



THE YAK

Volume 32, Number 2

February 2018

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

<http://frasersouthrhodos.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>



Wind storm damage

This Month

Date: Wednesday, February 21, 2018 at 7:30pm

Speaker: Nancy Moore

Topic: Caring for storm damaged trees

Nancy is well known within the FSRS group. She has served on the executive committee and in 2012 was the recipient of the Harold Johnson award. In 2014, Nancy was presented with the ARS Bronze medal by Fraser South for her many contributions to the group.

With the wind storms and an ice storm that our area has experienced over the last few months, her presentation on caring for storm damaged trees is a timely one.

We hope to see you at the meeting!

Kitchen duties: Colleen Bojczuk and Margaret Cadwaladr

Plant Sales: Kirsten Martin

2018 OFFICERS

Acting President:	Evelyn Jensen	604-857-5663
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:	Vacant	
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	

From The President

Planning has begun for our annual PLANT SALE. The date is April 21st. We are waiting for final approval from the Church for this date. Hours 10: AM to 3:PM.

One of the features of the Sale is the MEMBERS' TABLE. Plants on the Members' Table are your extra plants from your Garden that you donate to FSRS. Any plants EXCEPT Rhodos and Azaleas are welcome, as we don't wish to compete with our Sellers. Please tag the plants with their name, FSRS Members will price them. When you do your spring dividing, please pot up your extras for the Club. We will need volunteers on the day of the Sale. We will need people to set up in the morning and take down after the Sale as well as cashiers, customer assistants, etc. The shifts are 2 ½ hours. The sign-up sheet will be at the March meeting.

Advance Notice: The Annual Truss Show is May, so start pampering your babies now! The annual Picnic is planned for June 9th.

I'm looking forward to NANCY MOORE'S presentation on Pruning at the February Meeting. See you there!

Evelyn

The Calendar

Vancouver Rhododendron Society Thursday, February 15, 2018 7:30 pm VanDusen Gardens	Atsuko Gibson - Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden - Japan
Fraser South Rhododendron Society Wednesday, February 21, 2018 7:30 pm Langley Mennonite Church	Nancy Moore – Caring for storm damaged trees
Vancouver Rhododendron Society Thursday, March 15, 2018 7:30 pm VanDusen Gardens	George Woodard – The famous Phipps Garden on Long Island
Fraser South Rhododendron Society Wednesday, March 21, 2018 7:30 pm Langley Mennonite Church	Cliff Jury – Birds in the Garden

NOTE: The VRS meetings are a week before FSRS meetings for Feb and March due to the 2018 calendar.

**Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden
Annual Symposium
April 6 & 7th, 2018**

Everyone Welcome!

Location: Best Western Plus, Federal Way,
WA and Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden

Featured Speaker: William McNamara,
Executive Director of Quarryhill Botanical Garden

Information & Registration: www.rhodygarden.org

Early bird registration is now through March 9th (\$125.00)
253-838-4646 x 140

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.

Looking for a volunteer that is willing to
provide a summary of speaker
presentations. The summary would be
included in the Yak the following month for
those unable to attend a meeting.

From the Editor



Happy Valentine's Day!

The recent spring like days have allowed work in the garden to finally continue and the cleanup from the last winter storm is complete. Just in time because once again Mother Nature has upped her game and reminded me that it is still winter.

R. reiriei started to bloom at the end of January and was putting on a nice display until the below freezing temperatures hit. Unfortunately the flowers are now limp. I was glad I managed to get some pictures taken prior to the freeze. R. praeurnum and R. strigillosom are about to open up, hopefully they wait until the weather warms up so they don't suffer the same fate.

There is a lot of non-rhododendron plant action happening in the garden as we move towards spring. Different varieties of crocus have emerged and some of the hellebores have flowered. Daffodils are up a good six inches and even the tulips are starting to show. My feathered friends have voracious appetites and their songs have taken on a springtime melodious nature as a first step to nesting.

This month's "From the Archives" selection has pointed out that in November 2018, the FSRS will be '30' years old. That is quite an achievement and I congratulate all members both past and present on the achievements and friendships that being a part of FSRS has fostered over the years. Does a celebration sound in order?

Maureen Worden

Annual General Meeting and Desert Extravaganza 2018

The start of our annual AGM last month was slightly delayed due to a power outage in the area. Fortunately, we were able to proceed without the help of candlelight!



Evelyn Jensen started off the meeting by thanking the members of the 2017 executive and all those members of the club who had assisted the group in 2017.

The first order of business was the acceptance of the minutes from the 2017 AGM. This was followed by Harold Fearing presenting the treasurer's report.

The 2018 slate of officer nominations that had been previously circulated to the group was presented and elected by acclamation.

Evelyn Jensen presented a slideshow of MOSAICANADA, the amazing horticultural garden created in Gatineau, Quebec for Canada's Sesquicentennial, featuring the provinces and territories' culture, flora and fauna in plantings on metal frames.



Harold Fearing presented an X-rated show of the Sex Life of the Rhododendron, followed by garden photos of the infamous Ice storm of 2017 that at first created a magical scene while devastating much of his and Ginny's carefully cultivated property.

As always the attendees were treated to a myriad of delectable concoctions in the true tradition of the FSRS Desert Extravaganza.

Annual Plant Sale



Our annual plant sale is coming in April. The executive are currently working on organizing the sale and putting the final details together. This is an important fund raising event for our club. All proceeds from the club's member table go directly to the club. Please remember to start potting up your contributions for the plant sale as you are working out in the garden.

From the Archives

The following article by Harold Fearing originally appeared in the Fraser South Newsletter, February 2008



From the President

Notes from the Chair

This year marks the twentieth year for the Fraser South Rhododendron Society. The original meeting was held in the home of Les and Bev Clay on November 18, 1988. Les and Bev are still very active members. Some others in the group of founding or very early members are still members also, or have been within the last couple of years. These include Pat and Dennis Dahl, Cliff and Phyllis Anderson, Mike Bale, and Don and Louise Martyn. We owe a debt to these early pioneers and to the many others who have contributed over the twenty years to make our chapter what it is. Perhaps a good goal for this anniversary year would be to recruit some new and enthusiastic members who are young enough to carry the chapter through its next twenty years.

When I first started thinking about writing this column I thought I would write about the early rhododendrons currently in bloom. In mid-January *R. ririei* and *R. sitchensis* were beginning to show color and I thought that with a week or so of warm weather they would soon be out. But then followed two weeks of mostly below-zero weather with several snowstorms. Our garden is still covered with slushy snow as I write

this (February 1) and like the proverbial groundhog these rhododendrons have decided to duck under cover and wait a bit before coming out in full. So we will have to talk about the rhododendrons which would be blooming early in a normal year!



R. ririei

R. ririei is one of the earliest of what might be called conventional rhododendrons, i.e. those with a standard globular truss with a number of flowers. It makes a nice plant. Ours is about 6 feet high in 15 or so years. The leaves are moderate sized, maybe 10-15 cm by 4 or 5 cm, matte green on top and much lighter, almost white underneath. The flowers are an interesting plum purple. Some people don't like that color, but I have always thought it looked rather nice against the leaves. For us it usually shows significant color around the first of February, but doesn't reach peak bloom until early March. It

has been a bit shy about blooming, but I noticed this year that the south side of the plant, which gets four or five hours of direct sun, is covered with buds, whereas the north side has only a few. Maybe it needs more sun than it is getting.

Another very early blooming variety is *R. sitchensis*. This is a fairly newly named Russian species native to eastern Siberia, so it should be as hardy as one can get. It is a much smaller plant that probably won't be more than a few feet tall. The leaves are elliptic 3-4 cm. long by 1-2 cm. wide. They are partially deciduous, though this year most have remained on the plant. Those that remain turn a really nice mahogany brown in the winter. The flowers are 1-3 clustered together, a nice rosy



R. sitchensis



R. ledebourii



R. dauricum album



R. mucronulatum

pink. I have only had it for a couple of years and so don't have very good records, but I think it will be in full bloom by mid-February. It makes a real cheery addition to the garden at that time.

A very similar species is *R. ledebourii*. It is a native of western Siberia and Mongolia so again it should be perfectly hardy. Superficially the plant looks just like *sichotense*, only with somewhat smaller leaves and supposedly smaller flowers. It is showing color now as well and so I would expect it to also peak in mid-February sometime. What we used to call *R. dauricum sempervirens* or 'evergreen dauricum' is apparently now considered to be part of the *R. ledebourii* complex, and some people consider them just subspecies of *R. dauricum*.

The 'regular' *dauricum*, which is more commonly found in gardens, is supposed to be more deciduous than the above two. It is also much more widespread, and can be found across southern Siberia, in Mongolia, northern China, and Japan. It is quite variable, and can have flowers ranging from pink to purple to white and blooming from very early to almost midseason. There are many named varieties. I had one, *R. dauricum* 'Nanum', which reliably bloomed - one or two flowers - on January 25. It usually lost all but a few leaves in the winter, however last winter did it in completely. Two white varieties, *R. dauricum album* and 'Arctic Pearl', a seedling of *album*, bloom in the first and third weeks of March in our garden. They are supposed to be partially deciduous, though they have kept most of their leaves this winter. The leaves remain green however, quite different from *ledebourii* and *sichotense*.

There is one other species in this same subsection, namely *R. mucronulatum*. For us this is not a particularly early blooming variety as the individuals we have usually don't reach peak bloom until the end of March. There are lots of varieties though and I think some bloom much earlier. Flowers can be a deep rose pink ranging to fairly pale pink, as in the cultivar 'Cornell Pink'. An important feature which distinguishes *R. mucronulatum* from the dauricums is that it is completely deciduous. This year even the ones we have in the greenhouse lost every single leaf. The flowers then come out before or with the leaves.



R. 'Olive'



R. 'Seattle Springtime'

Among the hybrids, 'Olive' has been the most reliable early bloomer for us, and one which is commonly available in local nurseries. It is a moderate sized plant with rosy pink flowers. In our gardens, both in Vancouver and in Abbotsford, it has always bloomed on Valentine's Day, about half the time, like last year, in the snow. We will see about this year. Other early hybrids, which usually get started in mid-February, are 'Tessa Bianca' and 'Seattle Springtime'. Both are white, and 'Seattle Springtime' is a prolific bloomer. However one degree of frost turns the petals brown, so does need a protected location.

By mid-February a lot of the species get started, and the bright reds of *R. strigillosum*, *R. barbatum*, and *R. smithii* start to show - often in the snow. Some varieties of *R. moupinense* start then too, and by the end of February many things are in bloom. But that is a subject for next month's column.

Harold Fearing



R. strigillosum

From the Garden

The garden is moving towards “Spring” – crocus varieties, cyclamen, hellebores, buds swelling, and finally *R. ririei* in bloom.



Top Rhododendrons

Continuing with the list of the top 100 rhododendrons that was compiled from a survey of over 250 worldwide submissions from members of the RHS Rhododendron, Magnolia & Camelia Group, this month we feature the rhododendrons that came in positions 31 through 40 in the survey.



31. *campylogynum*



32. *nuttalii*



33. *dalhousiae*



34. *hodgsonii*



35. *wardii*



36. Nancy Evans



37. *sinofalconeri*



38. *orbiculare*



39. *kesangiae*



40. *souliei*

Credits: All pictures are from <http://hirsutum.info>

31. Harry Wright, Courtenay, B.C..
32. Tony Rodd, New South Wales, Australia
33. Gerald Wyatt, Cheshire, U.K.
34. Garth Wedemire, UBC Botanical Garden, Vancouver, B.C.
35. Coen Zonneveld, Diepenveen, Netherlands
36. Paul & Linda Laury, Lantzville, B.C.
37. Hank Helm, Chimacum Woods Garden, WA, USA
38. Garth Wedemire, RSBG, Federal Way, WA, USA
39. Douglas Justice, UBC Botanical Garden, Vancouver, B.C.
40. Garth Wedemire, Maple Ridge, B.C.



RHODODENDRONS IN AMERICA

Ted Van Veen

From the Library

Rhododendrons in America by Ted Van Veen.

180 pages, twelve chapters and supplement for 1980 edition, 108 colour illustrations, list of hybrids not covered earlier, subject index. Soft cover, published in 1969, second edition 1980.

Published by Thomas Binford of Binford and Mort, Portland, Oregon.
ISBN 0-8323-0374-7

Ted Van Veen is described in the foreword by David G. Leach as the largest commercial grower of rhododendrons in the United States. "... he exuberantly summarizes the selection, uses, planting and cultivation of rhododendrons according to his cheerfully admitted preferences and prejudices." This volume is dated by the comment that China is closed to plant hunting. How things have changed!

Chapters discuss the origins of rhododendrons, use in the landscape, growth factors such as temperature, soil type, moisture, feeding and prevention of problems.

He talks about what to look for when buying a rhododendron. A chapter lists a select list of species and hybrids available in 1969.

As Mr. Leach states in the foreword this book is not intended for the botanist, the phylogenist, the entomologist or any academic "ist". "It is an intensely practical book which lays not claim to being a comprehensive treatment of the genus." It is an easy read and the colour illustrations of the hybrids are excellent.