



# THE YAK

Volume 35, Number 2

February 2021



R. Canadian Sunset

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

<http://frasersouthrhodos.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).

In person meetings are not being held at this time.

**Cover:** R. Canadian Sunset  
(yakushimanum x Gipsy King Group)



Elepidote rhododendron.

Hybridized by: R. Henny  
Grown to first flower by: E.J. Linington  
Named by: E.J. Linington  
Introduced by: E.J. Linington (1974)  
Registered by: E.J. Linington (1974)

Note: Some books also mention Lofthouse is associated with this hybrid

**Flower/Truss Description:** The buds begin a good solid/vivid red. Flower vivid red to deep pink, fading in center to pale yellowish-pink with yellow cast in a rounded truss

Fragrant: No

Bloom Time: Midseason

**Foliage Description / Plant Habit:** Upright habit.  
Leaves oblanceolate, acute apex, recurved, olive green.

Height: 3 feet in 10 years.

Cold Hardiness Temp: -5°F (-21°C)

Sources:  
- *The Encyclopedia of Rhododendron Species* by Peter A. Cox and Kenneth N.E. Cox  
- The International Rhododendron Register and Checklist, Second Edition  
- *Greer's Guide to Available Rhododendron Species and Hybrids* by Harold E. Greer  
- American Rhododendron Society

## This Month

**Date:** Wednesday, February 17, 2021 at 7:30 pm.

**Place:** Zoom meeting from the comfort of your own home

**TITLE:** Natures Carpet - Dwarf Rhododendrons from the Higher Elevations

Mike Stewart's presentation will focus on lepidote species rhododendrons from around the world. He will discuss the growing conditions, range of area found, and where these lepidote plants fit into the rhododendron classification. The program will be complimented with pictures taken in the wild, and the mountainous regions in Asia where they were discovered.

**BIO:** Mike is a past President of the American Rhododendron Society, and is the Past President of the Rhododendron Species Foundation and Botanical Garden in Federal Way, Washington. The Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden holds the largest collection of species rhododendrons in the world.

Mike and his wife Maria have recently retired as owners of the Dover Nursery. For the past 40 years, they propagated and grew over 1,200 different hybrid and species rhododendrons, shipping some 40,000 plants each spring to garden centers throughout the US and Canada. Mike received the American Rhododendron Society's highest award, the Gold Medal, for his many contributions in the areas of rhododendron cultivation, preservation, and for the information that he provides to the public.

A short AGM will follow the presentation.

## Next Month

**Date:** Wednesday, March 17, 2021 at 7:30 pm.

**Place:** Zoom meeting from the comfort of your own home

**TITLE:** 'A Hop, Skip, and Jump in Eastern Australia'  
- Ginny Fearing (FSRS)

## 2020 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
	Vacant	
Programme:	Jim Worden	604-541-4754
Membership:	Vacant	
Newsletter:	Maureen Worden	604-541-4754
Librarian:	Gerald Nemanishen	604-826-0166
Website:	Maureen Worden	604-541-4754
Hospitality:	Jim & Margaret Cadwaladr	604-427-1685
BCCGC Liaison:	Vacant	

## From the President

Here we are in February 2021, and whoever thought we'd still be in this situation, with barely an end in sight yet! Jim is doing a bang-up job lining up interesting presenters for us – Glen Jamiesen's show of the gardens and growers in Denmark, Sweden and Germany was indeed an eye-opener to the scope of Rhodos and azaleas there, and the incredible production in the nurseries. This month's show by Mr. Stewart will certainly be informative and fascinating also. I didn't get a chance to join the Monday meeting with VicRS, but I'm sure it was entertaining. Report anyone? I do hope that more members can find a way to join in the Zoom meetings – it's not perfect but it sure is nice to see smiles and hear voices. This month also we will have a short and sweet AGM meeting after the presentation, but if there are any other nominations or volunteers for positions, please speak up quickly.

Sometime later this spring when plants are blooming, it would be nice to arrange a safe get-together in a nice park with plenty to see, or a large garden center somewhere convenient to all, preferably on a Sunday (my day off). Speak up with ideas please – what's good in Langley/Surrey? ( Minter's is large and nice, and has a great little restaurant for refreshments, but it is far, I know.) There doesn't seem to be a way so far for us to hold our April plant sale unless the rules change – we can't have a gathering of cars and strangers to attract attention. So for now we'll have to get through the upcoming cold blast, say good-bye to any blooms that have dared to open, and look forward to a good spring when it comes.

Stay safe, stay healthy and stay positive.

Respectfully, *Colleen B*

## Reminders

**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 Encouraged to send their own "In the Garden" photos to the editor for inclusion in the YAK.**

## **2021 AGM Proposed Slate of Officers for 2021**



President - Colleen Bojczuk  
Vice President - Jim Worden  
Past President - Evelyn Jensen  
Treasurer - Harold Fearing  
Secretary - Barb Mathias  
Membership:  
Directors: 3rd year: Gerry Nemanishen  
1st year: Robert Talbot  
1st year: Nancy Moore

### **Appointments**

Programme: Jim Worden  
Newsletter: Maureen Worden  
Librarian: Gerry Nemanishen  
Website: Maureen Worden  
Hospitality: Jim & Margaret Cadwaladr

## **Awards**

Due to the cancellation of in person meetings in 2019, the following awards were recently presented:

### **ARS BRONZE MEDAL 2019**

Ginny Fearing – You have been a long time member of Fraser South Rhododendron Society. From the beginning you have always been a willing volunteer, going about your duties in a confident manner. You assumed the duties of Membership Chair when the position became vacant five years ago, and have carried out the duties efficiently and admirably. In thanks for these contributions, the Chapter is pleased to present you with our highest award.

### **GERRY C. EMERSON MEMORIAL AWARD 2019**

Gerald Nemanishen - You have been a volunteer at the Plant Sale, Library, and other activities of the Chapter. We particularly appreciate your willingness to step in as Librarian and later Director. We appreciate the monthly book reviews you prepare for the Yak. You are a valuable member of the Executive.

## *From the Editor*

Welcome to winter! With the Arctic air now pushing in and the occasional spurt of snowflakes the work crew and I are hunkered down inside until the temperature rises to a point where we can spend some time outside without layers of clothing. This morning for my daily walk, I had to put in the down liner in my jacket and resort to my lined rain pants to keep warm. That in addition to head band (to keep the ears warm), hat (to keep the rest of my head warm) and mittens (I find gloves do not keep the digits warm), I felt like and am sure resembled to those passing on their way to work, the Michelin Man out for a stroll.

The rhododendrons are conserving energy and anyone not knowing that the leaves shrivel to conserve energy would think we have a yard full of dead plants. The feeders are swamped with feathered friends jockeying for the food. My Douglas Squirrel(s) is still visiting to snack on peanuts and continues to cart away food to build up / replenish his stash. We've also had a flock (up to 50) of Bushtits start to make regular stops at the feeders. They prefer the suet (I use the hot pepper kind that squirrels don't like) and they cover the feeder so you only see a mass of Bushtits and can no longer see the actual feeder. Others wait in the nearby rhododendrons for their turn at the suet. They then move on mass to the gurgler and cover it jockeying for position to get a drink.



Tree pruning has been underway for the last couple of weeks. With so many old fruit trees on the property, it's not unusual that a few years go by before they are addressed. The work crew pitches in by pruning the cut branches and occasionally takes the initiative to prune a tree, and sometimes a nearby rhododendron, that are not included in the pruning initiative. I'm sure the green waste collectors wonder when they see ALL our green soldiers lined up on the boulevard every week when some of our neighbours rarely put any out.

Hair Ice. Does everyone know what this is and how rare it is? I didn't until a friend showed me pictures taken in the work crews daily walk destination of Redwood Park. I was fascinated and hope you enjoy the shots and the information / explanation on how it occurs.

While zoom meetings are not for everyone, they allow us to enjoy speakers we would not normally be able to enjoy. The presentation "Natures Carpet - Dwarf Rhododendrons from the Higher Elevations" by Mike Stewart this month, (who is from Oregon) is a prime example of this and promises to be both interesting and educational. We are very happy he's agreed to present to us via zoom.



Next month we will shift gears from rhododendrons and our own Ginny Fearing will present "A Hop, Skip, and Jump In Eastern Australia".

I hope to "see" you at both. Stay Warm!

Maureen Worden



## From the Archives

The following articles originally appeared in the Fraser South Newsletter, February 2009 by Harold Fearing



From the President

### Notes From the Chair

My original intent was to talk about early blooming species this month, but when I toured the garden today (February 2) there really wasn't anything in bloom. *R. sitchensis* and *R. ririei* were beginning to show color, but it will be at least two weeks before they are in full bloom. Instead what I saw mainly was winter damage. So, while that is not as interesting a subject, especially for gardeners impatient to see some color, it will have to do.

All plants prepare themselves for winter by 'hardening off'. What this means is that the liquid within the cells becomes more concentrated, with a lower freezing point. If this hasn't happened yet, as in new growth, or if it gets cold enough to freeze the cellular liquid anyway, then the liquid expands as it freezes and bursts the cell walls. Then we get the lettuce effect - like a lettuce leaf caught in the back of a fridge where it freezes - which destroys the leaf.

How well a plant is hardened off determines the absolute low temperature

it can stand. This year, unlike a few years ago, the cold came fairly gradually with the worst not until late December or early January. At our place we had a lot of -7 to -10 C., a few nights of -12 or -13 C and maybe one night of -15 C. This is not particularly low, and so I think this was not what caused the damage.

The other source of winter damage is the drying effect of the winds. When the sun warms the leaves a bit they give off moisture. If the ground is frozen that moisture cannot be easily replaced through the roots. If the wind is blowing, the moisture is carried away more rapidly and the leaves are literally freeze-dried, which kills them. We had lots of wind at our place, with wind chills down to -20 to -25 C, and as a consequence lots of freeze-dried leaves.

Rhododendrons have some defense mechanisms. Thick fuzzy indumentum produces a layer of dead air near the leaf, which lessens the drying effect. Thick leathery leaves with few pores also are less prone to drying out. Some rhododendrons have another mechanism. The leaves droop and curl up, which lessens the surface exposed to the wind. A Peter Wharton collection, probably related to *R. auriculatum*, which we have fully exposed in our front yard, really shows this effect. On the coldest days the leaves, which are at least 20 cm. long, were curled as tight as pencils and hanging straight down. The plant looked terrible, but when it warmed up recovered completely and showed no permanent damage.

For us the various big leaved rhododendrons suffered the worst. The leaves of *R. rex* and *R. rex* ssp. *fictilacteum* curled up somewhat on the coldest days, and they appear not to be damaged. *R. calophyllum* and *R. asterochnum* also were ok. Our plants of *R. rothschildii* and *R. hodgsonii*, all of which are pretty small and close to the ground, suffered some leaf damage, but not too much. In contrast all plants of *R. macabeanum*, *R. coriaceum*, *R. maximum*, and *R. montroseanum* (except for one *montroseanum* totally protected from the wind) will end up losing essentially all their leaves. Hopefully the plants will survive.



Winter Damage



All but one of the half dozen sub-species of *R. arboreum* were pretty badly damaged as well. *R. niveum* and *R. lanigerum*, both related to *R. arboreum*, will lose at least half of their leaves, although a couple of years ago they lost everything, and recovered just fine. Others damaged were *R. griersonianum* and *R. mallowatum*. Many of the tiny leaved species, like *R. impeditum*, seemed to have some leaf damage on the side facing the wind.

At the other end of the scale there were some surprises. *R. stamineum*, which is supposed to be hardy only to 15 F and *R. moulmainense*, which is supposedly only slightly hardier, apparently came through unscathed.

So what does one do with a plant with freeze-dried leaves? For now, I would do nothing. Wait until late May or June and see what happens. Many rhodos can lose all their leaves and recover completely, though there probably won't be any flowers this year. Some can freeze to the ground and then regrow, though that sometimes takes awhile - which is why I would suggest leaving that dead looking rhodo around until you are sure it is dead. I have a plant of which I have had for at least 20 years. Every 5 years or so it freezes to the ground, in the process killing 6 cm diameter main trunks. But, so far at least, it has always regenerated from the roots, and after a couple of years is blooming again. So don't give up hope too soon!

## Time is Our Friend

**C**reation of a garden requires so many components to make it happen. We need plants obviously and there are all kinds of those, but we also need soil, air, micro organisms, macro organisms, sun, rain, wind, vision, energy and a spouse. As Harold Johnson used to say, "Never develop a garden bigger than your wife can maintain".

But there is one element that we tend to forget or rather view it negatively. Time is one of the most misunderstood components of the successful garden. When we develop a new garden, our natural tendency is to be impatient. We plant out a bunch of plants, look at them every day, and wonder why nothing is happening. Years later we are spending all our time pruning and removing plants because of the heavy growth.

Time, however, is our friend in the garden. Once we get things in place, time takes over and all we need to do is to provide a little guidance now and then. People (generally non-gardeners) who complain about how much work a garden is, tend to forget how much work is still going on when they go back indoors or off on holiday. Every minute of the day, those plants and organisms are working away to construct your vision. Yes, it does take time to establish a carpet of groundcover, but most of the work is done for you.

Once you think of time as your friend, one of the happiest times of the year is the Fall when you realize that you have several months to establish the new projects before the plants really get going again. You have time to think, create and develop while the garden is resting. Then in the Spring, you can sit back and let time work its magic.

(Rootstalk, September 2000)

## *From the Garden*



*Little Zebra*



*r. praevernum*





## Jim Barlup Hybrids

Picture credit : Jim Barlup



Burgundy Mist (*Midnight Mystique x Jonathan Shaw*)



Cades Cove (*Golden Anniversary x Lionel's Triumph x Loderi King George x r. macabeanum*)



Calico Dancer (*Anita Dunstan x Lems Cameo*)



Carols Candy (*Lems Tangerine x Tia*)



Carolyn's Carousel (*Midnight Mystique x Goldprinz*)



Cassie (*r. yakushimanum x Lionel's Triumph x Loderi King George x r. macabeanum*)



Champagne Lace (*Glenna* x *Jant Blair*)



Chattaray (*Britannia* x *China* x *Lems Cameo*)



Cimarron Sun (*Nancy Evans* x *Mts Furnivall*)



Cinnarose (*Anita Dunstan* x *Hills Low Red*)



Claret Mist (*Jonathan Shaw* x *Plum High*)



Cody (*Wind River* x *Janet Blair*)

## Hair Ice



Hair ice is a rare type of ice formation where the presence of a particular fungus in rotting wood produces thin strands of ice which resemble hair or candy floss. The conditions required for the formation of hair ice are extremely specific, hence the relative scarcity of sightings. To form, moist rotting wood from a broadleaf tree is required with the presence of moist air and a temperature slightly below 0 °C. It is generally confined to latitudes between 45°N and 55°N. In 2015 the scientists Hofmann, Mätzler and Preuß determined the exact cause of the hair ice phenomenon, linking its formation to the presence of a specific fungus called *Exidiopsis effusa*.

They discovered that the presence of the fungus led to a process called 'ice segregation'. When water present in the wood freezes it creates a barrier that traps liquid between the ice and the pores of the wood. This creates a suction force which pushes water out of the pores to the edge of the ice surface where it freezes and extends outwards. As this repeats it pushes a thin 'hair' of ice out of the wood which is around 0.01 mm in diameter.

It is believed that an inhibitor present in the fungus allows the strands of ice to stabilise allowing the formation of the beautiful phenomena and allows the hair ice to keep its shape often for several hours.



Pictures taken by Cindy Lightheart in Redwood Park, South Surrey, Jan. 23

*The ice hair reappeared on the same log in Redwood Park, South Surrey on February 8<sup>th</sup>.*



*C. Lightheart*

