



THE YAK

Volume 32, Number 10

December 2018

Fraser South Rhododendron Society
is a chapter of the
American Rhododendron Society

<http://frasersouthernrhodos.ca>

Meetings are held at 7:30 p.m. on the third
Wednesday of each month (except June,
July, August) at:

Langley Mennonite Fellowship Church
20997 40th Street
Langley, B.C.

Map : <https://goo.gl/maps/ZB1m1jnF9DP2>



This Month

Fraser South Rhododendron Society
Christmas Potluck Dinner

(Please note date & time change)



Date: Wednesday, Dec 12, 2018.
Doors open at 6:00 p.m.

Kitchen Duties: Shawn O'Neill &
Colleen Bojczuk



2018 OFFICERS

Acting President:	Colleen Bojczuk	604-826-4221
Past Pres:	Evelyn Jensen	604-857-5663
Vice Pres:	Colleen Bojczuk	604-826-4221
Secretary:	Barbara Mathias	778-580-6404
Treasurer:	Harold Fearing	604-857-4136
Directors:	Caroline Feldinger	778-545-8994
	Judy Wellington	604-597-9156
	Jim Worden	604-541-4754
Programme:	Jim Worden	604-541-4754
Membership:	GINNY FEARING	604-857-4136
Newsletter:	Maureen Worden	604-541-4754
Librarian:	Gerald Nemanishen	604-826-0166
Website:	Maureen Worden	604-541-4754
Hospitality:	Gail Floyd	604-541-2884
	Lois Williams	604-535-0543
BCCGC Liaison: Vacant		

Library Updates

The library lists on the FSRs website have been updated to include new book purchases as well as the book reviews contributed to the YAK by our librarian.

The library now has over 160 books. A reminder that members are welcome to borrow these books which cover a wealth of gardening subjects (I.e. not only rhododendrons!)

Recommended Reading

If you missed it last month, be sure and check out the website to read about "The First 10 Years" of the Fraser South Rhododendron Society.

ARS 2019 Conventions

ARS Spring Convention, May 16-19, Malvern PA.

ARS Fall Convention, Sept. 27-29, Parksville, B.C.

The Calendar

Fraser South Rhododendron Society Wednesday December 12, 2018. Time: 6:00 p.m. Langley Mennonite Church	Christmas Pot-luck dinner
Fraser South Rhododendron Society Wednesday January 16, 2019. Time: 7:30 p.m. Langley Mennonite Church	Annual General Meeting with Annual Desert Extravaganza and member slides
Vancouver Rhododendron Society Thursday January 17, 2018 7:30 pm VanDusen Gardens	AGM, with talks by Jacquie Clayton on Sikkim, Chris Hodgson on the 2018 Bremen ARS Convention, and
Fraser South Rhododendron Society Wednesday February 20, 2019. Time: 7:30 p.m. Langley Mennonite Church	TBD
Vancouver Rhododendron Society Thursday February 21, 2019 7:30 pm VanDusen Gardens	Dr. Glen Jamieson, "Vireya Rhododendrons

Christmas Potluck Dinner



Remember to bring a dish of food to share, with serving utensils if required. Beverages will be provided.

Bring your own plates, mugs, and cutlery, then remember to take them home again.

Be on time, the food will not last!

Bring your festive spirit and enjoy the always excellent food and spirited company as we celebrate the season. P.S. I hear through the grapevine that we will be treated to another one of Colleen's challenging quizzes.

Reminders

Our raffles help finance chapter activities. Please bring your contributions, extra plants, garden items, etc.

Feel free to suggest program topics and/or speakers to any member of the executive.

Submit articles, photos, or suggestions for the newsletter or else you will be stuck with the editors choices.

Speaker reviews are always welcome!

Plan to join us at the Christmas pot-luck dinner Wednesday, December 12th. Let's have a good turnout to kick off the holidays!

From the Editor



This month's YAK is a week earlier than usual to ensure that everyone is reminded of the potluck Christmas dinner on Dec. 12th. I always enjoy the dinner and hope to see everyone there. Anyone for corn bread?

The cool clear weather we've been enjoying has allowed more garden cleanup (does it ever end?) but last night's colder temperatures finally did in the hardy fuchsia flowers. The bird feeders are busy from dawn to dusk and only the occasional hawk in the backyard deters the birds from filling up on the feeder offerings. Doesn't seem to matter how cold it is, the birds faithfully perform their daily ablutions in either the birdbath or the gurgler. I personally like the sunny cool weather even though at times it does make my early morning walks a little slippery. We are fortunate to be on a school bus route which ensures that the local roads are kept brined and plowed when it snows.

We've been lucky so far this fall to avoid any major wind storms. This however has its downfalls as the usual abundant supply of free greenery for outside Christmas decoration is non-existent. Haven't decided whether to hope for a "blow" or perhaps do some pruning!

Best wishes to everyone this holiday season.

Merry Christmas!

Maureen Worden

Last Month



At our meeting in November, Colleen once again had us testing our plant knowledge.

This month she provided us with a selection of cuttings from various plants and trees to see if we could identify them.

Some correct identifications were made, but overall she stumped a lot of us.



November Speaker Review

We greatly enjoyed Barb Matthias' presentation on a bicycle tour through parts of Iran. I admit to a previous somewhat negative impression of the area, but her stories and wonderful pictures revealed a much different place and people. Despite the enormous population existing in a relatively small country, we saw vast areas of awesomely beautiful deserts and lush mountain forests with little to no sign of inhabitants. I was surprised to see gardens in the city with huge beds of perfectly ordinary bedding geraniums among the more tropical trees. In the seemingly inhospitable desert areas, there were many diminutive but nevertheless truly beautiful plants. The village people welcomed them into their homes, and although appearing plain on the exteriors, the interiors were bright and cheerful with the fabulous Persian carpets and wall hangings, and the food was delicious! After numerous questions and discussion, I'm sure we all came away pleasantly enlightened, and amazed at her bravery to accomplish such a journey.

Submitted by Colleen B.

From the Acting President

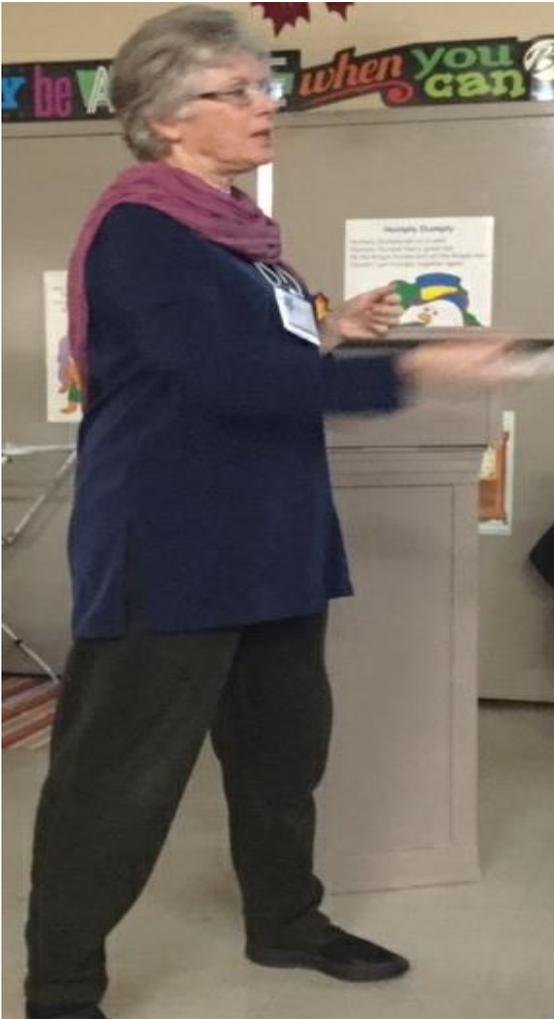
How spoiled are we all for this wonderful autumn, with the colors lasting so well, and now this crisp and sunny spell – how can anyone think of Christmas yet? And yet we must – the calendar doesn't lie.

My small greenhouse is cleaned out, insulated, and most of the needy plants crammed in – our banana population exploded over the summer (Dennis was very busy dividing and potting), and I of course discovered more half-hardy 'must haves' like Astelia, some new colored varieties of Dracaena, more Canna lilies, plus various things in small pots that have yet to be planted – somehow, somewhere! Soon now we really must get busy to deck the halls, trim the tree, roast some chestnuts, and simmer up a big vat of wassail for the holidays.

I hope to see everyone out for the Christmas party – the food will be fabulous, the puzzle will challenge your brain (just a bit), and there will be a great variety of things to win.

Colleen B.





After an introduction by her husband dressed in Afghanistan menswear, Barbara Mathias of the Fraser South group gave a presentation on Iranian botany and cycling through Iran.

The presentation provided insight into the historical country along with its customs. The northern part of Iran and the desert area were very interesting as well as the accommodation and historical buildings. The fauna encountered on the trip highlighted the uniqueness of the area.



From the Archives

The following article originally appeared in the Fraser South Newsletter, December 2002 by Norma Senn.



CHRISTMAS NUTS

NOVEMBER 2002

One of the speciality foods we associate with Christmas are nuts: we even have a whole Christmas story built around a nutcracker. We find mixed nuts available in the shell or in cans. The most common mix includes cashews, Brazil nuts, walnuts, pecans and hazelnuts. These delicious nuts represent crops that are produced from all over the world.

Cashews, *Anacardium occidentale*, is native to South America where it is still grown. However, in the 16th century, cashew trees were introduced to India by the Portuguese, and shortly thereafter, into Africa. The trees were really introduced to hold soil in place, rather than as use as an edible crop. The trees are now found growing throughout the tropical world, and it is a major economic crop of several African countries, as well as India and now, Viet Nam. It is grown in large plantations in many areas, but it also is a cash crop for many small growers. In parts of eastern Africa, cashew trees have naturalized and now form large tracts of forests. Cashew trees grow well with heat and drought, but they have no tolerance to cold or poorly drained soils.

The cashew tree is related to poison ivy and poison sumac, and like these plants, parts of the cashew tree cause skin irritations. The actual hard seed coat that surrounds the cashew meat contains the phenolic oils that cause skin rashes. In times past, there were problems in removing the husks to get at the delicious seeds inside, but with modern processing techniques, however, no one has to handle the husks. The cashew apple, the fruit that surrounds the cashew seed, is perfectly edible, and in many parts of the world, the cashew apple is more important than the nut as it is used for fresh eating, juice and syrup. In southern India, the fruit is fermented to create a local liquor called feni. Cashew apples are also used as livestock feed



Another crop originally native to South America is the Brazil nut, *Bertholletia excelsa*. The trees are native to large areas of the Amazon River basin, and are found growing wild in Brazil, Peru, Bolivia and Colombia. It is a very large tree, easily reaching 50 m in height. The nuts we eat are contained within a very large capsule-like fruit. Each fruit, which has a woody covering much like a coconut, can weigh over a kg and contains between 15 to 20 nuts.

The nuts are considered to be very nutritious as they have a high protein content, as well as several elements and vitamins essential to our diets. The nuts also contain high quality oils that can be used to make cosmetics and soaps.

Traditionally, Brazil nuts have been collected from the wild, but over the past couple of decades, concerted efforts have been made to establish cultivated plantations. The trees make good over-story trees for other crops like cocoa and pepper. The wood is used for lumber, and the hard fruit shells are used to manufacture local crafts. Brazil nuts are very important to the local economies where the trees are grown.

Pecans, *Carya illinoensis*, are native to North America, originally found growing in areas in the southern parts of the American mid-west into the south eastern states. This is a deciduous tree that needs deep, rich soil with an even moisture supply and good drainage. Georgia, Arkansas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Texas and parts of California have a large pecan industry. As well, there is a large industry in Australia. Pecans, like walnuts and hazelnuts, are used extensively in commercial baking, as well as being a Christmas snack. Trees come into bearing between 6 to 10 years of age. In addition to the nuts, pecans are also grown for their beautiful wood. The nuts form slowly in a shell over the summer months. The pecan kernels that we eat are actually a seedling's two cotyledons.

Pecan trees are vegetatively hardy in the mildest areas of B.C., but they do not produce nuts. There are several beautiful trees planted at Butchard Gardens in Victoria. Because they are tap-rooted, pecan trees are a good choice, to plant in a lawn, where a good lawn is wanted underneath the tree canopy.

Commercial walnuts come from the English (or Persian) walnut tree, *Juglans regia*. It is native to a large area from the western Himalayas through central Asia into eastern Europe. It has provided food for thousands of years. English walnuts were introduced into North America by early settlers, including the Spanish who brought the nuts to California in the 1700s. California is the largest producer of commercial English walnuts in the world. English walnuts have been selected for soft shells that can be removed easily and a mild flavour. Walnut oil is extracted from poor grade nuts. Even the hard shells of walnuts are used to make polishing solutions for metals.

There are several other species of walnut trees, including the black walnut (*Juglans nigra*) that is native to parts of southern Ontario into the eastern U.S. seaboard through the mid-west. The nuts, while edible, are not as popular as English walnuts because of their strong flavour and very hard shells. Wood lot production of black walnut trees is common in eastern North America since the trees are prized for their beautiful lumber. Trees grown for lumber are grown from seed while those grown for nuts are produced by grafting. Tree habit for nut bearing trees is a low, wide-spreading canopy while lumber trees are trained to grow tall and have a high canopy.

Both English and black walnut trees can be grown in southern British Columbia. However, nut production tends to be variable from year to year. One reason

for the variation is that the flowers are occasionally damaged by late spring frost. However, both make beautiful, large ornamental trees.

Commercially, hazelnuts or filberts, *Corylus avellana*, are grown from northern California into southwestern B.C., with the largest production in Oregon. However, our production pales in comparison with the crops produced in Turkey, Italy and Spain. The nuts are used extensively in baking, added to breakfast cereals and eaten whole. If you're wondering about the terms filbert and hazelnut, they're really the same thing. Traditionally, the nuts from trees introduced from Europe and the middle-east were called filberts and they are characterized by having husks (the covering over the nut) as long as or longer than the nut, while hazelnuts were used for native North American species which typically have a husk that is shorter than the nut. Nowadays though the terms are used interchangeably, and in some areas these even go by a third name, the cobnut.

Hazelnuts can be grown as a single stemmed small tree or as a multi-stemmed large shrubs. They grow best in rich, deep soils that hold moisture while providing good drainage. The contorted hazelnut tree, *Corylus avellana* 'Contorta' (Harry Lauder's Walking Stick) makes an interesting small tree for the garden. It is grown for its winter habit which has branches growing in contorted spirals. It does produce edible nuts, but I find the Stellars Jays and squirrels adore them.

There are several other species of hazelnuts that are important wildlife food sources, including *Corylus cornuta*, our wild hazelnut.



A *Rhododendron* Christmas

C is for Christmas Cheer
(*R. caucasicum* x ?)



H is for Hachmann's Junifeuer
(‘Mary Waterer x Moser’s Maroon’)



R is for Red Impulse
(‘Vivacious’ x ‘Nova Zembla’) x
(‘Mars’ x ‘America’)



I is for Impi
(*R. sanguineum* ssp *sanguineum* x
'Moser's Maroon')



S is for Sammetglut
(‘Mars’ x ‘nova Zembla’)



T is for Thunderstorm
(‘Doncaster’ x ?)



M is for Madras
(‘Mars’ x ‘Fanfare’)



A is for Anne Hardgrove
(‘C.P. Raffill Group’ x ‘Moser’s Maroon’)



S is for Scarlet Wonder
(‘Essex Scarlet’ x R.forrestii Repens Group)



Merry
Christmas

Rhododendrons of Sikkim-Himalaya

This month we start a new series on the Rhododendrons of Sikkim-Himalaya based on the explorations by Joseph Dalton Hooker and his findings published in 1849 (see below). Rhododendrons still readily found today in many gardens will be highlighted in this series.

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THE
RHODODENDRONS
OF
SIKKIM-HIMALAYA;
BEING
AN ACCOUNT, BOTANICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL, OF THE
RHODODENDRONS RECENTLY DISCOVERED IN THE MOUNTAINS OF EASTERN HIMALAYA,
FROM
DRAWINGS AND DESCRIPTIONS MADE ON THE SPOT,
DURING A GOVERNMENT BOTANICAL MISSION TO THAT COUNTRY:
BY
JOSEPH DALTON HOOKER, R.N., M.D., F.R.S., F.L.S.,
Sc. Sc. Sc.
EDITED BY
SIR W. J. HOOKER, K.H., D.C.L., F.R.A.S. & L.S.,
Vice-President of the Linnean Society, and Director of the Royal Gardens of Kew.
SECOND EDITION.



KINCHIN-JUNGA (Elev. 28,178 ft.) as seen from DARJEELING.

LONDON:
REEVE, BENHAM, AND REEVE, KING WILLIAM STREET, STRAND.

1849.





J.D.H. del. Fitch, lith.

Rever. Benham & Reeve, imp.

RHODODENDRON BARBATUM, Wall.

RHODODENDRON BARBATUM, *Wall.**Bristly Rhododendron.*

TAB. III.

Arboreum, foliis elliptico-lanceolatis acutis basi obtusis coriaceis marginibus subrecurvis utrinque glaberrimis subtus pallidioribus supra impresso venosis, petiolo tuberculoso longe ramulisque glanduloso-setosis, bracteis alabastrisque viscidis, floribus dense capitatis mediocribus sanguineis, lobis calycinis foliaceis viscidis ovato-ellipticis appressis, staminibus 10, filamentis glabris, ovari glanduloso-hirsuti loculis 5-8.

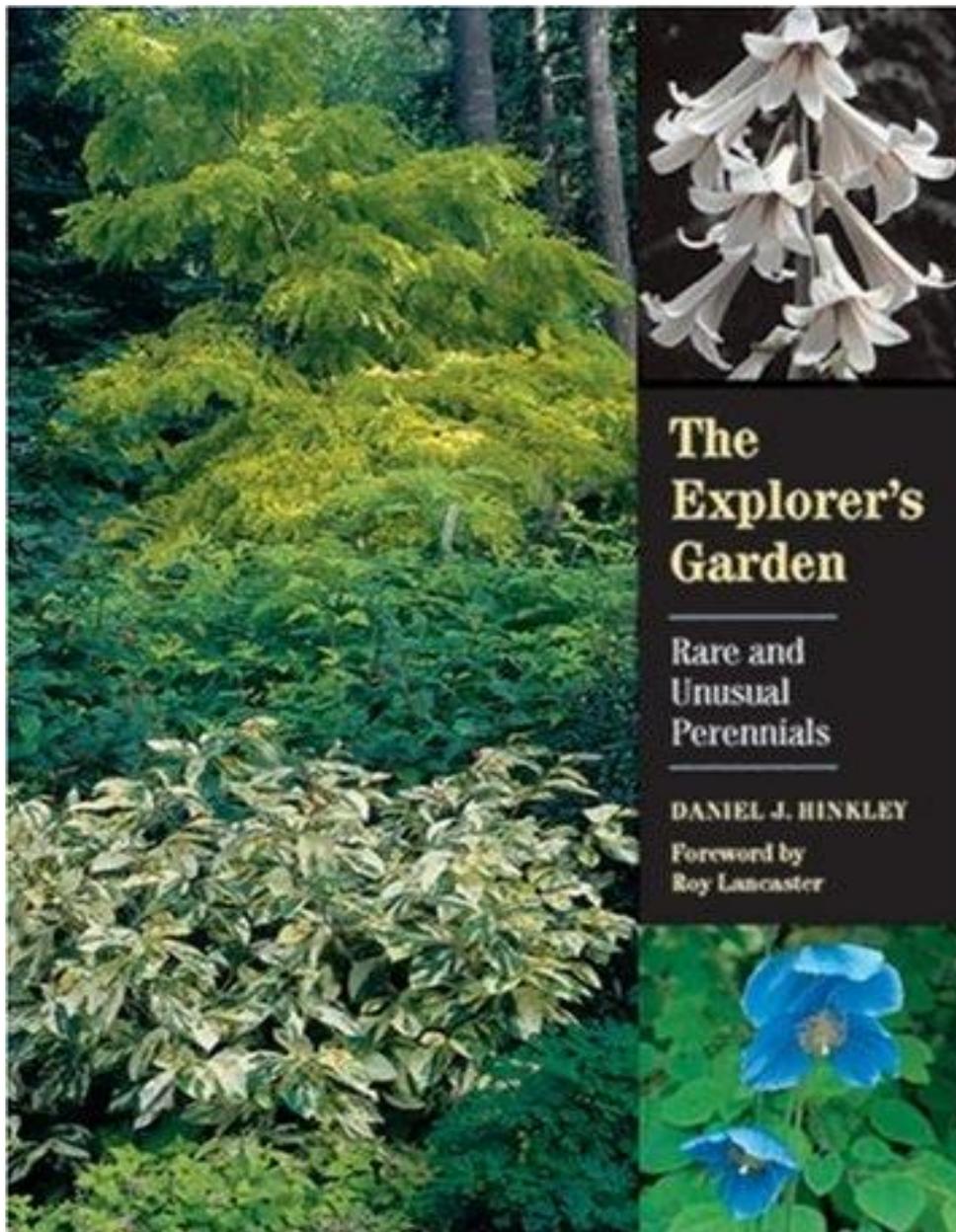
RHODODENDRON barbatum. *Wall. Cat. no. 757. Don, Syst. Gard. and Bot. vol. iii. p. 844. De Cand. Prodr. vol. vii. p. 721. Hook. in Bot. Mag. sub Tab. 4381; in Gard. Chron. 1848 (with a wood-cut).*

HAB. Gossain Than, *Wallich.* Summit of Tonglo, in Sikkim-Himalaya, alt. 10,000 feet. *Fl. April.*

A tree, from forty to sixty feet high, branched from the base. Main trunks few, inclined, compressed, clothed with reddish, papyraceous bark, destitute of Lichens and Mosses. Branches numerous, floriferous at their apices. Leaves, in the very young state, sparingly hairy and ciliated; when fully developed, five to seven inches long, and from one and a half to two inches and more wide, elliptical-lanceolate, acute, rather broader above the middle, the margins reflexed and rough to the touch from the presence of minute harsh ciliae, penninerved; the nerves sunk on the upper surface, and there dull but full green, paler and quite glabrous beneath and destitute of scales or down of every kind, but turning to an ochraceous tint when dry. Petioles short, (half an inch) thick, somewhat tubercled and beset with long, rigid, black setae or hairs, glanduliferous at the point: these hairs or bristles often extend a little way up the mid-rib beneath. Flowers moderately sized, of a deep puce or blood-colour, collected into a compact, globose head, four to five inches in diameter. Bractees oblong or ovate, the inner ones silky, all more or less glutinous. Calyx large, scarcely silky, deeply cut into five, erect, large, foliaceous ovate lobes, half an inch long. Filaments ten, glabrous. Anthers short, and, as well as the nearly straight style, included. Ovary oblong, clothed with glandular hairs. Stigma small, obtuse. Fruit setose, rich brown, included in the persistent calyx.

One of the most beautiful of the Himalayan species, and readily distinguished by the bristly petioles and young branches. [Although in cultivation in England, at least in the Upton Nursery, Chester, of Messrs. Dickson, no coloured figure has yet been published. The present one will serve to show what a treasure is in store for our open borders, seeing that it has proved perfectly hardy in the Nursery above mentioned. Ed.]

TAB. III. *Rhododendron barbatum*, *Wall.*; flowering branch. 1. Flower and bract:—*natural size.* 2. Stamen. 3. Pistil. 4. Section of ovary:—*magnified.* 5. Capsule:—*natural size.*



The Explorer's Garden, Rare and Unusual Perennials
by Daniel J. Hinkley. Forward
by Roy Lancaster.

Timber Press, Portland, OR,
1999, 380 pages, 28 chapters.

Daniel opened Heronswood Nursery in Puget Sound in 1989. The Nursery became the laboratory for growing the thousands of plants he brought back from his expeditions. Although the Nursery is now closed the garden was restored is still operating. Daniel is still directing the management with a team of volunteers. Check out the web site: www.héronswood.com.

From Actaea to Triosteum, the book is an interesting collection of chapters about unusual perennials. It is well written and well-illustrated with some of Daniel's own photographs.

For those of you who have perennials in your garden (which I suspect is all of us) this is an excellent resource to peruse.

Gerald Nemanishen , Librarian FSRS