



# THE YAK

Volume 34, Number 10

December 2020

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**Malahat**

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

<http://frasersouthernrhodos.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:** Malahat (Gill's Triumph x R. strigillosum)



Elepidote rhododendren.  
Named Hybridised by: H.L. Larson (1949)  
Introduced by: H. L. Larson (1980)  
Registered by: H.L. Larson (1983)

Medium: 4.5 – 6 ft.  
Hardiness: Hardy in all but the coldest parts of the Pacific Northwest  
Flowering: May - June

Flowers scarlet-red with darker throat and dark-red spots, in trusses of 14. 70x70mm, 5-6 lobed. Calyx minute, moderate red.

Leaves (125-150 x 45mm) pointed, underside with sparse coppery-brown indumentum, mainly on the midrib.

One of Larson's many R. strigillosum hybrids.

Source: The International Rhododendron Register and Checklist Second Edition 2004  
Source: *The Encyclopedia of Rhododendron Species* by Peter A. Cox and Kenneth N.E. Cox



## This Month

No meeting will be held this month.

## Next Month

**Date:** Wednesday, January 20, 2021 at 7:30 pm.  
**Place:** Zoom meeting from the comfort of your own home  
**TITLE:** Highlights of the Danish/Swedish/German 2018 ARS Tours.

Dr. Jamieson was a member of the ARS contingent to the 2018 ARS Spring International Convention "North America meets Europe" in Bremen, Germany. He elected to travel to Denmark and Sweden with the group that chose that optional pre-tour, leading up to the convention start. Glen will share some sights and insights from the beautiful garden destinations and rhododendrons in bloom from this unique shared convention with the German Rhododendron Society (Deutsche Rhododendron Gesellschaft). His photo tour through Denmark and Sweden will be grouped into categories including paths, water features, use of rock and elevations.

Glen will begin with a short and informative tutorial on mycorrhizae—"Roots and a Happy Plant"—pointing out that a plant that "rocks" doesn't have its hair roots firmly in place and should be dug up and replanted.

**Background:** Glen achieved his B.Sc. in Agriculture from McGill University and a M.Sc. and Ph.D. in Zoology from UBC. He worked for Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) as a research scientist for 31 years, both in the Maritimes (5 yrs.) and at the Pacific Biological Station in Nanaimo, BC (26 yrs.). He specialized in studying our northwest friend, *Metacarcinus magister*, a.k.a. Dungeness Crab. He retired from DFO in 2008.

Glen joined the ARS in 1995 and became editor of the Journal of the American Rhododendron Society (JARS) in 2009. Glen has explored for plants in Yunnan, China (2005); Borneo (2008); Ecuador and Peru (five trips between 2008-2014) and in Sikkim, India (2015). He has travelled extensively elsewhere as well and, with his wife Dorothy, lives and maintains a garden in Parksville that is periodically on his local chapter's (Mount Arrowsmith; MARS) garden tour, where he also has an extensive vireya collection, possibly the largest in Canada. He is currently in his third presidency of the MARS Chapter. He is also the editor of the new online journal he created called "Rhododendrons International"—which can be accessed on the ARS website.

## 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	

## Membership

Thank you to everyone that has renewed their membership.

By renewing your membership you have expressed your continuing support of Fraser South and your interest in our activities in what are far from normal times.

If you have yet to renew, please contact Harold Fearing to renew your membership.



## From the President

As I write this, after a gloriously sunny December day, I can hardly believe the calendar. All seems so right with the world – a few bright yellow leaves still clinging to birch branches; bright colored stems of various *Cornus* shrubs; vibrant bark color on *Acer Winter Flame* and *Bihou*; curiously twisted branches of the *Salix Torulosa*; and later, the bright moon at night and frost glistening on the lawn in the morning –so wondrous!

And then... I watch the news, and my brain just cannot fathom the public stupidity that has brought the virus back with such vengeance, from the negligible levels of June. Sure, we'd all love to be able to travel with family, to celebrate birthdays with friends, to watch the grandkids do their sports, and to attend weddings and such, but most of us have the good sense to `just say NO, not yet`!

I am, however, looking forward to winter – and hopefully some snow for Christmas so something will seem normal (and I do love to shovel!) We won't be having a big family get together – we all have relatively small houses for efficient distancing. I didn't have any projects to make for my 2 sisters' craft sale this year, as it was cancelled, so hopefully I'll still have time to ramp up doing more for myself. I see so many decorations going up around town, and at work, our fresh greens and DIY sections are being ravaged daily.

I do hope that the winter will not be too severe – my *Hellebores* are budding up nicely, *Viburnum Dawn* is blooming, *Mahonia x Winter Sun* is opening well and the hummers are very busy there. I saw a few spidery petals showing on the *Hamamelis* already, and *Lonicera fragrantissima* buds are swelling with anticipation. And talk about berries – the *Pyracantha* are loaded, the *Berberis Rose Glow* appears to be dripping with rubies in the sunshine, *Sorbus Pink Pagoda* is bent under the weight of them, and *Callicarpa* is resplendent in pure violet.

*Continued on Page 4*

# From the President - Continued

So I hope that we all stay safe and healthy, and enjoy the Christmas season as best we can. The Brain Teaser puzzle is included here, and should provide at least a few minutes of distraction. Answers ,if needed, will come in January. I've left a copy on the lunchroom tables at work and after a week of agony there were still 6 blanks to fill (mind you, we have a lot of young newbies there) but you more experienced gardeners should have no trouble (P.S. I already have another one nearly done).

I was encouraged by how many members logged in to participate with Danielle and the bat talk in November – she was so knowledgeable and supportive of the program ( Bulletin – bats are NOT scary!) We will all look forward to the presentation from Glen Jamiesen In January.

Respectfully, Colleen B.

**Bat boxes**

- ✓ Alternate **summer** habitat
- ✓ Multiple boxes required
- ✓ Varying directions needed
- ✓ Relevant box specifications met
- ✓ Proper installation
- ✓ Long-term commitment
  - ✓ Annual monitoring
  - ✓ Required maintenance

Images shown: Little brown bat, Yuma myotis, California montis, Big brown bat.

Some screen shots (thanks Barb!) from our November zoom meeting with Danielle Dagenais.

**Monitoring**

- ✓ At sunset
- ✓ Listen for audible sound
- ✓ Look for guano
- ✓ Watch for bats emerge
- ✓ Observe flight path

Photo: A wooden bat box mounted on a tall post in a wooded area.

**Helping bats**

- ✓ Report roosts / dead bats / winter activity
  - ✓ **Dead bats are very important!**
- ✓ Bat encounters
  - ✓ Report to the Fraser Health Authority
  - ✓ 1-604-507-5478
- ✓ Register bat boxes
- ✓ Advocate
- ✓ Volunteer
- ✓ Minimize disturbances / stress

Photo: A dead bat lying on a concrete surface.

Report dead bats, bat activity, roosts, and bat boxes to the BC Community Bat Program  
1-855-922-2287  
vancouver@bcbats.ca

## *From the Editor*



Merry Christmas everyone!

Normally in the December edition of the YAK, I would be talking about Fraser South's annual Christmas dinner and looking forward to the always delicious variety of food that our Christmas potlucks provides. Well not this year but we keep remain hopeful for next year! Hope you enjoy the memories that I've included in this month's YAK.

As Colleen indicated the talk last month by Danielle Dagenais was very educational. In a follow-up with Danielle, she reiterated that she is available to answer questions and would appreciate members passing on bat sightings and if you have a bat house, information on occupancy.

The garden has mainly gone to sleep at this point; any re-blooms or unexpected full blooms were curtailed by a few cold evenings. A few hardy fuchsias are continuing to produce a few flower. My spring / summertime hanging baskets which continue to bloom have been moved to the rear of the house to make way for the Christmas / winter greenery.

The house decorating both inside and outside was completed a couple of weeks ago. In the past I've relied on a gardener friend for greenery to provide outside festive cheer, but this year I decided to use whatever was available in the yard. Holly (the bush actually had berries this year), pruned cedar branches, and evergreen magnolia (Browns Bracken's) branches, along with redwood greens gathered from the forest floor of the nearby park. I am very pleased with results and the chickadees must agree as they are overnighing in the decorated hanging baskets.



The bird feeders have been very busy lately with large contingents of gold finches, house finches, and pine siskins. I've had to scare off a rather large hawk lately so he/she don't get comfortable feeding off the feathered friends in our yard. Over the weekend I looked out and out gurgler was covered with bushtits. The nearby patio planters and magnolia were also full of bushtits and I enjoyed watching them fly back and forth trying to get their turn at splashing in the gurgler.

Next month's presentation from Glen Jamieson promises to provide us with some wonderful garden sights from Denmark and Sweden. With foreign travel curtailed lately I look forward to "travelling" with his presentation. A reminder that if you haven't joined us on zoom yet, to give Harold a call if you have any questions on how to join us and participate in the sessions. We had an excellent turnout last month and hope it is repeated this month.

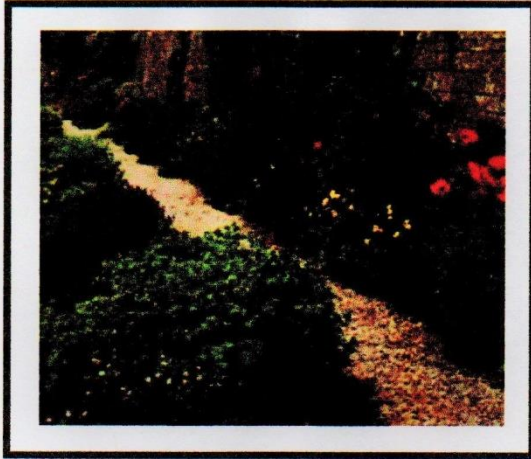
I wish everyone a Merry Christmas and even though the holidays are different this year that you enjoy the season.

*Maureen Worden*

## From the Archives



The following article originally appeared in the Fraser South Newsletter, December 2004 by Norma Senn



## Up the Garden Path with ..... Christmas Spices

December 2004

Holiday baking and cooking call to mind fragrant spices and herbs. We all have our favorite dishes, but I think of things like eggnog sprinkled with nutmeg, turkey dressing flavoured with sage and thyme, spicy gingerbread men and of course, peppermint candy canes. Flavoring agents have been prized for centuries, and they continue to be an important component of our holiday fare.

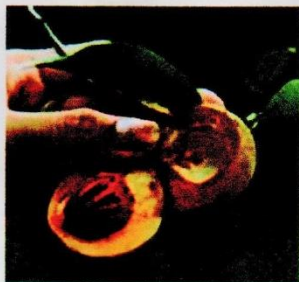
The use of cinnamon has been well-documented since ancient Egyptian times, but it is actually native to southern China and the island of Ceylon. Its value, even in ancient times, was such that it has been an important trading commodity from time immemorial. It continues to be one of the most important spices in the world.

Cinnamon is actually the dried inner bark harvested from two trees, *Cinnamomum zeylanicum*, native to Ceylon and southern India, or *C. cassia*, from southeast Asia. In the wild, the trees are about 40 to 50 feet tall, but for commercial purposes, trees are grown in plantations where they are severely pruned to be kept just over 6 feet tall. To harvest, twigs are cut from the trees, and the bark is carefully peeled off the twigs to form "quills". The quills are dried by wrapping them around another piece of wood, and during the drying process, the cinnamon ferments slightly. After drying, the quills are unwound and cut to short lengths for sale, or ground into cinnamon powder. Cinnamon oil can be distilled from the bark too, and this is used as a commercial flavoring agent and in the perfume industry. Usually, no reference is made as to which form of cinnamon is sold in a given package, but in North America, the "cassia" form of cinnamon is more commonly available, while Europeans and Mexicans prefer the Ceylonese form of cinnamon. Both forms provide a spice with a rich, aromatic scent and flavor, but the cassia form is thought to have a more robust flavor and the Ceylonese form is more delicate. Cinnamon is commonly used in baking and some processed candies, but it also is often added to pickles.



*Cinnamomum zeylanicum*, illustrated in the 1887 atlas of medicinal plants "Medizinal Pflanzen", published in Germany

Cassia buds, dried fruit capsules of *C. cassia*, are also harvested and dried for use in making pickles. The buds have a more pungent flavor of cinnamon.



*Myristica fragrans* at harvest time, showing the bright red aril which produces the spice "mace", and the "nutmeg" within

Nutmeg is the seed of the nutmeg tree, *Myristica fragrans*. A related spice, mace, is also harvested from the nutmeg seed, but it is the leathery coating that is found wrapped around the actual "nut". Nutmeg is a medium sized tree, native to Indonesia. It is now grown throughout southeast Asia and in the West Indies. Nutmeg trees are dioecious, that is, male and female flowers are borne on separate trees. In planting a nutmeg orchard, the grower must ensure there are enough male trees to pollinate the female flowers, so about one in every 10 to 12 trees will be a male pollinator. Only the female trees bear nuts. As they ripen, the nut's outer husk splits open, revealing a kernel, wrapped in the mace. After the nuts are gathered and the outer husk is removed and the leathery mace is carefully removed by hand. The mace is pressed and dried. The remaining kernel consists of a hard outer shell with the seed inside. These nuts are slowly dried and when curing is complete, the hard shell is removed. The kernel within, the

“nutmeg” is the actual spice and it can be packaged whole or ground. Both nutmeg and mace are used for flavoring sweet dishes, but they are also commonly used to spice meats, fish, preserves and pickles.



*Myristica fragrans*

These flower buds, when carefully dried and processed, produce clove oil, otherwise known as “eugenol”, a medicament which was the source of the characteristic smell of dental offices for many years

Cloves are the dried buds of unopened flowers from the tree, *Eugenia aromatica*. It is thought to be native to Indonesia, although its exact origin is unknown. Cloves are harvested just before the flower buds actually open. Pickers climb the trees to carefully cut off the sprays of buds which are separated into individual units and dried on mats for several days. Since the flower buds are delicate, the heads and supporting stems can easily come apart which lessens the value of the crop. Whole cloves, the most valuable form of the spice, must have the appearance of a “nail” with both the head and stem connected. Broken pieces can be ground into powder or used to distill oil of cloves which is a common flavouring in toothpaste and mouthwash. These can also be used to flavour condiments and candies. Whole cloves are used as “nails” to stud hams or other kinds of meats. Cloves are also used in baking, curry, pickles, preserves, and sausages. Another use of oil of cloves is to flavor tobacco, so if you’ve ever smelled “aromatic” tobacco from pipe smoke, you were probably smelling cloves.

Ginger is made from the rhizome (underground stem) of the ginger plant, *Zingiber officinale*. It is grown throughout most of the sub-tropical and tropical world, but originated in southeast Asia. Ginger is a herb that goes through periods of active growth and rest. As a rest period approaches, the leaves die down. The rhizomes are lifted, washed and dried slightly. Ginger can be purchased as a powder which is made by grinding dried ginger, or it is readily available as pieces of the cleaned rhizome. If purchasing the rhizome, it should be stored at room temperature or just slightly cooler, and kept dry. If kept long enough, you may see buds starting to develop along the rhizome and you can actually plant the ginger. It won’t be much of a houseplant for us, as we can’t provide it with enough light to sustain the plant, but it’s fun to keep it going for awhile. Ginger adds a pleasant, pungent “bite” to pastries, cookies, pies, candy, curry, and beverages. Ginger ale really does contain this spice, and while many of us enjoy ginger ale at any time, it actually does help settle upset tummies, so it is often given to people when they are ill.



*Zingiber officinale*

The rather plebeian-looking rhizome which gives us ginger is never-the-less blessed by being a member of perhaps the most euphonious plant family there is - the lovely sounding *Zingiberaceae*. Leave the “g” hard, as in “zing went the strings of my heart” and let the rest of the word just roll off your tongue. One can almost hear the waves crashing on some tropical isle.

Sage comes from *Salvia officinalis* and thyme from *Thymus vulgaris*. Both plants are members of the mint family and are native to the Mediterranean where wild plants of both species can still be found growing over the hillsides. Sage and thyme grow best in climates with hot, dry summers and moist, moderate winters. Commercially, the branches of these “subshrubs” are harvested just as the plants bloom. The branches are dried and then the leaves are stripped off the twigs. Leaves are ground and packaged. Both sage and thyme are commonly grown in local gardens for use in cooking.

Mint is also a common kitchen garden herb. There are several species of mint, but for culinary purposes the most commonly grown are spearmint, *Mentha spicata* and peppermint, *M. piperita*. Freshly picked leaves are often used as a garnish, or the leaves can be dried and ground into a powder. Commercially, most mint is distilled to make mint oil. If harvesting leaves for drying, the leaves are harvested just as flowering starts. After drying slightly, the leaves are stripped off the stems and allowed to dry more and then they are ground. In the case of mint oil, the entire top part of the mint is processed. The state of Oregon is one of the largest producers of mint oil in the world, and if you are traveling through the Oregon countryside at certain times of the year, you can smell the distilling mint for long distances. Mint oil is a common ingredient in candies, toothpaste, mouthwash and ice cream.

Like our treats, the holiday spices and herbs have a long history of tradition and come to us from all over the world. Bon appetit, and best wishes for the holidays.

*Norma Senn*

# Remembering Christmas Past







*From the Garden - A Garden At Rest*



Christmas 2020





Langley agrologist Les Clay displays a Japanese maple tree on his Langley property on Wednesday. The tree is one of dozens that will be moved to the city's arboretum. *MIKE BELL*

## Lifetime tree, plant collection to move to Langley arboretum

Local gardener donates prize azaleas, rhododendrons and Japanese maples

**KEVIN GRIFFIN**

The way Les Clay explains it, the longtime Langley gardener and former nursery operator pretty much talked his way into starting the community's arboretum.

It's a good thing, too, because that is the ultimate destination for many of his prize azaleas, rhododendrons and Japanese maples collected over a lifetime.

Clay ran a 40-acre nursery in south Langley. With his wife Beverly, the couple developed a number of hybrid rhododendrons, including one called Langley Tranquility.

He said he was sitting and waiting for something to happen in the city park with officials that included the former mayors of both the City and Township of Langley.

Over the years, he told them, he had donated a number of plants to both the city and township.

"I was giving them a hard time because they weren't looking after them properly," he said.

Former Langley city mayor Marlene Grinnell said the city really didn't have any facilities to handle plant material.

"After a few minutes, Marlene looked me in the eye and said, 'Why don't you do something about it?' "So that's how it all started."

By 2010, the Township of Langley adopted a master plan for Derek Doubleday Arboretum. Last year, a two-storey log post-and-beam interpretive centre opened in the park, located in the 21200 block of Fraser Highway. The arboretum is home for the Arboretum and Botanical Society of Langley and provides meeting space for other volunteer organizations.

At least 26 medium-sized trees and 22 mature shrubs will be moving from Clay's home in Murrayville to the arboretum, whose main purpose is to educate people about the cultural and environmental benefits of plants.

Clay said after downsizing his nursery in 2001 to one acre, he es-

timated that he moved about 500 rhododendrons and other plants onto his property.

He said his children are planning to build a house on the property where he can live with his daughter.

Clay decided it was the right time to donate some of his plants to the arboretum.

"I'm donating a fair number of plants," he said. "We're in the process now of making arrangements to carry it out."

Niall McGarvey, landscape design co-ordinator for the Township of Langley, said Clay is donating most of his yard to the arboretum.

"The idea is that it would be a legacy garden," McGarvey said. "He has quite a few rare specimens that he grew basically from cuttings or seeds."

McGarvey said Clay is donating a couple of fairly large Japanese maples that "are really spectacular." If sold, he said, they could fetch as much as \$15,000 each.

"He has quite a stunning collection," McGarvey said. "They are all fairly rare plants and they're all in really good condition."

*kevin@2fm@postmedia.com*