



Book Reviews (Margaret Hodgson)

The Public Rhododendrons Gardens of Vancouver Island

By Ian E. Efford. 121 pages, approximately 141 colour photographs and illustrations, Photographic credits and an Index of Rhododendron Photographs. Maps indicating the location of all the gardens. May 2015. Copyright Ian. E. Efford. Published by Ian. E. Efford. Printer: Friesens Corporation, Altona, Manitoba, Canada. book.friesens.com ISBN 978-0-9947323-0-9 (soft cover). \$29.95 + Tax Cdn.

Ian E. Efford, an author in his own right, or perhaps I should say “in his own write” as he has written a number of books now. Ian, a member of the Cowichan Valley Rhododendron Society, is a retired professor from the University of British Columbia and an ecologist. His books include “Marion Lake Project, International Biological Programme, Canada: Report 1967-68. In 2013 Ian wrote “Rhodo Book” which covered the history of the first 25 years of the Cowichan Valley Rhododendron

Society. In 2015, he had this beautiful publication ready for sale before the ARS May 2015 Conference in Sidney, B.C.

The Public Rhododendrons Gardens of Vancouver Island by Ian E. Efford, Susan Lightburn (Photograph Editor) and Alan Campbell offers the reader excellent descriptions of public Rhododendron Gardens of Vancouver Island which are located in North Saanich Peninsula, Victoria Region, Cowichan Valley, Mid-Island Region, West Coast, North East Coast and the Far North of the Island. The book discusses the three rhododendron species which grow on the Island, as well as the three rhododendrons which are native to British Columbia.

Historical information is included about the rhododendron hybrids (and the hybridizers) which occurred on Vancouver Island in the late 1880s and continued with many rhododendron hybrids being developed in the years following. The book contains a list of the hybridizers and their registered and non-registered hybrids, many of whom will be familiar names to the readers, as well as their well-known hybrids.

The organization of the book follows a pattern of location of the gardens, moving from the North Saanich Peninsula and Victoria to the regions farther north on the Island. Maps are included for each major area described, giving directions to the location of each garden described. Each individual report on the various gardens gives the historical background of how the garden came to be developed. The writer has also included details of the garden, as it is today.

This book is extremely interesting to read, the excellent colour photographs add much to the enjoyment of this book, and the book is a very useful tool for anyone planning to take a garden tour on Vancouver Island to see all these exceptional gardens. This is a new acquisition recently added to the FSRS library. This is indeed a most beautiful book. **Margaret Hodgson**