



NEWSLETTER

Volume 18, Number 4


EDITOR: LESLIE DREW

April 2007

Pentrelew Opens Garden Tours



Four beautiful gardens go on show this month and next on the annual rounds for Cowichan Valley Rhododendron Society members.

- **April 26, from 6–8 PM:** The garden of **Mona Kaiser** and **Tom Rimmer** on Grieve Road, off Sherman Road. Well known from the days when **Edna** and **Claude Green** were the owners, this is a garden (see above) being lovingly restored. See “Pentrelew: A Garden of Discovery” page 4.
- **May 10, from 6–8 PM:** **Janet** and **David Gardner** will be hosts at their skilfully designed garden at the end of Margaret Place, off Maple Bay Road. Beauty and serenity mingle here.
- **May 15, from 5:30–7:30 PM:** The secluded and exceptionally inviting garden of **Margaret deWeese**, at 1100 Genoa Bay Road, off Maple Bay Road (roadside rhododendron plantings at the entrance).
- **May 23, from 5:30–8 PM:** Craighends, 3996 Riverside Road, the mature garden of **Etta** and **Ruth Cook**, a magnet for rhododendron fanciers, with prime examples of some of the finest species and hybrids. 

What's Coming Up

April Meeting: April 4 in St. John's Anglican Church Hall, 486 Jubilee Street, Duncan. Set-up at 7 PM, meeting starts 7:30.

Speaker: **Bill McMillan** will speak on Plant Hunting Adventures in Sichuan, China—a PowerPoint presentation about his plant exploration journey in May and June last year from Chengdu, Sichuan to the Wolong Pass. Bill is the current president of the Victoria Rhododendron Society.

Tea and Goodies: **David** and **Janet Gardner*** (748-1867); **Rose Rogan** (748-0098); and **Leslie Bundon** (748-9219).* indicates team leader.

Spring Nursery Tour and Outing: April 14: Bus leaves Duncan Bus depot behind Sears at 8 AM sharp.

Directors' Meeting: April 11 at the home of **Bill Dumont**, 1753 Peerless Road, Cobble Hill.

Propagating Group Meeting: April 10 at the home of **Siggi** and **Maria Kemmler**, Gibbins Road.

Garden Tours: April 26, **Mona Kaiser** and **Tom Rimmer**, 6181 Grieve Road; May 10, **Janet** and **David Gardner**, 1228 Margaret Place; May 15, **Margaret deWeese**, 1100 Genoa Bay Road; May 23, **Etta** and **Ruth Cook**, 3996 Riverside Road.

Annual Spring Sale: May 5 from 10 AM to 2 PM in the Rabbit Barn at the Exhibition Grounds.

ARS Annual Convention: April 12–15, South San Francisco, Embassy Suites Hotel. See Web site (<http://www.ars2007conf.org>) for details.

Special Invitation: June 6 at noon at the University of Victoria's property at Marble Bay on Cowichan Lake, the former rhododendron garden of the **Stokers** and **Simpsons**. The custodian, **Roger Wiles**, will be the guide. Bring brown bag lunch.

Annual Picnic: June 9 potluck at noon at the garden of **Siggi** and **Maria Kemmler**, Gibbins Road.

*May meeting to be held May 2, 2007,
in St. John's Anglican Church Hall,
486 Jubilee Street, Duncan*

The Cowichan Valley Rhododendron Society

A Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society

PO Box 904, Duncan, BC V9L 3Y2 <http://cowichan.rhodos.ca>



President's Message

Spring greetings to you all! How lucky we are to be able to enjoy some exercise in the garden at this time already. I crave evidence of my daily creativity—new plantings in another corner of the garden, getting ready for summer—these give me a “high.” To be sure, I don’t work as long or as hard nowadays; my years are claiming attention. But give me the life of a gardener any time!

May I call on you new members of our chapter today? We hope to make your life in our community a rich garden experience through learning all about rhododendrons and gardening with them. One of the most rewarding ways of getting to know one another is visiting gardens and discussing pros and cons of different types

of rhododendrons that perform well in our setting. A membership chairperson gets to know everyone. Who of you will take this on? **Jackie Walker** kindly stepped in for **Sharon Pettersson**, who is very ill right now, but Jackie has held the position for many years and would like to see a new member take on the job to enable her to help with other work. As you all know, it takes a lot of willing members to make a chapter successful. So please contact me and say you will be our new membership chair.

The Best Performers in our region are requested by our ARS District Director for 2010. Here is the listing for

2002–2009. Please let me know your choice for the *Best for 2010* in each category so that I may pass this on to **Ron Knight** immediately. I am asking this of all members.

by *Ingeborg Woodsworth*

Year	Elepidote	Lepidote	Deciduous Azalea	Evergreen Azalea
2002	Ken Janeck	Ginny Gee	<i>R. schlippenbachii</i>	Hino Crimson
2003	Taurus	P.J.M.	Homebush	Purple Splendour
2004	Percy Wiseman	Dora Amateis	Arneson's Gem	Fascination
2005	Horizon Monarch	Ramapo	Nifty Fifty	Hilda Niblett
2006	Point Defiance	Wee Bee	Washington State Centennial	Silver Sword
2007	Nancy Evans	Blaney's Blue	Cecile	Mitsuki
2008	Marie Starks	Vibrant Violet	Yukon	Girard's Fuschia
2009	Fantastica	<i>R. augustinii</i>	<i>R. occidentale</i>	Komo Kuishan

From the Minutes . . .

. . . CVRS general meeting March 7: Moved by Treasurer **Siggi Kemmler** that Term Deposit No. 3 (current value \$12,367.28) be maintained and the sum of \$500.00 of its annual interest be set aside as a bursary for any student of horticulture, preferably connected with rhododendrons, and resident in the Cowichan Valley. In years when there is no applicant, the club will use the bursary monies to support rhododendron-specific causes. Seconded by **Alan Campbell** and carried.

. . . CVRS Directors' meeting March 14: **Ian Efford** offered to package rhododendron seed sent to the club by **Peter Wharton** from his explorations in Southeast Asia last fall and other collections, as well as open-pollinated seed from **Harry Wright**. The packages will be made available to members at the April 4 general meeting.

. . . An outline of how the Cowichan Valley Regional District might sponsor rhododendron garden tours for the public as a fundraising venture was presented by **Ian Efford**. The proposal was calculated to raise \$3500.

The idea was raised at the District 1 directors' meeting at the Milner Gardens on March 4, and has been taken up successfully by up-Island chapters. Because it would be too late to arrange for this spring, the outline was tabled until the September directors' meeting.

. . . **Leslie Drew** gave cost estimates for a proposal for the printing of all-occasion cards for sale by the club. These would depict blossoms of different rhododendrons of regional significance, and would be sold in sets at meetings and other club functions.

. . . **Siggi Kemmler** offered to arrange for plants for the raffle at each monthly general meeting.

New Members

Welcome to new associate members **Louise Dwyer** and **Bill Saunders**, who have settled in Cowichan Bay and look forward to attending club events. A member of the American Rhododendron Society since the 1980s, Louise is a founding member of the Mount Arrowsmith Rhododendron Society and a former member of the North Island chapter.



THE QUESTION BOX

Deadheading: The Only Risk May Be To The Gardener

by Norman Todd

Q Do you need to deadhead rhododendrons?


A I've said this before, but you really do need a dead head to deadhead. Next to house painting, I can't think of a more mindless task. So, the answer is an almost "No"—you don't need to, but you should.

When I started growing rhododendrons, I was told that because they produced so many seeds they used copious amounts of energy in making seed to ensure their prospects of survival.

Rhododendrons could be classified as weeds if the criterion is prodigality in seed production. I have not read of any studies where the amount of energy needed to make seed has been measured. It would be nice to know and would make a good subject for a Master's thesis. My current guess is that because most of the seed capsules on rhododendrons are green they probably manufacture a fair amount of chlorophyll on their own and therefore the energy needed is not as much as may be first assumed. I have noticed, however, that varieties with large capsules and are brownish in colour, if not removed, will result in the capsule-bearing branch dying—*R. concinnum* is one example, *R. oreotrephes* is another.

I don't think there is any risk to the plant in deadheading. (It may be riskier for the operator.) I have had some people tell me that it is injurious, otherwise why would the conservation of energy principle not have looked after it. I do think the conservation of energy principle is then being applied, but on the part of the gardener. Most observers of rhododendrons in the wild report that they bloom well only every three or four or five years.

This is where the conservation is applied. Because rhododendrons are so long-lived they need only have a surviving offspring every decade or so. Couple this with the enormous amount of seed available to ensure one successful germination every few years and rhododendrons do not need to use huge amounts of energy producing flowers every year. Also, rhododendrons have an absurdly inefficient means of seed distribution. They use none of the devious exploitive ruses of other smarter plants, like covering their seeds with sugar or presenting a big juicy robin-reward like cousin blueberry does or designing and patenting the Velcro fasteners of burrs. No! Rhododendrons are quite content to let the capsules wither a bit, open minimally and spill their seed on the ground. It is true that a few of the tropical *Vireya* rhododendrons have developed vestigial wings to get a bit of a lift, but to nowhere near the high-tech aerodynamics of the samaras of the maples. But why bother? They have been around for close to 60 million years and, as **Edith Bunker** said, "If it works why try to fix it?" They are a successful genus.

Still, the majority of observers claim that deadheading does give better blooms the following year. One of the famous aristocratic English growers was a devout believer in his own conservation of energy principle. He pronounced with ancestral authority that deadheading only made the problem more acute in the following year. At the end of the day, however, the main reason for deadheading is aesthetic. The sere, brown corpses of the past glorious blooms are messily ugly. And we do grow rhododendrons because we like to look at them. (Humans go to enormous pain to try to make themselves look good—that is, bed-worthy. Nevertheless, it seems difficult to justify in Darwinian terms that all that effort pays dividends in survival benefits.) So give your garden the benefit of a beauty treatment, while suffering the sticky fingers from beheading the past luxuriance. You just have to invent some mental ploy for preventing the tedium from giving you a permanent dead head. 



Pentrelew: A Garden of Discovery

by Mona Kaiser and Tom Rimmer

By great good fortune, we came to purchase our home and garden on Grieve Road in 2000. New to the Valley, young and willing to put down roots, we couldn't have been more delighted than to find ourselves the new custodians of Claude and Edna Green's joint labours of love.

Claude was responsible for building the house, which he began in 1937, and lovingly maintained until we purchased it from him 63 years later. Edna used those years to raise their family, run the home, and develop the property's 1.4-acre lot. According to Claude, the property was considered "out in the sticks" when they bought it, and so heavily wooded that trees stood thick "like hair on a dog's back." Cleared of most of its trees, and gently terraced down its eastern slope, Edna's garden would become known for its spring bulbs, rhododendrons, and dogwoods.

By the time we came to the garden, however, Edna had passed away, and although she had maintained the rhodo beds near the house well into her nineties (with the addition of an irrigation system only in her 87th year), much of the larger garden was rapidly returning to its original wild state. A little overwhelmed and foolishly undaunted, we set about to rejuvenate what we had. We did little more than prune and tend the immediate beds during the first year, hoping to watch what popped up throughout the rest of the garden as the year progressed. Pop it did, and, in fact, 7 years later we are still finding new (old) plants. Along with stone-edged garden paths, stepping stones and stairs, a concrete bunker, an old orchard, circular beds, and pockets of plantings all awaiting discovery among the encroaching salal, snowberry, blackberry, bird cherry, and big leaf maples. Fall is a great time to explore for old paths, which we often find by following repetitive puffs of bright green moss staggered through the leafless underbrush. Similarly, spring is good for catching a splash of suspiciously bulblike colour poking through a tumble of undergrowth and fallen trees. One fun find included an entire bed of daylilies that must have been blooming for years within its salal jail, and which, no more than 50 feet from our house, we found after 4 years of gardening around it.



Ours is certainly a spring garden. Waves of naturalized bulbs and flowers begin in January and continue for several months. Snowdrops, aconite, hellebore, crocus, chionodoxa, anemone, erythronium, trillium, daffodils, tulips, iris, peonies, and cyclamen carpet the various garden beds of heathers, rhododendrons, kalmia, blueberries, Japanese maples, dogwood, and fruit trees. At its height the garden held over 200 different daffodil forms, some of which are known to exist only in this garden (see "Pioneer Gardener Remembered" by Bill Dale, *CVRS Newsletter* May 1998). We have counted more than 200 rhododendrons, of which nearly one-third have identifying labels with planting dates sometimes noted. The oldest dated label we've found reads "Grieg 1952," but like much of the rest of the garden, we are still routinely finding buried label treasures. Of course, the help of CVRS members who can lend a hand in identifying unlabelled rhodos would be most welcomed!

The changes we have made to the garden have been largely structural. Recognizing that many of the "bones" of our garden are very mature, the goal has been to ensure we have some established plantings to replace them with when they go. To date, we have extended the paths, terrace walls, and garden beds down the eastern slope, and planted more fruit trees throughout this old orchard area. We have also been slowly replacing dying dogwoods with in the rhodo beds with other smallish ornamental trees

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April In The Garden

by Liz Murray


April showers bring rhodo flowers! I can hardly wait for the rhododendrons to swell their buds and thrust up their colour. Now the rhododendron itself does not care what you think about the flowers; their whole purpose in life is to flower to attract the pollinators, set seed, and reproduce.

We have had a long and wet winter, and most of us are behind in our gardening tasks and cannot wait for the lovely days of spring to get out and work on our gardens. But wait! If you rush out there unprepared and gung-ho, I guarantee that you won't be so eager the next day. Those gardening aches and pains are going to catch up with you, and you will be disappointed that you don't feel like gardening on such a beautiful day with s-o-o-o much to do.

Take a little time to get ready. Take a brisk walk before starting the garden chores. Do some stretching exercises to get yourself ready to garden.

Once you are out in the garden, be aware of what you are doing. Find easier ways to do tasks. Put wheels under heavy things. Rotate the jobs. There's no need to stay at one thing too long with so many jobs to do. You should be able to do a little of this and a little of that, rotating so that things get done, but also changing the way your body has to work.

Make sure your tools are the correct ones for the job. We all think that we can prune big branches with bypass pruners when really we should use loppers. Try to keep all of your tools close by so you won't be tempted to use the wrong ones. Tools need to be sharp and free of rust. Use gloves with a bit of texture to help you grip without grasping hard. Think of those finger joints and how hard they work.

Bring on the lovely weather, get out there, and enjoy the tasks to be done in the fresh air and sunshine. Remember, the gardener is the artist who creates the garden. Take care of the artist! 

Pentrelew . . .

...continued from Page 4


(Japanese maples, styrex, stewartia, camellia). The roses from an old, now shaded, rose garden were redistributed, and we built a workshop on its site. On the lower portion of the garden, where Claude Green's father used to tend the family vegetable patch, we have made a new grassy area for kids that includes a fire circle, play space, and a secret trail (stone-lined, kid-height, winding through the underbrush) for our 4-year-old son and new baby daughter. We may yet put in a veggie patch.

Closer to the house we've added a dining terrace off the kitchen, with a grass floor, yew hedge, and white clematis pergola. Hopefully, we'll get up a grape arbour over the stone deck off the dining room this season. Sitting high on a hill, with few large trees to the south and east, the house receives a good dose of summer sunshine, and so we have planted a robinia and some finely lobed scarlet oaks close to the house to provide both filtered shade and transitional trees for the ageing dogwoods and liquidamber. CVRS meetings are always a great source for new rhodo purchases, but I'm ashamed to admit, without this built-in peer-review, our choices are often based less on botanical lineage than to try and stretch our blooming season. July is a rather quiet month in the garden.

However, Edna Green clearly had the autumn in mind

when she planned her garden, for the colours are nearly as compelling as the garden's spring flush. In fact, teasing out Edna's planting ideas has been one of the most rewarding aspects of working in this established garden. Recognizing an intentional site selection, colour scheme, view frame, or plant pairing is not always noticeable with the first round of restorative pruning or liberation weeding. The gift comes when you suddenly look up from the task at hand and realize that the bank of azaleas to your left not only blooms sequentially, but does so through a very specific colour spectrum—from white-yellow and yellow-orange, to orange-bronze and bronze-red.

You begin to notice the quirks, too. Like the patch of shrubs that used to live on the far side of the old potting shed—surely, the designated bed for plants (gifts?) that were not welcomed elsewhere? Like that lonely old hydrangea and hosta. Similarly, garden omissions are intriguing. Not a magnolia or camellia to be found, nor lavender, herbs, or much in the way of perennials. And why only apples and blueberries?

We are committed to gardening without chemicals, and we realize we certainly have our work cut out for us because of this decision. But for us, too, this home and garden has become a labour of love. 



PROPAGATION

Seeds from Southeast Asia

by Saggi Kemmler

The Cowichan Valley Rhododendron Society, which last year gave \$500 toward the travel expenses of Peter Wharton, curator of the Asian Garden at the University of British Columbia, has received in return species seed collected on his trip to Southeast Asia, and more from other expeditions. In a letter to myself and the club, he wrote:

Enclosed is a range of seed for members from my own collection in South Sichuan (September 2006) under my PW numbers; official Dafengding Botanical Exploration Program collections (DBEP #s) from S. Sichuan (September 2006); a North Vietnamese collection of Dan Hinkley from the Fan Si Pan (DJHV September 2006); two collections of Keith Rushforth's work in Northeast India under his KR #s from the autumn of 2005; and some older seed from 2002 from Peter Cox.

Please note that all have collectors' numbers.

I can provide field notes on my PW-DBEP material if required.

Again, please extend my thanks and gratitude to all members for your generous support.

Southeast Asian Seed List

- *R. thomsonii* ssp. *lopsangianum/sherriffii*: Cox; 23.10.2002; 11,000 ft, Southeast Tibet
- *R. kendrickii*: Cox #10011; 22.10.2002; 7800 ft, Southeast Tibet
- *R. stewartianum* ? *eclectum* off.? [Kenneth thinks *lopsangianum*]” Cox #10043; 23.10.2002; 11,000 ft, Southeast Tibet. [The Rhododendron Species Foundation library shows no seed from Southeast Tibet for *eclectum*.]
- *R. rex*: PW #215; 2006; Dafengding, South Sichuan
- *R. taliense*: PW #218; 2006; Jiuding Shan, Central Sichuan
- *R. argyrophyllum*: PW #195; 2006; Dafengding, South Sichuan
- *R. calophytum*: PW #216; 2006; Jiuding Shan, Central Sichuan
- *R. sinofalconeri*: DJHV #129; 2006; North Vietnam
- *R. principis*: DBEP #400; 09.2006; Dafengding, South Sichuan
- *R. hirtipes*: DBEP #392; 23.09.2006; Dafengding, South Sichuan
- *R. oreodoxa*: PW #197; 09.2006; Dafengding, South Sichuan

- *R. arizelum*: KR #8183; Fall 2005; Northeast India, Assam
- *R. falconeri* ssp. *eximium*: KR #8079; Fall 2005; Northeast India, Assam

There are no dates on the KR packages, but the letter says Fall 2005. With two exceptions, about half of each seed packet from Peter Wharton was distributed to Propagation Group members at their last meeting. There were very few seeds of *R. arizelum* and *R. thomsonii* ssp. *lopsangianum*, so Alan Campbell took all of *R. arizelum* and I took the *R. thomsonii*. Ian Efford took on packaging of the rest. I have been informed that AI has all his seed planted.

The Frank Pelurie article on seeding and germinating rhododendrons will be informing me in this first seed-propagating venture. Someone mentioned that there is supposedly a new kind of growlight available with a greater spectrum at lower power consumption. There are two different specs of fluorescent tubes, T8 and T5. Here is an excerpt from what B.C. Hydro has to say about them:

Indirect and indirect/direct fixtures typically use T8 or T5 lamps with electronic ballasts. T5 lamps are thinner, more efficient, and offer a higher intensity of light output than their T8 predecessors.

I checked on the Internet and what I also found are adverts for full-spectrum, compact fluorescent growlights, which are affordable, as well as LED row lights, which are very expensive, prices starting at more than \$100. I will use the compact fluorescent lights we now use throughout the house. ☺

Success—But Help Wanted

The Cowichan Valley Rhododendron Society has led all 70 chapters of the American Rhododendron Society in its recent increase in membership.

Executive director Laura Grant informed District 1 directors last month: “We (the ARS) have acquired 157 new members since the last report in September. Cowichan Valley Chapter is leading with 13 new members, followed closely by the Mid-Atlantic Chapter that acquired 10 new members.”

Actually, the CVRS total now stands higher still at 46 memberships or 64 members, of which 42 are full memberships, three associate, and one life.

President Ingeborg Woodsworth said, “Well done!” and credited Jackie Walker and Sharon Pettersson with much of the success of the club’s membership drive. Unfortunately, Sharon Pettersson now finds that illness has forced her to turn over the membership chair to someone else. Anyone willing is asked to phone Ingeborg at (250) 749-6291. ☺



PROPAGATION

Seed Packages for Members

by Ian Efford

The Society has been given two lots of seed. The first are wild seeds collected on expeditions to the mountains of Southeast Asia, the original home of most rhododendrons. The other seeds are bee-pollinated seeds from Harry Wright's nursery. Below are listed the seeds, the number of packages available in brackets, the hardness zones, and the colours. The 33 packages will be made available at the next general meeting on April 4.

To grow these seeds, sprinkle them on top of a damp mixture of peat moss and perlite and keep them in a covered container to prevent loss of humidity. Frequently, large numbers germinate, but the young seedlings are very sensitive to loss of moisture. Do not let them dry out. When they grow into fine plants, please donate some back to the Society for the plant sale or raffle.

Seed from Southeast Asia

Section *Pontica* Subsection *Falconia*

R. falconeri ssp. *eximium*; Assam (2), zone 9, orange

R. rex; Sichuan; (3), zone 7, pink

R. sinofalconeri; Vietnam (4), zone 9, pink

Section *Pontica* Subsection *Fortunea*

R. oreodoxa; Sichuan (2), zone 6, pink

R. calophytum; (4), zone 6, white

Section *Pontica* Subsection *Argyrophylla*

R. argyrophyllum; Sichuan (2), zone 6, pink

Section *Pontica* Subsection *Selensia*

R. hirtipes; Sichuan (2), zone 6, pink

Section *Pontica* Subsection *Taliensia*

R. taliensia [sic] *taliense*; Sichuan (2), zone 7, white

R. principis; Sichuan (1) pink

Section *Thomsonia*

R. stewartianum? *electium?*; Tibet (1), zone 9, pink

Seed from Harry Wright's Garden


Section *Pontica* Subsection *Fortunea*

R. praeevernum; (5), zone 6, white

Section *Pontica* Subsection *Grandeae*

R. macabeaenum; (2), zone 8, yellow

R. grande; (1), zone 8, yellow

R. sinogrande; (2), zone 8, cream. 

PROPAGATION

Those Peculiar 'Seashells'


by Siggi Kemmler

Slowly, very slowly, things are happening in my propagating box . . . with one exception. Among the plants I put in last fall were three cuttings of 'Seashells', a hybrid of uncertain parentage. Perhaps this explains what is going on.

Shortly after I planted the cuttings, one gave up and died. It turned dark brown, the leaves fell off, end of story. The other two just hung around, getting warmed and watered all winter. About two weeks ago, one of them decided to wake up and get busy. In a little more than a week, it pushed inch-long leaves out. It is looking great and certainly will amount to something. The third one is still just sitting there, thinking things over.

Unlikely story? Look at this picture!



What is the mystery behind this seemingly odd behaviour? I have been told that air or a pathogen may have been introduced when I planted the cuttings. It would be good to hear from others and learn more about such happenings. 



New Red-leaved Hybrids

Two red-leaved rhododendron hybrids have been developed by Glendoick Gardens of Perth, Scotland and are being marketed in the British Isles.

Named 'Wine & Roses' and 'Ever Red', the two are listed in the new Kenneth Cox book, *Rhododendrons and Azaleas: A Colour Guide*, under smaller-growing elepidote hybrids.

'Wine & Roses' is described as semi-dwarf, H4, EM-M, bright pink flowers in rounded trusses, leaves with red undersides, compact, very free flowering, new growth bronze . . . "the best of the dwarf hybrids with red-leaf undersides and the only one so far with pink flowers."

'Ever Red', also a semi-dwarf, H4, EM-M, has dark red-purple flowers in lax trusses of three, with leaves dark reddish purple on both upper and lower surfaces, the colour of Cotinus 'Royal Purple', very slow growing with dense, compact habit.



R. 'Wine & Roses'

According to *The Garden*, journal of the Royal Horticultural Society, the hybrids are the result of 20 years' breeding work by Kenneth Cox, managing director of Glendoick Gardens, and his father, Peter Cox. Unlike earlier red-leaved rhododendrons, they are vigorous and keep their coloration, and their compactness (about 1 x 1 m) commends them for containers and small gardens.

Both are listed as PBR, which stands for Plant Breeder's Rights, meaning that they cannot be propagated commercially without permission or licence from Glendoick, the patent holder. See www.glendoick.com for more information.

Whether they can be imported directly to Canada at the present time is in doubt, owing to restrictions resulting from the sudden oak death outbreak in the United States. ↪

Plant Sale Nearing

by Ian Efford

Plans for our Plant Sale on May 5 at the Rabbit Barn at the Exhibition Grounds are moving along.

After some years in the wilderness, the large sign that the Society owned a few years ago has returned to the fold. This sign and the new one will be put up for the week preceding the sale on the baseball backstop and on the Rabbit Barn itself.

We only make money if people attend and this means advertising. If you have any suggestions of clubs whose members would be interested, please let Anne Slaby [748-4623] or myself [246-1453] know and we will get flyers or posters to them.

We have confirmation that the following nurseries will return: **Cherry Point, Mayo Creek, Firwood, and Prospect.** A new one, **Perennial Ridge,**

will also be there. In addition, **Susanne and Keith Muir** will have companion plants. Other nurseries have been invited.

Again, members are invited to bring blossoms from their gardens for the truss display, always a popular feature of this big fundraising event. For three days of the week leading up to the sale, we shall also have a promotion stand in the Duncan Mall.

At the April meeting, I will circulate a sign-up sheet: please fill it in. If you cannot attend that meeting and are willing to help with the sale, please let me know by telephone or email efford@shaw.ca

Our greatest market may well be in the new housing developments around the Valley. If you know of people living in these areas, please publicize the sale to them in particular. ↪



EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Other Places, Other Gardens

by Leslie Drew

Because it takes time, making a rhododendron garden of more than a few of the most undemanding hybrids is not for the faint of heart. After one gets the hang of planting them, it can take a few years to find the right location—not too much hot sun, not too much shade, good drainage, and so on, by which time a move may require a monumental effort. This applies to not all but many lovely species and hybrids. The saying goes: move an unhappy plant once, and if it's still grumbling, move it again a couple of seasons later, and maybe a third time. If it still doesn't like its place in the sun (or out of it), dump it.

As well, some are known to perform famously in some parts of the world, usually their home and native land, and not others. I learned this a few years ago not with a rhodo, but a dogwood. A noted plantsman from the west of England visited our garden on his first trip to the West Coast and, as we walked around, stopped by its one and only eastern American dogwood, *Cornus florida rubra*. It was—and still is—a disappointment to me: prone to die back whenever a cold east wind kicks up, and less than floriferous. I apologized for its presence, as one might for a skunk at a garden party, saying that but for sloth I would have removed it. "Oh no," he said, "I hope you don't. In England, this would be considered a superb specimen."

The fact that some very lovely rhododendrons have geographic preferences is one of the introductions in Kenneth Cox's *Rhododendrons and Azaleas: A Colour Guide*. For example, of 'George's Delight' he says: "Much better in the Pacific Northwest than I have seen it in the U.K."

We can't all hop around the Northern Hemisphere while our gardens here are in bloom to see how our rhodos are performing elsewhere. But we can see how other growers here are succeeding—or not—with plants we may already have or contemplate acquiring, by taking in the annual garden tours. This year, Anne Slaby has lined up four fine gardens for our enjoyment in late April and May. Besides seeing the beauty of them all, there's much to be learned at each and every one. ↪

—2007 Directors—

PRESIDENT	Ingeborg Woodsworth <i>mayocreekgardens@shaw.ca</i>	749-6291
FIRST VICE PRESIDENT	Ian Efford <i>efford@shaw.ca</i>	246-1453
SECOND VICE PRESIDENT	Janet Gardner <i>jgardner@shaw.ca</i>	748-1867
SECRETARY	Sharon Tillie <i>sharontillie@shaw.ca</i>	748-8254
TREASURER	Siggi Kemmler <i>siggi-k@shaw.ca</i>	746-8751
MEMBERS AT LARGE	Leslie Bundon <i>lbundon@hotmail.com</i>	748-9219
	Bill Dumont <i>wedumont@shaw.ca</i>	743-9882
	Roger and Anne Slaby <i>rs0321@telus.net</i>	748-4623
	Jackie Walker <i>jacquelinewalker@shaw.ca</i>	743-3650
EX-OFFICIO	Alan Campbell <i>stonefold@shaw.ca</i>	743-3597

—2007 Conveners—

GARDEN TOURS	Anne and Roger Slaby	748-4623
HISTORIAN	Bev Mountain	746-6339
INTER-CHAPTER RELATIONS	Ingeborg Woodsworth	749-6291
LIBRARIAN	Janet Gardner	748-1867
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SPEAKERS	Alan Campbell	743-3597
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PROPAGATION	Alan Campbell	743-3597
REFRESHMENTS	Maria Kemmler	746-8751
SUNSHINE	Ann Springford	746-7303
WEB SITE	Alan Campbell	743-3597

***Cowichan Valley
Rhododendron Society***

PLANT SALE



'Papaya Punch' [photo courtesy of Mhairi Bruce]



SATURDAY, MAY 5TH 10 AM-2 PM
Rabbit Barn at
Cowichan Exhibition Fairgrounds



All Types of Plants
Free Plant Advice
Raffles
All Welcome

FOR MORE INFO CALL 246-1453