



This Month's Meeting

Date: Wednesday, April 16th, 2014 @ 7:30 pm

Topic: Horticulture: The Crown Jewel of Oregon

Speaker: Rosemary Prufer, Propagator

Plant sales: Les Clay

1	2014 Officers	
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http://frasersouthrhodos.ca/

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

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

United Church Hall
5673 - 200th Street
Langley BC



Quick Hits

The map to the Easter Sunday, April 20, field trip to Erica Nurseries in Pitt Meadows may be found on page 15.

Likewise, a map to the open house at Dalen and Lori Bayes garden just across the border in Washington on, May 3rd and 4th may be found on page 16.



President's Remarks

On this cold, dreary, late March morning, I find myself mentally roaming to more pleasant times; back to that inspiring talk by Dennis Bottemiller at our March meeting and forward with anticipation to exciting events in April, our club's busiest month of the year.

Dennis is not only an engaging speaker, but he (like most gardeners I know) is also very down to earth, with a good dollop of self-effacing humour. His talk, appropriately for one representing the RSBG, was on species rhododendrons suitable for our gardens.

Dennis left us with three important take-aways. First, he introduced us to 33 really great and (mostly) easy to grow species rhodies, many of which are under-appreciated and under-used. It had me scouring for more details in the club's recently-acquired *Pocket Guide to Rhododendron Species*, (see the book review which is provided on page 10 in this Yak). I'm sure Dennis' list will soon make its way to our web page for the benefit of those who missed his talk. Secondly, Dennis emphasized once again the importance of the growing medium: a really coarse sand-gravel mix with just a whiff of bark mulch or some other organic debris. This truism was borne home to me after that big wind storm mid-February when a few adolescent rhodos blew down in our back yard. Turns out

Margaret and I had been killing them with kindness! You plant them in a perfect organic mix and what do they do? They decide the soil is so good there's no sense extending roots in search of nutrients. Result? One compact root ball, one over-sized and over-balanced top, and presto changeo, the plant falls down. Thirdly, Dennis introduced us to the

wonderfully novel idea of growing alpine vireyas indoors. Their bloom period can last up to six months, some can live without water for a month or two and even thrive in a medium of wine corks. Now you're talking my language! No excuse to further postpone that tipple or ocean cruise.

And looking forward, we have a bounty of exciting garden events in the month ahead.

At our regular meeting on April 16th, Rosemary Prufer will speak on the recent propagation meeting she attended in Oregon.

Saturday, April 19th, is our annual plant sale; the main fund-raiser that pays for all our outstanding speakers. This year we have a record eight sellers offering everything from species and hybrid rhodies, acers and other ornamental trees, to unusual ground covers. This is a rain or shine event and we hope all able-bodied hands will be on deck to help out.



On Easter Sunday, April 20, a field trip has been organized to Erica Nurseries in Pitt Meadows. It's a 20 acre wholesale nursery, not open to the public and specializing in "azaleas, heathers, junipers, hibiscus, hollies, hydrangea, maples, pieris, hand-pinched rhododendrons, skimmia, and many other species and cultivars." This will be a car-pool event, starting at 10:00 am and yes, plants are available for purchase and at very reasonable prices. Kirsten and owner/mom Sheila will be our guides. We'll break for lunch and a garden tour at Sheila's nearby home. It's a byo brown bag affair, with tea and coffee very kindly provided by Sheila. A location map is attached to this Yak.

April 27 (Saturday): Open house at Harold and Ginny Fearing's home, 5376 Ross Rd., Abbotsford (ph 604 857-4136).

May 3, 4 (Saturday, Sunday): Open house at the home of Dalen and Lori Bayes, 4950 South Pass Rd., Sumas, Washington (ph 360 966 4596).

Chris Hodgson



FROM THE EDITOR

Last Month:

Dennis Bottemiller, propagator and Garden Manager of the Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden gave us a detailed and informative lecture on the

subject of the best species rhododendrons to plant in our gardens. Dennis, a truly well-primed speaker, acknowledged while that there are many garden



worthy species rhododendrons that would thrive in our locale, he wished to give in-depth information on thirty-three representatives that he brought along with him in his

pictorial kit bag that evening. We are now energised to start new species rhododendron plantings.

This Month: HORTICULTURE: THE CROWN JEWEL OF OREGON

Rosemary Prufer has been a member of the International Plant Propagators for several decades now. This organization has allowed Rosemary to stay current with all kinds of nurseries and their propagation practices.

With regional meetings every year Rosemary has been able to visit many nurseries, from cut flower production to a cactus grower in southern California.

One of Rosemary's favourite places to visit is the state of Oregon. Horticulture is the number one resource for this state and for good reason. With mild weather and lots of land to grow on, Oregon is a jewel in the horticulture world.

Oregon's nurseries range from the famous Iselis Nursery, known worldwide for their conifers, to smaller companies like Dover, that we all love for the rhododendrons that they grow. You can take your pick of locations on a map of Oregon and one would surely find several companies of great interest.

Rosemary will be talking about her recent visit last fall to Portland, Oregon. She will cover such topics as the growing of Japanese azaleas on a large commercial scale and micro-propagation of woody ornamentals, affording us a true insight into how the commercial growers produce their plants. Also on the list will be a wonderful-family run garden centre and farm, so charming it may even entice us to go to Portland for a visit.

With humour and educational tidbits Rosemary hopes that everyone will enjoy the evening.

Next month:

Sharpen your secateurs for it will be the *Fraser South Justly Famous Beer Bottle Truss Show*. The rules of engagement will be posted next month but the perspicacious among you will start your planning now.

Other Duties as Assigned:

Nancy Moore and Ginny Fearing will have springtime in their steps as they organise the delectables for our April meeting. A small contribution to the toothsome table would be immensely welcome.

Rewards in the afterlife will doubtlessly be showered upon those fine souls who also contribute to the raffle table.

Sean Rafferty

The Business Stuff:

Rhododendron Species Foundation and Botanical Garden celebrates 50 years on April 24th, 25th, 26th



The Blue Himalayan Poppy

With successive generations
Of a species poppy,
The falling seeds of fading blooms
Ever extend the boundaries
Of its habitat.

Poppies of other forms Once distant neighbours Are likewise engaged In extending their range. One day circles interlock.

Taking advantage of their propinquity Intimate relationships are developed. By kiss of bee or caress of wind Pollen is transferred to achieve Natures purpose.



Thus were born the hybrids,
First in the wild then later
In the gardens of the world,
Where cultivars arose
Now known by name.

At the nursery look for Meconopsis baileyi and its cultivars Alba and Henson Violet. Or lured by a name You may choose Slieve Donard

Scot Henney

THE CALENDAR:

Wednesday, April 9 7:30 pm, Van Dusen	Alpine Garden of BC Nicola Ripley: Bringing the Mountains Home
Wednesday, April 16 7: 30 pm	Fraser South Rhododendron Society Rosemary Prufer: Horticulture, the Crown Jewel of Oregon
Thursday, April 17 7:30 pm, Van Dusen	Vancouver Rhododendron Society Sean Rafferty: Rhododendrons and Companion Plants of Sichuan, China
Saturday, April 19 10:00 am - 3:00 pm	Fraser South Rhododendron Society Annual Spring Plant Sale: United Church, 5673-200 Street, Langley
April 24 - 26, Thursday, Friday and Saturday 9:00 am - 10:30 pm	Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden 50 th Anniversary, Federal Way, Washington. Everyone Welcome. See here for details.
Saturday, May 3 10:00 am - 3:00 pm	Vancouver Rhododendron Society, Annual Show and Sale Park and Tilford Gardens, 333 Brooksbank Avenue, North Vancouver,
Wednesday, May 14 7:30 pm, Van Dusen	Alpine Garden Club of BC Richard Ramsden: Wild Flowers of Washington and the Wild Places They Grow
Thursday, May 15	Vancouver Rhododendron Society A Walk in the Park
Wednesday, May 21 7:30 pm	Fraser South Rhododendron Society The Fraser South Justly Famous Beer Bottle Truss Show

You are invited to an open garden

Fearing's Farm Rhododendrons

5376 Ross Road, Abbotsford, BC

Sunday, April 27, 2014, 10:00 am - 4:00 pm

This is a private garden, rarely open to the public. There are some 1500 rhododendrons, 1100 of which are species, distributed in an informal way around a patch of woodland.

Some pictures of the garden can be found in the Picture Gallery section of www.fearing.ca.

Rhododendron sales: The nursery will be open for sales and local growers Les Clay and Sue Klapwijk will be there also offering some of their very special plants, varieties not available at local nurseries.

What's in Bloom

R. calophytum at Van Dusen Gardens

R. lanigerum at Bill and Carla Bishoff's garden





R. kesangiae at the RSBG

R. fargesii at the RSBG





R. rothschildii at the RSBG

R. tomsonii at Alleyne Cook's garden





My Orphan Azalea

It hasn't a name. It appeared with no more fanfare than greeted **Ernest** on his arrival in a handbag at Victoria Station. There is no record of when and how it was deposited in my garden. Over several years it has grown to portray a personality that says "I am worthy to be regarded for myself, whether I have a name or not." Faced with its forthright presence, the least I can do is to try to discover what its true label should be.



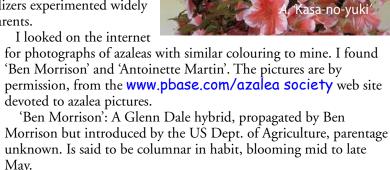
The flowers of my evergreen azalea are distinctive, being what one might describe as "candy striped", red on white. It is low-growing, less than three feet in five years. The leaves are evergreen, small and dark green. It is somewhat tender, having been cut back twice in severe cold weather. Flowers are medium sized, about two and a half inches across, and prolific. Flowering time is late April to early May.

In May, 2012, I took a spray of flowers to the Fraser South Rhododendron Society's annual show. There was general interest in the flower's unusual colouring. No-one there suggested a name for my azalea, but Sue Klapwijk, who I had known for several years as an expert grower and vendor at club sales, said she would ask a knowledgeable friend. Sue took home the spray and by her special magic produced several cuttings from the by-now wilting clipping. Only one cutting survived, but it

proved to be a vigorous plant. The picture 'unknown azalea' is of the first flowering of the plant and is by permission of Sue Klapwijk. Sue is now taking and propagating cuttings from the original

Sue Klapwijk. Sue is now taking and propagating cuttings from the original survivor. Sue's friend suggested 'Kasa-no-yuki'. On a bonsai related site, bonsaispecials.nl, I found a photograph and its description as a Satsuki azalea. I thought the stripes were too broad and diffuse so I looked further, beginning by seeking general information on evergreen azaleas. I received no reply to my e-mail requesting permission to use the 'Kasa-no-yuki' picture.

In Japan evergreen azaleas have been hybridized for hundreds of years. In North America in the twentieth century there has been great activity by hybridizers. Groups of hybrids are listed under such names as Glenn Dale, Robin Hill, Bowie Mill and Deckert. The names of more than 10,000 of these hybrids are registered. The hybridizers experimented widely in choosing from species azaleas and hybrids as parents.





'Ben Morrison'

'Antoinette Martin': A hybrid by Joe Klimavicz based in Vienna, Virginia who has been hybridizing since the late 1980s. In the Azalea Society notes it was described as a cross between A. 'Festive' and A. 'Satellite', introduced in 2013. I found A. 'Striped Azalea' on a private website for friends and relatives featuring a southern California garden. My enquiries led to an engaging email

correspondence with the owner. The pictures 'striped azalea' and 'bonsai azalea' are by permission of the owner. A. Striped Azalea' was bought in 2008 or 2009 as a remnant with no tag from a nursery no longer in existence. Flowering time in southern California is January-February. The leaves are said to match a detailed description I had sent.

After reviewing the pictures from the internet, I concluded that A. 'Ben Morrison' was too late flowering,

but that A. 'Antoinette Martin' and A. 'Striped Azalea' were by appearance, distinct possibilities. Against A. 'Antoinette Martin' is its introduction date which is several years after A. 'Unknown Azalea' and A. 'Striped Azalea' were acquired. When Sue looked at the picture of A. 'Striped Azalea', she said "Mmm!" which I interpreted as "Yes, this is it". So perhaps we have found a clone of my azalea, itself without a name.

In comparing the photographs the question of colour accuracy seems very important. Should I discount a picture because the flower is orangey red, rather than the purple red of another possible choice? I have tried to obtain the most authentic pictures for this article, but some doubt must remain based on the limitations of photography.

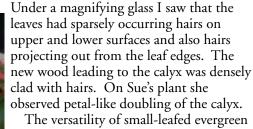
Bearing in mind that there are thousands of

named hybrid evergreen

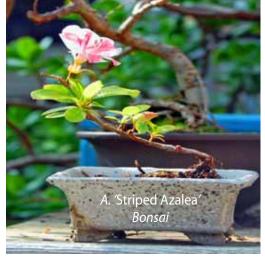


azaleas and many more thousands unnamed, it seems that the only chance of establishing a name would be to have both known and unknown flower and leaf specimens in hand. Then by careful inspection and reference to plant size and form, an identification might be possible. Even it were possible to arrange such a comparison, who but the original hybridizer could guarantee that the supposed named hybrid was indeed truly named? It would be a different matter if we were dealing with species azaleas where a key might be followed and a precise identification made.

Should someone have a plant similar to mine, I give further details which might help in confirming that a match is possible. In January I examined leaves stems and the one calyx remaining on my plant. The leaves are up to one and a half inches long and are slightly obovate.



The versatility of small-leafed evergreen azaleas is demonstrated by the history of A 'Striped Azalea'. Quoting from the owner's email: "It was growing in the ground for a season, then I decided to move it into a pot. There was a tiny portion of the plant that had self-layered from the parent plant, so I made it into a bonsai. It has grown in a windswept style and is about 3 inches high". This type of plant can be very rewarding in the variety of ways it can be used.

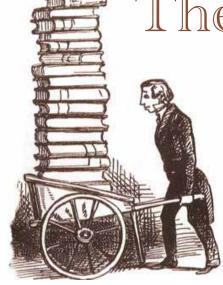




Now I can look at my azalea and say, "I have done my best to give you a name. I know you better now than I did before. You remain in my affectionate regard whether or not you remain an orphan of unknown parentage."

Scot Henney

The Book Cart



Rhododendron & Azaleas, A Colour Guide by Kenneth Cox 240 pages, over 1,200 colour photos. Glossary, Bibliography and Index. Photography credits. Hardbound, Copyright 2005, Published in Great Britain by The Crowood Press Ltd., Ramsbury, Marlborough, Wiltshire, SN8 2HR

ISBN 1 86126 784 3 (hardcover)

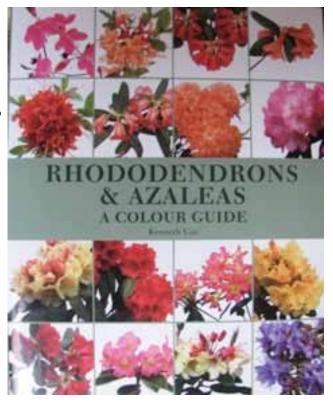
Kenneth Cox was born in 1964 into a family of renowned plantsmen, the grandson of plant-hunter, writer and nurseryman Euan Cox

and son of Peter

Cox VMH. The three generations were and are considered the world's leading experts on rhododendrons. Kenneth, himself a nurserymen and author of six previous books on rhododendrons, has carved out his particular niche in the world of plant-hunting in leading expeditions to south and south-east Tibet and Arunachal Pradesh, India, from 1995 to the present.

Kenneth is managing director of the family firm, Glendoick Gardens Ltd. in Scotland, a mail-order nursery and garden centre specializing in *rhododendrons, azaleas, ericaceous plants, meconopsis, primula* and other plants collected by the Cox family from around the world. He is married with two sons and in his spare time plays several musical instruments.

Rhododendrons & Azaleas, A Colour Guide is a compilation of Kenneth Cox's lifetime's experience rendered in a single volume on rhododendrons and azaleas. The first part of the book covers the history of rhododendrons, how they came to be collected from the wild and how they can be successfully cultivated. There are detailed chapters on landscaping, maintenance, and husbandry, pests, diseases, problems and disorders, propagation, and buying and collecting rhododendrons.



The core of the book is a rhododendron and azalea encyclopaedia, covering well over 4,000 varieties. This is a complete survey of the genus Rhododendron, including all the cultivated hardy species, the most popular commercial rhododendron hybrids, and deciduous and evergreen azaleas species and hybrids. The list of cultivars is international with data from Australia, New Zealand, North America, Japan and Europe.

The book contains extensive performance assessments of varieties for different countries and climatic conditions. The author has surveyed growers in all parts of the world where rhododendrons are widely grown to compile this data.

Over 1,200 pictures illustrate wild rhododendrons, cultivation practice, propagation, and gardening design ideas, as well as over 1,000 plant portraits.

Margaret Hodgson

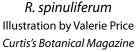
Rhododendron spinuliferum (Epithet: Bearing spines)

Père Jean Marie Delavay discovered R. spinuliferum in 1891 above Tonghay, southern Yunnan, China, but its introduction into European cultivation is owed to Maurice de Vilmorin, a French seed merchant. Vilmorin received the seed in 1907 from Boanerges F. Ducloux, a French missionary and botanist in Yunnan. From these seeds plants were raised in Vilmorin's garden with the first flowering in 1910 and subsequently sent to Kew Gardens.

The distribution of *R. spinuliferum* in the wild is limited to central, south and northeast Yunnan and southern Sichuan, amongst pine woods and

Species and their Hybrids		₩ pollen	
		В	b
pistil	В	ВВ	₩ Bb
	b	₩ Bb	bb





shady thickets at elevations of 5,500 to 8,500 feet. Coming from such low elevations it is recommended that the plants be sited carefully and protected from the worst of winter frosts, although there are some forms which are surprisingly hardy.

It is a rather straggly shrub up to 8 feet in height, typically erect and rigid in habit with strongly bullate leaves. R. spinuliferum is similiar to some forms of R. scabrifolium in foliage but with far fewer or sometimes lacking bristles on the lower leaf surface. The mostly terminal or sometimes axillary





inflorescences are composed of 1 to 4 unusually shaped tubular flowers which are constricted at either end and filled with a watery nectar. The corolla colour ranges from pink, orange, peach-red, brick-red to crimson. Stamens and style both protrude from the corolla mouth. *R. spinuliferum* is an oddly un-rhododendron like plant.

Some years ago, I happened to be returning to Canada from the Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden with a load of impulse-purchased treasure in my van and no phytosanitary certificate. I was just too giddy with pleasure over the gems that I was bringing home to have concerned myself with the important, importation legalities. Happily between the two front bucket seats sat a two gallon, fully bloomed R. spinuliferum, which offered a glowing smile to the Border Services Officer upon arrival to Canada. In answer to his enquiry, I informed him that I was bringing back rhododendrons and he then challenged me about the R. spinuliferum, telling me that it was certainly not a rhododendron. He was the first border guard that I had ever met who knew what a rhododendron was, let alone tell me what he thought one wasn't. I assured him of its identity and even showed him the invoice as proof when he came out from his booth to examine it more closely. Much to the chagrin of those cars lined up behind me, doubtlessly thinking I was going to be pulled over and offered some discomfort, he spent ten or fifteen minutes wildly enthusing over the plant and marvelling about a garden such as the RSBG wishing to grow



all of the species rhododendrons possible. He was absolutely gobsmacked and cheerily sent me on my way with no further ado. Occasionally, but not often enough, one is smiled upon.

In the wild, *R. spinuliferum* forms a natural hybrid with its close relative *R. scabrifolium*. This natural hybrid is known as *R. scabrifolium* var. *pauciflorum* in the west or *R. x duclouxii* Lév in China, and usually has larger leaves and flowers than typical *R. scabrifolium*. I recall reading that the *R. spinuliferum* corollas, being filled with the watery nectar, might cause difficulties with pollinators and fertilisation, and that fertilisation might be a specialised affair,



thus dissuading presumed hybridisers from tackling the species. I am unsure if there is any truth to that conjecture, but hybridisation of R. spinuliferum occurs naturally and abundantly in the wild in the northern part of its range, so pollination and fertilisation does seem to occur unimpeded by the constraints imposed by the nectar. Admittedly, not a great deal of hybridisation has been initiated with R. spinuliferum and much that has been accomplished is no longer in the trade, but there are small groups who are still working with R. spinuliferum or its hybrids. A few worthy R. spinuliferum hybrids grace the following pages.

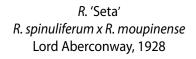
Sean Rafferty



R. 'Brambling'
R. 'Razorbill' x R. racemosum
Peter and Kenneth Cox, 1933



R. 'Ann Carey' R. keiskei x R. spinuliferum Halfdan Lem, 1951







R. 'Crossbill Group' R. spinuliferum x R. lutescens J. C. Williams, 1933

R. 'Razorbill' R. spinuliferum x R. 'unknown' Peter. Cox, 1975

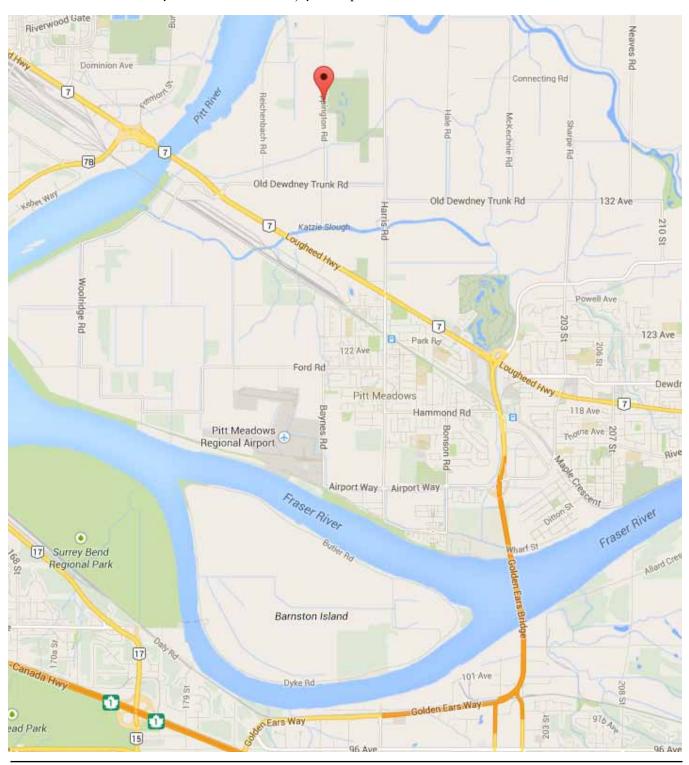




Easter Sunday, April 20th 14021 Rippington Road Pitt Meadows BC Tel: 604-465-2307

A field trip to Erica Nurseries, in Pitt Meadows, will take place on the above date. Contact a fellow member or friend to arrange a carpool. If you are having any difficulty arranging transportation, please contact Chris Hodgson at: 604-541-2382.

This is a glorious chance for you to visit Erica Enterprises spectacular nursery and purchase some rather wonderful plants. This is a rare and golden opportunity that Kirsten and Sheila have very kindly offered our club members. Please make every effort to come and enjoy the experience.



On Saturday and Sunday, May 3rd and 4th there will be an Open House at the home and garden of **Dalen and Lori Bayes**, 4950 South Pass Road, Sumas, Washington (ph 360-966-4596). This is one of the finest rhododendron and companion plant gardens on the planet. Please be sure to take advantage of this marvellous opportunity. Please find your way to the Sumas border crossing and follow the instructions below.

, ,

1. Head south on Cherry Street toward Garfield Street (0.5 miles)

- 2. Turn left onto WA-547 S/Front Street. (continue to follow WA-547 S, 1.3 miles)
- 3. Keep left to continue on WA-547 S/Reese Hill Road (4.1 miles)
- 4. Turn right onto Frost Road (0.8 miles)

Driving distance is 8.3 miles (17 minutes)

5. Turn right onto South Pass Road and continue for 1.7 miles to 4950 on your right.

