



Cowichan Valley Rhododendron Society

Message from the Executive

Acting President, October – Candice Feeney

As I sit here on the couch looking out the window at the pouring rain, I am thankful that I planted my 400 bulbs last weekend when it was sunny out. You sure can tell it's the end of the summer; the bright summer flowers are quickly fading; I'm patiently waiting for my fall trees to start turning colour.

I have to say that I don't mind when autumn comes, not having to water everyday and trying to keep my plants alive for another day. There's something peaceful in it. I can take a step back and look at all the projects I've done during the year and I can start planning my new ones to come.



The only bad thing about the rain is the weeds--- now don't get me started on the weeds

...

Candice

PLEASE NOTE:

The CVRS October 2019 Newsletter will not be posted until later due to personnel holidays

This Notice contains information important prior to the Monthly Meeting October 2, 2019; 7:30pm

GUEST SPEAKER:

Bernie Dinter
"Spring Bulbs to Complement Rhododendrons"

TEA SERVICE:

Joyce Rodger's Group (Members alphabetically R-Z)

IN THIS NOTICE:

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GUEST SPEAKER

BERNIE DINTER

Bernie Dinter has been in the nursery business for over 40 years, starting with a degree in Plant Science from the UBC Department of Agriculture. Bernie enjoys the challenge of managing Dinter's Nursery and shares his father's stated mission to "make the Cowichan Valley more beautiful".



Photo: Dinters Nursery Website

"Spring Bulbs to Compliment Rhododendrons"



Gardeners are often looking ahead to creating something beautiful in the future and this is certainly true when planting bulbs. "A wide range of spring flowering bulbs, each with a bit of magic inside", should be planted before the end of November and will send up a colourful bloom next spring. "They range from bright yellow Winter Aconites to June flowering Giant Allium. Many are deer resistant and naturalize into larger displays of colour over the years."



AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY FALL CONFERENCE

"Rhododendrons by the Seaside"

September 27 to 29, 2019

Parksville Community and Conference Centre

Register at www.marsrhodos.ca/ars2019/

**LAST
CHANCE!!!**



Letter from the Editor

Hi Friends!

Because Mary-Lynn will not return from travel in time to prepare the newsletter before October 2nd meeting, I am trying to create an **October Notice** instead of the regular newsletter that you would normally receive the weekend prior to our meeting. Hopefully, although the format is neither as colourful nor as interesting, it will provide all the basic information that you need.

Once again we have been gifted with highly productive gardens, too much for some of us who don't enjoy harvesting as much as growing gardens. However, a complaint of that type lacks the gratitude absolutely essential from those of us so fortunate to live in this idyllic Canadian "Provence".



The rains have begun and the streams in the forests are once again beginning to trickle. Such a lovely season . . .

I personally am excited about attending the ARS Conference in Parksville at the end of this month! I hope to see many of you there! There is always so much to learn! I am considering making this a camping trip as well. Wouldn't that be fun? And I must not forget to place an order for a few special species rhododendrons from **Chimacum Woods** for **the easiest cross-border delivery** by our friends coming from the US!

Propagation season is beginning as well. October is generally an excellent month for plant divisions and for starting cuttings. Keep watching for the upcoming CVRS Propagation Club activities. These are really more about fun than hard-core work!

October is also Candice Feeney's month as Acting President. It is so nice to have this enthusiastic lady in our club!

So!! We'll get together soon, Friends; you know we'll have a good time then,

Verna Buhler

SPECIES RHODODENDRON PLANTS

Chimacum Woods, Bellevue, WA

"On Thursday, Sept. 26, we are heading up to the American Rhododendron Society Gathering in Parkville, British Columbia, bringing species rhododendrons for the plant sale. Contact us with specific requests (pre-orders)." Contact: **Bob and Beth** (206-383-2713) robtrhododendron@gmail.com

Just a note of encouragement to people who are, or in the future may be, in the process of transplanting their whole gardens

Nil Desperandum

By Bill Spohn, Vancouver, BC

In 2016, I had a garden that included 864 Rhododendrons of which 484 were species and an additional number were primary species crosses that I liked (for instance *R. cinnabarinum* hybrids).

Then we decided to move. I found a smaller place with only around 1/3 acre so had to select which plants to take - it was mostly species and primary hybrids and a handful of the other hybrids (that sometimes cause hybrid aficionados to hiss or spit when they come up in conversation - as in *R. "President Roosevelt? How crass!"*) [M]y wife had a few favourites, *R. 'Starbright Champagne'* and *'Lilyflower'* for which she wanted to find garden space.

We moved around 300 rhodos as well as 20 odd Acers, a dozen or so Magnolias and a few other favourite trees (Vibernums [sic], Styrax etc.) to the new site, which was a half hour away from the old one. I hated to abandon the large trees that were too big to move (30 foot *Magnolia officinalis*, *Metasequoia*, Acer 'Asahi Zuru' and 'Okushimo', an 18-foot blooming *R. 'Sir Charles Lemon'*, a really nice *Cedrus brevifolium* etc.) but we couldn't save everything. As a last effort to salvage the rhododendrons, I called the local gardeners and gave them a date to come over and take anything they could carry for free. [They] saved many more; oddly, no one bothered with the 15-foot *R. ponticum* by the pond, nor the similarly sized *R. 'Cunningham's White'*, both of which were around 60 years old.

We moved; the plant material was planted and then a hard winter hit that defoliated quite a few plants including some of my favourite big leaf rhodos.



R. cinnabarinum Photo: Ken Cox



That is the point of this post. I had long learned not to give up too soon on a plant. Even if there was zero sign of life, you should bend a branch a bit and if it snaps you can cut back until whatever is left is still limber, and only when it is clearly brittle all the way to the ground do you dig it up and toss it away.

I made maybe two mistakes on that, and dug up a plant I thought had no signs of life, only then to see small buds on one part of the plant; [I] then pruned and replanted. A few of these apparently barren plants took two years to come back - a *R. scabrifolium* showed no signs of life nor did a *R. yunnanense*, but in the Spring of the second year they came back very nicely.

The big leaf bed looked a bit dire and I lost a handful, but things like a small *R. sinogrande* came back this year with quite large and lush foliage - always better to have a rootstock with some age on it than to start with a young seedling.

I think that normally gardeners are far too ready to dig up plants that are doing poorly and toss them, but species aficionados who can't as easily replace them are well advised to hang in there to see what happens even if it takes two or three years.

Now my job is to try and identify the plants whose tags were lost in the move, and with so many species plants you either have to key them out (a painstaking process in which one wrong turn means you'll never find the way again) or wait until they bloom so you have that added data to narrow it down. I still have a bunch of species that I can't retag. Got one this Spring - *R. lepidostylum*, which with the glaucous hairy leaves you might have thought was easy [to identify],



but until it bloomed it could have been one of two or three plants (usually maybe 18"- 24", but I'd sourced it from the RSF 18 years ago and this one is 6' across and a couple of feet high - that makes you stop and think, too.) I'm still waiting for one *R. cinnabarinum* hybrid to bloom as it could be one of a half-dozen plants, but being planted in a shaded area it may be awhile.

So if something does poorly for you, hang in there, make the hard decision as to whether to wait it out and see if it improves rather than moving it elsewhere in the assumption that it just doesn't like where it is, and be patient.

Ironically, my *R. williamsianum* still looks poorly (it is under an English Walnut, which isn't the bad species for exuding juglone, but may account for it doing badly) while the one I gave my sister is almost waist high and blooms beautifully.

"Nil desperandum!"

SHARED MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

We have had many requests from members of the CVRS Club to have the contact information of members shared with others in the club. Many other clubs do this; contact information is shared with club members only, and should never be given to other people outside of the Cowichan Valley Rhododendron Society.

We propose to send a list of members' emails and telephone numbers to each club member. Anyone who does not wish to have his/her contact information shared with the other members MUST INDICATE SO by October 15, 2019.

Anyone wishing to "opt out" must contact Diane Allen frenchyallen@shaw.ca before October 15th to have his or her name removed.

Cowichan Valley Rhododendron Society 2019-2020 TEA SERVICE		
DATE	TEAM LEADER	MEMBERSHIP LIST
September 4, 2019	Janice/Laurie Moseley (Exchange w. Judeen)	Kitchen thru Rafferty
October 2, 2019	Joyce Rodgers	Rodger thru Zoffmann
November 6, 2019	David Annis	Agar thru Efford
December, 2019	Christmas Party All Members Pot Luck	McLay House 5241 Koksilah Road
January, 2020	No Meeting	
February 5, 2019	Judeen Hendrickson (Exchange w. Moseley's)	Evans thru Kerr
March 4, 2020	Janice/Laurie Moseley	
April 1, 2020	Joyce Rodgers	
May6, 2020	David Annis	
June 2020	Picnic All Members Pot Luck	TBA

Calendar of Upcoming Events

SEPTEMBER 27-29, 2019

ARS FALL CONFERENCE, Parksville, BC (See Notice Page 11)

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 2, 2019; 7:30pm

CVRS Monthly Meeting Speaker - Bernie Dinter: "Spring Bulbs to Compliment Rhododendrons"

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2019 2pm

CVRS Book Club Meeting Verna and George's: 3908 Cowichan Lake Road, Duncan

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2019; 1pm

Propagating Club Work Party (cuttings) Verna and George's: 3908 Cowichan Lake Road, Duncan

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2019; 7:30pm

CVRS Monthly Meeting Speaker – Glen Jamieson: "Plants of Southern California Deserts"

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2019; 2pm

CVRS Book Club Meeting Verna and George's: 3908 Cowichan Lake Road, Duncan

DECEMBER 2019:

Christmas Party - TBA

APRIL 30 – MAY 3, 2020

ARS ANNUAL CONVENTION (75th Anniversary) Portland, Oregon

2019-20 Executive

President: Shared/CVRS Executive Team

Vice-President: Diane Allen

Past President: Barrie Agar

Secretary: Verna Buhler

Treasurer: Elaine Kitchen

Members-at-Large: Alan Campbell, Candice Feeney, Ali Morris, Rhoda Taylor, Wendy Wilson

Membership Chair: David Annis, 250-748-1338



Convenors

Sunshine: Mary Gale

Tea: Judeen Hendricksen

Raffle: Hilda Gerrits

Club Liaison: Alan Campbell

Program Committee Co-ordinator: Alan Campbell

Garden Tours/Trips: Al Murray

CV Garden Fair: The Team

Christmas Party: The Team

Library: Verna Buhler

Newsletter Editor: Verna Buhler



Cowichan Valley Rhododendron Society

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

<http://cowichanrhodos.ca>