



R. souliei

Image: Garth Wedemire



This Month's Meeting

Date: Wednesday, November 16th, 2016 @ 7:30 pm

Topic: My Favourite Shade Perennials

Speaker: Philip MacDougall

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- 40th-Street
Langley BC



Quick Hits

This month's speaker will be Philip MacDougall speaking on his 'Favourite Shade Perennials'. Philip is an extremely knowledgeable plantsman and entertaining speaker.





I would like to thank everyone for coming to the October meeting to ratify the revisions to the B. C. Societies Act By-laws. Many thanks to Harold Fearing for all his efforts in handling the task.

Welcome to our new Website Manager, Maureen Worden.

The Plant Sale date has been confirmed as April 15th 2017. This is the Saturday of the Easter weekend and has been approved by the Mennonite Fellowship Church. Please mark this date on your calendar.

The deadline is approaching to pay your annual dues. Please see Ginny at the meeting to update your membership.

Plans are underway for our Christmas Party on Wednesday, December 14th. Look up your favorite recipes and plan to be there!

Evelyn Jensen

FROM THE PRESIDENT

This Month:

Philip MacDougall will be returning to Fraser South to speak to us on his favourite shade perennials. Philip, is an executive member of both the Alpine Garden Club of BC and the Vancouver

Rhododendron Society; as well as a plant explorer who has botanised in Taiwan, Chile, Argentina, Tasmania, Korea, Turkey, Japan and China, in addition to the Yukon, Newfoundland, North Carolina and the Siskiyou Mountains in North America.

Philip's marvelous plants, grown on from seed collected on his various expeditions, have been beneficently donated to many garden club raffle tables over the years and are treasures to obtain. Our garden has been a fortunate recipient of his largesse.

On his last visit to Fraser South we were beguiled with his adventures of botanising in China, travelling by bus and by taxi, frugally, and without a guide to some of the famous rhododendron mountains. It was one of the best related Himalayan adventure tales that I have had the pleasure of listening to.

Please attend this next meeting and be in the company of one of the most knowledgeable plantmen on the planet.



FROM THE EDITOR

Next Month:

Next month is, of course, our annual Christmas Potluck Dinner and Soiree. Full rules and regs will be outlined in next month's newsletter, but keep in mind that we do have an early date - December 14th instead of December 21st, and an early start - 6:30 pm instead of 7:30 pm. One of our Executive Hostesses, will be touching base with each of us to confirm attendance and culinary contributions.

OTHER DUTIES AS ASSIGNED: .

Your refreshment pleasures this month will be prepared by the entertainment virtuosi, Karen Linton and Larry Morton. Please remember to bring along some tasty treats for Karen and Larry to set out on the calorie table.

Santa will also be taking notes on the generous folks bringing plants for the raffle table.

Sean Rafferty

Last Month:

The Evolution of Rhododendrons, a presentation by Glen Jamieson (based on the paper by Richard Hebda and Ted Irving published in 1993 in the ARS Journal.

Last month we were treated to a fascinating presentation on the origin and dissemination of rhododendrons. Rhododendrons are currently found in northwestern North America, the Appalachians, China, India, the Caucasus, Japan, and Indonesia and its surrounding areas.

Glen explained that pollen fossils indicate that rhododendrons originated in North America. Fifty million year old fossils of *R. crassum* have been found in Alaska, and 40 million years ago (when there was no polar ice cap) rhododendrons would have grown in the Arctic. Rhododendrons could have moved over the land bridge to Asia. Twenty million years ago the Himalayan Mountain Range was being created, while the land bridge between Siberia and North America was breaking apart.

Glaciation in the last 2–3 million years has caused diverse speciation. The advance and retreat of the ice (and the subsequent cooling and warming) has caused rhododendrons to move from growing at the tops of mountains to growing down in the valleys. They have moved up and down mountains with each ice age. Glaciers scoured North America, lowering mountain heights and creating a warmer, less hospitable climate for rhododendrons. Hence, North America has very few endemic rhododendrons.

Meanwhile, over in Asia, four major rivers; the Salween, Irrawaddy, Yangtze, and Mekong were



gouging steep, V-shaped valleys through the huge Himalayan mountains. This erosion continues today, and creates excellent rhododendron habitat. Of the approximately nine hundred species of rhododendron in the world, more than six hundred of them grow in the Himalayas.

Schistanthe (the new name for Vireya) grow in the mountain ranges of Java, Sumatra, Borneo, Papua New Guinea and the Philippines. Since glaciation didn't reach all the way to the mountaintops, each volcanic peak in this area is like its own little island. Mt. Kinabalu in Borneo has 5000-6000 species of plants, as well as unique fauna. *R. ericoides*, an endemic found at the highest altitude of Borneo, is an interesting rhododendron that looks a lot like heather.

Observing where and how rhododendrons grow in nature might help us to have more success growing them. In the Himalayas, most grow at alpine or sub-alpine elevations on steep slopes in talus rock with very little soil. There is abundant moisture during the growing season, and they have excellent drainage, very different than the Fraser Valley.

Vireyas grow well in 10 – 12 degree C temperatures, with lots of rain and wind, but no frost or snow.

Glen gave us a fascinating look at the origins and travels of our favourite genus.

Nancy Moore



The Business Stuff:

RHODODENDRONS IN THE REDWOODS ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY EUREKA, CALIFORNIA

Register now for the American Rhododendron Society's annual spring Convention April 27-30, 2017. 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. Top notch speakers will be featured every day, along with tours of redwood forests, private and public gardens, azalea reserves and Victorian architecture.

The Red Lion Hotel will be our host hotel, with a rate of \$99 per night per room plus tax. The rate includes full breakfast and an airport shuttle. Thursday and Sunday events will be held at the hotel. The new state-of-the-art Sequoia Conference Center, three blocks from the Red Lion Hotel, will be our meeting and banqueting venue Friday and Saturday. Visitors can walk to the conference center, take the shuttle or drive; abundant parking is available at the center.



Humboldt Botanical
Garden



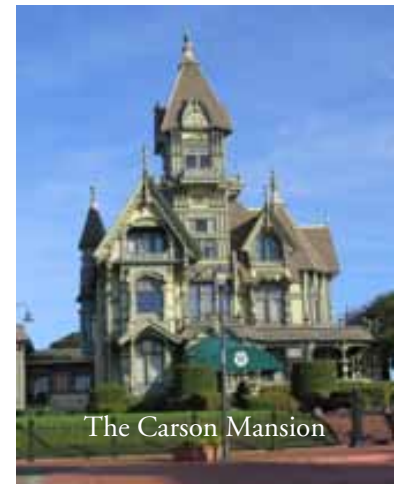
R. occidentale

For many ARS members, seeing the Redwoods (*Sequoia sempervirens*) is high on the must-see "bucket list", as are the rugged North Coast of California with its *Rhododendron macrophyllum* and Stagecoach Hill, the home of the Smith-Mossman 1966 collections of *Rhododendron occidentale* azaleas.

In addition to the area's redwood parks and other natural wonders, Eureka and its neighboring towns abound with well-preserved Victorian homes displaying the famous Queen Anne "Carpenter Gothic" style. The Carson Mansion (now a private club) is the most famous example from the late 19th century era of the lumber barons in northwestern California.



Singing Tree Gardens



The Carson Mansion

Eureka is served by United Express twice daily from San Francisco. Flying to San Francisco

and transferring to Eureka is the usual air transport option. Renting a car in San Francisco and driving to Eureka is a very scenic alternative. Drive time from San Francisco is about seven hours, through the wine country with its rolling hills and on north through the Coast Range mountains and redwood forests. From the north, PenAir flies from Portland, Oregon to the Eureka/Arcata airport. An alternative to flying directly to Eureka from Portland might be to fly to Crescent City or to Medford, Oregon, then rent a car. Drive time from Crescent City is about two hours; from Medford about four hours. Both routes are quite scenic, with wild rivers, rugged mountains and redwood forests well worth visiting. Several car rental agencies operate at the Eureka/Arcata airport. The Red Lion Hotel offers free shuttle service for convention attendees to and from the Eureka/Arcata airport. However you choose to get here, we look forward to hosting you and showing you our beautiful northwest corner of California.

More information at www.eurekarhody.org

More Business Stuff:

American Rhododendron Society Fall Conference in Newport, Oregon

The ARS fall conference was held September 30-Oct 2 at The Agate Beach Holiday Inn, just north of Newport, with 189 participants including 26 from District 1. Not bad!

Highlights of the conference, in addition to copious socializing, were evening talks on rhododendrons from around the world, and morning clinics on “how to, and more.”

We heard about amazing azaleas in the southwest USA, rhododendrons in northern Germany, Russia, Sikkim, New Zealand (presented by MARS president Linda Derkach) and even Chile.

Clinics were held on Saturday and Sunday mornings with simultaneous, rotating talks on rhododendron propagation, camellias, rhododendron bonsai, hardy fuschias, alpines, garden photography and more. I really like these clinics. They get right to the point, usually involve hand-out notes, and always have an attentive and appreciative audience. The ones that I attended were all outstanding: Dennis Bottemiller of the Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden fame on growing rhododendrons from seeds and cuttings, Robert Herald of Portland on Camellias (“Revival of an Aristocrat”), Don Wallace from Eureka chapter (“Hybridizing Rhodos with Goals in Mind”) and Dave Eckerdt from Salem, Oregon (“A Garden Appreciator”), photos and garden ideas from around the world presented with wry humour. If any of them venture north, grab them for speakers. Of course we all know Dennis and he’s always obliging.

Trusses are out of the question in October, but Mike Bones of Florence, Oregon put together a most attractive display of rhododendron foliage, from miniatures to big leaf. We voted, and the winner was a big leaf, but darned if I can remember which one.

A meeting of the ARS board was held on the Friday, at which it was reported that the ARS budget is finally in balance and that Katherine Sterner, our new Administrative Assistant, is doing an exceptional job. We heard glowing plans for next year’s ARS spring convention in Eureka, California. Ken Webb, from the Victoria Rhododendron Society pumped us up for the 2018 blockbuster ARS conference in Germany, which will include optional pre and post trips to Holland, Denmark, Sweden and Finland.

Stay tuned!

Chris Hodgson



Image: Chris Hodgson

THE CALENDAR:

Wednesday, November 16 7:30 pm. Langley Mennonite Hall	Fraser South Rhododendron Society Philip MacDougall: My Favourite Shade Perennials
Thursday, November 17 7:30 pm VanDusen	Vancouver Rhododendron Society Chris Hodgson: Gardens of Cornwall and Devon
Wednesday, December 14 7:30 pm VanDusen	Alpine Garden Club of BC Annual Christmas Potluck and Rare Plant Auction
Wednesday, December 14 6:30 pm Langley Mennonite Hall	Fraser South Rhododendron Society Annual Potluck Christmas Party
Wednesday, January 11 7:30 pm VanDusen	Alpine Garden Club of BC Luis Roberto Gonzalez Torres: Orchids of Cuba
Wednesday, January 18 7:30 pm Langley Mennonite Hall	Fraser South Rhododendron Society Annual General Meeting, member slide shows and Desert Extravaganza
Thursday, January 19 7:30 pm VanDusen	Vancouver Rhododendron Society Annual General Meeting and members' slides
Wednesday, February 8 7:30 pm VanDusen	Alpine Garden Club of BC Ken Marr: Flora of northern BC alpine
Wednesday, February 15 7:30 pm Langley Mennonite Hall	Fraser South Rhododendron Society Douglas Justice: Plant Hunting in Viet Nam
Thursday, February 16 7:30 pm VanDusen	Vancouver Rhododendron Society Paul Reimer: Reimer Nurseries



Precociously blooming today:
R. 'Trewithen Orange'

Leprechauns

Good friend Garth, who resides away up Island in Comox, sent me a link to the story reported below. He has evidently unremembered that he sent me, a few years ago, a link to the rhododendron forest in this particular area of Tipperary, Ireland. No matter, I am pleased to remember the forest and, I believe, that I wrote a short piece about the *R. ponticum*, which reside there, for *The Yak*. For the three of you out there who actually read this newsletter, there is the reasonable probability that your memories are also fading, so I shall carry on with the repeat performance. Earlier, I might have only indicated the link to the ostensibly invasive nature of the [maligned rhododendron](#), and not mentioned the entrapped travellers.

Office manager, Ratso, who seldom discusses with me anything other than *Yak* deadlines and her mealtime menus, informs me that the Knockmealdown Mountains are the playground of the Leprechauns who are known to attend ARS Conventions and have developed remarkable rhododendron propagating skills. Their proficiency in replicating rhododendron plants is most appealing, although I have noticed that there is a predictable dearth of Leprechauns when one really needs one.

Sean Rafferty

Couple in their 50s rescued from rhododendron forest in Tipperary

A couple in their fifties have been rescued in a five hour operation after becoming stranded in a treacherous area of steep ground in Tipperary

The two experienced hill walkers got stuck in what rescuers described as a very dense rhododendron forest. The two had been walking in the Knockmealdown Mountains overlooking Bay Lough when they got into trouble.

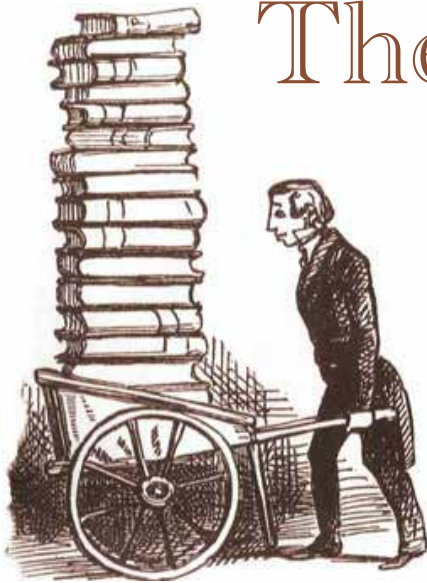
Mountain rescue workers were able to spot the couple and guided rescuers in by radio to the location. The groups involved in the rescue made the decision to bring the two to safety by taking a boat across Bay Lough rather than take the risky trek up the slopes of a nearby mountain

Rhododendrons can form very dense thickets which prevent access by the sheer size of the plant.



More images may be found on the [facebook page](#) of the South Eastern Mountain Rescue Association.

The Book Cart



Right Plant, Right Place by Nicola Ferguson. Original Publisher; Pan Books, an imprint of Macmillan Publishers Ltd. This edition published 1997 by Bookmart Ltd. Copyright ©1984 Nicola Ferguson.

292 pages, approx. 283 pages with colour illustrations, well-detailed Table of Contents, a comprehensive Index of Botanical Names plus an excellent Index of Common Names. ISBN 0 330 31726 1, Toppan Printing Co., (Singapore) Pte. Ltd.

The Author: No information was given in the cover jacket or before the Introduction about the author, Nicola Ferguson. After a bit of detective work, I discovered that she was born 1949 and raised in Northern Ireland, attended Edinburgh University where she was awarded PhD in Psychology. The Amazon.UK site lists 12 books at this time, some of which may be

updates of this *Right Plant, Right Place*. Nicola Ferguson has been writing about and photographing plants for several decades now. She gardens in a north-facing Edinburgh location. She is the mother of three adult children.

Right Plant, Right Place contains 27 chapters, plus a Metric Conversion Table, Abbreviations and symbols used, Introduction and two good Indices (Botanical, and Common Names) at the end. Unfortunately, the chapters are not numbered so I found I was constantly flipping back to the table of contents to look up information. But the chapters are very detailed, covering a large range of subjects regarding just about any gardening situation. Examples of topics discussed are as follows: Plants Suitable for Shallow Soils Over Chalk, Plants Suitable for Acid Soils, and Plants Suitable for Heavy Clay Soils. Dry soils, dry shade, dense shade. shrubs, trees, ground covers, hedging plants, variegated foliage, colourful autumn foliage, ornamental fruits, ornamental bank and twigs are also discussed. Each colour photograph, of approximately 1,400 plants, is accompanied by much useful information.

Margaret Hodgson

