

Cowichan Valley Rhododendron Society

Newsletter

Volume 33:1 January 2022

Message from the President

Happy New Year Friends,

Aren't we simply surrounded by breath-holding beauty?

What a wonderful way to begin 2022, the *Year of the Garden*. The BC Council of Garden Clubs has partnered with the Canadian Garden Council to help celebrate ***Year of the Garden 2022***.

Executive Director of the Canadian Garden Council, Michel Gauthier, sends a message:

"The Garden Life is a healthy life, environmentally friendly life, an inclusive life that contributes to quality of life for those living it and for their community. To 'Live the Garden Life' is to include plants in your life at home, at work, at school, in your community and even on holidays."

Lynda Pasacreta, Editor of the BCCGC Newsletter adds:



"From January 1 to December 31, 2022, here in British Columbia, we will be celebrating a centennial of Canada's rich garden heritage, celebrate our vibrant garden culture, and create important legacies for a sustainable future."

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CVRS February Meeting

Wednesday
February 2, 2022
7pm

EXPERT PANEL

Special Presentation January 15, 2022 SEAMUS O'BRIEN

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Banner Photo:

Snow-draped *Acer palmatum* in winter dawn

Photo (left):

Ice crystals on Hardy *Geranium*
'Alexandra'

. . . In light of this garden celebration and the fact that our favourite Genus, *Rhododendron*, is tucked out of site, fully cloaked in thick white snowflake-patterned comforters, I decided to write a brief article discussing of the use of layers in garden design. What began as a simple idea, evolved into at least a three-part photo depiction of garden storeys, the first about the celebration of the upper storey in our gardens.

What inspired this was a breath-taking, breath-holding, and slow exhalation response to an elusive painting by Nature of our back yard. An attempt to capture *this* in a photo was entirely inadequate, but I was captivated by the power of trees in a landscape to fill me with awe that lasted not only briefly in that moment but for weeks following.

Hopefully you will enjoy this form of celebration as well,

Verna



Betula pendula* 'Purpurea'**, or Purple-leaf River Birch, a graceful chandelier of thousands of shimmering tear-drop crystals, juxtaposed with the confident horizontal stature of ***Gleditsia triacanthos, the Honey Locust, sparkling in the frosty morning sunlight

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

ARS DISTRICT 1

Seamus O'Brien

National Botanic Gardens of Ireland

Saturday, January 15, 2022 11am

Zoom Presentation



In the Shadow of the Mighty Kangchenjunga

A Botanical Expedition to the Bhutan and Sikkim Himalaya

Seamus O'Brien manages the National Botanic Gardens of Ireland, Kilmacurragh. He is a veteran of many plant expeditions, author of ***In the Footsteps of Augustine Henry*** and ***In the Footsteps of Joseph Dalton Hooker***.

In 2014, he led an expedition of Irish horticulturists and tree enthusiasts to the mountains of Bhutan and Sikkim, following the routes of early botanical explorers such as William Griffith, Joseph Hooker, Frank Ludlow and George Sheriff. His travels took him from tropical valleys to icy glaciers, to woodlands and mountain tops. Seamus will entertain us with his recollections of these adventures at this talk.



Campsite at Dzongri, north Sikkim



Willamette Chapter ARS Meeting

January 12, 2022 7pm

Speaker - Emily Aune, Head Gardener of the Rhododendron Garden at Hendricks Park

The History of Hendricks Park and the Rhododendron Garden

Social Time: 6:30pm Meeting and Program: 7:00pm

Join via Zoom at: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83867185366>



EXPERT PANEL

FEBRUARY 2, 2022 7pm

Does this photo remind you of a hilarious evening where very useful tips and information were delivered in an unmatched format of dry wit and humour? If you were there, you are probably smiling and chuckling right now.

Two of these experts, Sean Rafferty and Ken Webb have agreed to return; Al Murray, who has appeared on the panel before, will join them; we welcome Garth Wedemire to this year's event.

Mark this event on your calendar now!

Write down questions to ask the experts

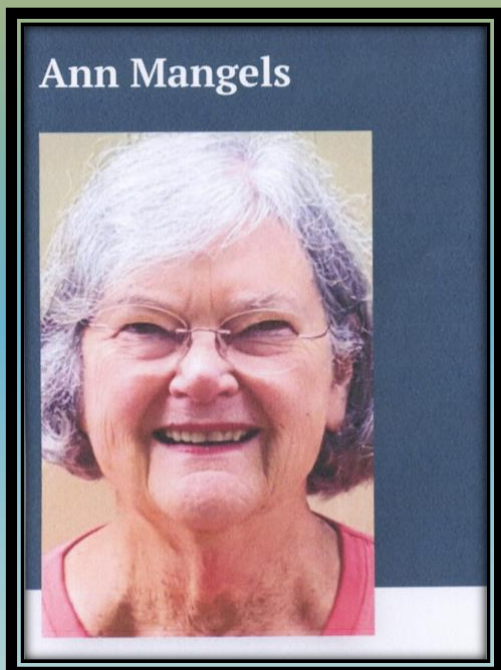
The event will be virtual; a Zoom link will be sent to members January 31st.



We had hoped that this could be our first in-person meeting of the New Year. Unfortunately, current situations call for continuing practices to protect our health and that of others in our community. Thank-you all for participating despite the physical distance

In Memory of Ann Mangels

We mourn the loss of a very special woman



On December 31, 2021, Ann Watson Mangels passed away from cardiac arrest while she was in hospital for a knee replacement. Ann had been looking forward to the procedure so that she and her husband Bill could enjoy more travels.

Bill Mangels explained that her surgery was delayed for two days because of a physician's concern about her pre-op ECG results. Her surgery went well, but in the days following, Ann suffered three cardiac arrests, returning from two of them. Bill was with her at her passing.

Ann influenced the lives of many in a positive way. Ann was a Past President of the American Rhododendron Society and recently was awarded the ARS Gold Medal.

Ann was born in Baltimore in 1941, grew up in the Hamilton neighborhood, and attended Hannah More Academy (now St. Timothy School). She subsequently graduated from Centenary College for Women (now Centenary University). Before her marriage to Bill, she was a legal secretary; later with the aging of her sons, she became a realtor. After many successful years she retired to enjoy her garden, growing many rhododendrons and azaleas. She held leadership roles in her church and her retirement community. She was a loving mother of two sons, a grandmother, and a great grandmother.

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## **Ann Mangels - Celebration of Life**

**Livestream Access**

**January 15, 2022**

**11 am EST (8 am Pacific Standard Time)**

**Church of the Good Shepherd**

**Use the link below, and choose **Online Worship** to join:**

[Episcopal Church | Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd, Baltimore \(goodshepherdruxton.org\).](https://www.goodshepherdruxton.org)

Information above was provided by John Stevens, ARS Western Region VP, and the *Baltimore Sun*



# GARDEN STOREYING

~ Verna Buhler ~



## GARDEN DESIGN - Part One The Upper Storey

It was several years ago, while I was editing a friend's Master's paper, that I first met the word **storying** and came to understand that it had become an acceptable term in the fields of Psychology and Education. I didn't like the word used in that context at that time, and I can't say that I like it any more today. But by now it has become a familiar term.

I thought it might be better suited as a means of describing aspects of garden design. Perhaps I could call the process of creating levels and layers in a garden as **storeying**. However, I learned that the acceptable North American word and spelling for **storey** was **story**. The only reference that I found to **story** used in the garden sense was on the Website for St. Nicks in York, United Kingdom. In a discussion of the woodland garden structure, **understory** (yes, the North American spelling) was the layers of plants growing between the canopy and the field layer, beneath which was the ground layer. Since term usage is irregular, I have chosen **storey** for my purpose here.

As this information became more and more confusing, I turned to my most dependable of sources – books. One of my favourites is **John Brooks' Garden Design Book**. Another is A. Paul and Y. Rees' book **Designing with Trees**. Of course, **Landscaping with Nature**, by Jeff Cox, appeals to my fundamental sense of West Coast garden design, observing closely how Nature designs her gardens and echoing tiny bits. I now had far too much information to work with and needed to simplify.

I have a lot of photos that I have taken in beautiful gardens, many in your gardens in fact, so I decided a photo story of the multiple **storeys** might best serve the purpose of a mini-design article.



## UPPER STOREY KALEIDOSCOPES

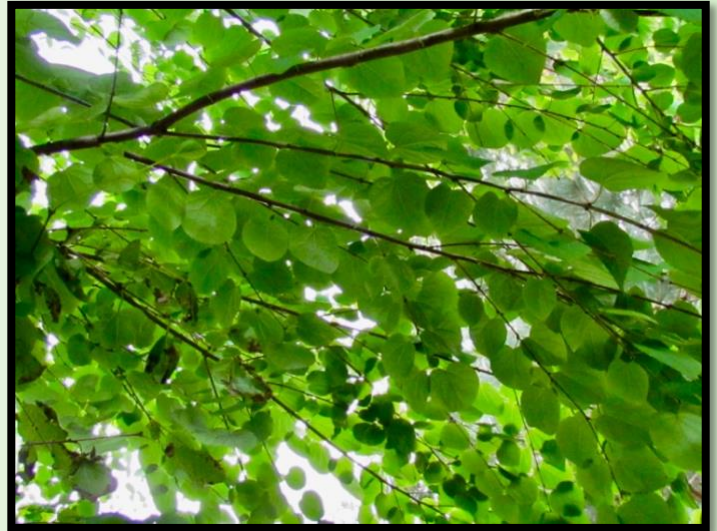
What is it that causes me to stop and hold my breath in amazement when I look up? Form, pattern, colour, structure, repetition, contrast, shadow and light– kaleidoscopes. . .

### Symmetric and asymmetric



The spectacular ***Davidia involucrata***, or Dove Tree, at Finnerty Gardens, UBC (with a blooming *Fuchsia* below), also offers four-seasons of beauty, with large unique handkerchief blossoms in spring and incredible fall colour.

Whorls of the ***Acer dissectum*** leaves, delicate and lacy, dance in even the lightest breezes. Fall colour is stunning.



***Ceridiphyllum japonicum***, known as Katsura, has delicate heart-shaped leaves and brilliant fall colour of bright yellow, pink and orange-red. It is fast growing but requires deep, permanently moist soil. It offers four seasons of beauty; in Fall, leaves produce a scent of burnt brown sugar or cotton candy.





## Dramatics of Scale

The *Metasequoia glyptostroboides*, Dawn Redwood, is an ancient tree that knew the dinosaurs. It is a deciduous coniferous tree of great beauty; despite its immense scale, comparable to the Douglas Fir in stature, it sheds its needle-like leaves in fall and produces soft, lacy, fern-like sprays of brilliant green foliage in spring. In Fall, its tiny cones become visible.



Looking up to the top of *Tilia cordata*, the Little Leaf Linden, exemplifies dramatics of scale. The slightly lopsided heart-shaped leaves gradually diminish in their detail to tiny droplets of hues and shadows 80 feet above. Tiny, lime-coloured *Tilia* flowers are fragrant





## Fresh Perspectives of the Familiar



Mature *Rhododendrons* have grown to play a special role in the **upper storey** at Towner Crest, Evelyn Weesjes' former garden in Saanich – and so, an unfamiliar and fresh perspective of our much-loved *Rhododendron* genus.





## Statuesque Forms

In Ali Morris' garden, ***Fagus sylvaticus*** 'Purpurea Pendula', Weeping Purple European Beech, reaches upward, drawing eyes to view its deep purple hues against a sky-blue backdrop.



Two snow-dressed ***Cedrus libani*** 'Pendula', Weeping Lebanese Cedars, tower above ***Acer palmatum*** pointing out the coral highlights of early morning sun on snow covered Douglas Fir





## Decorative Seasonal Detailing



Bud sprays of *Styrax japonicus*, Chinese Snowbell; pendant bud clusters of *Prunus x yedoensis* 'Akebono', Akebono Cherry; bud and flower bundles of *Malus* 'Prairie Fire', Prairie Fire Crabapple; fluffy fragrant snowballs of *Prunus serrulata* 'Mt Fuji', Mt Fuji Cherry



Fragrance of pendulous chains of *Wisteria*  
Unmistakable musical notes of the soft, shrill whistling of eagles above

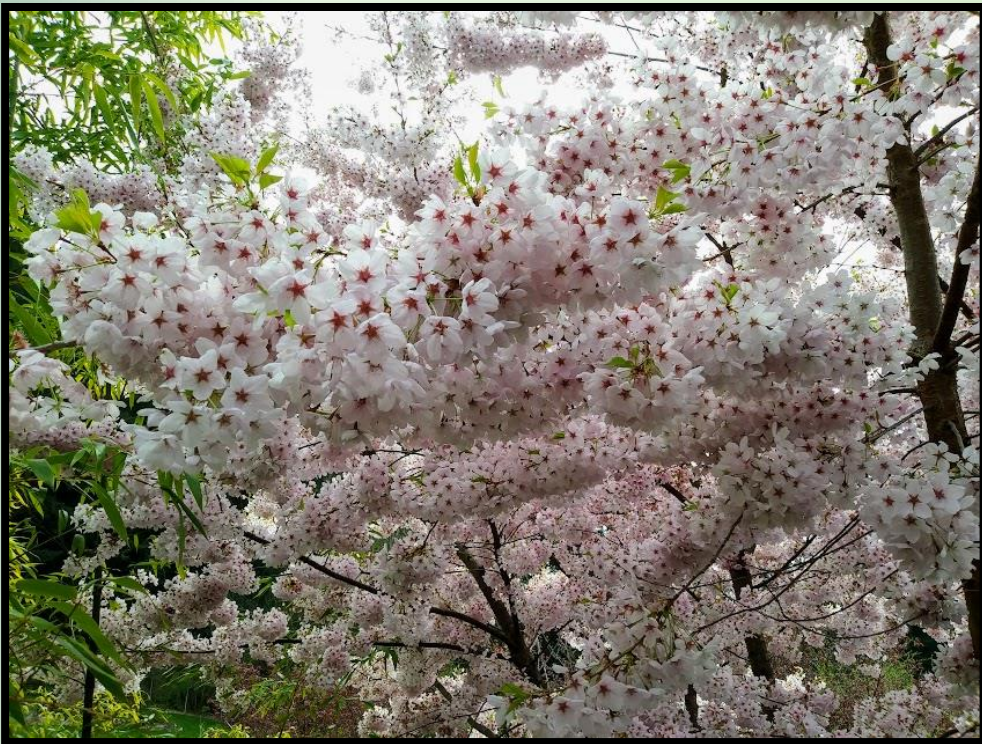




## Layers of Repetition and Density



***Cornus controversa***  
**'Variegata'**, Wedding  
Cake Dogwood,  
graceful horizontal  
layers of lace in Ali  
Morris's garden



Merlot stars in drifts  
of thousands on  
***Prunus x yedoensis***  
**'Akebono'**, Akebono  
Cherry, at Echoes of  
Nature Farm and  
Garden



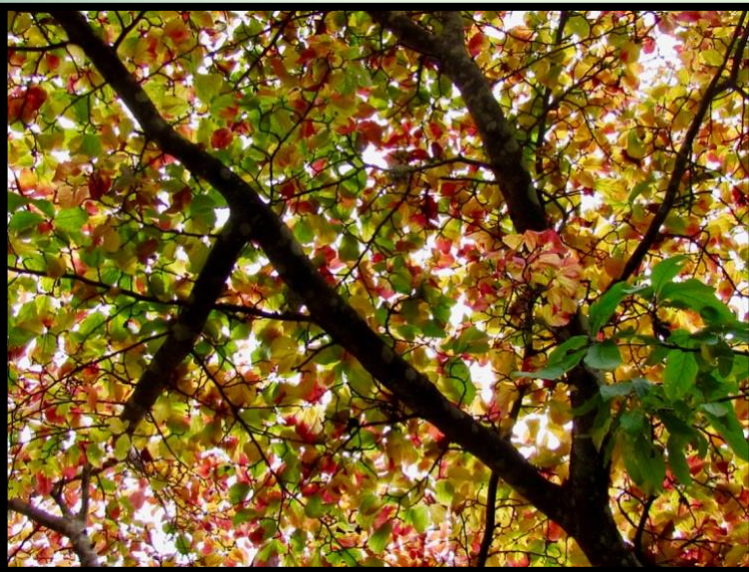
## Kaleidoscopes of Patterns and Colours



Drifts of gold, mandarin and coral flutter gracefully above on stretching branches of one of the original 1908 plantings of ***Acer palmatum***, Japanese Maple trees, in the Royal Roads Garden near Victoria



Bold shifting patterns of maroon hues of ***Acer palmatum*** foliage in Fall



In Carrie Nelson's garden, winged seeds of ***Acer palmatum***, Japanese Maple, flutter and twirl like delicate wine-red dragonflies amongst soft coral blends of foliage

No single tree quite provides its own dazzling kaleidoscope of ever-changing, multiple shades of bronze, crimson, orange and gold as does a mature ***Parrotia persica***, Persian Ironwood, shifting and reshaping in Fall breezes.

**This article touches on only a few of the many amazingly diverse considerations in designing the upper storeys of your garden. As this *canopy*, composed largely of trees, naturally extends downwards, the features of structure and bark of this key ingredient, trees, impact the middle and lower storeys of designing stunning gardens as well.**

**2021 – 2022**  
**Calendar of Events**

Contact CVRS:

[cowichanvalleyrhododendron@gmail.com](mailto:cowichanvalleyrhododendron@gmail.com)

**Wednesday, January 12, 2022 7pm (Social – 6:30pm)**

**Willamette Chapter ARS Zoom Presentation**

**Speaker: Emily Aune, Head Gardener – *The History of Hendricks Park and the Rhododendron Garden***

**Saturday, January 15, 2022 11am**

**District 1 Special Zoom Presentation**

**Speaker: Seamus O'Brien – *In the Shadow of the Mighty Kangchenjunga***

**Wednesday, February 2, 2022 7pm**

**CVRS Monthly Meeting**

**Expert Panel: Sean Rafferty, Ken Webb, Allan Murray, Garth Wedemire**

**NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY EVENTS**

**May 4 - 8, 2022**

**ARS Annual Convention, Portland, Oregon More information <https://ars2022.org/>**

**2022:**

**ARS Fall Eastern Regional Conference, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. Dates to be determined.**

**2023:**

**ARS Fall Western Regional Conference, Florence, Oregon. Dates to be determined.**

**2023:**

**ARS Annual Convention, Atlanta, Georgia. Joint ARS/ASA meeting. Dates to be determined.**



## USEFUL LINKS

**Cowichan Rhododendron Society:**

[cowichanrhodos.ca/](http://cowichanrhodos.ca/)

**Victoria Rhododendron Society:**

[victoriarhodo.ca/index.html](http://victoriarhodo.ca/index.html)

**Mount Arrowsmith Rhododendron Society:**

[marsrhodos.ca/](http://marsrhodos.ca/)

**North Island Rhododendron Society:**

[nirsrhodos.ca/ws/](http://nirsrhodos.ca/ws/)

**The American Rhododendron Society:**

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

**Nanaimo Rhododendron Society:**

[nanaimorhodos.ca](http://nanaimorhodos.ca)

**Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden:**

[rhodygarden.org](http://rhodygarden.org)

**Nanoose Garden Club:**

[nanoosegardenclub.ca/](http://nanoosegardenclub.ca/)

**Linda Gilkeson:**

[lindagilkeson.ca/](http://lindagilkeson.ca/)

**Vancouver Island Rock and Garden Society:**

[virags.com](http://virags.com)

**Linda Chalker-Scott:**

<https://puyallup.wsu.edu/lcs/>

**Steve Henning:**

[rhodyman.net](http://rhodyman.net)

**Rhododendron, Camellia, Magnolia**

<https://www.rhodogroup-rhs.org/>



**Cowichan Valley Rhododendron Society**

A Chapter of the American  
Rhododendron Society P.O. Box 904  
Duncan, British Columbia V9L 3Y2

<http://cowichanrhodos.ca>

### 2020-21 Executive

**President:** Verna Buhler  
**Vice-President:** Ali Morris  
**Treasurer:** Wendy Willson  
**Secretary:** Diane Allen  
**Director-at-Large:** Barrie Agar  
**Director-at-Large:** Candice Feeney  
**Director-at-Large:** Carrie Nelson  
**Director-at Large:** Mary Pike  
**Membership Chairperson:** David Annis

### Convenors

**Sunshine:** Mary Gale  
**Tea:** Judeen Hendrickson  
**Raffle:** Hilda Gerrits  
**Program Planning:** The Executive Team  
**Fundraising:** The Executive Team  
**CVRS Garden Tours:** Candice Feeney  
**CVRS Bus Tours:** TBA  
**Library:** Verna Buhler