



SEPTEMBER 1994

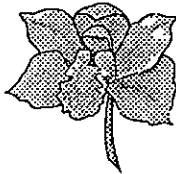
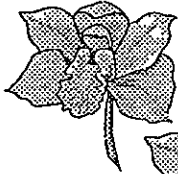
The Yak

A CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

FRASER SOUTH RHODODENDRON SOCIETY
6835 232ND STREET
LANGLEY, BRITISH COLUMBIA
V3A 6H4, CANADA

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 1994 MEETING
8:00 P.M.

St. Andrews Anglican Hall
20955 Old Yale Road, Langley



PERENNIALS THAT COMBINE WELL WITH RHODODENDRONS

GUEST SPEAKER: RANDAL ATKINSON

Randal Atkinson is the owner of Meadowsweet Farm Nursery, a small cottage nursery in South Langley now in its third year of operation. The nursery specializes in rare and unusual perennials including ornamental grasses and hostas.

Randal's presentation will focus on perennials that are suitable companion plants for rhododendrons both from the point of view of aesthetics and cultural requirements.

Reminder

Please do not use the main entrance when leaving the church after the chapter meeting—a request from St. Andrews Anglican Church as they have experienced some security problems.

Cuttings Exchange

The Yak is sponsoring a Cuttings Exchange for Fraser South members. Phone in your list of cuttings you would like to obtain to Wendy Sellars at 535-0763. We will be publishing a list of requested cuttings in the next edition of *The Yak*.

How's Your List Coming?

For Harry Wright, that is. In the March 1994 issue of *The Yak*, we asked members to help Harry out with *His Project*, which is to compile a list of hybrids and species grown successfully in our area. He gave us a deadline of September 1994, which will give him enough time to get *the list* ready for the September 1995 Western Regional Conference in Parksville/Qualicum.

Mail your list to:

Harry Wright
769 Chaster Road
Courtenay, B.C.
V9N 5P2

or bring it to the September Chapter meeting and we will send them off en masse. Let's support Harry in this very worthwhile project.

Royal Horticultural Society Anniversary Yearbook

Orders are being taken for the 1996 RHS Anniversary Yearbook celebrating 50 years in print—beats *The Yak* by a few years. The cost of the book is £10 (Cdn\$ 23 approximately). Place your order with Len Bengough at the September meeting or phone Diane Scott at 533-4378.

Nominations please

If you wish to submit a nomination for District 1 Director, contact Arnim Roeske at 538-3881 for a Nomination form.

June Picnic

The picnic in June at Williams Park was a big success as usual. Great food, great talk and rhodos in view. What more could you want on an early summer day?

Species Study Group



A Species Study Group is being formed as a joint Fraser South/Peace Arch initiative. The idea is to meet every month or so to discuss and learn about rhododendron species. No previous knowledge is necessary as this will be a learn-at-your-own-pace type of experience. Quite how it works out will depend on the interests and enthusiasm of the participants. For more information contact Robert Bishop at 538-1288.

New Book in the Library

THE CULTIVATION OF RHODODENDRONS
by Peter A. Cox

This book is probably the most comprehensive compendium available on all aspects of rhododendron cultivation. It contains very detailed information on propagation, pests, diseases and disorders, some of which will only be relevant to the professional nurseryman. Of interest to the general reader is a fascinating summary of growing conditions in the wild, a discussion of different rhododendron climates around the world and ideas on landscaping. The book also contains information on cultural differences in various types of rhododendrons which is not found in other similar publications.

The book layout is very pleasing and there are 75 colour photographs which accurately reproduce flower colours. On the downside there are far too many typos for a book costing over \$75 and the English is occasionally execrable. The author has a tendency to throw in curious asides that are often embarrassing. An example occurs at the end of the Introduction. The book, however, is well worth borrowing from the library and can currently only be purchased in the U.K.

May 18 Chapter Meeting

The First Annual Fraser South Beer Bottle Truss Show was held at our May Meeting. There were fourteen participants and many entered several categories. A spirited debate ensued over the meaning of 'lurid' as specified in the category 'Most Lurid Truss'. Some wanted to understand how this category related to 'Most Flaccid' but most decided they would rather not know.

Joan and Len Bengough donated a priceless trophy for the winner of the category 'Best last year's truss'. The winner by a large margin (it looked more like a twenty year old truss!) was reminded that it was not a keeper trophy and had to be taken from its pride of place on the mantelpiece and returned next year.

The event turned out to be alot of fun and a good time was had by all. Many members suggested additional categories for next year such as:

- Blue/purple
- Best truss that defies description
- Multicolour

The winners were:

Best Red

Pat Dahl with Lem's Stormcloud

Best White

Lillian Emerson with Helene Schiffner

Best Yellow

Lillian Emerson with Unk

Best Pink

Anim Roeske with English Roseum

Most Lurid

Wendy Sellars with Lem's Monarch

Most Flaccid

Lillian Emerson with Unk Flaccid

Best Last Year's Truss

Mike Trembath with a splendid spray of seed pods

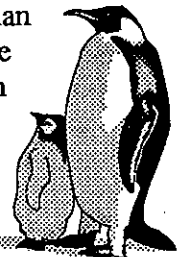
In addition to the big show several members brought plants for sale and Anim Roeske and John Anderson did an excellent job of selling club plants. Vern Finley brought in some beautiful trusses from plants all grown from the same cross. The variation was startling.

Cold Hardiness in Rhododendrons

Cold hardiness is an important topic for selecting and siting rhododendrons. The current rating system provides one temperature below which the plant will be damaged and probably die. However, a cold snap in early winter does more damage than colder temperatures in January when plants have had time to harden off.

The ARS formed a committee to define hardiness in rhododendrons. It was the consensus of the committee that expressing hardiness in terms of a

range would provide gardeners with more information regarding the risk to their plants in terms of things other than simply low temperatures. This range accommodates the variations in hardiness that occur due to unseasonable cold weather, duration of cold, exposure, snow cover, unseasonable warmth prior to cold weather, etc. It is felt that a hardiness range best takes into consideration these variables.



The committee recommended the adoption of this definition:

“Cold hardiness is defined as the temperature range through which damage to flower bud, leaf or plant structure can be expected to occur, in a plant at least five years of age and in good health. Flower bud damage is defined as that which detracts from a normal floral display. The range is given by two figures, expressed in both Fahrenheit and Celsius. The lower figure is the lowest temperature after which the plant has been observed to perform normally; the upper figure is the highest temperature after which cold damage has been observed.” In other words, the low end of the range is the temperature below which the plant will almost certainly suffer cold damage. In some conditions plants will suffer cold damage at the upper end of the range.

**Fraser South
Rhododendron Society**

Executive and Committees

President:	Norma Senn
Past President:	Don Martyn
Vice President:	Mike Trembath
Treasurer:	Larry Chase
Secretary:	Lillian Emerson
Directors:	John Anderson Mike Bale Arnim Roeske
Membership: Programs:	Arnim Roeske Les Clay and David Sellars
Library:	Pat Dahl
Newsletter:	Wendy and David Sellars
Publicity:	Hedy Dyck
Hospitality:	Phil Anderson
Ways and Means:	Diane Scott

rootstalk

BY *INDUMENTUM*

Last October eleven stalwart Fraser South members formed a work party to improve the rhododendron garden at St. Andrews Anglican Church. Several new planting holes were dug and before placing the rhodo someone produced a box of bonemeal and proceeded to mix it in the bottom of the hole. I assumed this was standard practice and the next five rhodos I moved in January were given the same bonemeal treatment. However when I was reviewing fertilizing and planting techniques later I could find no books or articles that recommended or even mentioned it. In fact, Kenneth Cox, the authoritative son of the even more authoritative Peter Cox, notes in his book, 'A Plantsman's Guide to Rhododendrons', that "There is no point in putting fertilizer at the bottom of a rhododendron hole, as is commonly done with other plants, since rhododendrons are surface feeders."

Assuming that our members were using bonemeal out of habit, perhaps from tree planting days, I stopped using it. So guess what? Out of about fifty rhododendrons that I planted or moved last Spring, the five that performed the best were the ones with bonemeal at the bottom of the hole! The moral of this story is—if you put all your rhododendron books at the bottom of a hole your plants will probably do better.

You may have noticed the hot, dry summer this year. Three of our tough old hardy hybrids suffered sunburn for the first time ever—Christmas Cheer, Vulcan and Mrs. E.C. Stirling. So much for sun tolerance, except maybe what they say about the ozone layer is true. In a few years' time someone will probably make a fortune out of sunblock for rhododendrons.