hotel’s restaurant there are many restaurants within easy walking distance.

The new Sequoia Conference Center, three blocks from the Red Lion Hotel, will be our meeting and banqueting venue. Visitors can walk to the conference center or drive as there is plenty of off-street parking.

The Convention Committee is working on getting world-class speakers and having tours to highlight the natural beauty of Eureka and Humboldt County as well as public gardens, private gardens and nurseries.

We hope to welcome all of our Rhodo friends to our piece of heaven in the world.

For more information call or email June Walsh, 707-443-0604 or [RhodyHostel@suddenlink.net](mailto:RhodyHostel@suddenlink.net) or on the web at <http://EurekaRhody.org/>.



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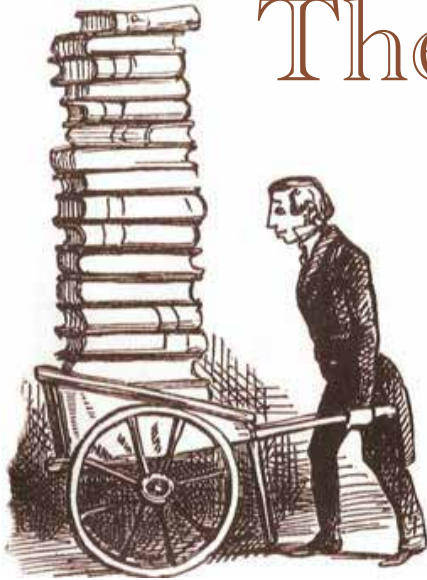
## THE CALENDAR:

<p><b>Wednesday, March 9</b> 7:30 pm Van Dusen</p>	<p><b>Alpine Garden Club of BC</b> Linda Verbeek: A Plethora of Seeds</p>
<p><b>Wednesday, March 16</b> 7:30 pm Langley Mennonite Hall</p>	<p><b>Fraser South Rhododendron Society</b> Dr. Shannon Berch: Mycorrhizae Plant Sales: Sue Klapwijk</p>
<p><b>Thursday, March 17</b> 7:30 pm Van Dusen</p>	<p><b>Vancouver Rhododendron Society</b> Dr. Shannon Berch: Mycorrhizae Plant Sales: Kirsten Martin</p>
<p><b>Saturday, March 19</b> 7:30 pm Sooke Baptist Church</p>	<p><b>Sooke Philharmonic Orchestra and Chorus</b> Maestro Mozart</p>
<p><b>Saturday, April 2</b> 12:00 pm - 4:00 pm Van Dusen Floral Hall</p>	<p><b>Alpine Garden Club of BC</b> Annual Spring Show and Sale</p>
<p><b>Saturday, April 16</b> Langley United Church 10:00 am - 3:00 pm</p>	<p><b>Fraser South Rhododendron Society</b> FSRS plant sale of rare and unusual rhododendrons, companion shrubs and perennials.</p>
<p><b>Wednesday, April 20</b> 7:30 pm Langley Mennonite Hall</p>	<p><b>Fraser South Rhododendron Society</b> Dr. Sara Harris, of UBC, will speak on local and global climate change. Was the 2015 drought an anomaly or the new normal? Plant Sales: Kirsten Martin</p>
<p><b>Thursday April 21</b> 7:30 pm Van Dusen</p>	<p><b>Vancouver Rhododendron Society</b> Gary Lewis of Phoenix Perennials, "Hot New Plants" Plant Sales: Sue Klapwijk</p>
<p><b>Thursday, May 19</b> UBC Botanical Garden</p>	<p><b>Vancouver Rhododendron Society</b> Douglas will lead us through the UBC Botanic Garden with a focus on the Carolinian Forest. Time to be announced</p>



*R. 'Conemaugh'*  
(*R. racemosum* × *R. mucronulatum*)

# The Book Cart

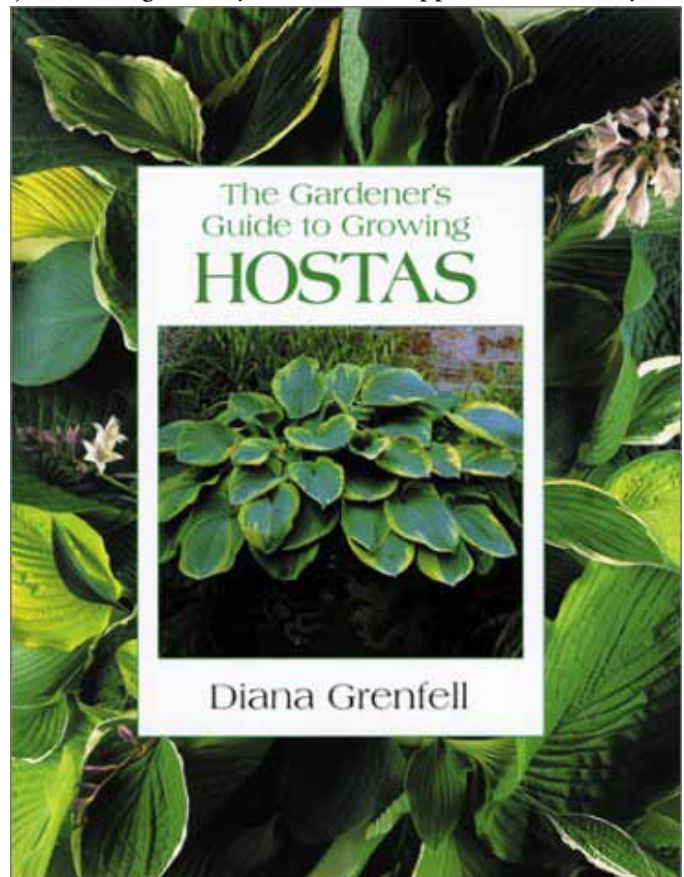


*The Gardener's Guide to Growing Hostas* by Diana Grenfell. Timber Press, Portland, Oregon, copyright 1996 by Diana Grenfell. 160 pages, 72 colour photographs, 3 pages of illustrations, several line drawings. Glossary, Selection of Best Hostas, Appendix and Index of Plant Names. Hardbound. ISBN 0 7153 0431 3 (hardcover).

Diana Grenfell became fascinated by hostas in the mid – 1960s when few gardeners were aware of them. She is co-founder of the British Hosta and Hemerocallis Society. Grenfell has done much to raise the profile of hostas throughout the world, broadcasting, lecturing and writing on all aspects of the plant. She has also contributed many authoritative books and articles on the subject. Having recently retired from Apple Court Nursery, where she held the National

Plant Collection for Small-leaved Hosta, she went on to establish a small town garden in Gloucestershire, England. She has written many books on hostas. She is a life member of the American Hosta Society.

In the Foreword of *The Gardener's Guide to Growing Hostas*, Graham Stuart Thomas mentions that the genus *Hosta* is a relative newcomer to the annals of horticulture and goes on to say that in the 1920s, there was not a single specimen to be seen in the University Botanic Gardens at Cambridge. He also mentions that Hostas, or funkias as they were called, were not mentioned by William Robinson in his *English Flower Garden* until the fifth edition in 1896. Much has changed, and hostas are among the favourite plants in the northern and southern hemispheres, and both sides of the Atlantic. Diana Grenfell tells of learning about hostas from several radio programmes, being described as "perfect plants for gardening in the shade". Now the breeders offer hostas which are perfect for shade or full sun; large leathery leaves or small dainty leaves; crinkled leaves or smooth textures; in varying colours of dark greens to grey blues as well as the lime greens and variegated leaves that are such dazzling highlights in any garden. The new shoots of hosta in their differing shades have to be the quintessential sign that spring has arrived in the garden. Some hostas have the added benefit of being scented as well. The organization of the book begins with a good description of the history of hostas, habitat and classification. The generic name *Hosta* was first proposed by botanist Leopold Trattinick in 1812 to honour an Austrian, Nicholas Thomas Host (1761-1834), botanist and physician to Emperor Francis II. A further name *Funkia* was proposed, but rejected. However this name became accepted as the common name for hostas in many European languages. The book continues in a logical sequence of the botany of hostas, nomenclature, people and their plants, cultivation, propagation of hostas, breeding of hostas, use of the plants in a garden setting, and from there the book expands into descriptions of host collections, hostas in Japan, North America, Europe and Australia. The last chapter of the book covers an A-Z of hostas in cultivation, a very useful chapter. The glossary and appendix supply much valuable information for lovers of hostas.



*Margaret Hodgson*

# *R. falconeri* ssp. *falconeri*

(Epithet: After [Hugh Falconer](#), Superintendent of Saharanpur Gardens)

Although seed of *R. falconeri* ssp. *falconeri* was sent to British gardens by [Colonel William Henry Sykes](#) in 1830, it was not until J.D. Hooker described and re-introduced it in 1850 that the species became widely distributed in cultivation. Hooker found the plant growing at 10,000 feet on Mount Tonglu, in the Singalila range which borders Nepal. It is an absolutely stunning plant even when not in bloom due to its large leaves; elliptic-obovate, matte green and rugulose above and with thick brown to red-brown indumentum underneath. It is even more dramatic when adorned with huge trusses of long-lasting, cream to yellow flowers with a purple basal blotch. *R. falconeri* ssp. *falconeri* grows to forty feet tall with thick trunks exhibiting a beautiful red-brown exfoliating bark. *R. falconeri* ssp. *falconeri*, like several other species of rhododendron in Sikkim, can



*R. falconeri* ssp. *falconeri*

By Walter Hood Fitch: Curtis's Botanical Magazine

form vast impenetrable forests of itself.

The species *R. falconeri* ssp. *eximium* (epithet excellent) does not grow in Sikkim but is found further to the east in Bhutan and the Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh. Ssp. *eximium* differs from ssp. *falconeri* in its smaller stature. It has a darker indumentum beneath the leaves, which makes them even more magnificent than the leaves on ssp. *falconeri*, and has rose to cream flushed rose flowers. Ssp. *eximium* was, until 1982,

ranked at specific level, but David Chamberlain, in his revision of subgenus *Hymenanthes*, placed it as a subgenus of *R. falconeri*.

Both subspecies of *R. falconeri* should be reasonably hardy on the west coast of British Columbia. All of the big leafed rhododendrons benefit from planting sites which are protected from desiccating winds, and *R. falconeri* is no exception. I have heard that ssp. *eximium* is slightly more tender than ssp. *falconeri* but both of them grew well in the North Vancouver garden. I have brought two *R. falconeri* ssp. *falconeri* from North Vancouver to the milder garden in Shirley where they have been happy for two winters, however they are both planted in windy sites until other arrangements can be made. We shall see what happens.

more images pp. 9 and 10

## *Rhododendrons of Sikkim*



*R. falconeri* ssp. *falconeri*



*R. falconeri* ssp. *falconeri*





*R. falconeri* ssp. *falconeri*  
bark



*R. falconeri* ssp. *falconeri*  
(with the editor, for scale)



*R. falconeri* ssp. *falconeri*  
Images: Brenda Macdonald



*R. falconeri* ssp. *falconeri*  
looming over Sue Grant in Dunedin, NZ



*R. falconeri* ssp. *falconeri*, Dunedin, NZ  
Images: Garth Wedemire



*R. falconeri* ssp. *falconeri*, new growth  
Image: Brenda Macdonald