

Cowichan Valley Rhododendron Society

Newsletter

Volume 34:4 June 2023

Message from the President

The curse of the Smartphone

June is upon us along with the sudden realization we are almost half through the year. The longest day is tantalizingly within sight. If you have studied any botany, you will realize that long day length equals increased growth, and the weeds are now taller than you are. I was away for most of May and needed a machete to hack my way to my front door. I missed my few rhodos - all that was left was some brown petals stubbornly clinging to the plant. The sour cherry tree which was a mass of bloom when I left is now, if not a mass, then certainly a goodly number of cherries.

What has a Smartphone to do with any of this?

It is an instrument of utmost usefulness. I seldom call anyone, but I do access the internet for information, send texts and emails, and take photos.

Ah, the camera function, and here are the insidious behavioural changes that seem to have affected all users. How many of them realize this, is another question.

It is wonderful for recording your plants and flowers and putting in a caption and date stamp. You can instantly send it to someone for admiration or verification. There are apps that will endeavor to identify that mystery plant you have just photographed in someone's front garden, all the while trying not to look as if you were casing the joint or eyeing up the plant for a bit of propagating material. (I wouldn't rely completely on those apps mind you.) You generally have it conveniently in your pocket, and it is light and easy to carry around. You can do close ups. I recently discovered the magnifier function and there has been no stopping me. Is that a pernicious pestilent insect bent on taking out the roses or a beneficial quietly going about its business? Just a minute and I will look that up. What is that bird singing? An app will give you an . . .

**CVRS
June Meeting**

**Sunday, June 25, 2023
11:30 am**

CVRS Summer Picnic

**Our Host
Melanie Fiander**

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Banner Photo:

Rhododendron 'Polarnacht'

Photo: Mallais Nursery

. . . idea as to the species. Isn't that fawn adorable?! Let me take a video of it while it eats those flowers, and now you see where the rot has set in. The photo opportunity has trumped getting the venison off the homestead as soon as possible. The dreams of your cinematic masterpiece going viral has a greater attraction than an intact plant.

I was working by a large window at my family's home in the Interior with not a rhodo in sight when a movement caught my eye. I stood up thrilled. A bear! My first impulse was to throw open the door and make as much noise as possible as I did not wish these visits to become a daily routine. But I stopped. My smartphone was in my pocket. Just a few frames I thought. I moved around to get the best angle. I was silent within the house not wishing to alarm the young bear. I zoomed in and I zoomed out. In short, I behaved in the exact way I have decried in other people, not stopping until the young bruin ambled off down the hill and out of sight.

But I got a great video.

Barrie Agar

CVRS Summer Picnic

Our Host

Melanie Fiander



*Melanie Fiander has
generously offered to host the
CVRS Summer Picnic*

Sunday, June 25, 2023

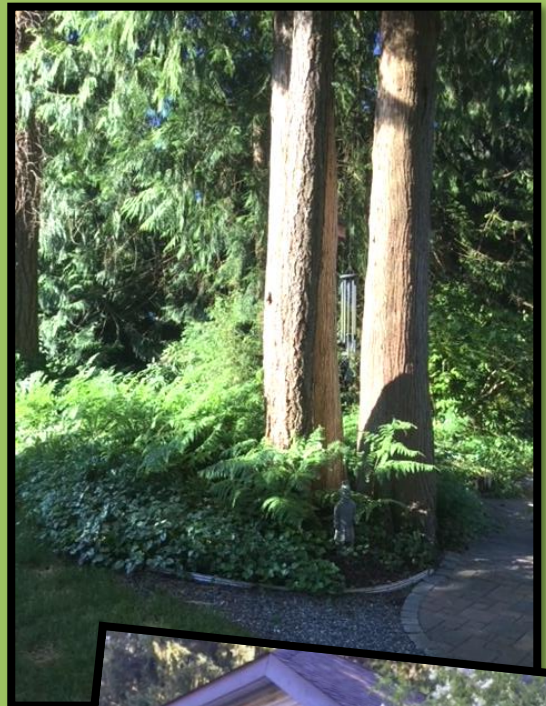
11:30 am to 3:30 pm

**2453 Fawn Terrace,
Mill Bay, B.C.**

**It will be a treat to visit a new garden
in the beautiful Mill Bay area.**

Thank you, Melanie

A summer picnic in a garden of colour and fragrance, arbours and patios, towering features, and open spaces, with friends and the finest of potluck dishes



See you all in this garden, on June 25th !

Letter from the Editor

Dear Friends!

Have any of you uttered these words: "It's too hot!" during the last few weeks? Admittedly, I have, and then I chuckle because mere weeks before, my comments were about the cold and how I longed for the heat. And it came, suddenly, with intensity. Linda Gilkeson warned not to plant the garden during those very hot days, as young seedlings with their shallow roots would fry! Not just seedlings were scorched. Some emerging leaves on trees and shrubs were desiccated in days. Most exposed areas of the garden required watering and my primitive irrigation system was not, and still is not, in place. Aren't there a lot of tasks to complete once the sun shines?

This spring, our gardens have displayed entirely new canvases. It might be too hasty, however, to begin digging and moving rhododendrons to new parts of the garden to create more appealing colour combinations. The, dare I say, *unusual* cold temperatures deterred early blooming rhododendrons from flowering for a month and by then the mid-season bloomers burst open as well, producing combinations we do not often see. I noticed, in our garden, that some buds had been frozen in the cold and the displays on plants were less prolific and unevenly dispersed.



Rhododendron 'Sapho'

Interestingly, this has been the best year for evergreen azalea blooms in our garden. They have not attracted my attention in the past, and in truth, it was my husband who wanted some evergreen azaleas because he had enjoyed a brilliant display alongside his house at his previous property. This year, they are so beautiful that I was drawn to research evergreen azaleas to find a pale double pink, with an 'M' name, that had grown beautifully, years ago, on our Cherry Point property. I came across an article written by Harold Greer that clarified points of my confusion. Hopefully, you find it does that for you as well.

The year my son graduated, the popular colour trend was purples and blues. I have never seen a more beautiful garden of graduates! When every shade of blue, mauve, violet, and purple are represented together the effect is stunning. That is happening right now in our gardens. You will find some of the lovely purple hues in this issue.

It is June - the time to think of celebrating a wonderful year! The CVRS Summer Picnic is coming up. Look for information in this issue! "We'll get together then. . ."

Verna

Your Perfect Rhododendron Garden Room

What colour hues would you choose if asked to design a garden room with rhododendrons in which you would be spending hours daily?

As high school teacher, I attended many graduation events. Six months before graduating, students would begin researching the trending colours for their banquet gown purchases. May and June then brought colourful galas. The colours of one graduation year took my breath away and is the one I still vividly recall today -- blends of purples and blues.

In my private and peaceful rhododendron garden room, shades of green would be enhanced by mauve, amethyst, lavender, lilac, mulberry, orchid, plum, royal purple, violet, wine, and periwinkle, cerulean and teal blue. This is the time of year when my garden room would be most appealing, as many of the purple rhododendron varieties bloom in late mid-season.



Photo: V. Buhler



Photo: V. Buhler



Photo: V. Buhler

R. 'Azurro'; Rhododendrons 'Dorothy Amateis' and 'English Roseum'; R. 'Polarnacht'



Photo: JC Bakker



Photo: Verna Buhler

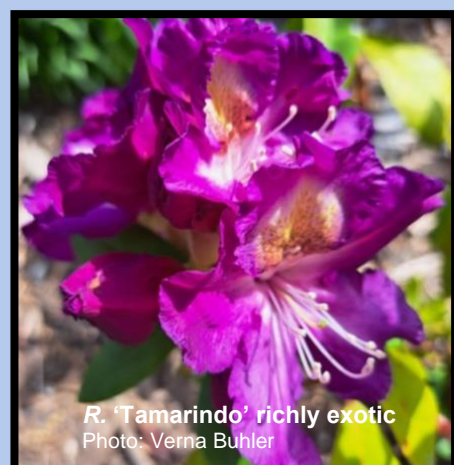


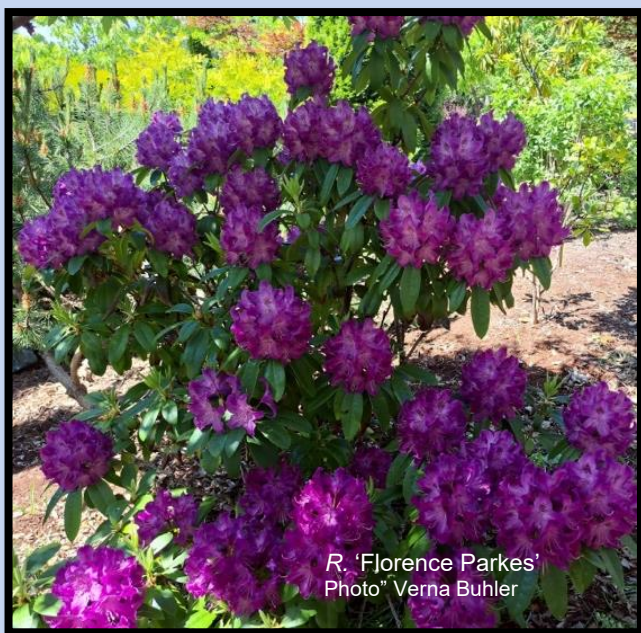
Photo: Dennis McKiver

R. 'Purple Passion'; R. 'Arthur Bedford'; R. 'Blue Lagoon'



Bottom left, clockwise: *R.* 'Cadis' grows low and broad and is lightly fragrant; *R.* 'Polarnacht' highlights the bud colours of 'Cadis'; *R.* 'Point Defiance' centers the garden room; *R.* "Catawbiense Boursault", a hybrid or selected form, peeks in from behind 'Point Defiance'; *R.* 'Florence Parkes' pulls the space together. Blooming simultaneously in this garden room is *R.* 'Edith Bosely' hidden behind 'Point Defiance' in this photo. Photo" Verna Buhler





R. 'Florence Parkes'
Photo" Verna Buhler



R. 'Purple Splendor'
Photo: Milan Havlis

*It would be wonderful to hear about your selections for **your** rhododendron garden rooms. Please send your photos to the CVRS editor for inclusion in upcoming newsletters.*

Thank you . . .

Late Blooming Rhododendrons

When you are eager to host the June summer picnic in your garden, and growing rhododendrons is truly your mono-passion, and no one can pressure you into growing those messy colourful perennials just because of a garden picnic, and you know people expect colour beyond greens, you don't offer your garden for the event.

Face it. Everyone knows that is just an excuse because rhododendron lovers are thrilled to see the stunning varieties of new growth, and the spectacular foliage of shade garden *hosta* and *podophyllum*, but let's humour you for the moment, and look at two, among many, late blooming rhododendrons that could eliminate your hosting hesitations!



***Rhododendron* 'Polar Bear'**

R. 'Polar Bear' flowers in July. It has large icy white, strongly fragrant, trumpet-shaped flowers.

Sheltered woodlands and dappled shade, where it receives some shelter and warmth, will allow 'Polar Bear' to display its best blooms and foliage.

Parentage: *R. decorum* subsp *diaprepes* x *auriculatum*

R. 'Polar Bear' can take its time before offering blooms, but it is well worth the wait.

***Rhododendron* 'Old Copper'**

***Rhododendron* 'Old Copper'**

has large funnel-shaped, coppery-orange, tinted pink flowers in June. It can grow up to five feet in ten years.



OTHER LATE-BLOOMING RHODODENDRONS

Hybrids:

- 'Frank Galsworthy'
- 'Lord Roberts'
- 'Mrs T. H. Lowinsky'
- 'Midsummer'
- 'Summer Glow'
- 'Whitney's Late Orange'

Species:

- *R. auriculatum*
- *R. fortune* ssp *discolor*
- *R. faithiae* (September)

Talk About Azaleas

At the CVRS Plant Sale held several weeks ago, I was attempting to answer some questions for a young lady examining the trusses on display. She wished to see the rhododendron flowers not just the azaleas; she confidently stated that she could see we many azaleas displayed. I pointed out the few azalea trusses on display and eventually convinced her that the rest were rhododendrons. No, I didn't complicate the answer by explaining that azaleas were rhododendrons as well.

If you had asked me last year whether I was a big fan of azaleas, I probably would have nodded half-heartedly, agreed they could be lovely and then admitted I really didn't have many in the garden. It was my husband George who first commented a week ago, that the evergreen azaleas were looking good this year. I had noticed that as well and began to see the cheery effect they had in several garden borders. Then the deciduous azaleas began blooming, and I saw bright lights perking up more areas of the garden. Were they simply maturing or did the winter conditions stimulate a proliferation of flowers? In any case, this would be a good year to dig around the bases of the plants, find faded labels and attach legible ones. In our garden, labels tend to fade a bit. A light rubbing, wiping, and tilting them just so in the light -- a lot of fussing in truth - sparks the memory enough to murmur with satisfaction, "*That's it, 'Baltic Amber' or 'King's Red', or I know it's a "M" name, two words.*" Time for dumping out boxes of dirty plant tags, a game of charades with gurus, hours of google searches, or finally running fingers down lists of azaleas in CVRS library books. When all else fails, use the book approach. Yes, "*Macrantha*", a breakthrough in the frozen tundra of my brain. It was not the simple identification answer I was looking for; it was in fact a very big answer clarifying confusions I had about azaleas, because the search led to a **JARS v38n4 article written by Harold Greer, *The Satsuki Azaleas***. At this point, I could set up a link, but perhaps you, like me, may be more likely to read the article if it is included in this issue. Enjoy.

~ Verna Buhler

The Satsuki Azaleas

by Harold Greer

In the Azalea Series of the genus *Rhododendron* are many flower types and colors. One of the most varied and interesting groups are the Satsuki. Let's take a look at this group, but to do so it is necessary to lay some groundwork to take away some of the confusion in the naming of these Japanese azaleas.

We often hear someone refer to an azalea or group of azaleas as an Indica or *indicum*. Someone else may call the same group of plants *Macrantha* and if you go to Japan, you will see a common azalea that looks almost the same called 'Osakazuki'. Then someone will show you certain plants in a group of azaleas they call "Sat-su-key" that look the same. The next person you meet will call the same ones "Sat-skeys". Then how about *R. eriocarpum*? What does it have to do with these azaleas? Are you confused? If not, you are one of the few who isn't!

Let's try to examine this situation in more depth and see if we can make sense out of chaos. On the island of Honshu in the area of Tokyo grows a *Rhododendron* species known as *R. indicum* which was named by the botanist Sweet in 1833. This was later placed in the Azalea Series by the Balfourian classification or in the Subgenus *Tsutsutsi* by other classifications. Before Sweet named it *R. indicum*, a botanist. . .



...by the name of Carolus Linnaeus named it *Azalea indica* in 1753, before it was realized that all azaleas were in fact rhododendrons. Why he named it 'indica' which means "Indian" or "India", is unknown. Perhaps he had the mistaken belief that it came from the East Indies. Another thing that should be mentioned here is that this 'indica' should not be confused with the tender Belgian or Southern Indicas which are of different ancestry.

How about the name 'Macrantha' we mentioned earlier? This was another name given *R. indicum*, also in 1833, by the botanist von Bunge when he named it *Azalea macrantha*. This name has stuck, and it is often used in the trade, and you will see the many forms of *R. indicum* called by names like Macrantha Double, Macrantha Dwarf or just Macrantha.

In actuality, *R. indicum* has had several other names such as *R. decumbens*, *R. breynii*, *R. danielsianum*, *R. lateritium*, *R. hannoense*, *R. hagnoense*, *R. sieboldi* and worst of all it was first published in Europe in Breyn's Prodomus in 1680 as "Chamaerhododendron exoticum, amplissimis floribus liliaceis".

In Japan, *R. indicum* is known as "Satsuki-tsutsuji" since the Japanese in their own use do not use the Latin names. Those plants that belong to the Azalea Series are usually called *tsutsuji* (suit-suit-gee) and other rhododendrons are known as Shakunage (shock-u-nog-ay).

Now we come to the Satsuki azaleas and their relation to all of this. Earlier we mentioned two names 'Osakazuki' and *R. eriocarpum*. In Japan, an azalea called 'Osakazuki' is planted by the thousands and in early June it seems to be in flower everywhere. It is seen in bonsai use frequently and it is not unusual to see a bonsai 'Osakazuki' that is said to be 300 years old. In the United States we do see this same plant under the name of 'Osakazuki', but it is also possible to find it under the name of 'Macrantha' which is probably because R. K. Beattie in 1929 introduced a Macrantha to the U.S. under the name of 'Osakazuki'. Since 'Macrantha' is equal to *R. indicum*, 'Osakazuki' is equal to

R. indicum. 'Osakazuki' is listed in many books as a Satsuki and according to the "The International Rhododendron Register" there are two plants named 'Osakazuki'. One is the *R. indicum* we just discussed, the other is a Satsuki which is listed as "prize winner of Japanese Satsuki Society; single, large flowered, pink with touches of red." The 'Osakazuki' commonly seen in Japan and often pictured in Japanese books on Satsuki, however, is the *R. indicum*, not the Satsuki.

It seems like we are going around in circles, so let's try to get back on track. Japanese authorities now feel that the origin of the Satsuki azaleas is a cross between 'Osakazuki' (equal to *R. indicum*) and *R. eriocarpum*. *Rhododendron eriocarpum* is a species native to southern Japan which is similar to *R. indicum*, and some botanists have classified it as a variety of *R. indicum*. It is commonly known as the "Dwarf Indica Azalea" and in Japan it is known as "Maruba-satsuki". It generally grows south of the habitat of *R. indicum*. 'Gumpo' (also known as Gunpo) and its clones are considered by some to be equal to *R. eriocarpum*, but others feel that they are crosses between *R. indicum* and *eriocarpum* and they are generally listed with the Satsuki group.



'Osakazuki' on left side of picture and *R. eriocarpum* on the right Photo by Harold Greer

The Satsuki azaleas are the result of the crossing and back crossing of two very similar species (*R. indicum* x *R. eriocarpum*). These crosses done over many centuries, plus the addition of "sports" which this group is so prone to produce, have resulted in a great diversity of colors and flower types. It is possible other azaleas have been used in their parentage. Many theories on this exist, but still their main parentage is 'Osakazuki' x *R. eriocarpum*.

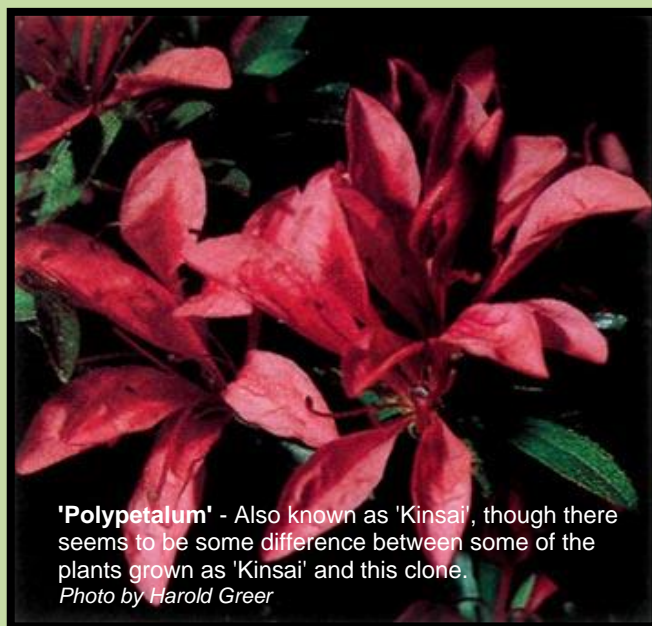


'Osakazuki' - At Toba Japan; these plants are nine feet across. Photo by Harold Greer

Now comes the question how should we pronounce the word 'Satsuki'? Some in the United States will insist that it should be pronounced "Sat-skey". Others will insist that it be pronounced "Sat-su-key". Who is correct? It seems both are, as the Japanese themselves pronounce it both ways, depending on the area in Japan and the particular dialect used.

"Satsuki-tsutsuji" means fifth month azalea from the fact that it flowers in June, which is the fifth month in the year by the old Chinese calendar.

The Satsuki azaleas are low to medium growing depending upon the cultivar and the location in which they are planted. Most tend to flower in June, though time of flowering will vary with the area in which they are grown. They flower with or after the new growth appears, but the flowers are large enough that they are not hidden by the foliage.



'Polypetalum' - Also known as 'Kinsai', though there seems to be some difference between some of the plants grown as 'Kinsai' and this clone. Photo by Harold Greer



Many of the clones are unstable and will produce limbs of varying colors, and the theory is that in time any cutting taken from a particular clone will produce all the colors possible for that particular clone. The catch may however be in the phrase "in time," since it often takes much longer for all colors to appear on the same plant than seems reasonable. An example of the many colors that appear on one plant is shown in the picture of 'Gyokurei' which is illustrated with this article.

'Gyokurei' - This plant was the first prize winner in the bonsai show in Kunuma, Japan. It is about four to five feet tall and is a good example of the many flower colors that occur on one plant. Photo by Harold Greer

There is a great variation in flower type, size and color with the largest flowers being over six inches across. Other flower types include flowers that have no petals, only stamens which make a delightfully interesting appearance; fully double flowers; star shaped flowers; and in one type represented by the named clone 'Chojuhu' the petals thicken and become leaf like lasting a full three months. One of the distinguishing features of an azalea is the fact that azalea flowers have five lobes.

'Kotobuki no Sono'
Photo by Harold Greer



The Satsuki group is an exception to this rule however, as some clones have six and occasionally seven lobes, though flowers with five lobes can occur on the same plant. Of course, any double type azalea may also have more than five lobes. The leaves of this group are variable from types that have fairly broad leaves to types with narrow strap like leaves. A few have variegated leaves such as 'Shirafuji'. A superb clone for foliage is 'Kazan', a plant that is often sold in the U.S. as 'Rukizan'. It has little glossy mouse-ear leaves which are most delightful.

All in all, the Satsuki group is a very interesting and diverse group of plants which would make a worthy addition to any garden. To quote Hideo Suzuki (Vice President of the Japanese Rhododendron Society and our host on a recent tour of Japan) when discussing a Satsuki azalea fair that we were going to see, said in his delightful Japanese English:

"We rhododendron enthusiasts don't grow Satsuki azaleas; they are TOO beautiful!"



'Chojuhu' flowers turn green and last a full three months
Photo: Harold Greer

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## ***Azalea viscosum***

***Azalea viscosum*** is a species of azalea commonly referred to as Swamp Azalea. It is more tolerant of wet soils, and can be found in areas of poor drainage, but will not grow where its roots are submerged in water.

***Azalea viscosum*** 'Pink and Sweet' has a spicy, sweet fragrance and blooms in June Photo: Verna Buhler



# Flowering Shrubs in June

## Companions for our Rhododendron Gardens

### ***Calycanthus***

Several varieties of *Calycanthus* in bloom caught the attention of guests visiting Elisabeth Zoffman's fabulous garden during the recent Cowichan Valley Family Life Garden Tour. She has red, white, and yellow flowering *Calycanthus*.



*Calycanthus* 'Venus'

*Calycanthus* is also known as Sweetshrub, and several varieties, *Calycanthus floridus*, *Calycanthus occidentalis*, *Calycanthus chinensis* can be grown in our gardens. It is a highly versatile landscape plant suitable as a specimen, or in a shrub border, or a foundation plant near a patio where the sweet floral fragrance of some varieties can be appreciated.

*Calycanthus floridus* 'Michael Lindsey' is considered the best species selection. Some of the best hybrids include *C.* 'Hartlage Wine', and *C.* 'Venus'.

### ***Philadelphus***

Master Gardeners said that one of the most frequently asked questions at the recent Cowichan Valley Family Life Garden Tour, was the identification of the **intensely fragrant** *Philadelphus*, also commonly known as 'Mock Orange'

*Philadelphus* is a deciduous shrub that grows best as an understory plant in moist, well-drained soil in full sun or part shade. The arching branches of 5 -10 feet bear **intoxically fragrant white flowers** born in clusters of three to eleven flowers.

Its native range extends from British Columbia to northern California from the west coast to Montana and central Idaho, and to 7000ft elevation in the Cascade Mountains. Although it appears delicate, it is tough and able to tolerate exposed, coastal areas and is extremely hardy. There are several selections, some of which have larger flowers and some, double flowers, and *P.* 'Blizzard' with Zone 2 hardiness.



# The Cowichan Valley Rhododendron Society Annual General Meeting

The Cowichan Valley Rhododendron Society Annual General Meeting is coming up at the Summer Picnic in June. Several people on the current Executive have served for many years and are stepping down. There are always positions to fill. You haven't received a call this year from our star recruiter of volunteers; sadly, Sharon Tillie is no longer with us. We deeply miss her.

There may be large shoes to fill, but one well-kept secret is that once you step into them, your feet magically grow! Consider becoming more involved. It is more fun that way!

Rhododendron clubs have long and varied histories. Some garden clubs (of all types) are having difficulty increasing their memberships and developing leadership teams. The fact is that all clubs require leadership and volunteers.

Consider some of these questions prior to the Annual General Meeting:

- **Do we value the CVRS?**
  - What are the positives?
  - Are there weaknesses?
- **What do we want?**
  - an active club of people who enjoy rhododendrons, companion plants, gardening, learning, and sharing their passion with others,
  - *or something else,*
  - *or nothing*
- **What do we need to know?**
- **What personal biases do we have moving forward?**
- **What options do we have?**
- **Are changes required?**
- **If so, what changes?**
- **What steps are required for any changes?**
- **What can we as individuals contribute to the health of our club?**
- **What personal strengths, interests, and talents could I offer to the club?**

Bernie Dinter, our friend, CVRS member, and local nursery owner recently told us:  
“Gardening is a very popular activity, and interest just continues to grow.”

That means that garden clubs can increase in popularity as well,  
if they offer what is important to the gardening community.



## Some Background Information to Consider:

*"At the CVRS Plant Sale last month, several people questioned why there was no Canadian Rhododendron Society. I thought it might be time to address that again. Several years ago, I wrote a piece on what caused the demise of the Rhododendron Society of Canada."*

~ Alan Campbell

## The Rhododendron Society of Canada

*As a result of negotiations over an extended period of time, the Rhododendrons Society of Canada (RSC) will become affiliated with the ARS as District 12, effective January 1, 1992. The RSC will retain its name and may continue all of its activities and services, as long as they are consistent with the bylaws of both societies and the law of Canada and the United States. The RSC will appoint a district director to serve until the regular election process can be implemented next year. The RSC currently has three regions, the Atlantic, Niagara, and Toronto Regions, which will become ARS Chapters. Representing the RSC at the ARS national board meeting were Sophia Maitland, current RSC President, and Charlie Sale, past RSC President. The ARS warmly welcomes the RSC and happily anticipates the mutual benefits that will accrue as a result of the affiliation. (Reprinted from Vol. 46, Number 1, Winter 1992, Journal of the American Rhododendron Society)*

During the long hot days of this past July, the most pleasant parts of the day, to me, was early morning before the sun would smile cruelly down on our cowering 'big leaves' or in the evening as the heat slowly, almost visibly, dissipated, allowing the garden to exhale with desiccated relief. During one such evening as I sat enjoying a dram of one of Scotland's finest exports and thumbing through my archive of ARS journals, I came upon the above article. The composition is factual and, to a point, informative, but fails to answer the question which has been asked of me on several occasions: "Why is there no Canadian Rhododendron Society?"

With only a slight hesitation, I placed my single malt to one side and addressed myself to my favourite appliance, my personal 'Oracle of Delphi' Mr. Gate's vehicle of success, my computer.

Leslie Hancock, a one-time M.L.A., and the owner of Woodland Nurseries in Mississauga, Ontario, along with 91 similar minded people, founded the Rhododendron Society of Canada in October 1971. Accounts of Mr. Hancock describe him to have been "...quite to the left in his politics, ..." and "...a small man with a large personality." An inspiring man, who at the age of 85 was still sowing rhododendron seed. Leslie and his wife Dorothy had three children, all who eventually became landscape architects and when Leslie died at the age of 86, it was his daughter who took over the nursery.

During the conception of the Rhododendron Society of Canada there took place some considerable discussion on whether or not to join the American Rhododendron Society or to form a separate Canadian organization. Leslie Hancock was quite adamant upon the formation of the 'stand alone' society.

The center of the RSC was, naturally, Toronto, with the first two Conferences taking place in that city. Membership increased rapidly producing the need to begin a second Chapter in Ontario, 'The Niagara Region'. Interest permeated eastward with a Conference eventually being held in Montreal with the formation of that city's Chapter. The Montreal Conference was attended by Captain Richard Steele and John Weagle, two rhodo enthusiasts from Halifax. "The Word" was spreading to the Maritimes and the Atlantic Chapter was born.

Membership in the RSC was high, but a problem was developing. Expenses were rising and a suggested dues increase was balked by the rank and file. The fine journal produced by the society found an ever-increasing difficulty in persuading members to contribute material. A finale meeting in Montreal was attended by four members; the group was viewed "...as a complete washout. . ." Even though membership was high, the almost non-existent participation "...made us give up because the cause seemed futile."

A great percentage of the RSC membership were also members of the ARS and affiliation became a 'buzz word'. A vote was put to the membership, and a large majority approved the suggestion of a merger with the American Rhododendron Society. Talks began in 1988 at the ARS Conference in Williamsburg, Virginia. Harold Greer, ARS President at the time the talks began, was a leading proponent of making the ARS an international organization and encouraged the blending of the two societies. Austin Kennel, who also served as an ARS President at the time of the merger, was similarly minded. It was soon clear that the ARS functioned as a beneficial umbrella organization and the Rhododendron Society of Canada members perceived no ill effect by the move.

The demise of the Rhododendron Society of Canada may be laid at the feet of apathy and non-participation, the bane of many fine organizations and the ever-present danger to those societies struggling to succeed.

*I would like to end my little history lesson by offering my thanks to Clive Justice, Joe Ronsley, and Charlie Sale for their time, comments, and recollections.*

We have wonderful volunteers in our club. The CVRS 2023 Annual Plant Sale proved that once again. Thank you all for making it such a success.

As you have already heard, it was one of our best! Thank you for generously donating plants from your gardens, for signing up for the many tasks that make an event run smoothly, for being there with welcoming smiles on your faces for the public, and for your camaraderie with fellow club members.

We have what it takes to not only sustain, but to "grow" our rhododendron club. Thank you for considering a leadership position this next year.

**Say yes! Why not?**



# Cowichan Valley Rhododendron Society AGM

## CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

CVRS – 2023 Annual General Meeting

### “Hear Ye, Hear Ye”

**BELOW IS THE STATE OF THE SLATE OF CANDIDATES FOR THE CVRS BOARD AS OF June 25, 2023**

Anyone wishing to stand for a position or to nominate candidates (CVRS member in good standing) to the Board, please do so prior to the AGM by contacting Carrie Nelson via email at [carrieonupthemountain@gmail.com](mailto:carrieonupthemountain@gmail.com)

Nominations will be called for on the day of the AGM. To encourage as many people as possible to stand for election, those already willing to stand will be nominated from the floor on the day of the AGM.

The AGM will be held on June 25, 2023, at the CVRS Summer Picnic/AGM, hosted by Melanie Fiander, 2453 Fawn Terrace, Mill Bay. 11:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

See the following table for specifics on positions.

#### **Position Term: Status: Comments:**

**President: Open** (1 yr.) Willing to Stand - Barrie Agar

**Vice President: Open** (1 yr.) Willing to Stand – Dorothy Kennedy

**Treasurer: Open** (1 yr.) - Elisabeth Zoffmann

**Secretary: Open** (1 yr.) Willing to Stand – Mary Pike

Member at Large: Sandy Campbell (2 yr., 1 to go)

Member at Large: (1 yr.) \*

Member at Large: (2 yr.)

Member at Large: (2 yr.)

• Bylaw 4.8 ‘the Board of Directors shall consist of .... four elected Directors who shall serve as Members-at-Large for two years, two of these Directors being elected at the Society’s AGM each year.’ Due to the attrition of three members-at-large this year, a one-year term is necessary to balance the team.

# CVRS Annual Plant Sale

May 13, 2023

*Thanks to Dorothy Kennedy for providing all the photos.*



## Setting:

- A spacious, central location at St John's Anglican Parish

## Products:

- CVRS raised rhododendrons and members' generous donations of plants

## Pace and Atmosphere:

- Organization and setup that worked smoothly
- Steady and unhurried flow of customers
- Enough volunteers to distribute the tasks into manageable portions
- Thank-you volunteers!



## Customer Service:

- Many knowledgeable CVRS members left no *rhododendron* questions unanswered
- Master Gardeners on sight researched and answered other gardening questions

## Provisions for Volunteers:

- Chef Diane prepared delicious croissant sandwiches for all
- Tea, coffee, and cold drinks hydrated volunteers





#### The Truss Display:

- The truss table was filled on both sides
- Customers asked many questions about the rhododendrons
- The People's Choice was *R. 'Elsie Watson'*
- Al and Liz Murray managed the station in their usual expert manner

#### The Sales:

- Sales were excellent
- Most plants were sold
- Remaining perennials were donated to the Mill Bay Garden Club Sale
- Rhododendrons remaining will be held to grow on for another year



#### The Cashiers:

- Cashiers efficiently handled a steady flow of purchases
- Profits of the Sale were highest to date

#### Leadership:

- Special thanks to Dorothy Kennedy for leadership in the organization of the Plant Sale
- Thank you to those who coordinated the details of other special task

**Thanks to the many who stayed for swift cleanup! Many hands!!**



# A Fascinating Tree

## *Sciadopitys verticillata*



*Sciadopitys verticillata*, also known as the Japanese Umbrella Pine, is the only member of its genus. Its natural habitat is in mid altitudes of 500 to 1000 meters, in Japan, in clouded forests of high rainfall and humidity.

The “pine” grows in various light conditions but in areas of very high temperatures it would appreciate some light shade.

It is a fascinating tree because of its leaf taxonomy. It has two different types of leaves; its *scale* leaves, or true leaves, are small and scaly, and are interspersed on the branches in a random pattern. It also has *photosynthetic* leaves, whorls that occur at the ends of branches. These whorls, resembling the ribs of an umbrella, consist of twenty to thirty soft, flattened, pliable, dark green needles about six to thirteen centimetres in length, two to three millimeters in width, and one millimeter in thickness.

The bark has a stringy texture, and the wood a spicy smell and taste.

Several varieties exist with different coloured needles such as golden, bright green, and variegated needles. There are also ‘Pendula’ with weeping branches, and ‘Jim’s Cross’ that grows only 10 feet tall.



Since we are now experiencing snowy winter conditions more frequently in the Cowichan Valley, don’t be surprised if *Sciadopitys verticillata* explodes into a fully decorated tree of white stars six months from now.





# Welcome New Members!

- Raquel Schmidt
- David and Sharon Nesbit

We look forward to meeting you at the CVRS Summer Picnic

## 2022 – 2023

### Calendar of Events

Contact CVRS:

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

**SUNDAY, JUNE 25, 2023, 11:30 am – 3:30 pm**

**COWICHAN VALLEY RHODODENDRON SOCIETY SUMMER  
PICNIC AND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**Venue: Melanie Fiander, Mill Bay, B.C.**

**WATCH FOR NOTICES OF UPCOMING EVENTS DURING THE SUMMER**

**YOU WILL RECEIVE EMAIL NOTICES OF EVENTS/ACTIVITIES THAT MAY BE  
PLANNED FOR JULY AND AUGUST**

**NEXT MONTHLY MEETING – SEPTEMBER, 2023**

**Enjoy a wonderful summer!**

## 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>

### 2022-2023 Executive

President: Barrie Agar  
Vice-President: Dorothy Kennedy  
Treasurer: Diane Allen  
Secretary: Mary Pike  
Director-at-Large: Wendy Willson  
Director-at-Large: Candice Feeney  
Director-at-Large: Sandy Campbell  
Director-at-Large: Ali Morris  
Membership Chairperson: David Annis

### Convenors

Sunshine: Vacant  
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  
Newsletter: Verna Buhler