



THE YAK

Volume 34, Number 3

March 2020



R. praevernum

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

<http://frasersouthernrhodos.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: *R. praeevernum*



Flower/Truss Description: 8-15 flowered, open-topped. Corolla campanulate, 5-6cm long; white, pale to deep pink, pinkish-purple, or pinkish-lilac, with large purple or crimson blotch at base; calyx 1-2mm, blabrous; stamens 13-15; ovary and style glabrous.

Fragrant: No

Bloom Time: Before the spring. (February – April)
Hardiness 3.

Foliage Description: 10-18 x 2.5-6cm, elliptic-oblong, retained 1-2 years; upper surface olive-green or darkgreen, matt, glabrous; underside pale green, glabrous, midrib glabrous.

Plant Habit: 1.8-4.6m (6-15 ft.) high, branchlets tomentose with a thin, white tomentum or glabrous

Cold Hardiness Temp: 0°F (-18°C)

Elepidote (E) or Lepidote (L): L
Sub Genus: *Rhododendron*
Section: *Rhododendron*
Sub Section: *Maculifera*

Distribution: W. Hubei and E. Sichuan, 1,600-2,500m (5,250-8,250ft) in woods, *Quercus* and bamboo.

Introduced: 1900

Very closely related to *R. sutchuenense* but tends to be more compact and the flowers are paler.

Source: *The Encyclopedia of Rhododendron Species* by Peter A. Cox & Kenneth N.E. Cox

This Month

Annual General Meeting and “Just Desserts Extravaganza”



Rescheduled from January due to weather, come for an evening and bring your favorite dessert to share with the group and see Member slideshows

Date: Wednesday, March 18, 2020 at 7:30 pm.

Kitchen Duties: Carol Atkinson & John Dodd

Plant Sales: Harold Fearing

Next Month

Date: April 15, 2020 at 7:30 p.m. – Danielle Dagenais, MSc, PAg, from the South Coast Bat Conservation Society.

The importance of bats is often overlooked. These creatures are very important wildlife and face many threats, including habitat loss. Danielle Dagenais with the South Coast Bat Conservation Society will be given a presentation on bats and bat boxes. Come learn about bats in your neighborhood and how you can help them.

BIO: Danielle has over 10yrs experience working on many wildlife and fisheries projects. She began working with bats in 2011 as a volunteer with the Stanley Park Ecology Society. She has recently completed a Master's of Science using radar-acoustic technology to compare bat activity over vineyards and adjacent shrub-steppe habitat in the South Okanagan Valley. Danielle is pleased to have joined the South Coast Bat Conservation Society in the spring of 2016 to help with the management and conservation of bats in the Lower Mainland

2020 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
	Vacant	
Programme:	Jim Worden	604-541-4754
Membership:	Vacant	
Newsletter:	Maureen Worden	604-541-4754
Librarian:	Gerald Nemanishen	604-826-0166
Website:	Maureen Worden	604-541-4754
Hospitality:	Jim & Margaret Cadwaladr	604-427-1685
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

Once again we were captivated and astounded by the excellent photography of Ron Long at the February meeting. His expertise is so confidently presented, and he offered many tips to we amateurs on how to plan and enhance our own photos. So many beautiful locations, plants and flowers! I personally was so intrigued to see the Bee Orchid – with flowers that mimic the look of female bees, and even emit a copycat pheromone to attract the males, who will try to 'have their way' with the flowers and failing in that, move on to the next and the next blooms, thus transferring the pollen and evidencing their very small brains! Fascinating

Being that our schedule is in a bit of disarray this spring, we now look forward to our Decadent Dessert/ AGM/Awards/Members Slides meeting. I am so happy to announce our new hospitality coordinators – Jim and Margaret Cadwaladr, who so generously volunteered for the post. Thank You. Now if only some other person or couple would step up for the membership chair and a third director, we would be set to go. I know I harp on this, but everyone, please consider these positions – we all need to do our part to keep our club alive and vibrant and fun. New people and new ideas are always welcome. Harold will be bringing plants for sale at the meeting, but I strongly encourage everyone to bring a show of color from their own gardens to share with us – we love that!

The next consideration - Barb has designed a very nice poster that will be printed up to advertise our club and plant sale. Please take a few and be sure to install them in places to be seen by the public. And also for our sale, because we are running short of growers to supply plants, we can certainly ramp up the members table – let's try to supply pictures of the plants we bring, or at least a descriptive label or small card to entice the buyers, as not many can be in flower at the time. Let me know if I can help with that. I'd like to thank all the members who offered their support to help with managing the plants that Vicky will supply for us, since she cannot be there herself.

So let's all enjoy the few sunny days we're getting, get those plants dug and divided for the sale, and make some room for something new, (P.S. – the new stock is flooding into the garden center now, exciting times!)

Respectfully, Colleen B.

Upcoming events

Fraser South Rhododendron Society Wednesday March 18, 2020 7:30 pm	The Annual General Meeting and “Just Desserts Extravaganza” followed by Member slideshows. (postponed from January)
Vancouver Rhododendron Society Thursday March 19, 2020 7:30 pm	TBA
Fraser South Rhododendron Society Wednesday April 15, 2020 7:30 pm	Danielle Dagenais, MSc, PAg from the South Coast Bat Conservation Society will speak on Bats and bat houses
Vancouver Rhododendron Society Thursday April 16, 2020 7:30 pm	Lionel de Rothschild – see the “Your Invited” section of the Yak for details
Fraser South Rhododendron Society Saturday April 18, 2020 9:00 am – 3:00 pm	Fraser South Rhododendron Society Plant Sale
Fraser South Rhododendron Society Wednesday May 20, 2020 7:30 pm	Annual Truss Show
Fraser South Rhododendron Society TBA	Annual Picnic

Upcoming Conferences

ARS 2020 Spring Conference <https://ars75.org>

- ARS 75th Anniversary Convention, Apr. 29 - May 3, 2020, Portland, Oregon.

ARS 2021 Spring Conference

- ARS Annual Convention, June 3 - 6, 2021, Annapolis Valley, Nova Scotia, Canada.

Wanted: Kitchen Helpers

A number of vacancies currently exist for kitchen helpers. Please apply for the positions to Margaret or Jim Cadwaladr (our new hospitality volunteers) at the meeting or give them a call to volunteer.

New member

Please welcome and introduce yourself to our new FSRs member Colette Savarie who has recently joined our group. Welcome Colette!





You're Invited!

The Vancouver Rhododendron Society is holding a special meeting April 16th with Lionel de Rothschild presenting on his historic Exbury Estate Garden in Hampshire, England. Lionel is an acclaimed speaker, a rhododendron devotee and an honoured invitee to the upcoming American Rhododendron Convention in Vancouver, WA.

This message is an open invitation by VRS is to all members of FVRS to attend our chapter's meeting on April 16, without admission charge. We meet at Floral Hall, VanDusen Botanical Garden, just west of Oak Street on 37th Avenue, at 7:30 pm. And, early birds arriving at 6:30 pm will get first pick of a number of lesser-known rhododendrons (both species and hybrids), available in limited quantities, on sale at discount prices.

Member Open Gardens



Fearing's Farm Rhododendrons,
Sunday, April 26, 2019, 10:00 am - 4:00 pm
5376 Ross Road, Abbotsford, BC



Wingswept Garden (John and Gael Dodd)
Sunday, May 17, 10 a.m. – 4:00 P.M.
24365 61st Ave, Langley.

From the Editor

Welcome Spring! or so I thought until I woke up the other morning to ice on the birdbath and the garden helpers water bowl. Mother nature is taking her time this year teasing us with some warm days or bright sunny days but with a somewhat icy cold wind. I was waiting until R. Bo Peep was fully out to take a picture for the Yak, but the icy nights unfortunately are causing the flowers that are out to go brown. Last year it didn't bloom until April (obviously confused). Hopefully, a few flowers will hang on to have their picture taken – I love the delicate yellow.



The work crew (four legged) and I have been busy edging the perennial and rhododendron beds in the back yard (beats weeding which has yet to commence) and there are signs of life everywhere. While the snowdrops are fading, the daffodils are out in full glory, the growth on the daylilies gets longer almost on a daily basis, and the magnolia buds along with the rhododendron buds are getting plumper by the day. The “Crown Royal” magnolia buds are starting to show pink at the tips. We have a number of magnolias and except for last year, they always bloom in a predictable sequence. I'm waiting to see if they will follow their regular pattern or again surprise us with a new sequence this year.

The various cyclamen leaves are out and a few flowers are starting to appear. The hydrangeas and roses are still waiting to be pruned. I was always told that the time to prune was when the forsythia bushes bloomed. An urban legend perhaps, but the neighbours forsythia is about to bloom so those pruning tasks will need to be tackled, perhaps next week depending on the weather. (I should note that one of my four legged crew has already commenced with early pruning with no consideration as to whether a plant actually needs to be pruned e.g. the rhododendrons. Guess it's her way of helping out – now if only she could weed! The crew has once again firmly beaten their route down through my large perennial bed clearly marking where plantings should not be attempted – I haven't bought that “dog path” sign yet but it's still under consideration.



The bird population continues to be hale and hearty in the backyard, seems like more birds arrive everyday. The house finches and golden finches are now showing on a daily basis rather than just a sporadic showing. I've been watching the hummingbird feeders looking for the arrival of the male Rufous' but to date haven't seen any, but as I don't spend my days watching the feeders, it's possible they are around. The Anna's males are busy courting the females with lightening speed dives. You can hear them as the air “whistles” through their feathers.

This month we have our postponed AGM meeting. While it may sound somewhat mundane, the business activities are quickly and efficiently handled and then the desserts extravaganza and member slide shows begin. I've heard through the grapevine that there may be a show of a recent “Down Under” trip by one of our members as well as other presentations. Don't forget to bring something decadent that can be shared with other members.

With spring only days away, it's an exciting time of the year as the life and color that's been hidden in our gardens all winter re-emerges and comes on display again for our enjoyment. Happy Spring Everyone!

March 2020 Long Range Weather Forecast for Southern British Columbia (Source: Farmer's Almanac 2020)

Dates	Weather Conditions
Mar 1-13	Rainy periods south, snow showers north; cold
Mar 14-17	Showers, cool
Mar 18-22	Sunny south, snow showers north; cold
Mar 23-31	Showers, then sunny, cool
March	temperature 2°C (2°C below avg.) precipitation 100mm (20mm below avg.)



The following article originally appeared in the Fraser South Newsletter, March 2003 by Brenda MacDonald

PROPAGATORS AND PEDIGREES

This is the second in our series of articles that celebrate members of the FSRS and their work in developing new rhododendron hybrids.

In 1969 Ed Trayling, long time rhododendron fancier, breeder, and generous distributor of hybrid seeds and cuttings, gave some seeds from one of his recent crosses to Vern Finley. This was the beginning of a new rhododendron hybrid which would, more than 20 years later, be chosen as 'Burnaby Centennial'.

Burnaby had chosen the rhododendron as its official flower in 1967, during Canada's Centennial celebration, and now they had chosen this particular example as their official rhododendron.

'Burnaby Centennial'
('Leona' x 'Etta Burrows')
hybridized by Ed Trayling, 1968
germinated by Vern Finley, 1969
submitted to Burnaby Beatification Commission 1988
Designated winner and named 1992

(photo Mike Trembath)

Both Ed and Vern germinated the seeds, which were a cross between Hjalmer Larson's 'Etta Burrows', with its outstanding foliage and blood red flowers, and Rudolph Henny's 'Leona' (named after his wife), with its intense pink, spotted-darker rose, blooms. At three inches each, the individual flowers of 'Leona' are very wide, but they are held in an upright domed truss.



After germination both growers brought the seedlings along. Regrettably, Ed suffered significant losses of his nursery plants to theft over the years, so it was left to Vern to grow on the remainder of the seedlings.

The parentage of 'Burnaby Centennial' is fairly complex, with red colours predominating. Of the five species known to have contributed to 'Burnaby Centennial's gene pool, four were red. But mixed in are the genes of *R. fortunei* - the hardiest of the scented rhodos - with its very large, pale, frilled, blooms. Another of the progenitors was 'Corona', whose own parents are listed as 'unknown'. However, according to Clive Justice, 'Corona' claims at least part of its heritage from *R. griffithianum*, another species with very large, pale, and sometimes scented flowers.

Designation as the official rhododendron of Burnaby's centennial celebration was a somewhat longer and more arduous process than simply submitting a nice looking truss to an evaluation committee. All entries had to be submitted by 1988, and each entrant had to supply multiple plants for evaluation. These specimens were then planted out in several locations all over Burnaby, and each year the selection committee visited and evaluated the plants in terms of their attractiveness and suitability for the public and private gardens in Burnaby.

And in 1992, a year that celebrated not only the centenary of the charter incorporating the Municipality of Burnaby, but also the bicentenary of Captain George Vancouver's voyage to the Pacific Northwest, the decision was made, and the lovely red rhodo with the black anthers was designated 'Burnaby Centennial'.

As for all those parents, there were some hits and some misses. It was probably from *R. fortunei* (and possibly *R. griffithianum*) that 'Burnaby Centennial' gained its large frilled blooms, but unfortunately it did not also inherit the lovely fragrance. In the garden, 'BC' is a very hardy plant, showing somewhat wrinkled and recurved leaves that are probably best described as mid-green; similar to, but not quite up to the standard of the outstanding and easily recognizable foliage of *R. strigillosum*'s offspring 'Etta Burrows'. It blossoms at the beginning to middle of May, making it an Early-Mid bloomer, less vulnerable than the very early blossoms of *R. arboreum* and *R. strigillosum*, but not quite as late as *R. elliotii* and *R. griersonianum*.

What 'Burnaby Centennial' did appear to receive from *R. griersonianum* however, was that species' less than tidy habit. Vern reports that 'BC' tends to be rather leggy, and to sprawl along looking for light rather than growing upwards in the more symmetrical upright habit of *R. strigillosum*. Be that as it may, 'Burnaby Centennial' is easy to propagate by cuttings and it matures and sets buds early on in its life. These are also attributes probably received from *R. griersonianum* that more than make up for its unfortunate habit. Cloned from cuttings, 'BC' usually blossoms in its second year, and Les Clay has also had good success in propagation by tissue culture.

'Burnaby Centennial' is, of course, planted all over what became - in the same year the rhodo was chosen - the City of Burnaby. Although the farthest away that Vern has personally heard of someone growing her prize winner is Oregon and Vancouver Island, it is probable that there are examples of it much farther afield as a result of Les Clay's marketing of the tissue culture clones.

And, in point of fact, a quick surf across the web produced a rewarding hit at "Blue Mountain Nurseries" located at 99 Bushy Hill Street, Tapanui, New Zealand, where their web site shows the following listing:

Burnaby Centennial	Large raspberry red flowers in perfect trusses with black anthers creating magnificent display in late October.
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It warms the very cockles of one's heart to think of all those rhodos growing away down there, at the wrong end of the year, without their owners having the foggiest notion of where or even what Burnaby is, or how the seeds Ed Trayling gave to Vern Finley wound up being the official specimen of the official flower of a city so far away.

Brenda Macdonald

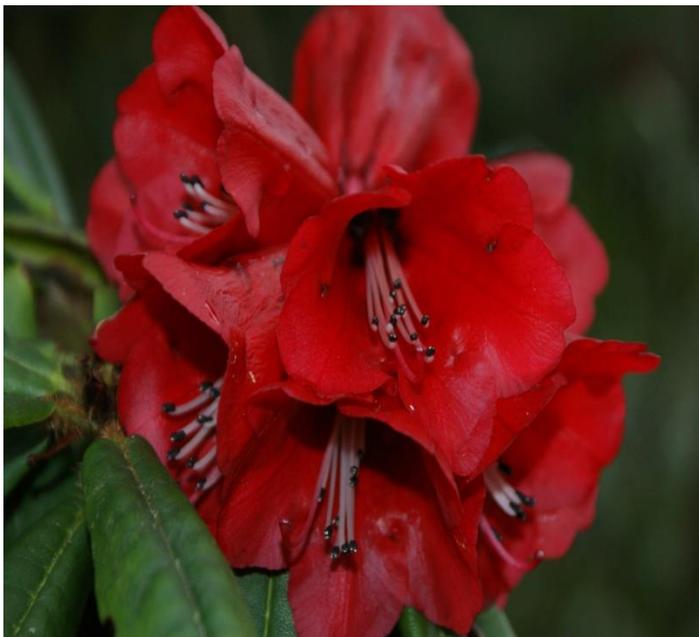
SPECIES PARENTAGE OF 'BURNABY CENTENNIAL'

R. fortunei
R. arboreum
R. elliotii
R. griersonianum
R. strigillosum
(*R. griffithianum*)

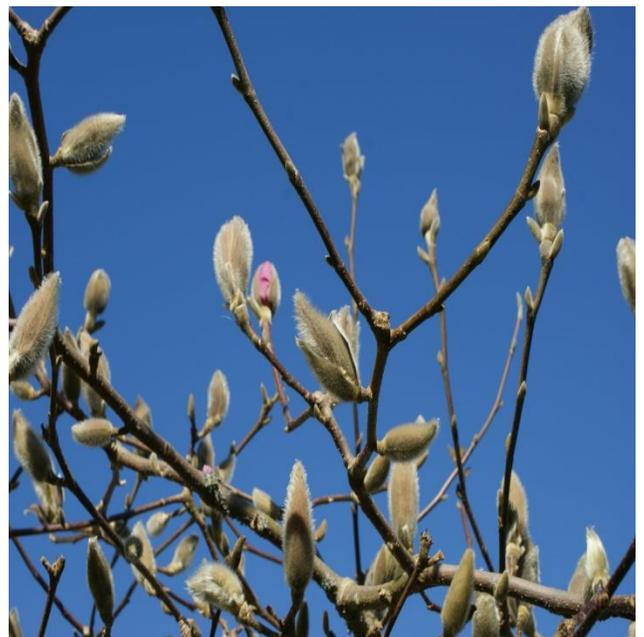
From the Garden



R. barbatum



R. strigillosum



Magnolia "Royal Crown"



Hellebores



R. Seta (moupinense x ciliatum)

Ted and Mary Greig Rhododendron Garden

The "50 rhododendrons of interest" in the Ted and Mary Greig Rhododendron garden in Stanley Park" continues. (Source: City of Vancouver)

18 *Rhododendron decorum*

Rhododendron decorum is noted for its beautiful, abundant, white, fragrant flowers. It also has attractive, glossy green leaves that provide interest in the garden, even when no flowers are present.

19 *Rhododendron* 'Electra'



'Electra' has delicate, light purple flowers with light lime green centres. It has a distinctive flowering pattern, with each branch end holding four trusses of four flowers.

20 *Rhododendron* 'Elizabeth'



This is one of the most reliable of all red rhododendrons, and is thus commonly planted. 'Elizabeth' is low-growing, has nice dark green foliage, and prolific bright red trusses. It is easy to grow and generally problem-free.

21 *Rhododendron* 'Fabia'



indumentum.

'Fabia' produces plentiful, bright pinkish-orange campanulate flowers. They have a prominent calyx and are held in loose, downward-hanging trusses of approximately nine flowers. 'Fabia' has dark, dull-green leaves with fairly dense, pale brown

22 *Rhododendron* 'Fastuosum Flore Pleno'



'Fastuosum Flore Pleno' is an unusual double-flowered hybrid, with each individual looking like it is made up of two flowers, with the inner petals being smaller and more frilly than those of the outer flower. The flowers each have a greenish-yellow blotch and are arranged in loose trusses of approximately 15. 'Fastuosum Flore Pleno' is a sterile hybrid that has been bred from cuttings and graphs selected for features that eventually lead to a double flower. In most plants, double flowers have no stamens; in-

stead, they have usually mutated into the second set of petals.

23 *Rhododendron fortunei* x

This *Rhododendron fortunei* hybrid produces beautiful, delicate pale pink flowers that gradually fade to near white. This particular hybrid possesses a faint watermelon bubble gum scent typical of *Rhododendron fortunei*. It has attractive, broadly oblong blue-green foliage, while its habit is quite open, and almost tree-like. *Rhododendron fortunei* was discovered in China in the mid 1800s by the plant explorer Robert Fortune, after whom the species was named.



24 *Rhododendron* 'George Watling'

'George Watling' has beautiful, wide, pale primrose yellow flowers. In sunlight at their peak, they seem to have a bright, almost iridescent glow. Its bright glossy green, ribbed foliage is also quite attractive. This hybrid was developed by Ted and Mary Greig at the Royston Nursery on Vancouver Island.



25 *Rhododendron* 'Haydn'

Rhododendron 'Haydn' is another deciduous azalea that is rather similar to *Rhododendron* 'Paestrina,' and in this instance the two are planted together in a small massing. It has delicate, pale lavender-coloured flowers with a subtle reddish speckle and hairless dark green leaves.



26 *Rhododendron* 'Impi'

Loose trusses of strikingly dark red flowers adorn 'Impi' towards the latter part of the rhododendron season. It can be distinguished by its red petioles and ruddy green leaves. 'Impi' has a rather diminutive, prostrate stature, growing slowly and close to the ground.

27 *Rhododendron* 'Lady Clementine Mitford'

'Lady Clementine Mitford' has broad, pale peach-pink flowers and distinctive grey-green leaves. Unlike many rhododendrons it will tolerate sun and heat.