



THE YAK

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Banana Flip

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 40th Ave.
Langley, B.C.

From the Editor

As July 1st approaches and we are adapting to the “new normal” beyond our home, I continue to be grateful for the garden and the daily visitors that frequent the garden for a normal that hasn’t changed over the past few months.

June has been a trying month for a lot of reasons. The cool/warm/cool weather has resulted in a large number of perennials blooming later than they have in recent years. A lot of them are also about 1/3 taller than they usually are. This change will however provide a colourful July and August as the rhododendron blooms are finished and the emerging new growth and buds will add to the colour. Vegetable garden production is ramping up providing lots of fresh vegetables and all the fruit trees were pollinated with multiple varieties of apples, pears, and blueberries are currently in production to be enjoyed in the future.

This month we conclude our series on the Ted and Mary Greig Garden in Stanley Park and also include a map of its location in the park along with the location for all 50 rhododendrons covered in the series.

Links to virtual gardens are also available if you are missing garden tours this year. John and Gael Dodd have kindly provided some wonderful pictures of their garden that we unfortunately missed due to the cancellation of their open garden.

While work never ends in the garden, I am looking forward to some warmer weather where we can sit back, relax, and enjoy.

As the “new normal” moves forward over the summer months I hope you all remain well and partake in activities you enjoy.

Take care and I look forward to the fall where hopefully the FSRs can once again connect with each other.

Maureen Worden

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Virtual Garden Links

If you have missed garden tours this year, sit back and enjoy some or all of the following that have been made due to garden closures this year, including a virtual Chelsea Garden show.

RHS Garden Wilsley

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FhFQj-fyJ_8&feature=emb_logo

Gorwell Garden, Barnstaple Devon

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC4EAftSqU8yBtTuTo1Ppd1Q>

David Millais Nurseries

<https://www.facebook.com/MillaisNurseries/>

Queensland, Australia - Vireyas

<https://youtu.be/NG1X6RPz4Eg>

RSBG – Steve Hootman

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-IzakFzz8RE>

The Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh

<https://www.rbge.org.uk/collections/rhododendrons-a-unique-collection/>

Chelsea Virtual Garden Show 2020

<https://www.rhs.org.uk/shows-events/virtual-chelsea/catch-up>

From the Archives



The following article originally appeared in the Fraser South Newsletter, June 2008 by Harold Fearing

I wanted to write this month about the deciduous azalea species, in part because they tend to be late, generally blooming from late May into July. Somewhat coincidentally there was a very interesting article in the latest Journal of the ARS in which a group of dedicated amateur enthusiasts teamed up with some academic molecular biologists to identify a new species in this group which had been overlooked for years - but more of that later.

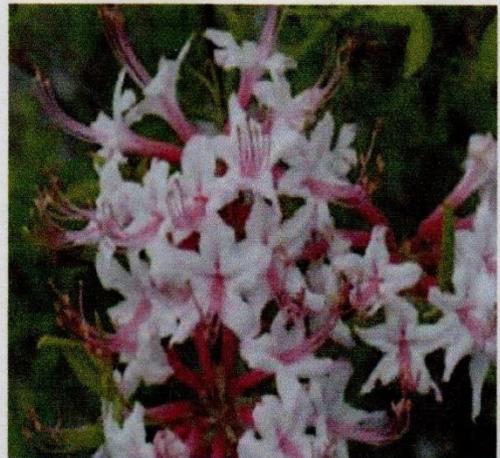
These azaleas, from the section Pentanthera, consist of about twenty species, most of which are native to the woods and mountains of the southeastern US, from Virginia down through the Carolinas, Georgia, Alabama and Florida. Despite this southern origin, they seem to be perfectly hardy here. They are all deciduous, with leaves 2-3 times as long as wide, tapering at both ends. The leaves are similar to many of our common hybrid azaleas.

The distinctive feature of most of the species are the flowers, which have long narrow tubes with flaring lobes at the end. The 5 stamens and the style extend past the end of the flower, sometimes by several centimeters. The books claim up to 20 flowers in a cluster, but most of those I have seen have more like 4-8.

For us, the first to bloom are *R. canescens*, *R. periclymenoides*, and *R. prinophyllum*, all of which are nearing the end of bloom now. These three are very similar, with long rose colored tubes and lighter pink lobes. *R. canescens* is the showiest, at least for us, as it blooms before there are very many leaves, and thus makes a lacy cloud of pink. The other two seem to come out more with the leaves and so are nice, but not quite as showy, at least that is true for the clones we have.

A very nice member of this group, currently in bloom, is *R. atlanticum* which is usually white perhaps marked with pink, sometimes with a very long (4 cm) tube. It is also very fragrant, so that one can smell it from some feet away. Its leaves are smaller and rounder than the others and tend to be a gray green. Unlike most of the others, it spreads by stolons (underground roots), so that after a few years it forms a low spreading clump.

R. alabamense is also white, and also currently blooming. Some of the pictures make it look spectacular, white with a yellow blotch, but



The very similar *R. canescens*, above, and *R. periclymenoides*, below. Generally, the *R. canescens* flowers blossom slightly before the leaves expand, creating a showier garden display





R. atlanticum, showing its exceptionally long floral tube and exerted stigma and stamens. The intoxicatingly fragrant and fuss-free cultivar *R. 'Snowbird'* is *atlanticum* x *canescens*; it also presents with long tubular flowers tipped with pink.

the clone I have has been pretty puny and slow to bloom. *R. viscosum* will bloom in June. It too is white or very pale pink, very nice and very fragrant. *R. arborescens* is a similar white, fragrant, late bloomer which is widespread throughout the Southeast US. *R. eastmanii* is a newly described member of this group, also white. Neither of these last two have bloomed for me yet, so I don't have personal experience with them.



R. alabamense is snowy white and fragrant, but its smaller blossom size and the fully expanded leaves when it blooms make it a somewhat less spectacular garden choice.

There are also yellow and orange varieties. *R. austrinum* is blooming now. The flowers on ours are yellow, tinged with orange and are fairly small, though that may be because the plant is still quite small. Again

some of the pictures I have seen make it look much more dramatic than ours has been so far. *R. calendulaceum*, which is just starting, is however quite nice. It comes in yellow or orange shades. The flowers are larger than some of the others, and come out with the leaves, and so make a nice contrast with new green of the leaves. I think it is as nice as most of the hybrid azaleas. Another more



R. austrinum



R. calendulaceum

familiar species is *R. luteum*. It is actually a native of Europe, from Turkey and adjoining areas. It is bright yellow, often quite fragrant, and very showy. One should also mention our native west coast azalea, *R. occidentale*. It is quite variable. It can be white with a yellow blotch or various shades and variegations of yellow, orange or red. It is sometimes double as well and is usually nicely

fragrant, though the very first one I had, smelled like turpentine. It blooms much later. The buds on ours have not even started to swell as yet.

Finally there are also reds. *R. flammeum*, which I don't know much about, can be yellow or red. *R. cumberlandense* (which used to be called *R. bakeri*) and *R. prunifolium* are usually bright red or orange red. They bloom quite late, into July for us, with flowers coming after the leaves are fully out. They are nice to have, as they extend the blooming past the time when most other rhodos are gone.

But now back to the ARS Journal article I mentioned at the beginning. It seems that since the 1950's people were aware of a May blooming azalea, white or pink, with relatively large flowers which could be found in parts of Georgia and Alabama. It was propagated and widely distributed by local nurseries. It had



R. luteum, native to the Caucasus and Eastern Europe is somewhat more familiar to many gardeners, partly as a result of its extensive use in the early hybridizing frenzy that produced such collections as the Ghent azaleas.



Native to the West Coast, the blossoms of *R. occidentale* are large, fragrant, flamboyant and variable. One of the largest stands of this spectacular shrub exists as a sort of hybrid swarm with an amazing variety of forms, just north of Eureka, California.

been formally identified as *R. alabamense* or sometimes *R. alabamense* × *R. canescens* by the experts, and appeared in local gardens and many herbaria under those names. According to the article it had been distributed as *R. alabamense* by the RSF and by the ARS seed exchange. A group of local amateur rhodo enthusiasts got curious though and started observing it closely. They eventually noticed that as compared to *R. alabamense* these plants tended to bloom a month later, tended to grow in wetter locations, and were often large and multi-stemmed. Somewhat by accident they connected with Ben Hall who had been doing DNA studies on the section Pentanthera. He and his group showed that, based on DNA, the section divided naturally into two clades, or groups. The first contained *atlanticum*, *calendulaceum*, *austrinum*, *luteum* and this new azalea. The second contained the rest, in particular *alabamense* and *canescens*. Also somewhat accidentally they became aware of some work at NC State University studying the chromosome count of this group of rhododendrons. The new one was tested and found to be a

tetraploid, which means it has twice the usual number of chromosomes. All of the others in the first clade were also tetraploid whereas those in the second clade were the usual diploid. Thus from both observational characteristics and genetic information this could not be *R. alabamense*, but had to be a new species, which they named *R. colemanii*. So even the amateurs like most of us can make a contribution if we observe carefully.

As an interesting footnote to this story is a second article in the ARS Journal which constitutes the formal scientific publication of the new species name. It describes in fairly technical language the genetic studies done and has a page of detailed description of the observational details of the plant, its distribution and habitat. It also contains a paragraph in Latin formally describing the plant, which I guess is a requirement for naming a new species by the rules of botanical nomenclature. What is amusing is that this Latin description contains words like 'tetraploid', 'DNA', and 'genome'. Thus I imagine that it would be just as unintelligible to Caesar himself, though perhaps for different reasons, as it is to me, one who is 50 years from high school Latin!

So....the section Pentanthera contains quite a few very nice rhodos, valuable for their late blooming, and in some cases for their fragrance. If you just have a small garden you should at least have specimens of *atlanticum* and *luteum*, both of which bloom well, don't get too big, and are very fragrant. For the larger garden it would be nice to have *occidentale*, because it is our west coast native, *calendulaceum*, because it is nice, one or two of the pink or white ones -- *canescens* and *viscosum* would be my choices -- and perhaps one of the red very late bloomers, *cumberlandense* or *prunifolium*.



R. prunifolium

All photos by
Harold Fearing

Harold Fearing

From the Garden



Golden Gate



R. flinckii



Thor



R. magniflorum



R. pseudochrysanthum



Double Winner

From John and Gael Dodd's Garden



Ted and Mary Greig Rhododendron Garden

The final installment of the “50 rhododendrons of interest” in the Ted and Mary Greig Rhododendron garden, along with a map on where to find them in Stanley Park. (Source: City of Vancouver)

no liabilities of any kind.

46 *Rhododendron* 'The Honorable Jean Marie de Montague'



'Jean Marie de Montague' is known as one of the best and most reliable red-flowered rhododendrons. It has thick, heavy, sun-tolerant foliage and produces flower buds at a young age. This particular specimen was also a wedding present to former Greig Rhododendron Garden head gardener Alleyne Cook and his wife Barbara from their friend Ellen Haley.

47 *Rhododendron* 'Unique'



'Unique' is another popular, commonly planted rhododendron due to its fail-safe nature. Its creamy-white flowers emerge from pale pink buds and are arranged in dense, prolific trusses.

48 *Rhododendron* 'Wedding Present'



Rhododendron 'Wedding Present' literally was just that – another wedding present to Alleyne and Barbara Cook. This vivid red-orange flowered rhododendron was hybridized and named especially for the occasion.

49 *Rhododendron* 'Whitney's Orange'



'Whitney's Orange' is one of the best orange flowers to be found amongst rhododendrons. It has widely funnel-shaped coral pink-orange flowers with a reddish-orange blotch and wavy margins, which are held in trusses of about 15 flowers. It has moss-green leaves and a low growth habit with decumbent branches.

50 *Rhododendron* 'Yellow Hammer'

Rhododendron 'Yellow Hammer' has tiny, lantern-shaped, pale yellow flowers and very small glossy

green leaves. It has an upright, leggy habit and can even, if planted en masse, be trimmed into a hedge. Unlike most yellow rhododendrons, 'Yellow Hammer' will do well in a sunny location.





- | | | | |
|----|---------------------------------------------|----|------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | <i>Rhododendron</i> 'Aladdin' | 26 | <i>Rhododendron</i> 'Impi' |
| 2 | <i>Rhododendron</i> <i>ambiguum</i> | 27 | <i>Rhododendron</i> 'Lady Clementine Mitford' |
| 3 | <i>Rhododendron</i> 'Anna Rose Whitney' | 28 | <i>Rhododendron</i> 'May Day' |
| 4 | <i>Rhododendron</i> <i>arboretum</i> | 29 | <i>Rhododendron</i> 'Moonstone' |
| 5 | <i>Rhododendron</i> 'Atlanticum' | 30 | <i>Rhododendron</i> 'Mrs. A.T. de la Mare' |
| 6 | <i>Rhododendron</i> <i>augustinii</i> | 31 | <i>Rhododendron</i> 'Mrs. Furnival' |
| 7 | <i>Rhododendron</i> <i>auriculatum</i> | 32 | <i>Rhododendron</i> 'Naomi Hope' |
| 8 | <i>Rhododendron</i> 'Azor' | 33 | <i>Rhododendron</i> 'Naomi Nautilus' |
| 9 | <i>Rhododendron</i> 'Baden Baden' | 34 | <i>Rhododendron</i> <i>occidentale</i> |
| 10 | <i>Rhododendron</i> 'Beauty of Littleworth' | 35 | <i>Rhododendron</i> 'Palestrina' |
| 11 | <i>Rhododendron</i> 'Beethoven' | 36 | <i>Rhododendron</i> 'Point Def ance' |
| 12 | <i>Rhododendron</i> 'Bonfre' | 37 | <i>Rhododendron</i> 'President Roosevelt' |
| 13 | <i>Rhododendron</i> 'Chionoides' | 38 | <i>Rhododendron</i> 'Professor Hugo de Vries' |
| 14 | <i>Rhododendron</i> 'Cilpinense' | 39 | <i>Rhododendron</i> 'Purple Splendor' |
| 15 | <i>Rhododendron</i> <i>cinnabarinum</i> x | 40 | <i>Rhododendron</i> 'Royston Red' |
| 16 | <i>Rhododendron</i> 'Crest' | 41 | <i>Rhododendron</i> 'Sappho' |
| 17 | <i>Rhododendron</i> 'Cunningham's White' | 42 | <i>Rhododendron</i> <i>schlippenbachii</i> |
| 18 | <i>Rhododendron</i> <i>decorum</i> | 43 | <i>Rhododendron</i> 'Scintillation' |
| 19 | <i>Rhododendron</i> 'Electra' | 44 | <i>Rhododendron</i> <i>smirnowii</i> |
| 20 | <i>Rhododendron</i> 'Elizabeth' | 45 | <i>Rhododendron</i> 'Susan' |
| 21 | <i>Rhododendron</i> 'Fabia' | 46 | <i>Rhododendron</i> 'The Honorable Jean Marie de Montague' |
| 22 | <i>Rhododendron</i> 'Fatuosum Flore Pleno' | 47 | <i>Rhododendron</i> 'Unique' |
| 23 | <i>Rhododendron</i> <i>fortunei</i> x | 48 | <i>Rhododendron</i> 'Wedding Present' |
| 24 | <i>Rhododendron</i> 'George Watling' | 49 | <i>Rhododendron</i> 'Whitney's Orange' |
| 25 | <i>Rhododendron</i> 'Haydn' | 50 | <i>Rhododendron</i> 'Yellow Hammer' |

From the Library

New to the Library:

This book is a contribution from the late Scott Henney of Maple Ridge. He was a member of the Maple Ridge Rhododendron Society and one of the principles in establishment of the Wonnock Rhododendron Garden.

Heligan Survivors was published in 2008 by Heligan Gardens. Philip McMillan Browse inspired, edited and wrote several of the descriptive chapters. The book is only 64 pages but had glorious colour photographs of these “survivor” plants.

The initial chapters discuss the Tremaynes, the creators of the gardens, the nurserymen and plant collectors that contributed to the collection and Sir Joseph Dalton Hooker, the son of William Hooker who became the first director of KEW gardens.

Then follows descriptions of these “survivors”. Of particular interest for our group are chapters on three Rhododendron species: *R. arboretum*, *R. falconeri*, *R. niveum*. There are other chapters on magnolias and camelias.

Gerald Nemanishen , Librarian FSRS