

Fraser South Rhododendron Society



a chapter of the ARS

The Yak

Volume 11

Number 3

March 1998

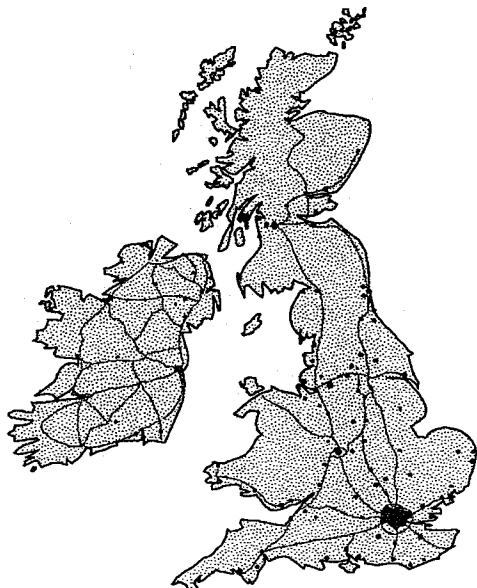


March 18, 1998

St. Andrew's Anglican Church Hall
8.00 p.m.



CLINT SMITH



" Gardens of England, Ireland and Scotland
from a Nureseryman's Perspective "

Clint Smtih
of
Benjamins Rhododendrons
Sumner WA

is ever a welcome visitor
to our meetings.

His presentations are always
much enjoyed and appreciated.

We hope he will be able to
bring along some plants.

Clint always seems to have
some of those rarly available
varieties that make us lose polite
control, and go snatching ahead
of other eager hands.

Inside

Reports & News.....	2
Yakalender.....	2
From 1989 newsletter.....	3
Letter of Interst.....	3
Watts in a Name: Part 1.....	4
A Rhododendron Primer.....	5
Rootstalk.....	6

February Meeting

What an enthusiastic traveller Susan Murray is! Next trip is to The Netherlands, she told us. I am looking forward to hearing about that trip too.

Photos of borders absolutely stuffed with plants and rioting colours and forms. Pictures of formally planted parterres whose designs came alive; of fields of blooming sunflowers; of ancient hill villages built of native stone - looking to me rather like something out of the middle east.

A most enjoyable evening.

N.B.

Some of you have yet to renew your membership. We sincerely hope that you will do so. If there is an asterisk after your name on the mailing label, it signifies that this is your last newsletter. Dues are the same as last year and are to be paid to Membership Secretary :

Vicki Neyedli
3221 Main Ave.
Balcarras, BC V3H 4R1
604 931 1199



Yakalendas

- * March 18, 1998, 8.00 p.m.
Kwantlen U. C.
Brian Minter
"Colour in the Garden"
- * March 28, 1998 VRS
Annual Early Show
Asian Gardens
- * April 4, 1998 PARS
Spring Sale & Truss
Show, Elgin Hall
Crescent Rd., Surrey
- ❖ April 5, 1998 FSRS
Annual Spring Sale
Clay's Nursery
- ❖ April 15, 1998 FSRS
Regular Meeting
Speaker Gerry Gibbons
- * April 18, 1998 Fraser
Valley Dahlia Society
Annual Tuber Sale, West
Oaks Mall, Abbotsford
- ❖ April 25, 1998 FSRS
Annual Truss Display
and Sale
Willowbrook Mall
- * May 2 & 3, 1998 10th
Annual Burnaby
Rhododendron Festival
Shadbolt Centre, and
Century Gardens,
Deer Lake Park
- * May 9 & 10, 1998 VRS
Annual Show
VanDusen Floral Hall
- * May 27 - 31, 1998 ARS
Annual Convention
Niagara Falls, Ontario
- * Oct. 2 - 4 ARS Western
Regional Conference,
Florence, Oregon.



Work Parties

Your executive in it's wisdom, has decided that the work party initially scheduled to weed and feed Ella's Garden before the March meeting, is best left until the April meeting - since there is some question of running out of daylight? Some replacements, and general work is necessary in William's Park in the area surrounding Harold Johnson's bench. Melba has graciously agreed to provide plants, and a work bee will be arranged - probably a Saturday. Further details will be forthcoming.

Plans are being made to visit gardens - Don Martyn has invited us, and perhaps we can arrange to see at least one other garden out that way. John has some other suggestions to make, so anyone interested in a bit of garden touring should speak to John Warner at our meeting. Dates have not yet been finalized.

In the March 1989 Newsletter for FSRS the following article appeared::

A Calendar of the Rhododendron Year

January - Use small amounts of dolomite to increase the calcium and magnesium. This will help your rhododendron to assimilate other important nutrients.

February - Use small amounts of "Fritted Trace Elements". This will help create darker foliage and help with future fertilizer assimilation.

March - By mid-month one should apply fertilizer (sparingly)

April - Declare war on weevils. Spray now. Use phosphates now to help roots and increase bud set during the summer months. (Don't forget the ARS Convention in Victoria)

May - Dead heading (removing spent trusses) (Reminder about VRS Show at VanDusen)

June - Spray those root weevils again. Apply fertilizer. Take cuttings toward the end of this month.

July - Cuttings, weeding and watering will fill your days. Enjoy your late blooming rhododendrons.

August - Spray the root weevils. Water during the hot days, and continue weeding. Use a little phosphate to help harden plants off for the winter.

September - Begin to cut back on watering. Root prune any shy bloomers. Join the FSRS again.

October - Spread old compost mulch. During warm days in early October spray for root weevils.

November - Take late cuttings.

December - Happy Holidays.

(Thanks to Janet Warner for calling attention

to this article . The most striking thing about it to me , is the change in our attitude toward the free use of insecticides . Ed.)

A Matter of Priorities ?

Dr. Mike Bale writes :

February 26, 1998

Every year, at this time, I find it necessary to carefully scrutinise my finances in an attempt to determine how I might pay all the bills that seem to come due at the beginning of the year. I suspect that, like many other people, I do not budget very carefully, usually as a result of buying too many rhododendron plants during the course of the year, and not planning for the bills that become due at the beginning of each year.

For the past two years I have tried to critically review my professional fees to see if I can reduce my expenses by cancelling membership in one or other of the organizations to which I belong.. (Mike belongs to 11 professional organizations with annual dues from \$130 to over \$2,000 . Ed).. As a result of reviewing these expenses, I have become much more appreciative of the value one derives in membership in the American Rhododendron Society. The extremely modest fee provides involvement with a very successful national organization with strong international attachments, and also includes the receipt of an extremely high quality quarterly magazine which is full of authoritative and useful information. In addition, membership provides the opportunity to attend monthly meetings at the local chapter and to meet and listen to experienced and knowledgeable individuals and to benefit from their wisdom.

These meetings also provide the opportunity to meet and fraternize with like minded individuals who share a passion for the genus Rhododendron. Given the advantages of membership and the modest fee I am somewhat surprised that every chapter is not overwhelmed with applications for membership.

For my part, as I review this year's subscriptions I am convinced that membership in the A.R.S. represents for me the most worthwhile investment that I have.

Watts In A Name?

Lynn Watts, Western Vice President, ARS

Rhododendron Nomenclature Part I (courtesy Eugene Chapter)

I have been asked to write an article (or several) on the naming of plants, specifically the species names in the genus *Rhododendron*. Although botanical nomenclature can be a very complicated subject it becomes much simpler when applied to a single genus such as the genus *Rhododendron*.

(This, by design, will be a simplified explanation of the botanical nomenclature as applied to the genus *Rhododendron*. For a more comprehensive treatment of this subject please refer to references 4 and 5.)

Within the genus *rhododendron* are the species. Their names are composed of the genus name, *rhododendron* (the generic name) plus a second word, the species name. This second word, called the specific epithet, distinguishes one particular species from all the others in the genus.

Species names are Latinized and are derived from:

1. Names of persons
2. Compound words which describe the plant.
3. Geographical names.
4. Words that describe the plants habitat.
5. Words that designate color.
6. Words that describe the leaf shape.
7. Words that describe the surface of leaf and/or stem.
8. Words that describe growth habit.
9. Words describing various characteristics of the plant.

This first article will deal with species (1) named for persons and species (2) whose specific epithets are compound words describing the plant.

1. Names of persons. Usually the name of the person honored has been latinized by adding *ii, ium, iae, iana, anum*, etc.

We will not attempt to list all the species *rhododendrons* whose names commemorate persons, rather we will give specific examples illustrating the reasons for such naming.

Rhododendron wardii: named in honor of Frank Kingston Ward, one of the most famous of the early plant explorers. (Loosely translated as Ward's *rhododendron*.)

Rhododendron beanium: named after W. J. Bean, Former Curator, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. *Rhododendron clementinae*: after Clementine, wife of George Forrest.

After a little study it will become relatively easy to identify the person for whom the *rhododendron* has been named. Then it becomes intriguing to learn more about that person.

2. Species names which describe the plant.

a. Compound words which form a descriptive adjective.

<i>Rhododendron macrophyllum</i> :	macro= large	phyllum =leaves
<i>Rhododendron brevistylum</i> :	brevi = short	stylum = style
<i>Rhododendron pachysanthum</i> :	pachy = thick	anthum = flowers
<i>Rhododendron pachytrichum</i> :	pachy = thick	trichum = hairs
<i>Rhododendron oreotrephes</i> :	oreo = mountain	trephes = bred

Additional prefixes which describe parts of plants include:

albi, leuco:	white	<i>R. albitlorum</i> , white flowered
lutea; aurea:	yellow	<i>R. luteum</i> , <i>R. aureum</i> , yellow
longi:	long	<i>R. longistylum</i> , long flowers
multi:	many	<i>R. multicolor</i> , many colored
parvi:	small	<i>R. parvifolium</i> , with small leaves
pauci:	few	<i>R. pauciflorum</i> , with few flowers
rhodo:	red	<i>R. rhodostomum</i> , with a red mouth
steno:	narrow	<i>R. stenophyllum</i> , with narrow leaves
tana:	long	<i>R. tanastylum</i> , with a short style

Additional species names which numerically describe parts of the plant:

uni:	one	<i>R. uniflorum</i> , with one flower
bi, di:	two	<i>R. dichroanthum</i> , with flowers of two colors
tri:	three	<i>R. triflorum</i> , with three flowers
quinque:	five	<i>R. quinquefolium</i> with five leaves
penta:	five	<i>R. pentaphyllum</i> with five leaves

The second part of the compound words which describe plants or parts of plants is formed by the following Latin or Greek words:

caulis:	stem
carpum:	fruit
florum:	flower
anthum:	flower
folium:	leaf
phyllum:	leaf
petalum:	petal
sepalum:	sepal

I hope this has stimulated some of you readers to further investigate the meanings behind the names of the wonderful world of species *rhododendrons*.

The next article in this series will discuss geographical epithets, referring either to the region where a species is found or to the place where it was first discovered. In the second article of the series we will also discuss names that contain words which describe the kind of place where the plant is found

References:

1. A Source Book of Biological Names and Terms, Edmund C. Jaeger; Charles C. Thomas, Publisher, Third Printing, 1955.
2. Selected Rhododendron Glossary and Botanical Terms, Pat Nelson, Marlene Buffington, Nadine Henry. 3-D Publications, 1982
3. The Rhododendron Handbook, The Royal Horticultural Society, Alan Leslie, Compiler, 1980
4. The Encyclopedia of Rhododendron Species, Peter A. Cox and Kenneth N. E. Cox, Glendoick Publishing, 1997.
5. Notes from the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh, James Cullen and David Chamberlain, Edinburgh, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1980,1982.



A Rhododendron Primer



is for *impeditum*.

This is a really great Rhododendron! It's also the very first Rhodie I ever grew (on my balcony), so it has a special place in my heart. *R. impeditum* is easy to grow and reliably hardy in the Fraser Valley. It has soft mauve to purple-blue flowers in late April through early May; the flowers can literally cover the plant. As well, the leaves are attractive, small and

fine-textured,

R. impeditum can be variable in habit, ranging in size from very small, spreading plants to those with almost tree-like proportions. However, we seem to usually grow the smaller forms of this species, and most of us think of it first as being a good dwarf specimen for rock gardens or the edge of our Rhododendron beds. It is also very amenable to life in a container, and because of its fine texture, it makes a good choice for creating bonsai.

R. impeditum is native to high elevations in the mountains of Yunnan. In the south coastal region of B.C., it is tolerant of full sun and I find it is even able to withstand a spot in my own garden that can get very hot and dry during the summer. I am on summer watering restrictions, so I find that a good layer of mulch is definitely beneficial and seems to allow *R. impeditum* to withstand reflected heat as well as limited water. As well, my impression is that *R. impeditum* does need excellent drainage in the winter.

Norma Senn

(Ed. note: I see that Cox states that many of the plants grown as *R. impeditum* are actually its close relative *R. fastigiatum*. Fine plants whatever you call them! For the purist - Cox and Davidian both state that *R. impeditum* has dark green foliage, while *R. fastigiatum*'s foliage is glaucous; also scales on the under surface of *R. impeditum* are dark brown while those of *R. fastigiatum* are 'palely opaque')



is for Nam Violet

Electra x *R. russatum* E. Stead (N.Z.) 1947; A.M.T. (after Wisley Trials) 1983
cold hardy to -15 degrees C (5degrees F)

A vigorous, upright growing plant it is well clad with dark green, shiny-surfaced leaves elliptic in shape and up to two and one half inches in length. The foliage is aromatic, and turns bronze in winter. (Ed. note - in full exposure I find the foliage tends to lighten and show some brown spotting)

Flowers are produced in compact trusses of 10 - 12 florets of deep violet-blue. It is very floriferous, and a plant in full bloom (mid May) is a stunning sight.

Vern Finley



DOORSTALK

BY INDUMENTUM



The original idea was not to build a greenhouse until I retired. The wife wanted to make sure I would have enough to do in retirement and a place to hang out that wasn't around her feet, as my Irish mother would say. Furthermore, the chances of getting into trouble would be limited to things like excess watering. It all changed when we had yet another failure of our tomato crop as a result of the usual August blight. Brown, blistered tomatoes are not all that appetizing so the plan to build a greenhouse was brought many years forward.

We decided we wanted a glass greenhouse, primarily for aesthetic reasons, but also so the wife could keep an eye on me from the kitchen window in her house. We found two suppliers in the Lower Mainland area and after extensive analysis we selected the product developed by BC Greenhouse Builders of Burnaby. The main reason was that they were very flexible in the design particularly regarding length, height and door size. They were also less costly per unit greenhouse area and as they are built locally we felt the service would be superior.

The books tell you that whatever size greenhouse you think you need, you should make it at least 50% larger. After a few weeks of going through this process, adding 50%, deciding on a new size and then adding 50% again and so on, we were planning a greenhouse bigger than the lot! We eventually settled for a greenhouse about 9 feet wide and 19 feet long.

BC Greenhouse Builders recommend a foundation of treated 6 X 6 for simplicity of construction. Furthermore, the structure is then not "permanent" and a municipal building permit may not be required. I built the foundation and BC Greenhouse Builders erected the structure. We made a floor consisting of a layer of drainrock, sand and then bricks after bringing in a water line from an outside tap.

We intended the greenhouse to be a "cool" greenhouse. This means that the temperature is kept a few degrees above freezing. A "cold" greenhouse has no heating and a "warm" or "hot" greenhouse requires double glazing unless you want to spend a lot on heat. We selected a 4 kW heater which required a 240 volt service to transmit sufficient energy. Even then, with our comparatively large greenhouse, the heater had trouble keeping up when the temperature fell to about minus 9 degrees Celsius recently. If it gets colder we could add another heater and line the inside of the greenhouse with plastic sheeting temporarily. You can buy special clips from BC Greenhouse Builders which makes the job easy. We also had a fan installed and the heater and fan are controlled with thermostats. The roof vents are fully automatic.

We have built a bench on one side of the greenhouse that can be removed in the summer to make room for all the tomato plants and to allow the wife to enjoy her pressure washing of the inside of the structure in the fall. The rhododendron propagation unit now has pride of place and the cuttings are starting to grow. The seed catalogues have just arrived so we would soon have our organic vegetables organised if only I had the time.

Roll on retirement!