



# THE YAK

Volume 33, Number 4

April 2019

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*R. barbatum*

Fraser South Rhododendron Society  
is a chapter of the  
American Rhododendron Society

<http://frasersouthernrhodos.ca>

Map : <https://goo.gl/maps/ZB1m1jnF9DP2>

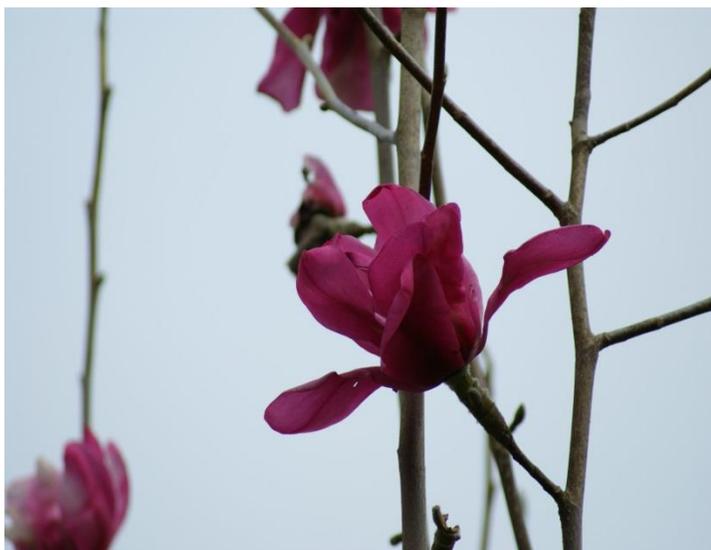
Meetings are held at 7:30 p.m. on the third  
Wednesday of each month (excerpt June,  
July, August) at:

Langley Mennonite Fellowship Church  
20997 40<sup>th</sup> Ave.  
Langley, B.C.



### **Magnolia sprengeri var. diva 'Eric Savill'**

This sprengeri 'Diva' seedling is a fast upright grower. Named in 1982, by John Bond for the creator of Savill Garden in Windsor Great Park. With fragrant flowers of distinctive, extraordinary pink and large stature, this Chinese magnolia is quite attractive. 'Eric Savill' was a 'Diva' seedling found in England. Flowering is delayed just enough to miss troublesome late frosts in most areas.



## *This Month*

### **Ron Long - The Unique Botany of Southern Oregon**

Southern Oregon is not that far from British Columbia in distance but geologically and botanically it seems much farther. The unique geology that is found there has allowed an unusual set of plants to evolve.

The geological up-thrust that created Steens Mountain also created a spectacular high elevation habitat for alpine plants, some of which are familiar and many of which are absolutely unique.

In the Siskiyou Mountains the Serpentine rock is toxic to many plants yet supports a complex and exotic flora that has evolved to survive and even require those poisonous elements. Many of these plants are found nowhere else.

The British Columbia botanist finds many old friends among the Southern Oregon plants but there are differences in scale that are truly impressive. Southern Oregon has something for every naturalist regardless of their particular interests.

This talk will look at the familiar and unfamiliar aspects of the plants, birds, animals, and landscapes, of this fascinating region.

**Date:** Wednesday, April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2019.

**Kitchen Duties:** Carolyn Feldinger & Hilda Neustadter

**Plant Sales:** Harold Fearing

## *Next Month*

### **Fraser South Annual Truss Show**

With the late start to the blooming season, perhaps we'll see some rhododendrons that have usually finished blooming by May. See the last page of the newsletter for the categories and start planning your entries now.

## 2018 OFFICERS

President:	Colleen Bojczuk	604-826-4221
Past Pres:	Evelyn Jensen	604-857-5663
Vice Pres:	Jim Worden	604-541-4754
Secretary:	Barbara Mathias	778-580-6404
Treasurer:	Harold Fearing	604-857-4136
Directors:	Caroline Feldinger	778-545-8994
	Gerry Nemanishen	604-826-0166
	Shawn O'Neill	604-583-1817
Programme:	Jim Worden	604-541-4754
Membership:	Ginny Fearing	604-857-4136
Newsletter:	Maureen Worden	604-541-4754
Librarian:	Gerald Nemanishen	604-826-0166
Website:	Maureen Worden	604-541-4754
Hospitality:	Gail Floyd	604-541-2884
	Lois Williams	604-535-0543
BCCGC Liaison:	Vacant	

## Reminders

**Our raffles help finance chapter activities.  
Please bring your contributions, extra plants,  
garden items, etc.**

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Feel free to suggest program topics and/or speakers to any member of the executive.

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Submit articles, photos, or suggestions for the newsletter or else you will be stuck with the editors choices.

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Speaker reviews are always welcome!

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Members are welcome to send their own "In the Garden" photos to the editor for inclusion in the YAK.

## From the President

WOW! – the March meeting was certainly a whirlwind of activity and interest – loads of raffle items, beautiful plants from Kirsten, a fully laden snack table, a full house of members, and guests from other clubs, and then TWO presentations by Mr. Larsen. The sheer volume of photos and information was quite overwhelming, and early feedback was somewhat mixed. High praise from the more experienced rhodoholics, (and Harold and Ginny added how personable he and his wife were), but somewhat less from some more novice members –the botanical technicalities were very complex. The geography, climate and personal anecdotes of Mr. Larsen's friends in Norway, and the wonderful human interest of the Kingdon-Ward family were certainly of great interest. All in all, I pronounce the meeting a success.

And now on to spring – or did we already have a bit of summer? I fear that rhodo bloom times will be condensed this year, unless this cool spell lasts a while. The truss show should be interesting, though. Plant sale preparations are well in hand, but there are still a few openings on the sign-up sheet I mailed out – please check your e-mail and help us top up - the meeting will be the last chance. Thanks to all who responded so quickly so far.

I also urge everyone to bring samples of anything blooming in your gardens to the April meeting to share with others. I know there is a great diversity of tree, shrubs and perennials in our gardens, and we'd all like to see what other people have. And lastly, I hope everyone is starting to scour their properties to find cool things for the silent auction at the June picnic.

*Colleen B.*

## Upcoming events

Fraser South Rhododendron Society Wednesday April 17, 2019. Time: 7:30 p.m. Langley Mennonite Church	Ron Long, The Unique Botany of Southern Oregon Ron was the sciences photographer at Simon Fraser University for thirty-six years. Now retired, Ron travels extensively to botanic hotspots around the world and enjoys sharing his experiences and photographs with interested
Vancouver Rhododendron Society Thursday, April 18, 2019 7:30 pm VanDusen Gardens	Gwen Odermatt of Petals and Butterflies Nursery is presenting 'Treasures of the Shade and Pond'.
Fraser South Rhododendron Society Saturday April 20, 2019 10:00 am – 3:00 pm Langley Mennonite Church	Annual Plant Sale
Fraser South Rhododendron Society Wednesday May 15, 2015 7:30 pm Langley Mennonite Church	Annual Truss Show



### FRRS Annual Plant Sale

Our annual sale will be held on Saturday, April 20<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 am – 3:00 pm.

This is our main fundraising event of the year. Even if you haven't signed up to help, come out for a couple of hours, shop and help out or come out at 3 PM to help with take down.

Coffee and tea will be available, please bring your own mug. As no food is available on site, please bring your own lunch. Remember that all plant donations to the members table will be greatly appreciated. If you are unable to make the sale but have some plants you'd like to donate, please ask another member if they would bring them to the sale for you or let the editor know and we will try to arrange pickup from you.

Most importantly, advertise the sale among friends, neighbours, and other garden groups you may belong to so we have a good turnout. Also having a few words with the sun god on our behalf would not be amiss!

### Kitchen helpers wanted

A couple of openings are available on the kitchen signup sheet – one for October and one for December. Please see Colleen at the meeting this month and help by volunteering for these vacancies.

## *From the Editor*

What a change from last month, the heat we had quickly brought a number of Rhododendrons to bloom but the lack of rain I think shortened their blooming period along with the tete a tete daffodils. Our magnolias have suffered some confusion with the weather we've had. Royal Crown is usually the first magnolia to bloom, however this year it's in competition to be the last. The maple trees are starting to show color as their leaves slowly emerge. Hate to say it but we really needed the rain we've had off and on lately.

Mr, and Mrs Mallard have been seen once again wandering through the neighbourhood yards but I have yet to see them come for their annual swim in the pool. It's fascinating to watch the devotion Mr. Mallard shows as he follows Mrs. Mallard wherever she chooses to go. I'm assuming they nest somewhere in the area, but have yet to determine where. The Rufous hummingbirds which this year appeared on mass (the males usually arrive prior to the females) are in daily competition at the feeders with our year round neighbours the Annas hummingbird.

You may notice a change to the newsletter format this month. Don't know what I was thinking at the time (I think it was my picture of *R. barbatum* picture that started it) but decided to play around a bit. (Always seems simple at the time of the idea and turns out not to be!). Whether it stays or goes is still undecided, guess we'll see how I feel next month.

Our travels this month will keep up more local. After Wales, then Norway, this month we will stay on the North American continent and visit Oregon with Ron Long. Ron has previously spoken at FSRs and was well received so once again pull up a chair, bring a friend and enjoy the evening.

I hope everyone plans to attend the truss show next month. I attended last year and found it an excellent opportunity to see a range of blooms that I hadn't seen before. If you're looking to expand your Rhodo knowledge or looking for some new rhodos for your garden or just like to admire some incredible blooms in so many different colors, this event is for you. Entering the show is not a requirement for attendance. Just come and enjoy!

*Maureen*

Harold and Ginny Fearing would like to invite you to:

### **OPEN GARDEN AND RHODODENDRON SALE**

Sunday, April 28, 2019,  
10:00 am - 4:00 pm

Fearing's Farm Rhododendrons  
5376 Ross Road, Abbotsford, BC

This is a private garden, rarely open to the public. There are some 1500 rhododendrons, 1100 of which are species, distributed in an informal way around a patch of woodland.

Some pictures of the garden may be found in the Picture Gallery section of [www.fearing.ca](http://www.fearing.ca)

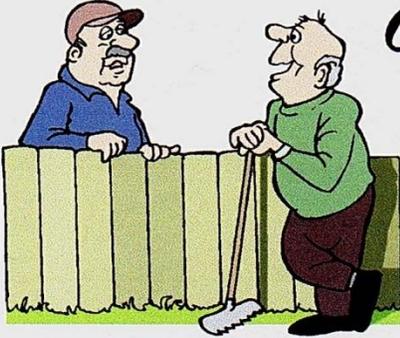
Rhododendron sales: The nursery will be open for sales with many varieties not available at local nurseries.



## From the Archives



The following article originally appeared in the Fraser South Newsletter, April 2004 by Ginny Fearing



## Over the backyard fence . . .

### A Dabbler in Rhodieland

I'm a dabbler, not a diver, so although I know a little about a lot of things, you really cannot expect me to know the Latin names and parentage of 700 rhododendrons.

My husband is crazy about rhododendrons. As the wife of a rhodie 'diver', I tend to grumble about the endless planting, weeding, and deadheading, not to mention the great camping weekends lost to sales. But, in fact, I might like rhodies more than I let on. 'Olive', 'Sir Charles Lemon', and 'Crest' are like old friends.

Lately it has occurred to me that, while I still think roses the superior plant, if I am to be the mother of 700 children, I should begin getting acquainted with them.

In true dabbler form, I decided to start learning what I could about one rhododendron. My first challenge was to pick a subject. That was easy. I chose a plant that lives right outside my workroom, where we keep an eye on one another.

The second challenge was to find out where novices get accurate information that is understandable. As a member of the FVRS, I realize that I have a wealth of knowledge available to me. I fantasize about shocking my rhodie friends with erudite contributions to their discussions. Not yet. First I have to learn something about one rhodie.

I decided to start with observation, using my eyes and hands to learn what I can about my plant. It lives on a very windy hill in full sunlight. It is about six feet tall with a rather open, upward growing appearance. It has 2-3 inch green narrow leaves that are just a bit reddish underneath. For the last two weeks, my plant has been covered with bell shaped lavender-pink flowers in clusters, each cluster circled underneath with a ring of leaves creating the appearance of a bouquet, in this case, hundreds of bouquets. This particular plant has 15-20 flowers to a bouquet, or truss.

I wondered if my plant were representative or if there were variations among different specimens of the same plant. I searched the gardens and found what I thought were 5 others. On closer examination, it was clear that the one with a purple throat, although striking, was not my plant. The other examples ranged in size from 4 to 15 feet. Two were living in sheltered locations, and two in full sunlight. All were blooming like fools.

Wanting to read something understandable about my plant, I turned to our library. I started with [The Fundamentals of Rhododendron and Azalea Culture](#) (American Rhododendron Society, 1995), which I understand is sold by the FVRS for \$1.00. While full of information on growing rhododendrons, it was not specific enough for my project.

Next I turned to [Greer's Guidebook to Available Rhododendrons](#), Third Edition (Greer, H.E., 1996). I learned that the approximate height of my plant at 10 years is 6 feet, that it is hardy to 0 F., and blooms in Oregon April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 1<sup>st</sup>. I learned that the flower is rated 2, the plant and foliage are rated 3 and the performance (whatever that means) is rated 3. I also see that plants are rated from 1 (poorest) to 5 (best). My plant is described as:

"open and upright, with distinctive, scaly, purplish new growth. Lance shaped leaves, to about 3 inches, are smooth dull green on top, covered densely with reddish brown scales underneath. Funnel-bell-shaped flowers, to 1 inches long, are pink, rose, or rosy lilac, spotted brown, carried in trusses of 4-8."

It grows in Szechwan, Yunnan, S.E. Tibet at 7,500-14,000 feet.

My plant's sisters in the woods are already way over 6 feet tall, although they are probably 15 years old and benefit from a father who feeds them more than regularly. They have all been blooming on our property since early March, having survived full sun, howling eastern outflow winds, ice storms and uneven watering. This plant, like many others in our garden, seems to be blooming

Continued on page 11

*From the Garden*



*Magnolia 'Anna'*



*R. arigipeplum*



*Avalanche x Harry Carter*



*R. calophytum*



*R. campanulatum*



*r. coeloneuron*



*R. hodgsonii*



*Mary Fleming*



*R principis*



*R. strigillosum*



*Unknown*



*R. pachytrichum*

# Rhododendrons of Sikkim-Himalaya

Rhododendrons of Sikkim-Himalaya based on the explorations by Joseph Dalton Hooker and his findings published in 1849.



## RHODODENDRON HODGSONI, Hook. f.

*Mr. Hodgson's Rhododendron.*

## TAB. XV.

Arboreous, ramis loricatis, foliis amplis petiolatis (petiolis crassis) obovato-ellipticis obtusis basi subcordatis coriaceis glaberrimis margines recurvis late viridibus subtus tomento appresso sclerogenico albido-glaucescentibus, capitula magna 15-20-flora, pedunculis loricatis tomentosis, calyce obsolete, corollæ roseæ tubo (basi intruso) late campanulato, limbo brevi 8-lobis, lobis rotundatis emarginatis, staminibus sub-15, filamentis gracilibus glabris, ovario tubo viscido dense vestito 10-loculari, stylo elongato, stigmae disciformi radiatim lobato, capsulis anguste cylindricis elongatis curvatis obtusis tomentosis.

HAB. Sikkim-Himalaya; on rocky spurs, and in the valleys of the outer and inner ranges; elev. 10-12,000 feet, very abundant. Fl. May and June; fr. December.

A small tree, from twelve feet, the average height, to twenty, branching from the base, main branches as thick as the human thigh, spreading horizontally for twenty or thirty feet each way, interwoven with the adjacent plants and shrubs. Bark smooth, papery, pale-flesh coloured, flaking off in broad membranous patches. Wood white, very close-grained, soft, yet tough, neither warping nor splitting, but, in consequence of the great compression of the larger branches, rarely affording a square a foot in the square. Leaf-buds or gemmæ terminal, as large as a hazel-nut; their scales broadly ovate, concave, coriaceous, subtomentose, tapering into a long acuminate point. Leaves terminal on the ultimate branches, ample, spreading, twelve to sixteen and often eighteen inches in length, varying in form, oblong-elliptical or obovate or ovate-lanceolate, obtuse, nearly cordate at the base, of a singularly thick coriaceous texture, quite glabrous and bright glossy green above, penninerved (scarcely reticulated), the margins recurved; beneath, all, except the thickened costa, clothed with a pale silvery white, rarely ferruginous, closely appressed tomentum, but which is easily abraded by the finger, and is often itself cranescent. Petioles one to two inches or more long, very stout. Capitula four to six inches in diameter, of several delicate, pale purple or rose-coloured flowers. Peduncles short, viscid, often downy. Calyx obsolete. Corolla large, the tube an inch and a half long, broadly campanulate, the base depressed at the insertion upon the peduncle, the margin of the depression lobed, limb spreading, two to two and a half inches across, eight-lobed, the lobes rather short, emarginate, or obtusely bifid, reflexed. Stamens sixteen to eighteen, spreading; filaments slender, glabrous; anthers rather small, dark purple-brown. Ovary oblong-ovate, densely covered with a short, white, viscid tomentum, many-celled. Style rather short, glabrous, thickened upwards. Stigma a broad radiately-lobed disc. Capsules slightly curved, two inches long, cylindrical, striated, covered with a white base tomentum. Seeds small, winged with a lax veil, jagged at both ends.

This, and the *Abies Webbiana*, I have always regarded as the characteristic tree and shrub (or underwood) at the elevation of 10 to 12,000 feet in all the valleys of Sikkim. *R. Hodgsoni*, in this respect, ranks with the *R. arborescens* and *Complanata*, being typical of a loftier zone of Rhododendrons, succeeded by the arctic one of *R. orthogonum*, *R. setosum*, *R. elegansoides*, and, finally, far above the ordinary limit of phanerogamic vegetation, by *R. niveum*, which is found at an elevation of 18,000 feet above the level of the sea.

Nowhere can the traveller wander, in the limits assigned to the present species, without having his attention arrested by its magnificent foliage, larger than that of *R. Falconeri*, and remarkable for its brilliant deep green hue. In summer

the leaves are lateral, and spreading all round the plant: in winter rolled up, shroveted, and pendulous from the tips of the branches. It is alike found at the bottom of the valleys, on the rocky spurs or slopes and ridges of the hills, in open places, or in the glossy Pine-groves, often forming an impenetrable scrub, through which the explorer in vain seeks to force his way. Nor is this a thicket merely of twigs and foliage, that will fall under the knife or cutlass, but of thickest limbs and stout trunks, only to be severed with difficulty, on account of the toughness and unyielding nature of the wood.

The scentless blossoms expand late in April, and in May and June, but are not very copiously produced in comparison with the majority of its congeners.

Of the wood, cups, spoons, and ladles are made by the Bhotas, and universally the little "Yak" saddle, by means of which the pack-loads are slung on the back of that animal. Easily worked, and not apt to split, it is admirably adapted for use in the parched and arid climate of Tibet. Nor is the foliage without its allotted use. The leaves are employed as platters, and serve for lining baskets for conveying the mashed pulp of *Arisema* root (a kind of Colocass); and the accustomed present of butter or curd is always made enclosed in this glossy foliage.

Such are the characteristics of this *Rhododendron*, which I desire to dedicate to my excellent friend and generous host, B. H. Hodgson, Esq., of Darjeeling, formerly the Hon. East India Company's Resident at the Court of Nepal; a gentleman whose researches in the physical geography, the natural history, especially the zoology, the ethnology, the literature of the people, &c. &c., of Eastern Himalaya, are beyond all praise.

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Tab. XV. *Rhododendron Bhotense*. Fig. 1. Flower—*natural size*. 2. Stamen. 3. Petal. 4. Section of ovary—*magnified*. 5. Capsule—*natural size*. 6. Seed with its oil. 7. Seed deprived of its oil. 8. Vertical section of a seed—*magnified*.

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From the Archives - continued from page 6

two weeks earlier than previous years.

Because the rhodie 'diver' in the family has slavishly labeled every plant (and relabeled as the coyotes chew off the labels), I knew the name of this plant when I started, although I may not pronounce it correctly. Because the name on the plant label starts with an *R*. I know it is a species rather than a hybrid.

I'm a dabbler, not a diver, so don't expect me to know the Latin names and parentage of 700 rhododendrons. But when you come to visit us, you can expect to be introduced to 'reddish-brown', my *R. rubiginosum*.

Ginny Fearing

**The world famous Fraser South Beer Bottle Truss Show will be held at our May meeting, Wednesday, May 15th.**



This is a fun event in which everyone can participate.

1. Entry to the hall will be by bringing at least one truss. It is not necessary that it be a rhododendron.

2. There will be three areas for display:  
a. competitive rhododendron

trusses

- b. non-competitive rhododendron trusses
- c. companion plant displays, including bonsai

3. To assist in deciding which class to enter, an Advisory Panel will provide guidance and make any final decisions necessary.

4. All trusses must be in glass bottles. (Cans and plastic pop bottles are too unstable.)

5. Judging will be by member votes. Having given up on the too-sticky and too-tasty Smarties, we will be continuing with the counting beads used for the last few years. Just drop your bead in the receptacle in front of the truss you wish to vote for.

6. All entries to be rhododendrons (not azaleas) unless otherwise specifically noted.

**Division I**

**Species Classes**

- Class 1. Sub-genus 'Rhododendron' (lepidotes)
- Class 2. Azalea (deciduous and evergreen)
- Class 3. Sub-genus 'Hymenantes' (elepidotes)

**Division II**

**Hybrid Classes**

- Class 4. Any lepidote hybrid
- Class 5. Any deciduous azalea hybrid
- Class 6. Any evergreen azalea hybrid

**Colour Classes (rhododendrons only)**

- Class 7a: Red - (small)
- Class 7b: Red - (large)

- Class 8a: White - (small)
- Class 8b: White - (large)

- Class 9a: Pink - (small)
- Class 9b: Pink - (large)
- Class 9c: Pink - (really, really, large)
- Class 10a: Yellow & Cream (small)
- Class 10b: Yellow & Cream (large)
- Class 11a: Mauve & Purple (small)
- Class 11b: Mauve & Purple (large)
- Class 12: Orange
- Class 13: Bi-colour

**Division III**

**Special Classes**

- Class 14: "What's it Called" - best new non-registered hybrid - a special class for the hybridizer
- Class 15: Truss with the Best Fuzzy Foliage
- Class 16a: Best Blotched (small)
- Class 16b: Best Blotched (large)
- Class 17: Best Speckled
- Class 18: Most Lurid
- Class 19: Best Last Year's Truss
- Class 20: Most Elegantly Weevil-Notched
- Class 21: Best Hammerhead
- Class 22: Most Flaccid
- Class 23a: Best Miniature - under 6" (species)
- Class 23b: Best Miniature - under 6" (hybrid)
- Class 24a: Most Fragrant - Rhododendron
- Class 24b: Most Fragrant - Azalea
- Class 25: Bridesmaid (for anyone not previously an award winner)

**Judged**

Lionheart Award: best over-all yellow, any Class

**Definitions:**

- 1. Small - 6" or under
- 2. Large - 6" to 10"
- 3. Really, Really, Large - over 10"
- 4. Blotch - each individual flower shows a solid colour mark on dorsal lobe (or three lobes), distinctly different from the base colour of the flower.
- 5. Lurid - most vividly garish
- 6. Hammerhead - an inflorescence which arises from more than a single flower bud
- 7. Speckled - distinguished from blotches by non-solid colour sprinkles and spots, either around entire flower, or at least on upper lobe(s) - e.g. 'Paprika Spiced'