



THE YAK

Volume 34, Number 7

September 2020



Sea-Tac

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:



'Moser's Maroon x *williamsianum*

Elepidoterhododren.

Hybridised by: H.L., Larson

Grown to first flower by: H.L., Larson

Named by: H.L. Larson after the Seattle airport

Introduced by H.L., Larson 1976

Registered by: H.L., Larson 1976

Flowers 6-7 ball truss, open campanulate, 50 x 65mm, 5-6 lobed, deep red (53a), buds moderate red (181A). Calyx minute, light green, edged maroon.

Leaves broadly elliptic to more-or-less-orbicular, 60 x 45mm, rounded at apex, cordate at base, glossy, bullate and moderate green (147A) above, hairless.

Shrub 1.2 x 1.2m in 18 years.

Early April bloom

Source: The International Rhododendron Register and Checklist, Second Edition

Source: *Rhododendrons & Azaleas* by Kenneth N.E. Cox

Membership Renewal

It's that time once again to renew your membership for the upcoming 2021 year.

The form is attached and should be mailed with your cheque to Harold Fearing, address on the form. Dues are the same as last year.

By renewing your membership you are expressing your continuing support of Fraser South and your interest in our activities in what are far from normal times.

You will continue to get the YAK and notifications of events and activities as we gradually are able to restart. Please renew!

FSRS 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	

From the President

In these bizarre times it's hard to find something positive to focus on, but if we try, there are many things we could be doing. Our gardens, however big or small, are one of the greatest joys we could have. Flowers of all colors, shapes and fragrances to lift our spirits, vegetables and herbs to make delicious meals, and fruits and berries for desserts and snacks. Not to mention attracting songbirds, hummingbirds, bees, butterflies and dragonflies, and even the odd 4-legged friends (see photo).

If your garden is small, a regular walk in a nearby park certainly has many attractions and a calming effect.



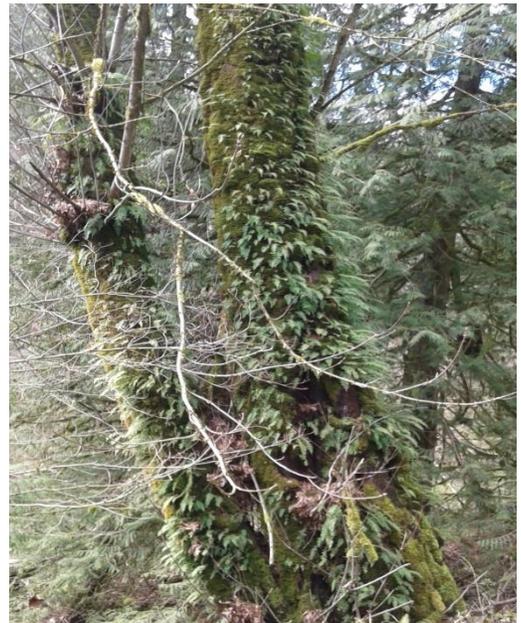
At work, after the initial closing, we quickly went to on-line orders to start with, and experienced a huge and

unprecedented uptick in vegetable seeds and starter plants, and fruit trees and bushes, not to mention shrubs, trees, patio planters and privacy screens. Despite strict occupancy restrictions, distancing and constant sanitization, we managed to serve all who came. People were at home and outdoors as best they could, making use of whatever space they had.



Those who chose to work from home were very motivated to create green spaces there, and sales of indoor plants skyrocketed also. Now that some restrictions are relaxed, the trend has continued right through spring and summer, even in the heat, and fall looks very positive despite the air quality. Many people we assist admit that they've never grown a plant in their lives, indoors or out, and need all the help they can get!

At home we've been doing some Sunday afternoon drives in the countryside – see some random photos from a very sunny day going through a ravine near Neilson Park. We have been staying away from nearly everyone, except for a few socially-distanced picnics with family and a few close friends – no eating out or fun shopping. But to tell the truth, I could kill for a big plate of gooey bbq ribs at Spaghetti Factory, and spumoni ice cream to finish !! (take out to eat at home just doesn't cut it) Various construction projects by Dennis have taken precedence over gardening this summer, so after the lovely spring flush of Rhodos and azaleas, things have gotten a bit dull outside, except for the bananas, coleus and cannas – they're doing fine. We sort of abused the tomatoes and peppers early on, so they're not too perky, but all the plants that were destined for the April sale are doing fine, albeit crowded in the back lane.





So now we go into an uncertain fall and winter, and I'm hoping we can engineer a meeting on Zoom with a speaker/presenter before Christmas to keep us all in touch a bit. The executive has just had a successful Zoom meeting, and we're determined to carry on. So then – memberships are now due (see enclosed form), and this year should be sent directly to Harold asap for processing.

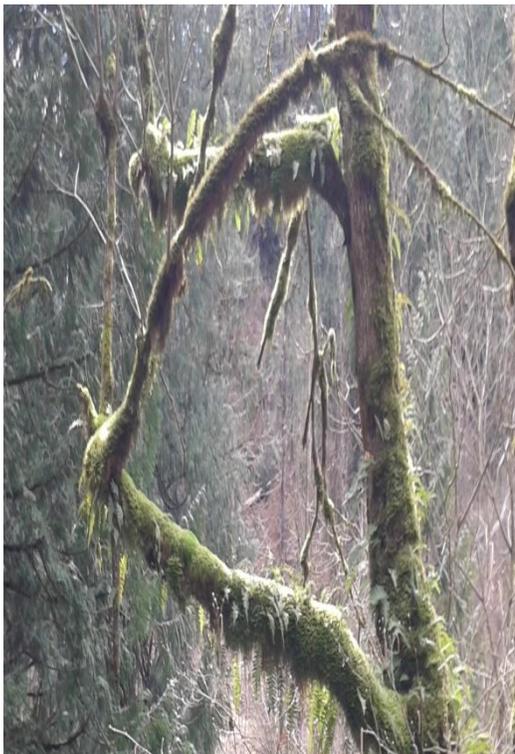
PLEASE NOTE: we are still waiting for a volunteer to replace Ginny as membership chairperson – not at all an onerous task, however important – please step up and contact Ginny for details.

I have also put out several feelers for 2 new directors to fill upcoming vacancies – again not a heavy work load – mainly idea people who can volunteer now and then for project help. I really hope someone will step forward, otherwise our club runs the risk of following the demise of others. Let's not let that happen!

Stay safe and stay calm, from Colleen

(P.S. There will at least be a Christmas Puzzle for a wee bit of entertainment by yours truly.)

What creature is this?



From the Editor

Welcome back to a new FSRS season! What a summer! After a somewhat dreary June the weather picked up and I've had no complaints until recently. I had hoped to extend the pool season into late September to make up for June but while the weather was certainly warm enough, the wild fire smoke made it difficult to be outside for any length of time. Fortunately the weather change this weekend is clearing things out for us so outdoor activities should start again.

I was totally unprepared for a number of breakdowns during the summer most importantly my freezer. After rushing around to find a neighbour to take most of the contents, I spent the better part of a day trying to track down a new one. Why stores continue to advertise stock when they have none is beyond me and I certainly let a few of them know how I felt. Finally found an appliance store that had 3 and was told when there were gone it would be months before they had more. I was told that during the start of the pandemic when people were panic buying food, they were also buying freezers. Must admit it never crossed my mind, anyway I got a new freezer.

The perennials have done well this year with most of them taller than normal and given the cool start to the summer, lasting well into September which is nice. It's been a busy year for both the Anna's and Rufous hummingbirds. Lots of young ones this year that delight in chasing each other, stopping mid-air to check you out, or zooming by you so closely you feel a draft.



Garden cleanup yielded signs that others were busy nesting in the yard. This, I think towhee nest was found under some globe thistles that had fallen onto a clump of day lilies.

Multiple Douglas squirrels have made the feeders a regular stop in their daily routine this summer. This is the most activity I've seen from them in years, hopefully a sign that they are prospering in the neighbourhood.

Start the fall season out right and continue to support the FSRS by renewing your membership for the 2021 season. While we can't say when in person meetings will commence the executive is working to come up with ideas to keep everyone connected – are you ready to Zoom? Of course the YAK hopes to play an important role and will continue to come to you on a monthly basis. I'm asking ALL members going forward to please contribute to the YAK by submitting articles, pictures of your garden, or a favourite plant. The executive answered my call for content this month and I hope ALL members will contribute something as we move through the season. Take care!



Maureen Worden

Farewell to Chuck and Gail Floyd

Early August saw Chuck and Gail remove to their new abode in the Dean Park area of Sydney on Vancouver Island. In the absence of any group gatherings prior to their departure, they asked that their farewells be extended to everyone in the FSRS group. Chuck and Gail originally joined FSRS when the PARS group closed. They have been very active in the group stepping up to fill director, hospitality, and plant sale roles.

We wish them all the best in their new Vancouver Island life style!

Species Foundation Presentation

Explore the mountains of China from your couch

The 2019 Expedition to China – A Zoom Talk by Steve Hootman

When: Thursday, October 8 from 5-6:30pm.

Where: Participate from the comfort of your home!

Cost: \$10 for Current Members, \$20 for non-Members

For more information and to register see:

www.rhodygarden.org/events/zoom-talk-the-2019-expedition-to-china/

District 1 News

The following ARS awards were presented at the District 1 Directors meeting in August:



Medal to Dr. Glen Jamieson.

For 25 years you have immersed yourself in support of the American Rhododendron Society. Ten years ago you became editor of the Journal of the ARS, the premier periodical of rhododendron culture. Further, you have reached out to rhododendron societies world-wide with your personally initiated Rhododendrons International Journal, aiming for a cohesive and collaborative international association. You are a regular speaker at ARS chapters and other horticultural groups on the genus, with emphasis on your favourite, the vireya sub-section. You have encouraged youth membership, have been personally involved in the establishment of the recently created Greig Rhododendron Species Garden in Qualicum Beach, held by Vancouver Island University and maintained, in part, by horticultural students. For recognition of your outstanding contributions, the American Rhododendron Society is pleased to present the Gold



Art and Susan Lightburn have been long term members and supporters of the ARS and the genus rhododendron through hosting garden tours in their magnificent garden, presentations, club displays, and by serving on the executive of both NRS and MARS for many years. Susan's photography has enhanced not only our local newsletters, websites, and the ARS Journal, but in documents around the world where exceptional photography of rhododendrons are required. Art and Susan have been tremendous supporters of the Greig Rhododendron Species Garden at Milner Garden and Woodland in Qualicum Beach, B. C. including their gift of more than fifty mature species rhododendrons. Their generosity will help to educate and foster a love of rhododendrons for generations to come on Vancouver Island. For recognition of your outstanding contributions, the American Rhododendron Society is pleased to present the Silver Medal to Art and Susan Lightburn.



The following article originally appeared in the Fraser South Newsletter, October 2008 by Brenda Macdonald

Q Rhododendrons of China Q



R. floccigerum
illustration by Lilian Snelling
Curtis' Botanical Magazine, 1929

Rhododendron floccigerum

Looking quite similar to its close and better-known relative *R. neriiflorum*, *R. floccigerum* is a member of the large, complex and taxonomically challenging Subsection Neriiflora.

Generally speaking, members of Neriiflora are shrubby bushes with somewhat lax trusses often partially hidden by the fairly narrow leaves, whose most distinguishable feature are the deep nectar pouches within the somewhat fleshy tubular-campanulate blossoms. Although often crimson, the blossoms can vary from white through yellow and pink up to scarlet, are sometimes bicoloured, and often have a substantial calyx.

Freely hybridizing in their native habitat in the western reaches of China, it is often difficult to tell where one species leaves off and another begins, leading to vigorous discussions between the Lumpers and the Splitters, and confusion for the rest of us. It is quite likely, however, that further genetic investigation will reduce the number of discrete species even further, and it will turn out that there are relatively few species, which happen to vary quite widely in colour, form and habit.

R. floccigerum itself is not as widely grown as some of the other Neriiflora although it can often be quite attractive, sometimes with an almost picotee look to the forms with

bi-coloured blossoms. However the combination of colours within a single blossom can often just look muddy, and the discontinuous indumentum looks plain scurfy compared to the felted plushness on the underside of a *R. baematodes* leaf.

On the plus side, *floccigerum* is reliably hardy here in the Pacific Northwest since its native habitat is between 9,000 and 13,000 feet in Yunnan and Tibet. It is a precocious and early bloomer, beginning to set its March blossoms when only a few years old, and it has a tidy mounded habit when not overly shaded.

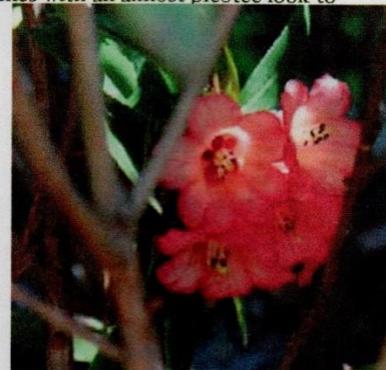
As long as one does not expect the rather exceptionally bright colours



of the specimen above, drawn by Lillian Snelling for Curtis' Botanical Magazine in 1929, this would be a nice specimen, particularly suitable for a smaller garden. Searching out the appropriate plant during its bloom time would be a definite advantage.

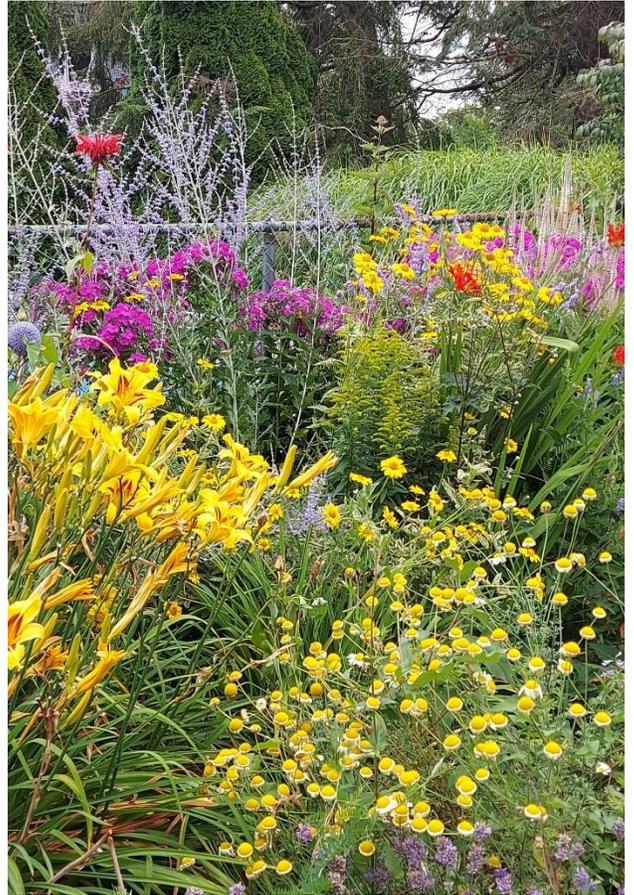
Not surprisingly, *R. floccigerum* has not been popular for hybridization schemes – Salley & Greer list only four hybrids. Considering the large variation inherent in each plant, using it as a parent would be the botanical equivalent of a night in Vegas, without even the satisfaction of knowing whether you had won or lost until your seedlings blossom three or four years later.

Brenda Macdonald



From the Garden

Snapshots from the garden over the summer. Some are still in bloom and will last until the first frost.

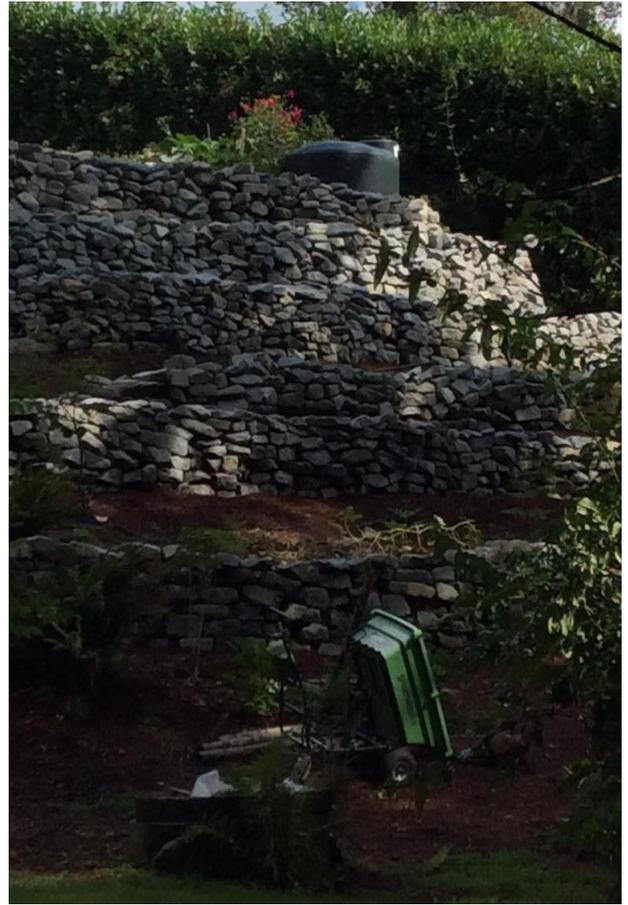








Rock Gardening



From last year, Gerald Nemanishen's rock wall project - 80 tons of rock - moved twice!!!

Rhododendron maximum

We are all familiar with the Pacific rhododendron, our native broadleaved rhododendron *R. macrophyllum*, which grows west of the mountains from California to British Columbia. Our eastern friends have a closely related native rhododendron, the Rosebay rhododendron, Great Laurel, or more formally *R. maximum*. It grows throughout the woodland areas from Alabama and Georgia up to Ontario and Nova Scotia, with a particular concentration in the southern Appalachian Mountains where it can be the dominant understory plant in the woods



In the garden it can become a large plant 2-3 metres high, similar to *macrophyllum* but with narrower and longer leaves which, at least in our plants, are much darker green. As befitting its native habitat, it prefers a somewhat shaded location. Our best plant is on the north side of our woods where it gets lots of light but little direct sunlight. Another plant, which gets full sun much of the day survives, but obviously is unhappy. *R. maximum* is extremely hardy, rated to minus 30 C.



The flowers are in a tight conical truss, somewhat smaller than many rhododendrons, but in most years produced very prolifically. The color is quite variable, ranging from deep pink to almost white. The pictures show the extremes. Often there are some green spots on the upper petal. Regularly the color varies even among flowers in an individual truss, giving a very nice variegated effect. I think the flower color on an individual plant can also vary from year to year, though this could be a consequence of a faulty senior's memory. Finally *maximum* blooms much later than most rhododendrons, usually late June in our garden, so it is a great plant to extend the blooming season.

Harold Fearing



Fraser South Rhododendron Society

frasersouthernrhodos.ca

2021 Membership Form

Date _____

Membership: *[An individual or two people residing at the same address]*

_____ Full Member: (Includes ARS membership & quarterly ARS Journal)	\$55	_____
_____ ARS Associate: (Member of _____ ARS Chapter)	\$15	_____
_____ FSRS Chapter member (ARS membership & journal NOT included)	\$25	_____

All personal information collected here is for FSRS or ARS use only. Your contact information will be included in the FSRS membership directory, distributed to FSRS members, unless you indicate here that all or part should be kept confidential.

Last Name _____ First Name _____

Last Name _____ First Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Province (State) _____ Postal Code _____

Telephone Number _____ Email Address _____

All cheques should be made out to: **Fraser South Rhododendron Society**

Mail to: Harold Fearing, 5376 Ross Road, Abbotsford, BC V4X 1Z2
Membership questions may be addressed to
Harold Fearing at 604-857-4136, or to any other FSRS officer.