



THE YAK

Volume 33, Number 10

December 2019



R. Luteum "Golden Comet"

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

<http://frasersoutherhododendron.ca>

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

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 Ave.
Langley, B.C.

Cover: Fall colour of **R. Luteum** “Golden Comet”

Deciduous azalea: selection from *luteum*

Grown to first flower by:

Rhododendron Species Foundation (RSF) (1994)

Named by: RSF

Introduced by: RSF (1996)

Registered by: RSF (1996)

Flowers 30/domed truss, tubular funnel-shaped, 50 x 65 mm, with wavy-edged lobes, green in bud, opening vivid yellow, with a darker vivid yellow throat and a darker edge to the dorsal lobe; stamens 5, curved, unequal; strongly scented. Calyx up to 3 mm long, green. Pedicels 25 mm long, green. Leaves narrowly elliptic to oblanceolate, 100 x 30 mm, flat but with wavy margins, cuneate at base, acute at apex, moderate yellow-green above, moderate yellow-green below, with discrete, white hairs on both surfaces; petioles c15mm long, green hairy; autumn colour brilliant scarlet, with silvery hairs, retained to late November / early December.

Shrub 1.8 x 1.5m in 18 years.

Mid-March – mid May bloom

(Seed collected by D.A. Robbins near Inebolu (near the Black Sea) in Turkey, c1978.

Source: The International Rhododendron Register and Checklist Second Edition 2004



R. Luteum “Golden Comet”

This Month



Fraser South Rhododendron Society Christmas Potluck Dinner (Note date & time change)

Date: Wednesday, December 11, 2019.
Doors open at 6:00 p.m.



Kitchen Duties: Shawn O’Neill &
Carolyn Feldinger

Next Month

Fraser South Rhododendron Society Annual General Meeting and “Just Deserts Extravaganza”

Date: Wednesday, January 15, 2020 at 7:30 pm.

Mark your calendar for this annual **DELICIOUS** AGM event!

2018 OFFICERS

President:	Colleen Bojczuk	604-826-4221
Past Pres:	Evelyn Jensen	604-857-5663
Vice Pres:	Jim Worden	604-541-4754
Secretary:	Barbara Mathias	778-580-6404
Treasurer:	Harold Fearing	604-857-4136
Directors:	Caroline Feldinger	250-614-6626
	Gerry Nemanishen	604-826-0166
	Shawn O'Neill	604-583-1817
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		

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!

Members are welcome to send their own "In the Garden" photos to the editor for inclusion in the YAK.

From the President

As we all gear up for the Christmas season ahead, and with the threat of a ENSO Neutral winter, (neither El Nino nor La Nina), we can't be sure what kind of weather we're in for. All the tender plants are in the greenhouse, mulch has been applied where deemed necessary, and hardy potted plants are bunched together in shelter. So let the decorating begin!

I was so enthralled by the November meeting presentation by Gwen Odermatt – her knowledge and enthusiasm was very engaging. Husband Paul deserves kudos for the beautiful photography of the garden vistas, and the close-ups of so many intriguing plants and flowers. I really need to go to their nursery (Petals and Butterflies) in the spring – in fact, we should definitely make a club tour of it. The naturalness of the gardens and pond, with emphasis on pollinizers and other wildlife, and the vast array of shrubs and perennials was quite astounding – the ferns, the arisaemas, trilliums, blue poppies, grasses and so many more. The selection of plants she brought for sale was so different and interesting too. Thanks go to all who brought such lovely snacks for coffee break – the table was a veritable smorgasbord, and also to all who brought such nice items for the exchange table.

I am very much looking forward to the Christmas party – Gail has volunteered to roast the turkey, and Carolyn will bake the ham, and the rest of us are free to bring whatever pleases us – there are always plenty of delicious dishes. So let's all put on something festive, work up a good appetite through the day, and we'll enjoy an evening of camaraderie and cheer. And bring your thinking caps for the annual puzzle – and hey, no Rhodos this year - I promise!!

Respectfully,

Colleen B.

Upcoming events

Fraser South Rhododendron Society Wednesday December 11, 2019 6:30 pm	Annual Christmas Potluck Supper Doors open at 6:00 for setup
Vancouver Rhododendron Society	No December meeting scheduled
Fraser South Rhododendron Society Wednesday January 15, 2020 7:30 pm	The Annual General Meeting and “Just Deserts Extravaganza”.
Vancouver Rhododendron Society Thursday January 16, 2020 7:30 pm	TBA
Fraser South Rhododendron Society Wednesday February 19, 2020 7:30 pm	Ron Long - The Beauty and Challenge of Flower Photography (Their beauty is the challenge) “I have given many talks that included hundreds of my wildflower photographs from around the world. This talk is a little different. I'm billing it as an instructional talk on how to make great flower photos and it will include tips that will be helpful to photographers. However the real purpose of this talk is to provide an excuse for me to present a collection of my very best flower photographs, most of which have not been seen before now. Non-photographer plant lovers and those who appreciate the beauty, art and design of nature will find much to enjoy.”

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 please 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 rhodo company as we celebrate the season.

If after enjoying the bountiful feast you would like a recipe for any of the dishes, we will attempt to track down the creator and publish the requested items in the January Yak.

From the Editor



This month's YAK is a week earlier than our usual schedule to ensure that everyone is reminded of the potluck Christmas dinner on Dec. 11th. Doors open at 6:00 pm with dinner around 6:30 pm.

I always enjoy the wonderful selections that everyone brings to the dinner and it never fails that they are excellent accompaniments to the ham and turkey!

The nor'easter that blew through here for a few days put gardening detail on limited activity for a few days. While the four legged crew and I had finished removing most of the leaves from our wooded area, the nor'easter took care of the rest. The ground there now looks like someone has taken a shop vac has gone through! Unfortunately the remaining leaves left are now scattered over the rest of the yard. Fortunately only a few branches and twigs were brought down and we didn't have any major damage. The cool weather however finally did my hardy fuchsias in. I have been collecting greenery (compliments of the nor'easter) in preparation for doing my outdoor greenery decoration. I have managed to collect a variety of species from the yard and the local park which will be supplemented by a wide variety of species shortly from a gardener friend. I shake my head when I think back on the money I used to spend on greenery, when all I had to do was wait for a good wind and ask a friend for some of the pruning that occur as part of a gardener's job.

Yard cleanup duties prompted the theme of this month's "In The Garden" as I noticed how different the buds on the rhododendrons were. Hope you enjoy seeing the differences of what will become next year's blooms. "From the Archives" this month features an excellent article on one the "main" food groups that is front and center at this time of year and "From the Library" fits in nicely with a tasty addition to the festive season.

I hope everyone will come to the dinner and enjoy not only the great food but the Rhodo comradery and of course Colleen's quiz! See you there!

Best wishes to everyone this holiday season.

Merry Christmas!

Maureen



A Christmas "Did You Know"?

- ✿ The name mistletoe derives from two Anglo Saxon words 'Mistel' (meaning dung) and 'tan' (meaning twig or stick). So you might say mistletoe is 'poo on a stick' – not quite so romantic now, is it?
- ✿ Did you know that Rudolph and Santa's other reindeers might well be all girls!? Only female reindeer keep their antlers throughout winter. By Christmas time most males have discarded their antlers and are saving their energy ready to grow a new pair in the spring.
- ✿ The 12 Days of Christmas start on Christmas Day and last until the evening of the 5th January - also known as Twelfth Night. The 12 Days have been celebrated in Europe since before the Middle Ages and were a time of celebration. The 12 Days each traditionally celebrate a feast day for a saint and/or have different celebrations.
- ✿ The first recorded 'candy stick' comes from 1837 at an exhibition in Massachusetts in the USA. They started as straight white sugar sticks and a few years later the red stripes were added.
- ✿ Mince Pies were originally filled with meat, such as lamb, rather than the dried fruits and spices mix as they are today. They were also first made in an oval shape to represent the manger that Jesus slept in as a baby, with the top representing his swaddling clothes. Sometimes they even had a 'pastry baby Jesus' on the top!
- ✿ Christmas crackers are a traditional Christmas favorite in the UK. They were first made in about 1845-1850 by a London sweet maker called Tom Smith. He had seen the French 'bon bon' sweets (almonds wrapped in pretty paper) on a visit to Paris in 1840. He came back to London and tried selling sweets like that in England and also included a small motto or riddle in with the sweet. But they didn't sell very well.
- ✿ Christmas pudding originated as a 14th century porridge called 'frumenty' that was made of beef and mutton with raisins, currants, prunes, wines and spices. This would often be more like soup and was eaten as a fasting meal in preparation for the Christmas festivities.
- ✿ Wassailing is a very ancient custom that is rarely done today. The word 'wassail' comes from the Anglo-Saxon phrase 'waes hael', which means 'good health'. Originally, the wassail was a drink made of mulled ale, curdled cream, roasted apples, eggs, cloves, ginger, nutmeg and sugar. It was served from huge bowls, often made of silver or pewter.
- ✿ The custom of burning the Yule Log goes back to, and before, medieval times. It was originally a Nordic tradition. Yule is the name of the old Winter Solstice festivals in Scandinavia and other parts of northern Europe, such as Germany.
- ✿ The Yule Log was originally an entire tree, that was carefully chosen and brought into the house with great ceremony. The largest end of the log would be placed into the fire hearth while the rest of the tree stuck out into the room! The log would be lit from the remains of the previous year's log which had been carefully stored away and slowly fed into the fire through the Twelve Days of Christmas.
- ✿ Boxing Day was started in the UK about 800 years ago, during the Middle Ages. It was the day when the alms box, collection boxes for the poor often kept in churches, were traditionally opened so that the contents could be distributed to poor people. Some churches still open these boxes on Boxing Day.

Source: whychristmas.com



The following article originally appeared in the Fraser South Newsletter, December 2003 by Norma Senn



Chocolate December 2003

You can tell when it's the holiday season by the numbers of television commercials for chocolates. This wonderful food has been cultivated for several thousands of years in Central and South America. It is derived from the fermented seeds of the cacao tree, *Theobroma cacao*. While native to the New World, about 70% of the world's chocolate is now grown in Africa, particularly in areas like the Ivory Coast and Cameroon.

Chocolate was highly valued by the Mayans and Aztecs who used it as both a spice and drink. It was introduced to Europe in the 16th century, first going to Spain but gradually spreading throughout western Europe. According to one historical source, the use of chocolate got a boost in popularity when Pope Pius V declared that drinking chocolate did not break religious fasts. During the 17th century, chocolate houses were common in many parts of Europe, since by the middle of that century, prices for chocolate drinks had dropped enough to allow them to become a popular treat by the middle classes. At first, chocolate beans were simply ground up and used without any further refinement, resulting in bitter pastes. Gradually though, flavoring ingredients like vanilla and cinnamon were added. Then, in 1828, The Dutch invented the process of making

Up the Garden Path with Norma Senn

cocoa powder, and hot chocolate drinks, as we know them today, were created.

By 1850, the Joseph Fry Company had invented the process of mixing melted cocoa butter with Dutch cocoa powder to make the pressed chocolate which became the first chocolate bars. This process led to the development of companies like Cadbury's in England and Hershey's in the United States. Both these companies were formed by men who, for religious reasons, abstained from alcohol but believed that chocolate was an acceptable substitute. These companies, along with many others, developed and continue to produce the wide variety of wonderful chocolates so many of us love.



Theobroma cacao
flowers

All chocolate starts with the seeds of the cacao tree. In the wild, this small tree grows as an under-story tree in areas with even soil moisture. It needs a true tropical climate where the temperature never drops below 15°C and adequate moisture is



Theobroma cacao
pods on tree

Cacao flowers (which are about the size of a nickel) and the seed pods that result if they are fertilized, grow directly off the trunk of the tree. Botanists call this pattern “cauliflory.” Europeans had never seen such a thing, and usually “corrected” drawings of the tree by moving the cacao pods out onto the smaller branches. Scientists theorize that the arrangement of flowers right off the trunk might facilitate pollination by small, moisture-loving insects, especially ants and flies associated with leaf litter.

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received year-round. The flowers and then the fruits form directly on the main stem of the tree. The white flowers can be produced at any time of the year, and this is one of those unusual plants that bears both flowers and fruits in varying stages of ripening year round. The fruit pods take between 5 to 8 months to ripen. Because there may be only one or two ripe pods on a given tree at any one time, workers need to go back to each tree regularly to individually harvest the ripe fruit. This is one reason why the fruits have to be harvested by hand.

In the wild, the cacao tree is pollinated by small midges and occasionally by bats. Flowers require cross-pollination, where pollen must come from different varieties of cacao trees. The entire pollination process in chocolate plantations is problematic because growers want to grow large tracts of just a few selected varieties of chocolate trees. But the more variability there is in tree varieties, the better the pollination. As well, the midges do best when they have a wide selection of plant materials to live in and feed on. In large chocolate plantations, plant species other than cacao trees are often removed so there are few alternate hosts for the midges, and this affects pollination. One of the solutions proposed to solve the pollination problem is to plant smaller groves of cacao trees, and to increase the numbers of varieties planted in one location. Of course, this is not as economically efficient as growing large numbers of trees in a single tract.

With ripening, the green seed pods gradually turn yellow, orange, red or purple. For good flavored chocolate, the pods must be allowed to ripen completely before harvest. Once ripened, the fruit can remain on the tree for a couple of weeks. Since the fruit is located directly on the tree trunk, the fruits have to be carefully harvested by hand to protect potential growth buds.

While we make chocolate from the seeds, the fruit pulp is also edible. It is supposed to have a mild, slightly tart taste, somewhat like that of a mango. After harvest, the pods are split open and the seeds removed. Each pod can have between 20 to 60 seeds. The seeds are

surrounded by a sweet, mucilaginous material which needs to be broken down during fermentation. It is the fermentation process, where over a 10 day period the seeds reach a temperature of about 50°C, that converts the tough, bitter tasting seeds into palatable cocoa beans. After this fermentation, the seeds are washed, dried, packed for shipping and sent to processing plants around the world.

In processing, the cocoa beans are ground, toasted and crushed. The seed coats and embryos are removed, and then the chocolate is either made into bars, or separated into cocoa butter and powder. Additional flavoring agents and sugars are added at the last stage of processing. It takes about 80 fermented seeds to make a 100g chocolate bar. A milk chocolate bar is made from less than half that number of seeds. In areas where cocoa beans are processed, the spent seed coats, or cocoa hulls, are often available for use as a garden mulch. When first spread they still have a faint fragrance of chocolate, which must make a pleasant addition to the garden.

If you're a chocolate lover, you are probably aware that the price of chocolates has risen steadily over the last ten years. This is due to the increasing consumption of chocolates around the world. As well, the chocolate makers have agreed that in order to call a product "pure chocolate," the product must contain at least 70% chocolate. This has also contributed to the price increase.

As far as I'm concerned, chocolate is one of the basic food groups, so it is nice to know that it does have some beneficial health properties. It contains theobromine, which is considered to be a mild stimulant somewhat like caffeine, as well as some anti-oxidants And in moderation, the cocoa butter is considered a good source of energy. So, enjoy your holiday chocolates without guilt, and best wishes to you all for a joyous holiday season.

Norma Senn



Theobroma cacao
ripened pods

From the Garden



R. maddenii ssp. crassum



R. 'Thor'



R. 'Bambi' x R. proteoides



R. 'Blueshine Girl'



R. 'Sir Charles Lemon'



R. praeevernum



R. 'Wind River'



R. bureavii



R. sutchuenense



R. oreotrephes



R. kesangiae 'album'



R. campanulum

Rhododendrons of Sikkim-Himalaya

Rhododendrons of Sikkim-Himalaya based on the explorations by Joseph Dalton Hooker and his findings published in 1849.



RHODODENDRON CAMPYLOCARPUM, Hook. f.

Curve-fruited Rhododendron

TAB. XXX.

Frutex gracilis, virgata, ramosa, cortice pagraceo, ramulis ultimis pubescentibus pedunculisque glanduloso-pubes, foliis petiolibus ovatis vel oblongo-ovatis apice rotundatis utrinque glaberrimis supra nitidis subtus pallidioribus interdum glaucescentibus, capsulis terminalibus hinc 6-8-locis, pedicellis gracilibus, calyce 5-lobis glanduloso, corolla (obovata) campanulata alba v. saturate straminea immixtata, lobis 5 patentibus, staminibus 10, antheris rotatis, filamentis glabris, ovario glanduloso, capsulis patentibus valde arcuatis cylindricis angustis pilis rigidis glanduloso-capitate saporis plerumque 6-valvis, seminibus pallidis.

Hab. Sikkim-Himalaya; rocky valleys and open spurs, elev. 11-14,000 feet; abundant. Fl. June, fr. November.

A small bush, averaging six feet in height, rounded in form, of a bright cheerful green hue, and which, when loaded with its inflorescence of surpassing delicacy and grace, claims precedence over its more gaudy congeners, and has always been regarded by me as the most charming of the Sikkim Rhododendrons. The plant exhales a grateful honeyed flavour from its lovely bells and a resinous sweet odour from the stipitate glands of the petioles, pedicels, calyx, and capsules. Leaves on slender petioles, three-quarters of an inch long, coriaceous but not thick in texture, two to three and a half inches long, one and three-quarters to two inches broad, crenate at the base, rounded and mucronate at the apex, in all characters, except the evanescent glandular pubescence and spherical buds, undistinguishable from *Rhododendron Thomsoni*. Flowers horizontal and nodding. Corolla truly campanulate, delicate in texture, tinged of a sulphur hue and always spotless, nearly two inches long, broader across the lobes, which are finely veined. The pedicels of the capsules radiate horizontally from the apex of the corolla, and the capsules themselves curve upwards with a semicircular arc; they are about an inch long, always loosely covered with stipitate glands.

TAB. XXX. *Rhododendron campylocarpum*. Fig. 1. Stamen. 2. Pedicels, calyx, and pistil. 3. Transverse section of ovary:—superficial. 4. Fruit:—natural size.

From the Library (But not ours)

At our last executive meeting held at Gerald and Rosemary Nemanishen's home, Rosemary prepared a cake from her online "library" of recipes.

This cake was extremely well received and consumed and the suggestion was made to publish it in the YAK. This was from the "Smitten Kitchen". Rosemary used Mac apples and cinnamon.

Gerald Nemanishen , Librarian FSRS

Apple Sharlotka

Adapted from Alex's mother, who adapted it from her mother, and so on...

Butter or nonstick spray, for greasing pan
6 large, tart apples, such as Granny Smiths
3 large eggs
1 cup (200 grams) granulated sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 cup (125 grams) all-purpose flour
Ground cinnamon, to finish
Powdered sugar, also to finish

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line the bottom of a 9-inch springform pan with parchment paper. Butter the paper and the sides of the pan. Peel, halve and core your apples, then chop them into medium-sized chunks. (I cut each half into four "strips" then sliced them fairly thinly — about 1/4-inch — in the other direction.) Pile the cut apples directly in the prepared pan. Meanwhile, in a large bowl, using an electric mixer or whisk, beat eggs with sugar until thick and ribbons form on the surface of the beaten eggs. Beat in vanilla, then stir in flour with a spoon until just combined. The batter will be very thick.

Pour over apples in pan, using a spoon or spatula to spread the batter so that it covers all exposed apples. (Updated to clarify: Spread the batter *and* press it down into the apple pile. The top of the batter should end up level with the top of the apples.) Bake in preheated oven for 55 to 60 minutes, or until a tester comes out free of batter. Cool in pan for 10 minutes on rack, then flip out onto another rack, peel off the parchment paper, and flip it back onto a serving platter. Dust lightly with ground cinnamon.

Serve warm or cooled, dusted with powdered sugar. Alex's family eats it plain, but imagine it would be delicious with a dollop of barely sweetened whipped or sour cream.