



Newsletter



Cowichan Valley Rhododendron Society

Volume 28:3 April 2017

President's Message

"If winter comes, can spring be far behind?"

Well, apparently this year it was---*far*, that is. But it appears now, that it is definitely at hand with more bulbs finally poking their heads above ground, birds in serious nest building modes, and the male woodpeckers drumming on the downspouts, their versions of heavy metal pulsating across the neighbourhoods.

Our speaker this month is **Brian White**, who with Peter Wharton of the UBC Botanical Gardens, made several trips to Vietnam, exploring mountains that have not been seen by Westerners for decades. Their journey, and what they found there, is Brian's topic at our April meeting. I have attended some of Brian's presentations and

CVRS Monthly Meeting

Wednesday, April 5
7:30 pm St. John's Church

Dr. Brian White

(More details on page 2)

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R. simsii i Macheng Photo: Guan Kaiyun

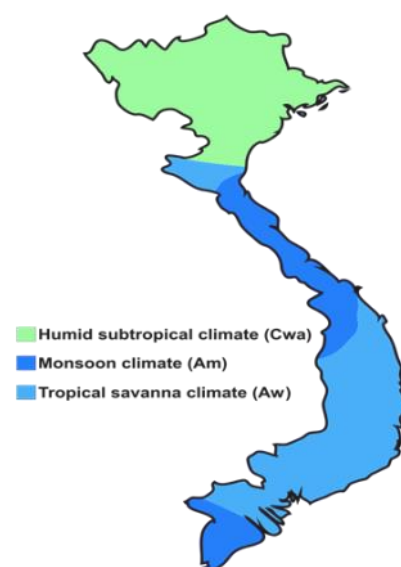
they are well worth attending. At Royal Roads, we have grown some of the species he has collected, and we are now anxiously awaiting their first flowering.

Our next big event is the CVRS Garden Fair! On Saturday, April 29th from 10am to 2pm! We are still looking for some people to help with various sections. Please do pause to read more of the details in this newsletter.

And now that spring is here, think about which rhododendron flowers you will bring for the truss show at the Garden Fair! They should be delivered between 8:30 and 9 the day of the show. Al and Liz Murray will once again be looking after the truss show. What a great advertisement for the genus *Rhododendron*!

Barrie Agar, President

Vietnam map of Köppen climate classifier



Dr. Brian White

Guest Speaker – April 5, 7:30 pm

Dr. Brian White is the program head for the Master of Arts in Tourism Management program and was recently the director of the School of Tourism and Hospitality Management at Royal Roads University. His teaching specialties include heritage and cultural tourism, ecotourism, and destination development. He has published two open source community and cultural tourism guides, and has developed educational partnership programs in India and China. His consulting work in a variety of countries has included tourism and hospitality curriculum development, community tourism development, cultural and arts-based tourism development planning, and First Nations tourism planning. White is a passionate horticulturalist and naturalist, and maintains a large garden at his home in East Sooke. He is a member of the BC Garden Tourism Coalition, representing Royal Roads University.



Prior to Royal Roads, White was senior faculty member and co-ordinator for Capilano University's Bachelor of Tourism Management, where he founded the Outdoor Recreation Management department in 1972 and the Tourism Management department in 1986. He has taught at the University of Victoria, Simon Fraser University and the University of Brighton. As the senior human resource policy advisor for the World Travel and Tourism Council from 1997 to 2001, White developed tourism labour force policy. In the mid-1990s, he wrote the BC Tourism Learning System, and subsequently developed the Bachelor of Tourism Management Degree for British Columbia. He chaired the development process for Lynn Headwaters Regional Park and for the Seymour Conservation Area in the 1980s and '90s, while serving as the chair of the BC Outdoor Recreation Council.

White holds a PhD and a Master of Arts in Human Geography from Simon Fraser University. White was honoured in November 2004 as the Canadian Tourism industry's 'Educator of the Year' at the annual Pinnacle Awards, hosted by *Hotelier magazine*. White was awarded the BC Tourism Industry's 2009 William Van Horne Visionary Award for leadership in educational programming and commitment to innovative teaching.

Special Gifts for first 50 Customers-Don't miss it!!



The Cowichan Valley's Largest Garden Fair

Saturday 29 April 2017

10 am – 2 pm

**Cowichan Exhibition Grounds,
Duncan**

(Mays Rd. & Trans-Canada Hwy)

**Free Coffee and donuts for the first
200 customers!**

- Free Admission, with lots of free Parking
- Come early for best selection!
- High quality Plants direct from 15 Nurseries
- Wide Selection of Rhodos in many Sizes and Colours
- Rare, hard to find Rhodos available
- Companion Plants, Maples and other beautiful Plants for sale
- Truss (flower) Display of colourful local Rhodos in Bloom
- Variety of Unique Vendors and Garden Suppliers
- Planting, Growing, and Maintenance advice from Experts
- Many excellent buys on Quality Plants
- Carts available for shopping or bring your own
- Credit Card, Cheques or Cash only please

www.CowichanValleyGardenFair.com



Twitter.com/CowGardenFair

CVRS MEMBER PLANT SALES for the CVRS Garden Fair

Please remember to set aside divisions and seedlings from your gardens to contribute to the CVRS plant sales. Your generosity makes a tremendous difference to the fund raising efforts of the CVRS





Garden Fair Volunteers are Happy People!

As you know, the Garden Fair, which is our major fundraiser for operating the Society, relies on you for making it one of the best Garden Fairs on the Island. We still have some spaces for people to help. It is only a few hours but makes such a difference!

Sport a Red Apron and a Happy Face!

Putting up signs and banners: We will have the “stick-in” signs at our April Meeting, for people to take home and post in areas near their homes. Attractive décor!

Refreshment Setup - Saturday 8 am: Someone to pick up refreshments, bring them to the hall, and help with setting up the table. It's another great job. But remember, . . . if too many doughnuts are missing, it will eventually show!

CVRS Plant Table - Saturday 8 - 2: One more person is needed to assist in receiving and pricing plants for this table. Spot the specials early!

Truss Show Setup - Saturday 8:30 am: Help Al and Liz receive and label trusses. Obviously, one the best jobs at the fair and who wouldn't want to do that?

Cashiers 9:45 am - 2:00 pm: 3 more cashiers and 3 more tag collectors are needed. Count tags and totals for the cashiers. Basic counting and adding skills are the only requirements. Patience helps!

Free-spirited floaters: If none of the above suit, it is always helpful to have unassigned floaters available to pick up any slack or give tiring people a quick break. Just a few short periods of assistance are always appreciated.

Bits of clean-up at the end: Just give a hand or help supervise. We have hired a setup and takedown crew, but there are many little jobs to complete before we all go home pleased and satisfied, . . .and tired.

If you can lend a hand, please let us know at the meeting or contact me: barrie.agar@shaw.ca

Letter *from the Editor*



For the first minute, or perhaps two, of “The Birds and the Bees” presentation, I held my breath with tension. There was no audio when Lois Blackmore began her power point presentation on Jim Barlup and his hybrids. Moments passed, and still Lois did not address this silence. Magically, in this silence, a gentle atmosphere of respect and reverence crept into the room. It left many, if not all of us, with a sense of wonder and awe for an amazing gentleman, Jim Barlup, and his outstanding patience, talent, and commitment to producing spectacular rhododendron hybrids.

No doubt, in response, we will all be eager to spot Barlup hybrids at the CVRS Garden Fair on April 29th! But what else will we select from the vast array available?

Plants in bloom easily attract us on the day of a sale. That could mean that we have a limited period of blooms in our gardens. Then again, there are a lot of crucial factors that determine bloom time that we could consider. Even on Vancouver Island there are variances in climate and zone, and accordingly, bloom times vary. Local circumstances in our gardens, such as altitude; proximity to bodies of water, an ocean or lake; and protection or exposure to winds, may affect flowering times. As we compare last year to this year we say, “Spring is late this year” and so are the blooms. Other factors to consider include soil and sunlight differences.

Spontaneous purchasing can definitely be enjoyable, and perhaps our gardens are large and spacious and can support that. But, then again, perhaps they are not.

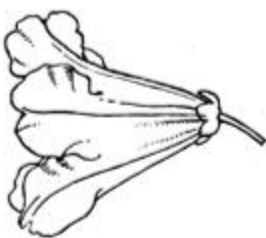
And so we may choose to develop a plan---a shopping list---based on some type of researched criteria. Criteria choices may be numerous and complex, and a number of those are identified in this April issue. Of course, descriptions from the knowledgeable vendors, or our very own AI and AI, are helpful. What questions will we ask? And will we understand the language we hear? Whatever approach we choose, there is pure excitement ahead!

Hopefully, you will find a few tips in this issue to assist in preparing your 2017 Rhododendron Wish List. Settle down with your references books or select some from the CVRS Library, or check out the suggested websites. A Glossary can be helpful too. You will need a pen and a long piece of paper! Okay, you have your iPhone. If that works for you, great!

In any case, treat yourselves! Research is definitely part of the thrill!

Verna Buhler

Rhododendron Flower Shapes



Widely funnel-campanulate



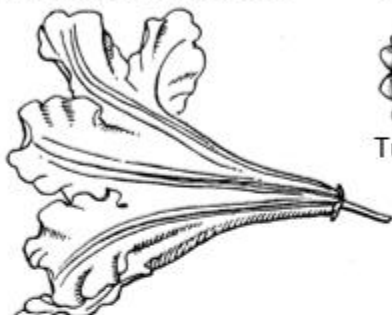
Saucer-shaped



Openly campanulate



Funnel-shaped



Openly funnel-campanulate



Tubular



Tubular-campanulate



Flat saucer-shaped



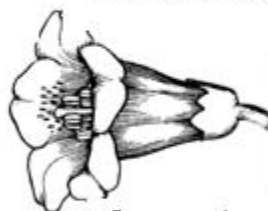
Tubular funnel-shaped



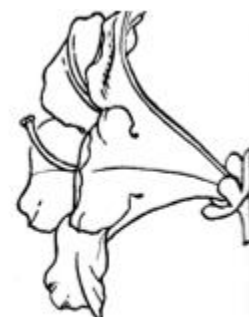
Ventricose campanulate



Rotate campanulate



Campanulate



Openly funnel-shaped



R. cinnabarinum ssp. *cinnabarinum*
'Nepal', tubular



R. 'Sanderling', saucer shaped



R. 'Starbright Champagne', broadly funnel-campulate



R. albrechtii, flat saucer-shaped

Note from Sean Rafferty:

I thought that I would add a comment of interest with respect to *Rhododendron albrechtii*. As Ian points out [CVRS March newsletter], *R. albrechtii*, along with *R.s pentaphyllum*, *quinquefolium* and *schlippenbachii* are all members of Section Sciarhodion.

Aside from all being worthy and interestingly collectable plants, they share the interesting feature of not hybridising with any other rhododendrons. That

is a fairly interesting fact, which I forgot to mention at the meeting.

There are several other azaleas, which as a group do not hybridise readily, if at all, and they are primarily the Japanese three leaved azaleas (within the Reticulatum and Weyrichii alliances), which come from the same part of the world as Subsection Sciarhodion.

Seriously, Al and Al are approachable!

Just try this descriptive jargon on them while you are shopping at the Fair!!

"Hi Al! I am looking for something special in the genus Rhododendron! Perhaps a Greer hybrid---it should have deep green, extremely heavy textured glabrous foliage, with a downward bend in the middle. Flowers? Definitely large tight trusses of 10 to 13 rose-red, widely funnel-campulate flowers! It really should bloom in Midseason, and prefer light shade. Do you have one of those?"



Rhododendrons Shopping List

There will be many rhododendron plants to choose from at the CVRS Garden Fair. Will you be basing your selections on the rhododendrons that are in **spectacular bloom** at the time of the plant sale, or will you have **additional reasons** for making purchases?

A LITTLE RESEARCH CAN OFFER ANOTHER LEVEL OF SHOPPING EXCITEMENT!

Where can you find information?

www.hirsutum.info

Rhododendron *hirsutum* was the first rhododendron to be classified and named. It was discovered in the 16th century by a Flemish botanist, Charles l'Ecluse, who later became called Clusius.

www.rhododendron.org (Note: The latter hardiness temperatures are in degrees Fahrenheit)

Rhododendron.org lists plants that have been identified as **Best Performers** in British Columbia District

IRONCLADS: Some of the rhododendrons more capable of withstanding both cold winter temperatures and hotter summers. *Rhododendrons* 'P.J.M. Group', 'Ramapo', 'America', 'Catawbiense Album', 'Nova Zembla', 'Roseum Elegans', 'Brown Eyes', among others. *Azaleas* *arborescens*, *calendulaceum*, *japonicum*, *kiusianum*, *vaseyi*, 'Northern Lights' series

One regions, and the site even lists those specifically identified for the Cowichan Valley Region.

What might you consider?

- Hardiness
- Flowering (Time, Colour, Size, Shape)
- Foliage (Size, shape, texture, changing colours)
- Mature Plant Size (Height and Width)
- Ideal Growing Conditions (Determine the conditions prevalent in YOUR garden)
- Scent
- Species, Hybrids, or Both

HARDINESS: After this winter's demonstration of complex weather combinations and the corresponding damage in our gardens, hardiness and resilience may be very important depending on the prevailing conditions present in your gardens. HUNDREDS OF PLANTS ARE SUITABLE!

Refer to Cox's Hardiness Chart included in the CVRS March Newsletter.



Rhododendron 'PJM Regal'

NOTE THE FACTORS CONSIDERED IN SELECTING the following rhododendrons:



Very Early flowering *Rhododendron moupinense*: This species blooms in the Cowichan Valley as early as February and March. The flowers are openly *funnel-campanulate*, and are able to withstand a few degrees of frost. The plant, which has a very small root system, is also relatively drought resistant and requires very good drainage.

FOLIAGE: You may appreciate plants that offer spectacular leaf shape and colour. Leaf lengths range from tiny to more than a foot in length. There are also those with texture and density variations to add interest.

The young foliage of *Rhododendron pachysanthum* is stunning with dense silvery-white *tomentose*. Later the upper surface may retain some browner *tomentose* or become *glabrous*. The underside is covered with a thick wooly cinnamon/rusty-brown, continuous, persistent *indumentum*.



GLOSSARY

Tomentum: DENSE hair covering, often of the upper surface of a leaf

Glabrous: WITHOUT hairs

Indumentum: HAIRY covering, particularly on the underside of leaves

SCENT: Many rhododendrons are not scented, but some are. Individuals may decide, for any number of reasons such as exposure, or limited garden space, that they will select rhododendrons based on specific criteria. Criteria parameters such as small-leaved rhododendrons, deciduous azaleas, or scented rhododendrons all offer enough rhododendron choices to fill even large gardens.



Rhododendron 'Fragrant Red' is one of the deepest-coloured larger hybrids with **fragrance**. It is of **Medium** height and blooms in **Early-Mid** season, April to May, in our region. It is suitable in its **Hardiness Rating of H3** (or 7a, USDA), withstanding temperatures to -15 to -17.7 C, although a sheltered site is best in severe winters.

Fragrant, and large in size---flower, **truss**, and tree (at maturity)---**Rhododendron 'Loderi King George'**, as well as any of the others in the Loderi Group, are spectacular. This rhododendron appreciates some shelter from winds.



Very strongly scented, of the Rhododendron Subgenus Pentanthera, or the **deciduous azaleas**, is **Rhododendron 'Fragrant Star'**, a version of *R. 'Snowbird'*. Pale yellow in bud, it has small white, unmarked, **tubular funnel-shaped** flowers, with wavy **lobes**, 1½" across. The foliage is bluish green.



OUR LIBRARY

As we have mentioned at previous meetings we are no longer able to store our club's library at the church hall. We have tentatively explored a few options, but nothing definite has been realized from these. So here are some possible scenarios to consider that may resolve the situation.

A member could store the books at his or her home and offer to host a "Library Hour" once a month or every 2 months.

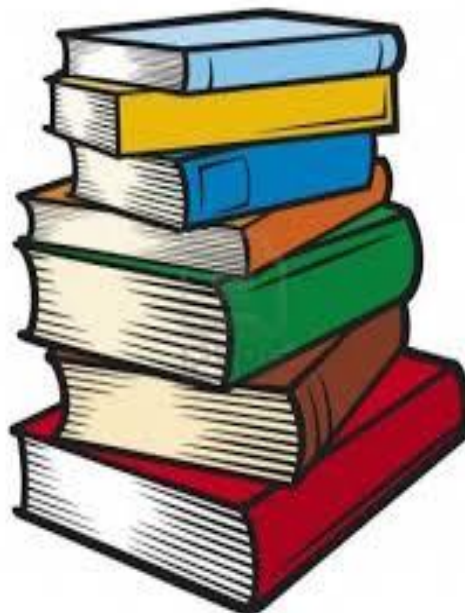
We might find an alternative storage place to rent, such as the Cowichan Agricultural Hall with access to members for an hour or two on a monthly or bimonthly schedule. This could be supervised by rotating librarians from a group of members who would volunteer for the task.

We may wish to donate the collection to an organization such as Milner Gardens.

We might choose to sell the books either to members, or to a combination of members and bookstores, or through raffles, etc.

The library is not being used as it once was, in part due to the ease of obtaining information off the Internet. However, it has taken time to amass the 193 excellent books in the collection, and once released would be very difficult and expensive to replace.

A "Library" gathering could be an informal gathering as well, if people would like to treat it that way, without having to worry about adhering to the timeline of a meeting.



We would like people to think about this and how they feel we should proceed. Our "drop-dead" date for removal is August 15th; therefore, we must arrive at a decision by the May meeting so we can take the necessary steps required. Of course, any suggestions and/or innovative new thoughts are gratefully accepted, and indeed, encouraged.

PS. What about a book club?



Upcoming Events/Speakers

April 5, 2017

CVRS Monthly Meeting 7:30 pm St John's Church –
**Brian White, PhD, School of Tourism & Hospitality,
Faculty of Management, Royal Roads University**

Brian White will present a compilation of twelve years of plant exploration in the Huong Lien National Park in Northern Vietnam.

April 7 – 8, 2017

Rhododendron Species Symposium at The RSBG

The second annual Rhododendron Species Symposium will be held at the Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden in Federal Way, Washington. Featured speaker: Dr. Hartwig Schepker, Scientific Director of the Botanic Garden and Rhododendron Park in Bremen, home of one of the largest Rhododendron collections in the world; Secretary of the German Rhododendron Society. Cost to attend the entire Symposium weekend: \$125 if registered before February 10th. Late registration of \$145 begins February 11th.

April 11 – 13, 2017

PHILIP MACDOUGALL from Maple Ridge, BC

- Tuesday April 11, 2017 NIRS, Comox
- Wednesday April 12 MARS, Qualicum Beach
- Thursday April 13 NRS, Nanaimo

April 22, 2017

Mount Arrowsmith Plant Show and Sale

April 27 – 30, 2017

2017 ARS SPRING CONVENTION “Rhododendrons in the Redwoods” Eureka, California

April thru to August, 2017

Canada 150 Garden Experience -150 Garden Ways to Celebrate Canada's Birthday. Enjoy Jury-selected gardens and garden experiences across Canada: <http://canadagardenroute.ca/> for more info.

April 22, 2017

VOLUNTEER GARDENERS' PLANT SALE AT CAIRNSMORE PLACE - Saturday April 22 from 9:00 to 12:00

250 Cairnsmore Street, Duncan (Additional information in this newsletter)

April 29, 2017

COWICHAN VALLEY GARDEN FAIR 2017 Saturday 10 – 2 pm www.CowichanValleyGardenFair.com

May 3, 2017

CVRS Monthly Meeting St. John's Church, 7:30 pm

SEAN RAFFERTY from Victoria: “A to Z of Rhododendron Species”

May 7, 2017

Nanaimo 24th annual Truss Show & Sale Centennial Building, Beban Park

May 12, 2017

BC Iris Society – Oregon Garden Tour (4 day tour)

May 20 – 22, 2017

Kitty Coleman Woodland Gardens Art and Bloom Festival www.woodlandgardens.ca

May, 2017

Member Garden Tour – the lovely garden of late Marie Jaques

More information will follow in the May Newsletter

June, 2017

CVRS Summer Picnic and Awards/Wrap Up: Hosted by Maria and Siggie Kemmler, in their spectacular garden

September, 2017

CVRS Monthly Meeting 7:30 pm St John's Church –
Geoffrey Ball, Director of Milner Garden

Support the dedicated volunteer efforts of our fellow CVRS Rhododendron Club

Volunteer Gardeners' Plant Sale at Cairnsmore Place, 250 Cairnsmore Street, Duncan

Saturday, April 22 from 9:00 to 12:00

The Volunteer Gardeners at Cairnsmore Place in Duncan will be holding their annual plant sale. There will be hundreds of plants ready for planting. You will also find garden signs, arbours, planters, pot trivets and faerie doors made by members of the group.

The group is made up of 16 volunteers, including our fellow CVRS members Ali Morris, Don Loewan, and Diane Allen, who work half a day per week from Spring to Fall. The gardens are enjoyed by residents, families and staff year round.



There is no Island Health budget available for this work, so money is raised through donations and the plant sale. These funds pay for fertilizer, mulching, new plants and new projects.



This work can only be done with the support of the Cowichan Valley's gardening community. Thank you.

Editor's Note: Our fellow members are uniquely knowledgeable about companion plants for rhododendron gardens. The Hosta varieties available are spectacular!

North America Meets Europe

The 2018 ARS Convention will be in Bremen, Germany. It will start around May 7, 2018, with optional tours before and after the convention. The schedule probably will change slightly in the next couple of months.



First Pre-Tour: Optional 5-day visiting Dutch Gardens including Keukenhof Gardens

Second Pre-Tour: Optional 2-day visiting RHODO 2018 Rhododendron Festival and Hachmann's Nursery

Third Pre-Tour: Optional 7-day visiting public and private gardens in Denmark and Sweden

Convention: 6-day convention in Bremen from May 21 to 26 including 3 days of garden tours

Post-Tour: Optional 4-day visiting gardens in Finland.



R. 'Hachmann's Brasilia'

Mark your calendar now! This is an opportunity not to be missed. You can choose to start in Holland or Germany with one of the 3 pre-tours or start with the convention. Then you can choose to finish in Germany after the convention or in Finland after the post-convention tour. That means there are 8 possible combinations ranging from 6 days for just the convention to 24 days if you do all pre and post tours and the convention.



R. 'Hachmann's Mikado'

FOND MEMORIES

Of Summer Picnics

Thank you Ian Efford for submitting memories of fun filled summer picnics of the past. Ian may be hinting that dancing should occur at this year's summer picnic being hosted by Siggie and Maria Kemmler!!



Joyce Gammie, Marilyn Boechler, Ken Flett, Peter Kearns, Daphne Jackson, Margaret de Weese, Janet Gardner



Morris dancers at a summer picnic at the Andersons



R. sutchuenense blooms in the lovely garden of **Maria and Siggie Kemmler**, who generously offered their garden for the **2017 CVRS Summer Picnic in June.**



Leslie Drew

2016-17 Executive

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Convenors

Sunshine: Mary Gale

Tea: Judeen Hendricksen

Raffle: Hilda Gerrits

Club Liaison: Alan Campbell

Library: Joyce Rodger

Membership Recruitment: Peter Lewis

Program Co-ordinator: Peter Lewis, Sandra Stevenson

History: Ian Efford

Garden/Bus Tours: Peter Lewis

CV Garden Fair: The Team

Facility Liaison: Roy Elvins

Christmas Party: The Team

Bus Tours: Vacant

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Saturday, April 29, 2017; 10-2
<http://cowichanvalleygardenfair.com>



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