



# THE YAK

Volume 38, Number 02

February 2024



**Fantastica**

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

<http://frasersoutherhododendron.ca>

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

In person 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 40<sup>th</sup> Ave.  
Langley, B.C.

## Cover:



**Fantastica**

**Predominant Flower Color:** Pink

**Flower/Truss Description:** Flower 1¾" to 2" across, strong purplish-pink, shading to white in throat, lightly spotted greenish-yellow. Ball-shaped truss holds 18-20 flowers.

**Fragrant:** No

**Bloom Time:** Midseason to Late Midseason

**Foliage Description / Plant Habit:** Leaves elliptic, 4" long, dark green with wooly, tan-colored indumentum. Dense and compact shrub.

**Height:** 3 feet in 10 years.

**Cold Hardiness Temp:** -15°F (-26°C)

**Parentage (Seed Parent x Pollen Parent):**

Mars x degonianum ssp yakushmanum 'Koichiro Wada'

**Elepidote (E) or Lepidote (L):** E

**Hybridized or Selected by:** Hachmann, Hans

Sources:

ARS: [www.rhododendron.org](http://www.rhododendron.org)

## Next Meeting

**Date:** Wednesday, February 21 @ 7:00 pm.

**Place:** Zoom meeting (in the comfort of your own home)

**Topic:** Rhododendron and Azalea Basics, Steve Henning

After covering the basics, Steve will delve into some less covered topics such as the natives, fragrant varieties, indumentum, toxicity, unusual forms and companion plants.

**BIO:** Steve Henning is the creator and webmaster of Henning's Rhododendron & Azalea Pages [[rhodyman.net](http://rhodyman.net)]. He is a member in the Delaware Valley Chapter and a member of the ARS since 1972. He is a regular contributor to the Journal of the ARS.

Steve participated in groups on rhododendrons and azaleas on the internet. After seeing many of the same questions asked repeatedly, he started his rhododendron website in 1996, to provide one place to reference the many things he learned about the Genus Rhododendron. These are things that many rhododendron experts take for granted, but that new members of the ARS and new "rhodoholics" have to learn over time. As he continued to participate in internet groups, he added new answers to this website.

Since 1974, Steve has attended just about every national ARS convention. Since 2012, Steve has served as District 8 Director for the ARS. Steve received the ARS Silver Medal in 2012 and the ARS Gold Medal in 2019.

Steve's other activities include Scouting, gardening, traveling, photography and being a Rotarian. In 2019, Steve and his wife Darlene moved to an independent living community in Lancaster County Pennsylvania. There Steve joined in an effort to create an Arboretum for the over 700 residents. The entire campus became an accredited arboretum in 2022. Now, Steve & Darlene enjoy other people's gardens. They continue to attend ARS Conventions.



## 2023 ELECTED OFFICERS

President:	Gerry Nemanishen	604-826-4660
Past Pres:	Colleen Bojczuk	604-826-4221
Vice Pres:	Jim Worden	604-541-4754
Secretary:	Vacant	
Treasurer(s):	Gerry Nemansihen	604-826-4660
	Colleen Bojczuk	604-826-4221
Directors:	Robert Talbot	604-720-0134
	Colleen Bojczuk	604-826-4221
	Aird Flavelle	604-870-4221

## Volunteers

Programs:	Vacant	
Membership:	Vacant	
Newsletter:	Maureen Worden	604-541-4754
Librarian:	Gerald Nemanishen	604-826-4660
Website:	Maureen Worden	604-541-4754
Hospitality:	Vacant	
BCCGC Liaison:	Vacant	

## Reminders - !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

**Vacancies** - Please consider contributing to the group by volunteering for the executive or very important volunteer positions. Contact a member of the executive for further information.

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

## From the President

My snow drops are up and blooming all over the garden. Over the years I have planted and divided my collection and now have a wonderful display. My witch hazels are blooming – I have a yellow and a rusty pink one – can't remember their names. Another hellebore, pale yellow, is just starting to show its buds. I had purchased it from Kirsten at our plant sale, probably about 10 years ago. Although not recommended, I did divide it and the division has got established but smaller than the parent.

Zoom presentation this month is by Steven Henning. He is a member of the Delaware chapter of the ARS. He will speak on rhododendron and azalea basics. His bio is in this newsletter. I will forward the link to log on later this week. A heads up, because he is three hours ahead of us, we are starting a bit early at 7 pm.

We had 32 renewals of membership. We are down about five or six from last year. Another heads up. We are planning on our AGM in March. It will be in person and we have a special presentation by one of our members, but I don't want to spoil the surprise!

Respectfully submitted,

Gerald Nemanishen, President

## Next Month

**Date:** Wednesday, February 21 @ 7:30 pm.

**Place:** Langley Mennonite Fellowship Church  
20997 40th Ave.  
Langley, B.C.

**Topic:** Annual General Meeting &  
FSRS member presentation

## From the Editor

I've certainly been enjoying the milder temperatures we are having this month. As expected January's snow and wind (especially the wind causing record breaking wind chill) was the demise of the *Hamamelis x intermedia 'Jelena'* and *R. ririei* blooms that were featured in January's YAK "In the Garden". The head gardener had to create pathways through the snow for the garden crew to move about outside. Neither man nor dogs wanted to spend more than a few minutes outside and only if they really had to. The pump on our gurgler after surviving many below freezing stretches over the years finally died and providing the bird with water even through the coldest stretches could not handle the cold and wind. It was a few weeks after the weather finally warmed up and I could source a new pump that the hummingbirds were able to return to their daily absolutions.



Walking through the garden yesterday in the sunshine there was noticeable leaf damage to some of the rhododendrons, more from the days of cold wind I believe than from the cold temperatures or snow. The big leaf rhododendrons that have protection in the wooded area appear to be fine but some in more open areas are sporting either all brown foliage or patches of brown. No indications at this time that we lost any rhododendrons but time will tell. While there are no "In the Garden" blooms to share this month the garden is showing life. The snow drops are out, the day lilies are on their second sprout of foliage, the magnolias are showing buds, the hellebores are up, and the daffodils are showing. All great signs for the coming weeks.

For those readers that have followed the four legged garden crew members, I have sad news. The retired senior garden crew member passed over the Rainbow Bridge at the beginning of the month to join other previous garden crew members. He is greatly missed and will be remembered for his 14+ years of love and companionship, mentoring the Junior Gardener and providing a calming example to the newest recruit. His presence will especially be missed this spring as he loved to lay in the garden beds when weeding was underway. Farewell friend, you will be missed but not forgotten.

This month due to Zoom technology our speaker is from the ARS Delaware chapter. As you can tell from his Bio, Steve has been presented both the silver and gold ARS medals, has an extensive background with rhododendrons, and runs his own rhododendron website. Remember that due to the time difference the **meeting will start at 7:00 this month**. Hope to see you there, it should be good!

Today I received this via email from a friend. It made me smile, hope it does the same for you.

Happy Valentine's Day!

*Maureen Worden*





The following article originally appeared in the Fraser South Newsletter, February 2012 by Sean Rafferty

## *R. forrestii* group

This delightful prostrate species was discovered growing on a mossy rock in southeast Tibet, by George Forrest in 1905. It has subsequently been located in northeast Yunnan, Upper Burma and Arunchal Pradesh. Current opinion seems to hold that *R. forrestii* group contains only one 'good' species which takes two forms; *repens*, which is prostrate and creeping, and *tumescens* which has more of a mounding habit and which flowers somewhat more freely than *repens*. Cox and Cox indicate that *chamaethompsonii*, which is also included in this group is most likely a natural hybrid and which exhibits more flowers per inflorescence. *R. forrestii* is noted for having only a single or sometimes double inflorescence. Despite its small stature, 15cm (6in) tall with small attractive, obovate leaves and fleshy crimson, scarlet and carmine flowers 3-3.5 cm (1-1.5in.) long, *R. forrestii* is a beautiful and charming specimen to have in your garden or rockery. That is if you find the right spot for it. As noted above, Forrest discovered it growing on a moist, mossy rock, so if you have one of those hanging about you should be in good shape. Or are you? Cox and Cox suggest careful siting on a wall facing away from the sun but in the open, and if it is in too much shade it will not flower. Shade but not too much shade and in the open? I take that to mean

Species and their Hybrids		pollen ♂	
		B	b
pistil ♀	B	BB	Bb
	b	Bb	bb



*R. forrestii* Group

deciduous filtered shade in the open on a mossy rock. We live in the rainforest of North Vancouver and that particular requirement is difficult to achieve. However what does seem to work for us here is sticking them atop old mossy stumps and allowing them to layer themselves down the sides. Please don't let these siting challenges dissuade you from bringing this species into your garden. Pushing the envelope is often a good thing and a carpet of charming *forrestii* is a marvelous reward.

*R. forrestii's* compact habit, attractive leaves and flowers and its ability to retain these attributes when used as a parent in hybridising, has managed to find favour with many hybridisers throughout the world, particularly in Germany. Dietrich Hobbie's, crossing of *R. forrestii* with *R. 'Essex Scarlett'* during the 1950's and 1960's brought many ( perhaps too many) hybrids into the market and some linger to this day. If I had to choose a favorite of his, I would hang it on *R. 'Baden-Baden'*, a low growing, glossy green-leaved, showy red, large, waxy-flowered beauty. From England and Lionel de Rothschild came the finest gem of the *R. forrestii* hybrids which is *R. 'Carmen'*

, created from two wonderful *R. neriiflorum* species, *R. forrestii* and *R. sanguineum ssp didymum*. There has also been local hybridising success from Ted and Mary Grieg, of Royston on Vancouver Island, who produced a cross from *R. forrestii* and *R. thompsonii*, producing the sweet *R. 'Royston Red'*. The above mentioned hybrids are certainly favorites of mine and I am quite partial to the small *Rhododendrons* that make such a large impact.

Sean Rafferty



Left - *R. 'Baden Baden'*  
Low growing and floriferous  
with bright green leaves  
(*'Essex Scarlet x forrestii Group'*)  
Hobbie, 1945

Below - *R. 'Carmen'*  
small is beautiful and this is  
one of the sweetest.  
(*R. sanguineum ssp didymum*  
*x forrestii Group'*)  
Rothschild 1934



All photos harvested  
from the wonderful  
"Hirsutum" site  
[www.hirsutum.info/  
index.html](http://www.hirsutum.info/index.html)



top

*R. 'Royston Red'*

Fine parentage shows through in  
this early season beauty  
(*forrestii* Group x *thompsoni*)  
Grieg, before 1960

Bottom

*R. Anna's Riplet*

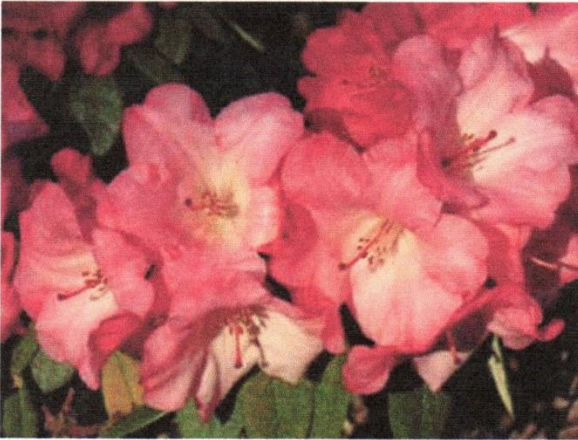
Compact and interesting plant  
with rose pink flowers that fade  
to soft yellow as it ages.

(*forrestii* Group x '*Letty Edwards*')  
Lem, unregistered





Top left  
*R. 'Elizabeth'*  
Compact habit, beautiful foliage with intriguingly coloured flowers. Loved by all, especially weevils.  
(*forrestii* Group x *griersonianum*)  
- Aberconway, 1939



Middle left  
*R. 'Riplit'*  
Another of Lem's crosses with *R. 'Letty Edwards'*. A dwarf plant with glowing pink and yellow flowers  
(*Forrestii* Group x '*Letty Edwards*')  
-Lem, 1962

Right  
*R. 'Ruby Hart'*  
Almost black red flowers on a compact plant with deep green leaves. A beautiful eye catcher.  
((*Carmen* x *Elizabeth*) x *elliottii*)  
-Whitney Sather 1976.





## Winter Trees and Shrubs

### TREES AND SHRUBS FOR WINTER BLOOM By Norma Senn

We have a wealth of wonderful trees and shrubs to use in our local gardens. To my mind, however, some of the most rewarding are those that provide us with late winter or very early spring blooms.

There may be variation in blossom displays from one winter to the next, depending on the severity of a given winter and occasionally, there may be years when woody plant blossoms suffer serious winter damage. There may also be variation in the actual blooming dates from one year to the next, depending on the frequency and duration of cold spells. However, in many years, winter blossom displays can be excellent and they offer a great deal of pleasure to the gardener.

The following plants are some of my favourites for winter bloom, with a few comments about their growing requirements. For the most consistent displays, they should be planted in areas that are protected from the cold, dry east winds. You may have to hunt a bit, but I have seen all of the plants listed in large local garden centres during the year.

Winter Jasmine, *Jasminum nudiflorum*, has lovely bright yellow flowers, beginning with sporadic blooms in November and continuing to bloom through early spring. The flowers are borne on bright green branches and are very noticeable in the landscape. Winter Jasmine has long trailing or arching branches to 10-15 feet, and is spectacular when allowed to trail down over retaining walls. I have also seen them grown up trellises as espaliers, or handled like vines. However, if trained to grow up, they will need to be tied to stay in place. Grow Winter Jasmine in areas with full sun, even moisture and good drainage. Flowering branches make nice additions to winter bouquets.

Witch Hazel, *Hamamelis mollis* or *H. intermedia*, are large deciduous shrubs, or small trees with small flowers of yellow, orange or red. Individually, each flower is small, but they are borne on bare branches, and en masse, they make a lovely display. Witch Hazels are what I like to describe as "edge of the wood" trees; they grow best in partial shade, in deep, loamy soil with lots of organic matter, even moisture and good drainage. Witch Hazels have other features that make them attractive for garden use; their flowers are fragrant, they have lovely clear yellow fall leaf colour, and the plants are slow-growing, so they do not overgrow the garden quickly. There are many named varieties from which to choose. A good time to select a Witch Hazel for your garden is in late January or in February when the flowers are out, so you choose the colour you want.

*Corylopsis spicata* and *C. pauciflora*, Spike Winter Hazel and Buttercup Winter Hazel, respectively, are deciduous shrubs that bear flowers in late February through March. The flowers are soft yellow in colour, and are borne on bare branches. These are well behaved, slow growing shrubs that ultimately grow to 8-10 feet in height. They are happiest in partial shade, and should be sheltered from the cold dry eastern winds. They need even moisture in the summer. *Corylopsis spicata* is the more commonly available species.

One of my favourite large shrubs is Viburnum bodnantense because it offers something of interest year round in the landscape. This is a large deciduous shrub that produces clusters of fragrant, small pink or white flowers from October to Spring. The leaves are a bright fresh green throughout the summer, turning shades of dark red just before falling in October. This can reach 10 feet in height. For best growth, give full sun, and a rich loamy soil.

Cornus mas, Cornelian Cherry, is related to our own Pacific Dogwood. However, the Cornelian Cherry is a very different plant. It has small, soft yellow fuzzy flowers in late February or early March. In August, Cornelian Cherry has brilliant red fruits, which can be used for jellies, as long as the birds don't get them first! It can be grown as a large multi-stemmed shrub, or more usually as a small specimen tree. It should have excellent drainage, and it needs some water during the dry part of summer. I have read that this plant needs to be 10 to 15 years old before it begins to bloom, but apparently, my own plant has not read the books because it started to bloom at age three.

I often hear people commenting with wonder, that there are cherry trees in flower in Vancouver in November and December. The plants they are speaking of are Prunus subhirtella "Autumnalis", the Winter Flowering Cherry. This lovely tree bears pink blossoms, sporadically, throughout the winter as long as the weather is mild. A final full flower display occurs in spring. Winter Flowering Cherry grows best in full sun, with good drainage and even moisture.

Chimonanthus praecox is also called Wintersweet. The brownish small flowers, borne in February, are not showy, but this plant is very fragrant. If possible, plant it near a doorway to enjoy the fragrance whenever you go in or out. Wintersweet is a deciduous shrub; it should be planted in partial shade and protected from cold winter winds. Wintersweet may need to be watered during the driest part of the summer.

Two plants that are worth fussing over because of their winter blooms are Camellia sasanqua and Sarcococca. Neither of these plants is reliably winter hardy here. However, some things are worth the risk. They are both broad-leaved evergreen shrubs, each having glossy, neat green leaves. The Camellia blooms sporadically throughout the winter and has red, white or pink flowers. The flowers of Sarcococca are actually small and whitish in colour, but have a wonderful fragrance that makes up for their tiny size. Since both plants may suffer in severe winters, there are a couple of things to try. Grow them in large tubs and move the containers into protected spots like a garage or unheated glassed-in sun porch during very cold weather. The other method is to try to plant them in very sheltered areas, next to the house entryway where there may be some protection from cold wind and extreme temperatures. However, they may, indeed, be some years where these two plants will die no matter what you do.

If some of these plants are new to you, and you would like a chance to see what they look like in bloom, check out Van Dusen Botanical Gardens, located at 37th Avenue and Oak Street, Vancouver. Even in winter, you can find plants of interest at Van Dusen. One feature that is very helpful is the display found just as you walk into the gardens from the admission kiosk. It shows the plants currently in bloom, with each plant identified. It's also time to start visiting local garden centres, so you can see exactly what varieties of winter blooming trees and shrubs you'd like to add to your own garden.

# Rhododendrons of the Year Plant Awards

NW USA / Canada Region (2020)



## Elepidote Rhododendron: 'Viennese Waltz'

Flower light red at edges shading darker in throat with orange-brown spots in dorsal lobe on orange background, funnel-shaped, 2" to 3" across, fragrant. Densely packed in large conical trusses of up to 34 flowers. Blooms early midseason. Leaves elliptic, apiculate apex, cuneate to rounded base, 4¼" to 5½" long, dark green, retained 2 years. Upright, open habit. Grows to a height of 5 ft. or more in 10 years. Cold hardy to 0°F (-18°C). Hybridized by Lofthouse.



## Lepidote Rhododendron: 'Vibrant Violet'

Flower vivid violet with brownish-orange anthers, widely funnel-shaped, 2" across, wavy to frilly lobes. Held in terminal clusters composed of 4-5 trusses each with 5-6 flowers. Blooms early. Leaves near elliptic to wider than lanceolate, concave, acute, cuneate, about 1½" long, dull, dark yellowish-green, retained 2 years. Round, well-branched shrub. Grows to a height of 3 ft. in 10 years. Cold hardy to 0°F (-18°C). Hybridized by Fujioka.



## Evergreen Azalea: 'Pearl Bradford'

Flower light purplish pink, with distinct, vivid purplish red spots, funnel-shaped, single, 3" across. Truss has 1 or 2 flowers. Blooms late. Leaves elliptic, mid green. Broad and spreading plant habit. Prefers some afternoon shade. Grows to a typical height of about 4 ft. in 10 years. Hardy to -5°F (-21°C). Hybridized by Morrison.



## Deciduous Azalea: 'Fragrant Star'

Flower pale yellow in bud opens pale yellow inside, yellowish white outside, unmarked, tubular funnel-shaped, wavy lobes, 1½" across, very strongly scented.. Blooms midseason. Leaves obovate, obtuse at apex, cuneate at base, 2" long, bluish-green, deciduous. Upright plant habit. Height: 4 ft. in 10 years. Cold hardy to -20°F (-29°C). Hybridized by Briggs Nursery.

Photos (top to bottom) by Steve Henning, Don Kohlenberger, Harold Greer, Harold Greer.



**Elepidote Rhododendron: 'Belva's Joy'**

Flower red, unmarked, widely funnel-campanulate, wavy edges, 2½" across. Held in flat trusses with 15-20 flowers. Blooms early midseason. Leaves oblanceolate, broadly acute apex, cuneate base, 3½" long, glossy, dark green above, felt-like indumentum below, colored white aging to tan, leaves retained 2 years. Plant has an upright, dense growth habit. Grows to a height of about 3 ft. or more in 10 years. Cold hardy to 5°F (-15°C). Hybridized by Cecil Smith.



**Lepidote Rhododendron: 'Manitou'**

Flower opens near white rapidly changing to pale purplish pink with a purplish pink throat and small red spots on dorsal lobe, openly funnel-shaped, 1" across. Held in ball-shaped trusses of up to 35 flowers. Blooms early midseason. Leaves elliptic, broadly acute apex, rounded base, flat, semi-glossy, olive green above, brown scales below. Mounding plant habit. Height: typically 3 ft. in 10 years. Cold hardy to -10°F (-23°C). Hybridized by Nearing.



**Evergreen Azalea: 'Roehr's Peggy Ann'**

Flower white with deep pink edges, funnel-shaped, hose-in-hose, 2" across. Blooms late. Leaves elliptic to obovate, cuneate at base, acute at apex, mid green. Compact, dense plant habit. Grows to a typical height of 3 ft. in 10 years. Hardy to -5°F (-21°C). Hybridized by Bauman.



**Deciduous Azalea: 'Golden Flare'**

Flower vivid yellow with strong orange blotch, openly tubular funnel-shaped, lower lobes turned down, about 2½" across. Ball-shaped truss holds 12-14 flowers. Blooms midseason to late midseason. Leaves obovate, broadly acute apex, cuneate base, 4" to 5" long, glossy, incised veins, medium green, hairy edges. Upright, well-branched habit. Height: 6 ft. in 10 years. Cold hardy to -20°F (-29°C). Hybridized by Metselaar.

Photos (top to bottom) by Jim Willhite, Sally and John Perkins, Tijs Huisman, Alice Schwegman.



**SAVE THE DATE !**  
**ARS 2024 Spring Convention**  
**Bellingham, Washington**  
**May 2-5, 2024**

**Four Points by Sheraton, Bellingham**  
**Hotel and Conference Center**  
**714 Lakeway Drive, Bellingham, WA, USA, 98229**  
**Phone: +1 360-671-1011**

***Highlights:***

**Pre-Tour: May 1: Private Gardens around Seattle**

**Convention: Tours \* Seminars \* Workshops \* Banquets**

**Post-Tour: May 5: Gardens around Vancouver, Canada**

***Time to check your Passport!***

***Plus:***

**Plant Sales \* Auctions \* Raffles \* Photo Booth \* Poster Session**

***Help get the message out!***

**Please forward to friends and gardeners in your  
community and around the globe.**

**Visit [ARS2024.org](https://ARS2024.org) for more information and to register.**