



Cowichan Valley Rhododendron Society

Newsletter

Volume 34:8 November 2023

Message from the President

Hi Folks,

We want to give you an initial summary of what occurred at the recent GLAD meeting and let you know that this is just the first step in developing a more positive and inclusive society, and the beginning of our discussions.

First, we appreciate the contribution of those who attended the meeting. Your input was vital and the groundwork for the CVRS to move forward.

Our facilitator, Doug Thornton, set a positive tone by reminding us of the ground rules for the conduct of our meeting, components necessary for the good functioning of any community group: we listen respectfully; it is appropriate to criticize ideas but not individuals; we deal with facts, never assumptions.

We sat in small groups of four for listening and discussion, with a person to record, and one to report to the full group at the end of each session.

Shared Vision of Excellence: Taking the Salvation Army as an example with their adage, 'Soup, Soap, Salvation,' Doug set us the task of working in our small group to discuss how we envisioned the essence of the CVRS and come up with a pithy phrase to encapsulate its mission. More on that later!

100% closure on communication: Time was spent clarifying

...

Continued on Page 2

CVRS Meeting

**Wednesday,
November 1, 2023
7pm**

**Guest Speaker:
Caroline Josefsson**

Page 3

Membership Renewal	2
Homegrown National Park	5
Letter from the Editor	6
In Sadness	7
<i>Rhododendron macrophyllum</i>	8
ARS Western Fall Convention	10
Geriatric Rhododendrons	13
Opportunity – Trees	18
Calendar of Events	19
Useful Links	20

Banner Photo:

**Tapestry in Fall, of Acers and
Rhododendron**

what is meant by good communication. For example, when we make an agreement, we all need to understand what will be done, by whom and when. We establish trust by regularly fulfilling our part of the agreement.

Code of Conduct:

Doug provided a sample code for us to consider –

- Support our mission/shared vision of excellence
- If it doesn't serve, don't say it
- Use 100% closure
- Will not engage in blaming or shaming
- Support the society's policies
- Not engage in gossip.

We then moved into small groups for discussion with additions and suggestions, which were reported back to the whole.

We learned from this exercise that we need, as a society, to commit to the foundations that we dealt with at the meeting before we can move on to address issues such as attracting new members, collaborating with other ARS chapters, developing a program of activities and, more generally, supporting our CVRS mission.

Even though Doug does this work professionally, he volunteered his time to the CVRS. We thanked him for his generosity by presenting him with two Rhododendrons for his Cowichan Bay garden.

The Executive will discuss the results and develop an action plan for the society to move forward positively and with a clearer understanding of our collective mission.

Barrie Agar

CVRS Membership Renewal

Fees for 2023 – 2024:

- **Adult Membership: \$40 (includes family at the same address)**
- **Associate Membership: \$10**

Payment Methods:

- **E-transfer** (preferred method as it goes directly into the CVRS bank account)
Email to: cowichanvalleyrhododendron@gmail.com
- **Exact payment** at Wednesday Monthly Meetings: Submit a cheque or exact cash to David Annis, CVRS Membership Chair.
- **Mail a cheque payable to CVRS:** Mail to David Annis,
5974 Tower Place, Duncan, B.C. V9L 0E1
- **Deliver Payment to David Annis's address:** Contact David before leaving payment to ensure he is at home.
Call: (250-710-4945 cell)

Gardening With Less Water

Learning from the Garry Oak Ecosystem



Caroline Josefsson

Guest Speaker

November 1, 2023

7pm

At The Hub

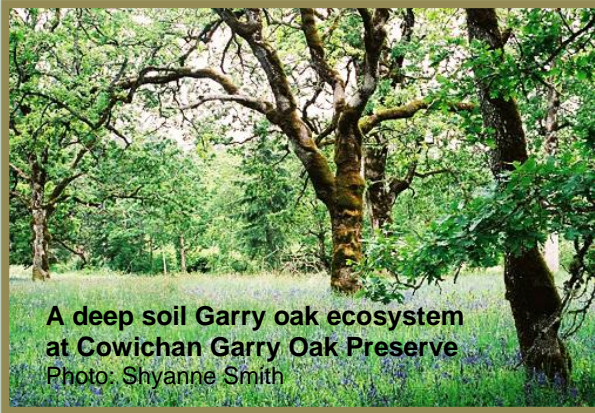
Climate projections suggest that summers in our region will become increasingly warmer and drier, presenting challenges to gardeners. Can we look to our local flora, our region's ancient history, and traditional ecological practices for solutions? The Garry oak ecosystem is a species-rich, drought-adapted plant community originating in a warm, dry period of British Columbia's ancient past, 8,000 to 6,000 years ago. The Garry oak ecosystem can serve as a model for sustainable gardening in our area, supporting its rich and beautiful biodiversity, while honouring our region's cultural history. I will speak to my experience of using Garry oak ecosystem-associated plants in my small front yard in Nanaimo and in a restoration project at the Nanaimo campus of Vancouver Island University, and suggest resources for information, seeds, and plants.

Born and raised in the southwest of Sweden, Caroline's lifelong interest in botany and plant propagation originates from her grandmothers. She pursued an undergraduate degree in Horticulture and Biology at the Swedish University of Agriculture. For her doctorate at the University of Washington, she studied gene deregulation caused by hybridization using the plant model system *Arabidopsis*. In 2009, Caroline joined the Biology Department at Vancouver Island University, where she teaches plant biology courses, as well as introductory biology and biochemistry. In 2021, with students from VIU's Eco Club, Caroline initiated a Garry oak ecosystem restoration project on the VIU Nanaimo campus (@viu_restoration on Instagram).

Garry Oak Ecosystems

Information drawn from the Garry Oak Ecosystems Recovery Team

Website: <http://goert.ca>



*A Garry oak ecosystem is one with naturally occurring Garry oak trees (*Quercus garryana*) and some semblance of ecological processes and communities that prevailed before European settlement.*

The Name 'Garry Oak'

*Garry oaks (*Quercus garryana*) are the only native oak trees in western Canada (west of Manitoba). The species is named after Nicholas Garry who was deputy governor of the Hudson's Bay Company from 1822-1835. South of the border, the trees are often referred to as Oregon white oaks. With their striking, gnarly shape and unique adaptations to the Mediterranean-like climate found in the rain-shadow of the Vancouver Island, Coastal, and Olympic mountains, they have become emblematic of the ecosystems in which they are found.*



Leaves are not litter.

They are food and shelter for butterflies, beetles, bees, moths, and more. Show your friends and neighbors that you plan to leave the leaves this fall with this beautiful yard sign produced by The Xerces Society. This durable 9" x 10.5" sign is designed for outdoor use and has two holes for hanging (hardware not included). Signs are available in our online gift center. **[Get your sign](#)**

HOMEGROWN NATIONAL PARK SOCIETY

Information was drawn directly from the Homegrown National Park Website. Click on the link for informative videos and simple ways in which you can participate. ~ Verna Buhler

“In the past, we have asked one thing of our gardens: that they be pretty. Now they have to support life, sequester carbon, feed pollinators and manage water.”

Doug Tallam, co-founder HNP



HOMEGROWN NATIONAL PARK is a grassroots call-to-action to regenerate biodiversity and ecosystem function by planting native plants and creating new ecological networks.

Homegrown National Park is a term coined by Doug and is the key to our call-to-action: *“Our National Parks, no matter how grand in scale are too small and separated from one another to preserve species to the levels needed. Thus, the concept for the Homegrown National Park, a bottom-up call-to-action to restore habitat where we live and work, and to a lesser extent where we farm and graze, extending national parks to our yards and communities.*

Doug’s message is a solution-based action – **small efforts by many people**. Together many people create new ecological networks that will enlarge populations of plants and animals enabling them to weather normal population fluctuations indefinitely.



Doug Tallamy presents the science-based solution to the biodiversity crisis and explains why it’s so urgent.

“We are at a critical point of losing so many species from local ecosystems that their ability to produce the oxygen, clean water, flood control, pollination, pest control, carbon storage, etc., that is, the ecosystem services that sustain us, will become seriously compromised.”

To learn about Homegrown National Park, visit:

<https://homegrownnationalpark.org/>



Letter from the Editor

Hi Friends,

Hasn't the month of October been busy!

George and I enjoyed three weekends of rhododendron and perennial sales. Guests visited on a steady basis, which allowed us time to wander with them through the gardens.

A grandson, on his first over-night hockey trip to Duncan and Port Alberni, gave cause for me to drive to Port Alberni on a sunny fall day. Traffic was light and Cathedral Grove stunning.



There were two ARS Board of Director Zoom meetings to scribe for, and a CVRS GLAD meeting to attend. Then the wonderful trip along the Oregon Coast to Florence, Oregon to attend the ARS Western Fall Conference. These Conferences always overwhelm me with new information, restore my enthusiasm, and offer me the unique experience of getting to know fine people from all over the US and Canada.

Of course, there is always so much to do in the garden to prepare for the cold and wet winter months. And today, Wednesday morning, we received a sensory reminder. The distinct rhythm of pounding rain on the roof changed to more muffled rhythm during the night, and in the morning the bamboo and cannas were bent under the weight of a white form of moisture. Snow on October 25th? The dahlias are blooming, many trees have not yet begun to change colour, container plants that will need some degree of winter protection are still on the veranda, and the weeds are still growing vigorously! This frost and snow changes the schedule!

In between the many activities, a celebration of life for a former colleague reminds me of how transient life is and the importance of cherished relationships.

Therefore, as I wander through forest trails with my dogs, I see fungi and mushrooms and recall how Ingeborg Woodsworth instantly identified and explained the specific characteristics of every fungus and mushroom that we spotted in the woods during one of her weekend

mushroom workshops. With a photographic memory, she could do the same with rhododendrons. She was a long-time active member of the rhododendron community.



As of last month, September 15, 2023, Ingeborg Woodsworth is no longer with us. Next month, I would like to include an article in the newsletter, honouring Ingeborg, and ask that those of you who were fortunate enough to have known her longer than I had, send your memories and stories about Ingeborg to me so that I may write a profile of this very special woman.

Verna

*With sadness, we acknowledge the passing of
Ingeborg Woodsworth on September 15, 2023*



Please forward your photos, memories, and stories of
Ingeborg to Verna Buhler to honor this special woman
in our December newsletter. Thank-you so much.





Rhododendron macrophyllum

As we drove along the winding roads of Highway #101 through Washington and Oregon last week, we could see the deep green rhododendrons thriving in the forests along the roadsides.

I thought it was time to learn more about our West Coast native rhododendron. -- Verna Buhler

Imagine strolling through trails in a forest in British Columbia and coming across a stand of rhododendrons in bloom, such as in the photo above. It is a sight that would steal one's breath.



It is not a far-fetched idea, as *Rhododendron macrophyllum* is also known as the Pacific Rhododendron, Coast Rhododendron, or the California Rhododendron. Its natural habitat is west of the Cascades from southern British Columbia to northern California.



It grows in fairly open forests and edges and can be seen along roadsides in the rainshadow of the Olympic Mountains. It is the showiest flowering shrub in the forests of western North America, and not surprisingly, Washington has chosen it as its state flower.

Rhododendron macrophyllum literally means "Rose tree with big leaves." Its oblong leaves are thick and leathery, and 3-8 inches (8-20 cm) long. There may be 10-20 bell shaped flowers, ranging from near white and pale pink to deep-pink and rosy-purple flowers. The plant will grow up to fifteen feet tall but will remain more compact if it is grown in more sun.



American Rhododendron Society Western Fall Conference

Florence, Oregon
October 18 – 22, 2023

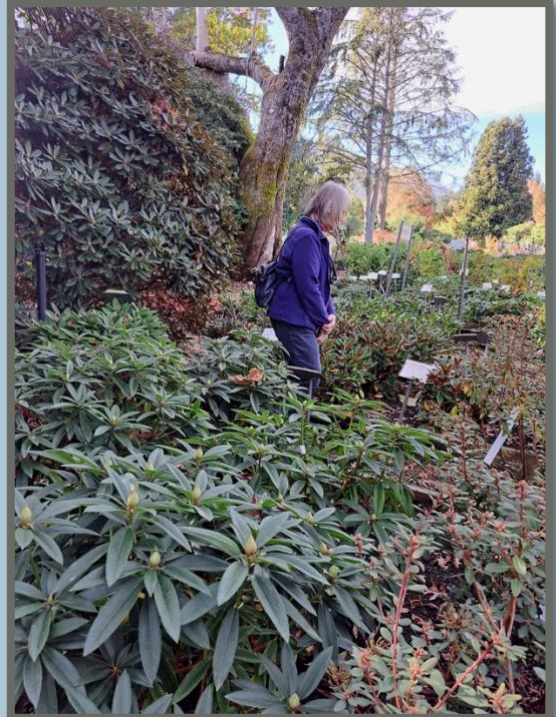


A leisurely drive along the scenic Washington and Oregon coasts, an overnight stay on the beach in Seaside, and pleasant and entertaining travel companions.



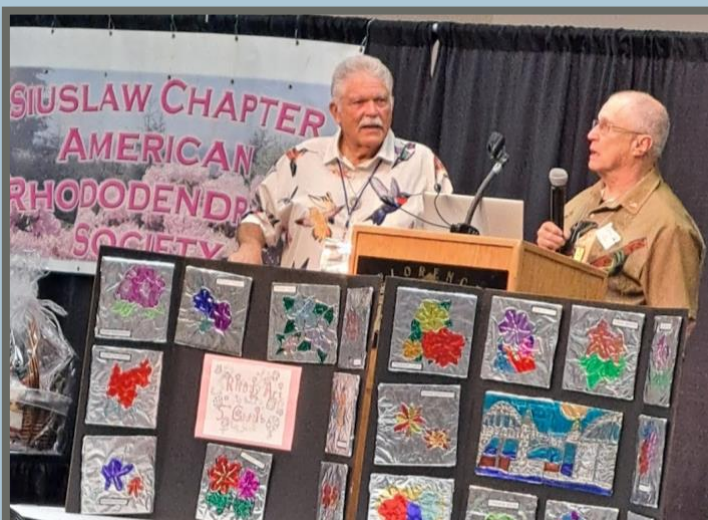


A stop at Whitney Gardens and Nursery to wander the established gardens and browse the many rows of rhododendrons, none of which we could purchase on this trip.





Lovely displays of almost one hundred perfect samples of unique foliage ranging from the tiny to the massive; two tables of lovely bonsai in the foyer where guests gathered during breaks for coffee. A very large room filled with tempting plants for the plant sale. However, with only four or five Canadians, no Phytosanitary Certification Inspectors had been arranged.



Guests from both the East and West coasts; entertaining hosts; lively and informative presentations; delicious buffet dinners; endlessly restocked tables of home baked goodies for numerous breaks between presentations.

Casual chats with knowledgeable people, and newly formed connections and friendships.

Knowledgeable speakers caused me to fill a notebook with interesting up-to-date information.

Jack Olson described some of his favourite rhododendron flowers, foliage and buds.

Sandi Jensen, with 50 years-experience in collecting fuchsias, reminded us to cut fuchsias that we move indoors down to their main structure using an angle cut and to water them only lightly to prevent them from drying out.

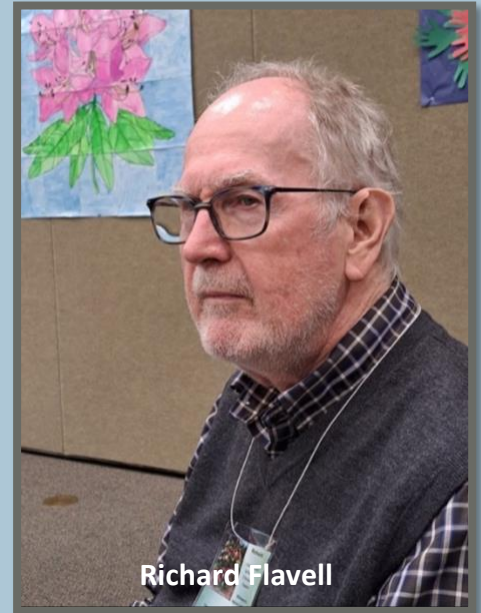
Day Farrauld listed Geriatric hybrid rhododendrons, favourites that have been around forever. **An article in this issue, will describe a number of those enduring hybrids.**

Mike Bamford spoke about the deciduous azaleas so abundant in areas of the Eastern hillsides.

Will Clausen, from the Rhododendron Species Botanical Gardens, describe the new projects and changes that are happening at the gardens. And Atsuko Gibson also from the RSBG described her expedition to Japan to see spectacular rhododendrons in their native habitats and protected forests.

Lorrie Bolivar of Log Cabin Nursery described a year in the nursery business in terms of seasonal tasks that the Nursery must complete.

Richard Flavell, world renowned immunologist, described his interest in hybridizing hardy big leaved rhododendrons suitable for growing in the Eastern US states.



Richard Flavell



GERIATRIC RHODODENRONS

From the presentation by Dave Farrald
at the ARS Western Fall Conference in October 2023

~ Verna Buhler

The Geriatrics of 1850 to 1901



Rhododendron 'Cynthia' 1870

Photo: Oregon State University



Rhododendron 'Faggetter's Favorite' 1874

Photo: Steve Henning



Rhododendron 'Fastuosum Flore Pleno'

Photo: Singing Tree Nursery



Rhododendron 'Purpureum Elegans' 1850

Photo: Lloyd Newcomb



Rhododendron 'Lee's Dark Purple' Prior to 1851
Photo: Oregon State University



Rhododendron 'Roseum Elegans' 1951
Photo: Millais Nursery



Rhododendron 'Sappho' 1868
Photo: Torbin Stein



Rhododendron 'Daphnoides' 1868
Needs fertilizer to bloom
Photo: Oregon State University



Rhododendron 'Boule de Neige'
Listed as critical in the United Kingdom
Photo: Odo Tschetsch



Rhododendron 'Chionoides'
Photo: Boris Bauer



Rhododendron 'White Pearl' Prior to
1896 Photo: Singing Tree Nursery



Rhododendron 'Gomer Waterer' Pre-1900
Photo: Millais Nursery



Rhododendron 'Christmas Cheer' (near Sister 'Rosa Mundi') Photo: Richie Steffen Great Plant Picks



Rhododendron 'Mrs. E. C. Stirling' 1900
Photo: Boris Bauer



Rhododendron 'Beauty of Littleworth' 1900
Photo: Harold Greer



Rhododendron 'Loderi King George' 1901
Photo: Verna Buhler

More Enduring Rhododendrons in the Next Issue

Want to learn more about Trees? You are invited to
ABOUT THOSE TREES— “Tree Fundamentals”
Sponsored by Vancouver Island Master Gardeners (VIMGA)



Date: Saturday, November 4, 2023
Location: Nanoose Place Community Centre
2925 Northwest Bay Rd. Nanoose Bay
Time: 11:00—2:30 (Doors open to Public)
Cost: By donation
Registration: email Ruth at: vicepresident@vimga.org

Bring a bag lunch and mug for water. Door prizes at end of day.

Guest Presenter: Trevor Coey,
arborist with Bartlett Tree Experts presents
“Tree Fundamentals”

Born and raised in Victoria, Trevor has always enjoyed the outdoors. When a job opportunity presented itself in 1999 to climb and care for trees, it was a perfect fit. Starting his career with Mt. View Tree Service as a *grounds* person, he worked his way up to climber, crew formen, and finally to an Arborist Representative with Bartlett Tree Experts. Trevor is a Certified Arborist with the International Society of Arboriculture and a certified tree care safety professional.

“What I enjoy about this job is that there is always something new to learn. I am outside rain or shine, and I can pass on valuable information to help people keep their trees and landscape healthy.”

Trevor’s presentation will be followed by a panel discussion of Master Gardeners on:
“Tips and collective wisdom on growing and caring for trees in our gardens.”

2023 – 2024
Calendar of Events

Contact CVRS:

cowichanvalleyrhododendron@gmail.com

Wednesday, November 1, 2023

CVRS November Meeting

Speaker: Caroline Josefsson *Gardening with Less Water – Learning from the Garry Oak Ecosystem*

December program was not available at the time of the November newsletter posting. Information will be circulated when plans have been made.

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY EVENTS

October 13 - 15, 2023

Australian Rhododendron Society Conference, Tasmania, Australia

October 19 – 21, 2023

ARS Fall Western Regional Conference, Florence, Oregon

October 24 - 27, 2023

New Zealand Rhododendron Association, Rodenza Taranaki, New Plymouth, New Zealand.

May 2 - 5, 2023

ARS Spring Convention, Bellingham, Washington, USA



Rhododendrons glitter in
the morning sun on a
frosty morning

USEFUL LINKS

Cowichan Rhododendron Society:

cowichanrhodos.ca/

Victoria Rhododendron Society:

victoriarhodo.ca/index.html

Mount Arrowsmith Rhododendron Society:

marsrhodos.ca/

North Island Rhododendron Society:

nirsrhodos.ca/ws/

The American Rhododendron Society:

rhododendron.org/

Nanaimo Rhododendron Society:

nanaimorhodos.ca

Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden:

rhodygarden.org

Nanoose Garden Club:

nanoosegardenclub.ca/

Linda Gilkeson:

lindagilkeson.ca/

Vancouver Island Rock and Garden Society:

virags.com

Linda Chalker-Scott:

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

Steve Henning:

rhodyman.net

Rhododendron, Camellia, Magnolia

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

Office of the American Rhododendron Society: member@arsoffice.org



Cowichan Valley Rhododendron Society
(A Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society)
Duncan, B.C.

Email:
cowichanvalleyrhododendron@gmail.com

2022 - 2023 Executive

President: *Barrie Agar*
Vice-President: *Dorothy Kennedy*
Treasurer: *Elisabeth Zoffman*
Secretary: *Mary Pike*
Director-at-Large: *Sandy Campbell*
Director-at-Large: *Janice Moseley*
Director-at-Large: *Laurie Moseley*
Director-at-Large: *Tricia Guiguet*
Membership Chairperson: *David Annis*

Convenors

Tea: *Vacant*
Raffle: *Hilda Gerrits*
Speaker Team Chair: *Sandra Stevenson*
Fundraising: *The Executive Team*
Sunshine: *Vacant*
CVRS Garden Tours: *Vacant*
CVRS Bus Tours: *Vacant*
Library: *Verna Buhler*
Newsletter: *Verna Buhler*