



# Cowichan Valley Rhododendron Society

## Newsletter

Volume 30:6 September 2019

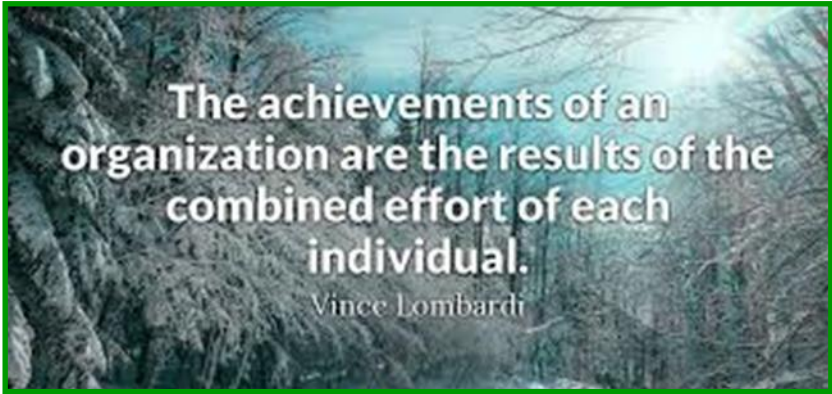
### Message from the Executive

Welcome Back Friends,

A classic opening would be to comment on how swiftly the summer months have flown by; I don't think I'll do that this time, because it hasn't really, has it?

Instead, I will begin by enticing you with the thought that this year may bring about a few changes that members will most probably enjoy! Depending on how we personally decide to view change, change can wake us from doldrums, ignite our imaginations, offer surprises when least expected, and ultimately lift our spirits.

There is a lovely surprise for us in *Harrowsmith's Almanac 2020*. And, I am not referring the forecasts: the "milder-than-normal" Winter temperatures, "the seasonable temperatures and above-average precipitation" thru Spring, the "slightly above normal" temperatures and "normal precipitation" during the Summer, and a "slightly below-normal temperatures" thru Fall. No, you should really pick up a copy because of Beth Lischeron's lovely article "*Brushstrokes of Giverny on Vancouver Island*". All I will tell you is that it is about one of our very own members.



The achievements of an  
organization are the results of the  
combined effort of each  
individual.

Vince Lombardi

#### GUEST SPEAKER

September 4; 7:30pm

Elisabeth Zoffman

Companion Plants

(More details on page 2)

Tea Service:

Judeen Henderson's Group

---

#### In This Issue:

Ken Webb, American Rhododendron Society President 3

Rhododendron spinuliferum 4

Dead-Heading Some Rhododendrons is Not Necessary 5

CVRS Summer Picnic 7

CVRS 2019-20 Program 8

Calendar of Upcoming Events 9

2019 Fall Rhododendron Conference 11

2019-20 Executive 12

---

For some powerful stimulation to wake you from your summer nap, be sure to attend at least some of the ARS Fall Conference in Parksville at the end of September. Listening to and chatting with the rhododendron experts from around the World can affect you in only minutes; an epiphany---a realization that rhododendrons matter more to you than you knew, may well occur.

An interesting change for our club is that we do not have a President this year. Oh, please don't worry! Last week, your Executive Team came up with a plan that promises to work exceptionally well. Each Executive Member has signed, in stone, to assume the role of President for one month. Won't that be fun? My month is September, so that is why I am writing the Letter from the Executive for September. I will also lead the meeting next Wednesday. Won't it be interesting to hear new "voices" addressing

you each month? So many new perspectives, fresh thoughts and ideas!

Those of you at the summer picnic may recall some discussion about how we can improve our major fund-raising event, the annual garden fair. We will be asking you contribute any ideas that you have, because adaptations and changes can definitely be made when a group of special people, that we know you are, put minds into action!

Those of you who attended the summer picnic also experienced the beauty of Elisabeth Zoffman's garden. She will be the guest speaker this month and will describe intriguing plants to extend your garden magic throughout the seasons.

I am looking forward to seeing you on Wednesday!

Verna Buhler

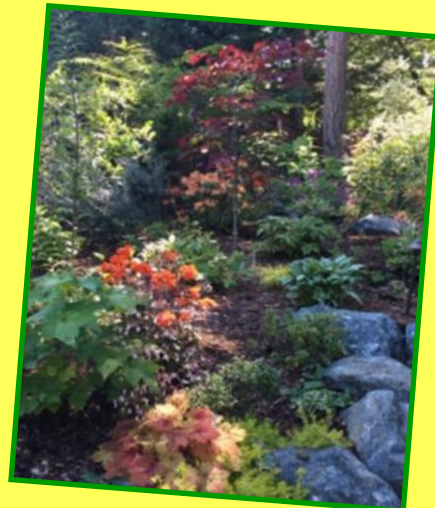
## **Guest Speaker: Wednesday, September 4, 2019 7:30pm**

**Elisabeth Zoffman**

### **"Companion Plants - or what to look at before and after the Rhododendrons bloom"**

*"It all started with a friend who couldn't bear to throw out the hardy geraniums that she was trimming from her garden. Within a year I was madly gardening at my rental house. I have gone on to become a hardened plantaholic with a propensity for buying stuff that just won't survive in our climate.*

*Five gardens later I've ended up with what people saw at the summer picnic. While I can't recall people names five minutes after introduction, I know the Latin names of all my precious plant babies (unless I have lost the tags)."*



# Ken Webb

## American Rhododendron Society President

*As per the announcement at the CVRS Summer Picnic in June, the Cowichan Valley Rhododendron Society joins VRS in congratulating Ken Webb on becoming President of the ARS.*



Ken Webb is an Associate Member of the CVRS as well, and we were thrilled to hear about his new position.

On Saturday, May 18, 2019, Ken Webb, one of our own members, officially became the president of the American Rhododendron Society. He accepted the presidency from Ann Mangels, the outgoing president. Ken is a well-known and respected promoter of the genus rhododendron. He works cooperatively with other chapters throughout the world and is known for his generosity in sharing plants and information. The Victoria Rhododendron Society congratulates Ken on this special accomplishment.

(Thank you to Lois Blackmore for the photo and text)

### UNIQUE PURCHASE OPPORTUNITY

for

### SPECIES RHODODENDRON PLANTS

from

### 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). We always love seeing our Canadian neighbors!  
Contact us at:

**Bob and Beth (206-383-2713) [robtrhododendron@gmail.com](mailto:robtrhododendron@gmail.com)**

**A list of the plants available has been sent to Verna Buhler ([vlbuhler@shaw.ca](mailto:vlbuhler@shaw.ca))**



# ***Rhododendron spinuliferum***

by Ian Efford

*R. spinuliferum* is one of the more interesting rhododendrons. In the wild, it can form a small tree up to 5m tall that grows in the low foothills of South Yunnan. Of particular interest is its strange flowers, which are quite unlike most of the flowers of all other members of this genus.

What pollinates these flowers? One might usually consider bumblebees or butterflies, the latter particularly, as the stamens and styles of the flowers are exposed, which is very unusual. It seems most unlikely that the pollinators are birds, especially as there are no hummingbirds in Asia.

One hopes that the next person to find it in the wild sits down for an hour or so and watches to see what pollinators are attracted by these colourful flowers. Nighttime pollination by moths might be considered but they are usually attracted to white, scented flowers.



**Bloom time: Early midseason**

**Hardiness: -15 C (5 F)**

**May have to be protected in some areas of the Cowichan Valley during winter months.**

# Dead-Heading Some Rhododendrons is Not Necessary

Thank you to Alan Campbell for drawing attention to the information for this article. Additional information was drawn from the *Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden, Summer Newsletter* --- Vol. 44 No. 2.

## ***Rhododendron oreotrephes*:**

“This is one of the finest species in cultivation. This is a selected form from the famous collection at Exbury and features very glaucous foliage. Always reliable, free-blooming, and like all trifloras, does not need to be dead-headed.”



***R. oreotrephes***

Photo: Fearing Farm Website; web\_DSC\_2866.jpg

Diane Whitehead of Victoria, BC expressed confusion with the description above, of this plant in the Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden Fall Catalogue, with respect to the comment:

*“ . . .like all Trifloras, does not need to be dead-headed.”*

*I have three forms of R. oreotrephes --- from Exbury, Barto and Whitney --- and always deadhead them, as I do all rhodies except for ones I'd need a ladder to reach. Why is it not necessary?”*

Steve Hootman, replied:

*“We have found that all of the triflora, and most lepidotes actually, do not need to be dead-headed and will still produce masses of flowers the next year. Also, it would be a real pain due to the size and amount, so it works out well. Many of the lepidotes are relatively short lived and sort of “weedy” in the wild, which is part of the explanation for this. They want to make babies and do it quickly. I just noted a six-month old seedling today of R. impeditum that had a flower bud already; whereas, most of the elepidotes are longer-lived and in it for the long haul, if that makes any sense. If you have the time, and do not like the look of the seed-heads, by all means go for it, but it is not necessary for the lepidotes, in my opinion (not counting maddenias, etc.)”*



## But can you trust Steve Hootman?

**Executive Director** [of the Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden] **Steve Hootman**, wins prestigious award from the **Royal Horticultural Society**

*Steve Hootman has been named as the 2018 recipient of the Loder Rhododendron Cup from the Royal Horticultural Society. Here is the citation used in the award presentation, which was kindly received by Keith Rushforth on behalf of Steve who was unable to attend the award ceremony:*

*“For those unfamiliar with his name, Steve Hootman – a very long-standing member of our Group – has been Curator of the Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden in Washington for over 25 years and Executive Director since 1998. Under his dynamic leadership, the garden has become the centre of Rhododendron excellence in cultivation and conservation. Rivalling the RBG Edinburgh, it now hosts one of the largest living collections of Rhododendron in the world – 700+ species including vireyas. He is one of the foremost plant hunters in the world and has introduced many species into cultivation that you may well be growing in your garden under the SEH name. If not, you might have encountered the acclaimed RSF yearbooks which Steve initiated in 2006 or visited the excellent RSF website he oversees: [www.rhodygarden.org](http://www.rhodygarden.org) Steve is a true ‘giant’ in the rhododendron community; highly regarded across the globe, he is a ‘go to’ person for information, advice and opinion on all matters Rhododendron. He has been of immense support to the Group during my tenure as yearbook editor, providing images and sharing his unrivalled knowledge with absolute generosity. Steve is a rare beast – a genuine expert in his field, with none of those all too familiar ‘diva’ qualities! This award would represent a perfect recognition of our respect for his ongoing contribution to the world of rhododendrons.”*

### Editor's Note:

I have found that becoming a member of the Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden has been one of the best decisions I have made in helping me gain knowledge about the genus Rhododendron. The first, of course, was joining the Cowichan Valley Rhododendron Society!



From Elisabeth Zoffman's  
Garden

# CVRS Celebrates a Great Year – Summer Picnic June 15, 2019

Photo Report by Sharon Tillie



A most enjoyable wrap-up party in a lovely setting generously hosted by Elisabeth Zoffman



Malcolm Ho-You provides the names of the peonies and irises in the bouquet, which he gathered from his own garden that morning



Summer hats, sundresses, cheerful faces and lively conversations filled the colourful garden rooms





# CVRS 2019/2020 PROGRAM

## MONTHLY GUEST SPEAKER LIST:

September 4, 2019:

Elisabeth Zoffman – “Companion Plants for Your Garden”

October 2, 2019:

Bernie Dinter - “Spring Bulbs to Complement Rhododendrons”

November 6, 2019:

Glen Jamieson – “Plants of Southern California Deserts”

February 5, 2020:

TBA

March 4, 2020:

TBA

April 1, 2020:

Rosemary Prufer – “Plant Availability During the Troubled Nursery Trade and How It Affects Society Plant Sales”

May 6, 2020:

TBA

**From Elisabeth Zoffman's  
Garden**





# Calendar of Upcoming Events



## **WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 2019; 7:30pm**

CVRS Monthly Meeting

Speaker: Elisabeth Zoffman - "Companion Plantings"

## **THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2019; 2pm**

CVRS Book Club Meeting

Verna and George's: 3908 Cowichan Lake Road, Duncan

## **TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2019; 9am**

Milner Work Bee: Greig Species Garden (See Notice Page 10)

## **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

## **VOLUNTEERS MOST APPRECIATED!!**

**Tuesday September 17, 2019 9am**

**for**

**Pre-ARS Fall Conference**

**Garden Tour WORK BEE**

**at**

**GREIG SPECIES GARDEN**

**Milner Gardens**

**Tasks for the day include general weeding,  
trimming, removing shade cloth, mulching, and more..**

*Thank-you so much,*

*Marilyn*

### **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)

Nanoose Bay Garden Club:

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

Linda Gilkeson's website:

[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)





# 2019 Fall Rhododendron Conference

## A Vancouver Island Celebration of Gardening

The Mount Arrowsmith Rhododendron Society (MARS) is bringing hundreds of gardening enthusiasts together for the fall conference of the American Rhododendron Society.

### **Rhododendrons by the Seaside**

September 27 to 29, 2019

Parksville Community and Conference Centre

Register at [www.marsrhodos.ca/ars2019/](http://www.marsrhodos.ca/ars2019/)

With the theme of “Rhododendrons as the World Warms,” the lineup of speakers, workshops and tours promises a busy and exciting weekend for everyone. This conference is one of the biggest bargains of the year. An early registration fee of \$95 will entitle you to 12 speakers over three days, including two workshops, choice of one of three bus tours, two continental breakfasts and lunch on Saturday. As well, there is access to a plant sale, a display of international rhododendron photos throughout the facility and a silent auction. Two keynote speakers follow the evening banquets on Friday and Saturday. Dinner is buffet style for an additional \$50 for each night.

The conference theme relates to climate change implications, but the context is for all gardeners who are interested in growing healthy plants of any type in our area. Speakers include a wide range of local and internationally-recognized experts in their fields; Dr. Richard Hebda, Curator Emeritus from the Royal BC Museum; Dr. Linda Gilkeson, entomologist; Mike Stewart, rhododendron nurseryman; Steve Hootman, Executive Director and Curator of the Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden (RSBG) in Federal Way, Wash.; Dr. Nancy Turner, UVic ethnobotanist; Marc Colombel, author and hybridizer, France; Ron Long, botanist and wildflower photographer, Nancy Moore, landscape designer & horticulturist, Geoff Ball, executive director Milner Gardens and Woodland and Dr. Juliana Medeiros, research scientist, Holden Arboretum, Ohio. Bulb and seed propagation workshops will be conducted by Bernie Dinter, Cowichan nurseryman and Dennis Bottemiller, propagator extraordinaire recently of the RSBG.

For those who need a place to stay, the MARS website has a list of various accommodations near the conference site. For best choice and best price, we suggest booking early as late September is still busy with tourists.

## 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:

CV Garden Fair: The Team

Christmas Party: The Team

Library: Verna Buhler

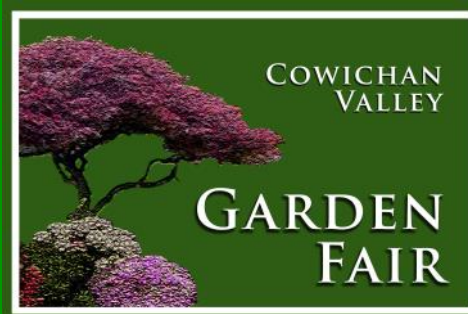
Newsletter Editor: Verna Buhler



## Cowichan Valley Rhododendron Society

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

<http://cowichanrhodos.ca>



Date TBA

<http://cowichanvalleygardenfair.com>



[www.facebook.com/  
CowichanValleyGardenFair](http://www.facebook.com/CowichanValleyGardenFair)

Newsletter design/format & website edits by  
Mary-Lynn Boxem ([mlboxem77@gmail.com](mailto:mlboxem77@gmail.com))  
ML Media Design [www.mlmediadesign.ca](http://www.mlmediadesign.ca)