



# THE YAK

Volume 34, Number 1

January 2020



*R. moupinense*

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

<http://frasersoutherhododendron.ca>

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

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

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

**Cover:** *R. moupinense*



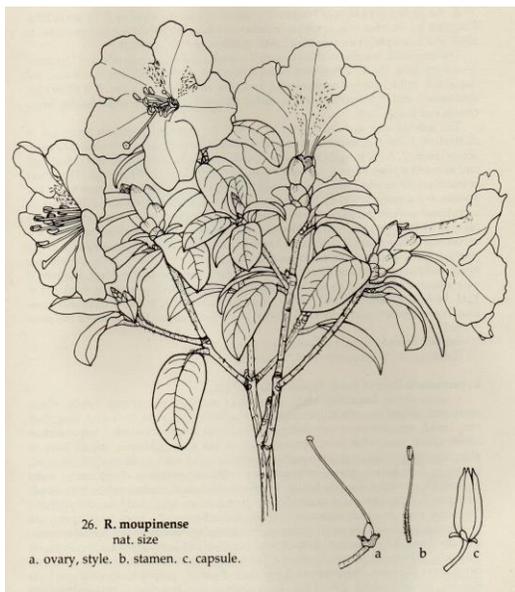
William Spohn

*Predominant Flower Color:* White, Pink, Red  
*Flower/Truss Description:* Openly funnel-campanulate, white often tinged pink, pink to deep rose-red. Inflorescence 1-2 flowered.  
*Fragrant:* No

*Bloom Time:* Very Early to Early; one of the earliest species to bloom  
*Foliage Description:* Leaves narrowly ovate to elliptic or obovate, up to 1¾" long.  
*Plant Habit:* Fairly compact to lax, straggly shrub  
*Height:* 2 feet in 10 years.  
*Cold Hardiness Temp:* 0°F (-18°C)

Elepidote (E) or Lepidote (L): L  
Sub Genus: *Rhododendron*  
Section: *Rhododendron*  
Sub Section: *Moupinensia*

Geographical Origin: China (C Sichuan, NE Yunnan, Guizhou)



26. *R. moupinense*  
nat. size  
a. ovary, style. b. stamen. c. capsule.

Source: Davidian

## This Month

Annual General Meeting and "Just Desserts Extravaganza"



Forget your New Year's resolutions for an evening and bring your favorite dessert to share with the group.

Also on the books is the Annual General Meeting where all AGM related items will be addressed.

**Date:** Wednesday, January 15, 2020.

**Kitchen Duties:** Lois Williams & Gail Floyd

## Next Month

**Date:** Wednesday, February 19, 2020 at 7:30 pm.

**Ron Long** - "The Beauty and Challenge of Flower Photography" (Their beauty is the challenge)

"I have given many talks that included hundreds of my wildflower photographs from around the world. This talk is a little different. I'm billing it as an instructional talk on how to make great flower photos and it will include tips that will be helpful to photographers. However the real purpose of this talk is to provide an excuse for me to present a collection of my very best flower photographs, most of which have not been seen before now. Non-photographer plant lovers and those who appreciate the beauty, art and design of nature will find much to enjoy." Ron Long

## 2019 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	250-614-6626
	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

Happy New Year to all, and I hope everyone's Christmas season was all you expected it to be, and more! We were fortunate to not catch any flu, and were very happy to have the kids and grandkids all here for Christmas Day turkey dinner, instead of the Boxing Day finger food buffet we usually have. I'm hoping the upcoming cold spell will not be too severe after all this warmer weather, although I would have really liked a bit of snow for Christmas.

On another note, we as a club have some serious business to address. At the December meeting, I mentioned that two of our volunteer positions, namely Membership Chair and Hospitality Coordinator, will be coming up for change this year, as the very capable ladies currently there would like to pass them on. Either position would suit a single person or a pair to share to duties, but neither position is an onerous responsibility.

Ginny, Lois and Gail will be very willing to explain all the details to the new candidates. Also, Shawn has regretfully asked to be released from director duties, and so another person will be needed to fill that position. I would prefer that someone step up without any arm-twisting – there are only 4 or 5 meetings per year, on a Tuesday evening in a member's home, so not a huge commitment there either. I know we all have busy lives, with many commitments and challenges, but our club depends on cooperation from all the members to make it work.

Please consider these requests, discuss with friends or partners, and I hope to see some new people step forward. Thank you.

Let's have a good attendance at the AGM ( don't worry, no one is ever railroaded into any position ), and we'll enjoy a last hurrah of loading up on sweets for at least ' til Valentine's Day, and see some interesting photos.

Respectfully, *Colleen B.*

## Upcoming events

Fraser South Rhododendron Society Wednesday January 15, 2020 7:30 pm	The Annual General Meeting and "Just Desserts Extravaganza".
Vancouver Rhododendron Society Thursday January 16, 2020 7:30 pm	Cancelled
Fraser South Rhododendron Society Wednesday February 19, 2020 7:30 pm	<p>Ron Long - The Beauty and Challenge of Flower Photography (Their beauty is the challenge)</p> <p><b>Bio:</b> Ron Long was the sciences photographer at Simon Fraser University for 36 years. Over fifty years ago he developed an interest in native plants and flowers have been his favourite photographic subject ever since. Now retired, Ron travels to botanical hotspots around the world. Recent travels have taken him to Southern Africa (6x) South and Central America (6x), Australia and numerous botanical locations in North America. Ron is a past president of the Native Plant Society of BC, is a past board member of the Alpine Garden Club of BC and is active in the Botany section of the Vancouver Natural History society.</p>
Vancouver Rhododendron Society Thursday February, 17 2020 7:30 pm	TBA

## Upcoming Conferences

### ARS 2020 Spring Conference <https://ars75.org>

- ARS 75th Anniversary Convention, Apr. 29 - May 3, 2020, Portland, Oregon.

### ARS 2021 Spring Conference

- ARS Annual Convention, June 3 - 6, 2021, Annapolis Valley, Nova Scotia, Canada.

## Darts Hill Events: [www.dartshill.ca](http://www.dartshill.ca)

### - Members' Day, Sunday, January 12, 2020 11 - 3

Visit the garden in winter!

### - AGM – March 7, 2020 10:00am - 12:00pm

Susan Murray - Featured Speaker: "Rare and Unusual Plants of SW Australia"  
Douglas Justice - "Show and Tell" of Darts Hill Garden Park Plants

# From the Editor

Happy New Year Everyone! I hope everyone had a good holiday season and is looking forward to the 2020 rhododendron season.

We had an excellent turnout for our December potluck Christmas dinner. As usual the food was excellent, varied and as always, no duplicates. Thanks to everyone that attended and contributed to the feast.



As promised, Colleen stayed away from the rhododendron themed quiz but managed to put our minds to work with her “Places in B.C .” quiz. I’d never heard of some of the places but Colleen assured us that all the quiz answers could indeed be found on a map of the province. Did anyone verify this?

Our table decorations, as seen to the left, were also crafted by our talented leader. I was fortunate enough to be gifted the centerpiece by our tables actual winner. Mid-January and even after sporadically following the “water daily” instructions, it is still showing no signs of deterioration. Thanks Colleen!

As suggested by the Nature Conservancy of Canada, we have left our real Christmas tree in the yard as a gift to the wildlife. Too late this year to go into the details on this, so for anyone that gets a real tree for Christmas, you’ll have to wait for the December YAK for the details! The mild weather seemed to be on everyone’s mind over Christmas. December was mild causing numerous buds on both the rhododendrons and the magnolias to swell. Our witch hazel came out in mid-December and our first rhododendron has started to bloom. Bulbs are starting to poke their heads out of the ground. Will we escape the wrath of winter this year? So far January has brought lots of rain and wind. I don’t mind one or the other but the two together ..... enough said!

For those of you wondering how much gardening you’ll be able to do this month, I’ve included the Farmers Almanac forecast for the month of January below. Looks somewhat iffy to me. My backyard feathered friends have been harrassed by hawks the last couple of weeks and have now decided to move their feeding activities to feeders unknown. Its been very quiet at the feeders except for the squirrels and various woodpeckers. Hopefully the hawks will move on soon and activity can resume as normal. I still have to keep my hummingbird feeders full!

This month we’re starting a new series that is closer to home and certainly more recent than Joseph Dalton Hooker and his findings published in 1849. (I did really love the botanical plates). As always, it is a challenge to come up with things that will be of interest to the group. So once again, if there is anything you’d like to see or contribute to the YAK please send them my way.

Don’t let the thought of attending an AGM this month put you off coming to this months meeting. The business activities are quickly and efficiently handled and then the desserts extravaganza and member slide shows begin. I attended last year and it was an enjoyable evening.

*Maureen Worden*

January 2020 Long Range Weather Forecast for Southern British Columbia (Source: Farmer’s Almanac 2020)

Dates	Weather Conditions
Jan 1-4	Showers coast; snow showers, very cold inland
Jan 5-8	Snow, then sunny, cold
Jan 9-14	Rainy periods, turning mild coast; snow showers, cold inland
Jan 15-18	Rainy coast; snow showers inland; mild
Jan 19-31	Snow showers, very cold
January	temperature -1°C (2°C below avg.) precipitation 200mm (avg.)

# From the Archives

The following article originally appeared in the Fraser South Newsletter, April 2011 by Brenda MacDonald



## *R. dauricum*

One of the two members of subsection Rhodorastra, *R. dauricum* is the darling of the winter-weary rhododendron lover, with some varieties blossoming as early as December or January. This in itself should not be sufficient to receive much attention, as there seem to be no end of species that can be fooled by mild winter weather into putting out their blooms early, only to have both blooms and buds turned to brown mush by a cold break. It is to *dauricum*'s great credit that such late frosts seem to have no effect on the blossoms at all - they simply wait out the cold, and continue on when the temperature warms up again. This characteristic, along with its slightly thicker leaves and semi-evergreen habit are what chiefly differentiate it from the other member of Rhodorastra, *R. mucronulatum*.

Usually found in the pale to deep rosy-purple colour range, *dauricum* can also be found in a deeper purple, and sometimes pink or white. Its widely funnel-shaped blossoms are usually about 2 - 5 cm across, with a prominent style, and arranged in terminal or sometimes axillary inflorescences of 1 to 3.

Despite its wide variability in colour, habit, and the amount of winter leaf retention, *dauricum* can often be identified by its densely lepidote lower leaf surfaces. The scales are initially translucent, then turn brown, and are often so numerous they overlap.

*Dauricum*, like its cousin *mucronulatum*, has been used in a wide variety of crosses, as hybridizers strove to impart its cold-hardiness and floriferous nature to other species with other colours and habits. Many of these crosses have become staples in our gardens, for what would the early spring garden be without 'Olive' displaying its subdued but oh-so-welcome mauvey-pink, tissue paper puffs along its almost bare arms.

*Brenda Macdonald*



Engraving by Weddell, 1817  
Curtis's Botanical Magazine

It is hard to know whether it is the extreme age of the engraving, or artistic licence that has resulted in the colour of the blossoms in the engraving to the left being far more red than is usually seen within this species. The photo at right captures a more typical colour for *R. dauricum*.

Species and their Hybrids		pollen ♂	
		B	b
pistil ♀	B	BB	Bb
	b	Bb	bb





All photos harvested from the wonderful  
 "Hirsutum" site  
[www.hirsutum.info/index.html](http://www.hirsutum.info/index.html)

We now come to a grab-bag of mystery plants. During the 1970's both Messrs Mezitt and Mehlquist were busy creating a number of hybrids using either or both of *dauricum* and *mucronulatum*. And it was during that same period of time that the hybrids pictured here were developed. Unfortunately, however, the exact crosses (and in the case of 'April Mist', even the person who did the cross) are unknown. They all bear a certain resemblance and are all sterile hybrids, as they are missing their anthers.

'April Mist', upper left, is unregistered, with neither hybridizer nor parents documented, but it has a lovely ghostly mauve colour and a perky little truss that make it look like a miniature wedding pom-pom.

'April White', upper right, registered 1972 - Mehlquist, with unknown parentage, is virtually indistinguishable from 'April Snow', registered 1978 - Mezitt, with similarly mysterious antecedents.

'Emasculatum', middle left, is not only the only hybrid whose lost anthers have not been converted to an extra whorl of petals, it is the only one whose provenance is known: *R. ciliatum* x *R. dauricum*, 1927 - Waterer. Note that the style is as prominent here as in the other hybrids.

'April Rose', lower left, was registered 1972 - Mehlquist, but again the parentage is not documented. It has the same tight ball as April Mist, but its darker colour and more angular petals give it quite a different look.

*Brenda Macdonald*



top left *R. dauricum*, a pink form

middle left *R. 'Ernie Dee'* keeps almost all of its leaves during the winter, and has a small, tight, mounding habit  
*R. dauricum* x *R. racemosum*,  
1968, Caperci

below left *R. 'April Dawn'*  
*R. minus Carolinianum* Group x *R. dauricum*,  
1972, Mehlquist

top right *R. 'Olive'*  
*R. moupinense* x *R. dauricum*,  
1936, Stirling-Maxwell

*From the Garden*

Witch-Hazel

*Hamamelis x  
intermedia*  
'Jelena'



*R. ririei*

# Ted and Mary Greig Rhododendron Garden

This month we start a new series on “50 rhododendrons of interest” in the Ted and Mary Greig Rhododendron garden in Stanley Park”. (Source: City of Vancouver)

“For gardeners, the best part of Stanley Park is the Ted and Mary Greig Garden, which encircles the pitch and putt golf course off Lagoon Drive. There is no arguing about the beauty of the park’s forest of tall trees and the awesome ocean views and people-friendly paths and play areas. Something to be proud of, for sure.

But for gardeners, for avid green thumbs looking for botanical treasures and keen to see something rare and out of the ordinary, there is nothing in the park like the Ted and Mary Greig Garden. It has personality, history and a unique quiriness that is in many ways perhaps more characteristic of Vancouver and the West Coast than more familiar, predictable features in the park.

The Greig garden covers 2.4 hectares, tiny when you realize that the whole park occupies more than 400 hectares. With Lost Lagoon on one side, Ceperley Meadow on another and separated from the bustling West End by Lagoon Drive, the Greig garden is a peaceful, dappled woodland oasis, gracefully intersected by narrow, meandering stroll paths.

But this gem, a ribbon of rare beauty wrapped around the manicured lawns of the golfing area, contains an extraordinary botanical inventory of more than 4,500 plants, including many world-class rhododendrons, dozens of specialty trees and an exceptional azalea walk.

Many of the rhododendrons were acquired at a bargain price from the couple the garden is named after — Ted and Mary Greig, who were owners of a specialty nursery in Royston on Vancouver Island.

When the Greigs decided to close their nursery, they wanted to sell the entire stock in one go. The park board saw an opportunity and ended up acquiring 8,000 rhodos for a song. The best went to the Greig garden, but the bounty was shared by parks across the city.”

Excerpt from Steve Whysall, The Vancouver Sun, August 19, 2003



The plaque reads:

The Ted and Mary Greig Rhododendron Garden

Dedicated to Ted and Mary Greig, pioneers in Rhododendron culture in British Columbia. They were awarded a gold medal by the American Rhododendron Society in 1965. The Greigs established a nursery at Royston on Vancouver Island in 1935. Their Rhododendron collection was acquired by the Vancouver Parks Board in 1966. Some of the Greig hybrids in this garden are unique in that they combine fragrance with mid-summer bloom, both rare qualities in Rhododendrons.

This plaque dedicated June, 1989.

Vancouver Rhododendron Society

# TED and MARY GREIG RHODODENDRON GARDEN

## 50 Rhododendrons of Interest



### 1 *Rhododendron* 'Aladdin'

'Aladdin' is a late-blooming hybrid that has large, watermelon-coloured flowers. It is tall, and can be leggy and may occasionally require some pruning. This is a Royston Nursery hybrid that features the desirable characteristics of being scented and summer-blooming, both of which are highly unusual amongst rhododendrons.

### 2 *Rhododendron ambiguum*



*Rhododendron ambiguum* has small, pale yellow flowers and dark green, medium-sized leaves with yellowish-brown scales underneath. These leaves are quite aromatic when crushed or bruised. It has a compact, upright habit.

### 3 *Rhododendron* 'Anna Rose Whitney'



'Anna Rose Whitney' is a very dependable rhododendron for its large, deep pink flowers held in large rounded trusses. It also has nice olive-green foliage and a vigorous habit. It blooms late in the rhododendron season, towards the end of May.

### 4 *Rhododendron arboretum*

*Rhododendron arboretum* produces medium-sized pink, cup-shaped flowers that are held in tight trusses of 15-20. Its clover-green leaves are smooth, oblong and tough, and have silvery plastered indumentum on their undersides.



### 5 *Rhododendron* 'Atlantimum'

*Rhododendron* 'Atlantimum' has small, pink, narrowly tubular flowers which are fragrant and which open just as its leaves be-

gin to emerge in early May. These are held in clusters of 4-10 flowers. Its foliage is small, smooth and dark bluish-green. It has a compact, upright growth habit.

### 6 *Rhododendron augustinii*

*Rhododendron augustinii* is a species rhododendron that has delicate flowers that are a nearly iridescent shade of pale purple. It has smooth, narrow, dark green leaves that have densely scaly undersides. The colour of the flowers on a single plant may vary slightly from year to year.



### 7 *Rhododendron auriculatum*

*Rhododendron auriculatum* is noted for its grand stature and fragrant, extremely late-blooming flowers which appear in July. The flowers of the true *Rhododendron auriculatum* species are typically pure white, or occasionally pale pink, with a slight green blotch in the throat, but this particular specimen is a hybrid and has light salmon-pink flowers. *Rhododendron auriculatum* has enormous leaves – more than a foot long in some cases – and a strong, tree-like branching pattern. These final two characteristics make it an impressive plant anytime of the year, regardless of whether flowers are present or not.



*Rhododendron auriculatum* and its hybrids were a signature of Royston Nursery, owned by Ted and Mary Greig – after whom the garden is named and from where most of the rhododendrons in this garden came from during the 1960s.

### 8 *Rhododendron* 'Azor'

June sees *Rhododendron* 'Azor' develop striking clusters of wide salmon-pink flowers with brownish flecks in the throat. This tall, late-blooming hybrid is not to be missed. It is very similar to *Rhododendron* 'Aladdin.'