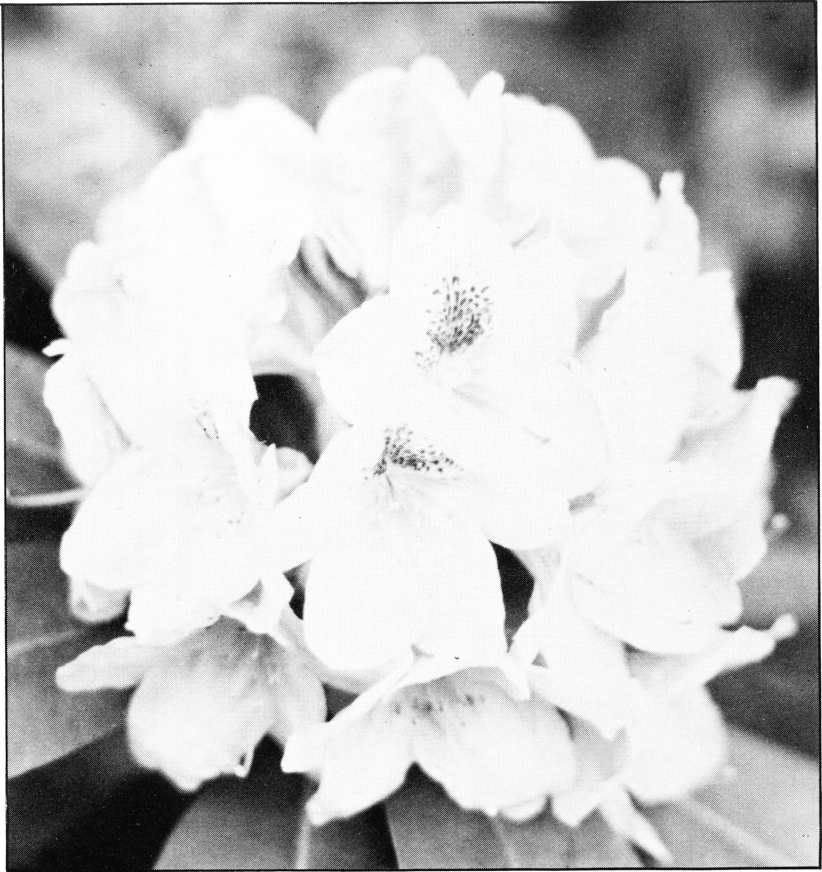


**Rhododendron
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Canada**

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Rhododendron**

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HALIFAX: THE 1985 ANNUAL MEETING

Barbara Hall - Halifax, Nova Scotia

Our Annual Meeting Committee is busy working on a very full programme, which extends from Thursday, June 13 until Sunday afternoon, June 16. The Show and several activities will be held at the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, directly on the waterfront and part of the extensive redevelopment going on there. It is the most interesting and exciting area of the city at the present time, and a remarkable change to those who have not visited Halifax in recent years.

We have arranged accommodation on a small university campus within walking distance (about five minutes). The rooms are modest but very reasonable, and meals are available. For those who prefer hotel accommodation, we have arranged a special rate at the Nova Scotian Hotel, which again is within walking distance of both the Maritime Museum and the campus.

On Thursday evening we plan a welcoming reception.

Friday's Tour day, when we will travel by bus to two locations of particular interest on our coast. Walter Ostrom's property is close to Peggy's Cove, and we plan to make a stop to see the Cove as well as Walter's garden. Then we drive to Bayport Plant Farm to see Capt. Dick Steele's nursery. A box lunch will be arranged as part of the tour. We expect to have speakers on Friday evening and an opportunity for chatting with old and new friends.

Saturday is Show day, and will also include a visit to the Boulderwood area, where we will see the greatest concentration of rhododendron plantings in the city. Again there will be speakers and slide shows available. The Annual Dinner and presentation of awards will be held on Saturday evening. We hope to make this special, with an Atlantic flavour.

Sunday is Kentville day, with buses arranged to visit the Research Station there. A programme is planned and a tour of the grounds. Once again a box lunch will be provided.

We hope that some of our members from the United States will be joining us and adding a good deal of interest to our meeting. Those who travelled from Ontario for our first Show in 1979 can be assured that we have more to see now. Please come again and bring your friends!

Speakers who have been lined up so far include the following: Dr. James Cullen of the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh; Dr. Don Craig and George Swain, who were involved in the development of the extensive gardens at Kentville Research Station; Rich Birkett of Oakville, Ontario; Capt. Dick Steele and Walter Ostrom from our local group.

We extend a very warm welcome to all members of the R.S.C.!

OBSERVATIONS ON HARDINESS AND ADAPTABILITY OF SOME RHODODENDRON SPECIES

R. Roy Forster - Vancouver, British Columbia

In the years 1981 to 1983, nearly 150 species of rhododendron were planted in a newly-developed area within the VanDusen Botanical Garden. This was the Sino-Himalayan Garden and, quite naturally, all the species planted, numbering approximately 3,000 plants in all, are derived from original collections made in western China and the Himalayas, the world's richest area for temperate, woody plants.

The aim of this project, which entailed the creation of woodland, stream, and alpine habitats from what was formerly a derelict site, was to display the widest possible range of the finest Asian rhododendron species, ranging from the giant-leaved *R. sino-grande*, to the small lepidote species such as *R. intricatum*.

Many small plants were obtained from the Rhododendron Species Foundation. Most of these represent some of the best available clonal forms of the species such as *R. davidsonianum* cv 'Caerhays Pink' and *R. campanulatum* cv 'Knaphill'. The larger plants in the garden were mostly grown from seed by the Greigs of Royston, B.C. Some of these species are derived from original collections in China, such as the Ludlow and Sherriff form of *R. wardii* (L&S 15764) or the Kingdon-Ward form of *R. decorum*, both of which are superb expressions of these species.

Most of the species in the collection are too tender for Canadian gardens other than on the favoured west coast. However, there are some choice plants which the author has grown in southern Ontario. *R. fortunei* is from central China which has a climate more similar to eastern North America than western China. *R. ambiguum*, a lovely yellow lepidote species, which the author encountered on the summit of Omei Shan (10,920 ft.), is a hardy plant which grew at Vineland some years ago and may still be there. Other Chinese dwarf lepidote species for Canada may include *R. fastigiatum*, *R. impeditum*, *R. polycladum*, *R. chryseum*, *R. racemosum*, *R. trichostomum*, *R. russatum* and my favourite *R. hippophaeoides*, which is tough and reliable. All these lepidotes are somewhat tolerant of slightly alkaline soil (but not clay). In Vancouver, we have found them to be happier with light shade, and the same, along with an eastern exposure, would apply to the Great Lakes Region and eastern Canada. Regrettably, very few of the elepidote Chinese species are hardy in Canada anywhere beyond the west coast.

The mildness of the Vancouver climate can be seen by a glance at the climate information:

The botanical garden is located on a sandy ridge in south-west Vancouver. The land slopes from the south-west to the north-east corner, where the elevation is 106 M (350 ft.). The highest point is the summit of the Sino-Himalayan Garden at an elevation of 141 M (464 ft.). From this overlook can be seen the full panorama of the city, the sea, and the Coast Range Mountains.

The lakes, mounds, streams, waterfalls and rock-work are all man-made. During the excavations necessary to create the lakes, quantities of clam shells, calcified worm castings and other marine remnants were found. These are about 12,000 years old, indicating that the site was below sea level at that time. The present elevation is due to glacial rebound since the melting of the retreating ice cap.

The soil is a sandy glacial till, with coarse gravels and rounded boulders. The latter can be seen in the water spillway that drains the Sino-Himalayan Garden. All the other rock in the garden has been brought in from various parts of the city. Sandstone, limestone, basalt and granite conglomerate have been used to build rock gardens and walls. Several large boulders of British Columbia jade (nephrite) can also be seen.

Statistical information:

Land area.....22.46 hectares = 55.5 acres
Elevation.....106 M. to 141 M. = 350 to 464 ft.
Latitude, Longitude.....49.5 N - 123.5 W.
Average annual rainfall.....127 cm. = 50"
Average July temperature.....+17.4 C = 63 F
Average January temperature.....+2.4 C = 36 F
Lowest temperature recorded (1968).....-17.8 C = 0 F

However, we had some concern for survival of some species in the new plantings because of the exposure on the treeless high ground of the Sino-Himalayan Garden. We were lucky to have two mild winters during which the major part of the collection was moved from Stanley Park, at sea level, to the Vandusen Garden (464 ft.). Well before the winter of 1983-4, the collection was quite well-established. Many of the plants had been somewhat 'leggy' as a result of being grown in the rather dense shade of Stanley Park. After being out in the sunshine for a year, most of these plants produced a forest of suckers and shoots from the lower stem. The results are much more compact and thrifty plants.

All the plants were mulched with about 6" of semi-decayed leaves and given 6-30-15 at the time of transplanting; two applications of 9-3-6 were given in spring and early summer.

In mid December 1983, an unusually early cold front moved in. For a period of over two weeks, the temperature barely rose above freezing. The soil froze to a depth of 8". On December 23, -13.2°C was recorded. This was comparatively cold if one remembers that the lowest temperature ever recorded was -17.8°C (0°F) in 1968. The mean temperature for the month was a surprisingly-low 0.7°C. The normal mean for December is 3.9°C.

Considering the abruptness of the cold spell, very little severe damage was recorded. We can attribute few outright plant deaths to the freeze. This is surprising since the weather caught us unawares, before the winter protective mulch had been applied. In other areas of the botanical gardens, southern hemisphere plants such as escallonias, hebes, phormiums and oleareas were frozen. Mediterranean flora consisting of helianthemums and cistus was also damaged.

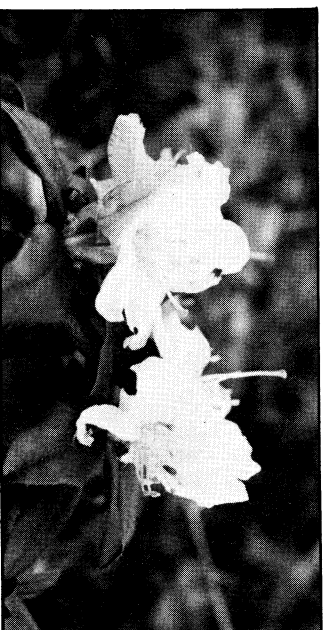
Rhododendron oldhami was killed, but this was not unexpected since the native home of this species is Taiwan at relatively-low elevations. Many other obtusum-type evergreen 'Azaleas' were slightly damaged. No damage was recorded on any deciduous 'Azaleas'. In the elepidote group, the only significant damage occurred on the *Campylocarpa* subsection. As a group, these were usually considered rather tender. *R. campylocarpum* itself was severely scorched. *R. souleianum* and *R. wardii*, slightly so. This may have been exacerbated by a rather poor choice of site for these plants, which were placed in a western exposure and thus were vulnerable to the afternoon sun. This situation can be fatal if the ground is frozen and the air temperature rises. *Rhododendron thomsonii*, a species much prized for its blood-red flowers, suffered only slight leaf scorch. *R. dicrananthum* and its subspecies, *scythocalyz* were similarly affected.

The tree species of rhododendron in the Falconera subsection are, perhaps, the most vulnerable, as the enormous leaves cannot withstand frost for very long. Several plants of *R. rex* were only slightly injured. *R. rex* ssp. *fictolacteum* appears to be the hardest in this group. *R. falconeri* is not hardy.

In the Grandia subsection, the magnificent *R. macabeanum*, from Manipur, is the most robust, large-leaved species, closely followed by *R. sinogrande*. These, and their relatives, are the most majestic of all rhododendron species. Unfortunately, they are not likely to withstand a really severe freeze that may occur from time to time. Equal in stature, and much harder, is *R. calophytum*, the largest species we have in the Fortunea subsection. This, like all large-leaved rhododendrons, must be sited out of the reach of strong winds. In a sheltered location, it is capable of reaching tree proportions.

While the collection has not been subjected to a real test winter, it is gratifying to have available for study such a large and varied collection of rhododendron species.

Roy Forster is Curator of the Vandusen Botanical Gardens.



Rhododendron fletcherianum

A beautiful and dwarf yellow-flowered species in the *cilicalyx* alliance. Undamaged in the cold spell (-13°F) of winter 1983-84. The normal flowering season is said to be in May. This plant was in full bloom in July, 1984 in Vandusen Garden.



Rhododendron flavidum

A dwarf lepidote species in the Laponica subsection. A good plant for the rock garden or for group planting in the manner of heathers. Unusual in its category for having yellow flowers.

RHODODENDRONS IN CANADA

CAPE BRETON REPORT

From a letter from Robert Morgan - Cape Breton Island, February, 1984

Sydney's climate - note I say Sydney, since other parts of the island have different weather patterns. Our climate resembles that of Halifax with less fog, since we are 9 miles back from the open ocean. The western side (Inverness) of the island is influenced by the Gulf of St. Lawrence. However, we are an island, so we are both milder in winter and cooler in summer than adjacent mainland areas. Remember, Sydney is at the same latitude as Quebec City! There are not many rhodos growing there.

The lowest temperature at the Sydney Airport since 1940 was -25°C (-13°F). We experienced that in 1941 and 1983. Normal lows are about -18°C (0°F) to -20°C (-5°F). Our falls linger into November but real killer frosts come around 20 October. Our springs are disappointingly late, as they are throughout N.S. - but even worse, since drift ice can linger off shore through March, April and even May. Last frosts are usually around 24 May. Some say we have no spring! I say we have the longest spring in Canada - it just moves very slowly. For example, I can plant shrubs, etc., any time between 1 April and 1 June; there is no great rush to plant, as temperatures do not rise quickly or to high values. I appreciate this since I have lived in southern Ontario, where shrubs must be planted in a two-week period around 1 May because spring passes so quickly.

The result of all the above is ideal for rhodos and many kinds of broad-leaved evergreens. Even the normal winter cloudiness which results from our insular location is a help, since sun burn is limited.

Now for the difficulties; both are related to our insular environment, and they are wind and snow. Wind off the ocean (from three directions) can cause wind burn in June or even July - at 100 kmph. wind can really hurt young growth. The western side of the island (Inverness) is particularly open to this. Hence, it's a good idea to plant broadleaved evergreens near some protection (a conifer or the east side of a house, etc.).

Snow! Like the rest of coastal N.S., a great number of our snow storms turn to rain. However, this frequently fails to happen and storms generally gain in intensity between Shelburne and Sydney; 2 or 3 inches in Shelburne can be a foot or two by the time the storm gets here. Worse, a storm may drop say 6 inches on Halifax, turn to rain and wash the snow away. We may get a foot, then it may turn to rain but wash away only 6 inches of snow. What is left turns to heavy ice. The above scenarios, ie - heavy snow and icy residue - we get more frequently than anywhere else in N.S. They can crush broad-leaved evergreens, tear off beautiful branches and knock the tops off upright plants like hollies. There is nothing worse than seeing a branch of my 'P.J.M.' after a terrible ice storm.

To give you an example, last February/Halifax had a relatively snowless month. We had - get this - 6 FEET of snow; storms veered off just south and east of C.B. All my rhodos disappeared for a month and a half. The small laurels I have disappeared from February til April. When this melts - it freezes - melts - freezes and can turn to ice. It ripped off branches from my magnolia (with fat buds) and blue hollies. So cold is not my enemy; it's excessive snow with it attendant slow melt.

The answer to the above is to stake firmly all upright plants like hollies - tie plants firmly to the stake. Remove snow if possible before it can turn to ice, otherwise just leave the plant alone. Don't try to pull ice off the plant or to knock it off, or leaves and branches will follow. Once ice forms all you can do is pray. Little wooden lean-to's can help, but who's going to make twenty of these things? And if we have an open winter, like this one, so far, they ruin the look of the yard. One reason I grow broadleaved evergreens is so that I can enjoy their greenery all winter - nothing is nicer than looking out the window on a rainy, blah, day in January and seeing fluffy rhodos and laurels and glistening hollies. Picks you right up! I do not want to see little shacks all over my yard.

Other things to do: buy dwarf-growing plants - they seem impervious to this. Put those small fences around plants; this helps support them in heavy snow and since these fences are green you don't notice them. These methods and staking hollies seem to work well. Also, don't plant below a roof where the wind will dump all the snow from the roof on your plant. I'm living with this: a five-foot 'P.J.M.' is regularly buried - totally - because of this location. It has obviously survived, but I lose branches almost every year. (But God! in the spring against the background of my white house, it stops traffic!)

I've learnt all the above on my own, since the nearest agricultural station is 200 miles away in Truro. Cape Breton is really on its own in this regard, and people growing broadleaved or tender plants without the help the Rhodo Society gives are condemned to learn by trial and error. Wish I'd discovered the Society ten instead of four years ago.

*RHODODENDRONS AND THEIR RELATIVES: Part One

by B.N. Starling

The enchanted forest of Sikkim had been, for over two full days, revealing their floral treasures to us four wandering souls when, on the third day we climbed clear of those tortuous, lichen-hung rhododendron branches into swirling alpine moorland mist. Like a magician drawing back a veil our guide, Daku Tenzing, proudly introduced us to this new vista and in particular to our first alpine rhododendron in flower.

We had now achieved 3750 m. and had been noticing unflowered scrub of *Rhododendron lepidotum* for some time but here, only 50 m. away, was a solitary bush of *R. anthopogon* just 60 cm. high by as much through, bearing numerous 3-4 cm. clusters of small, rose-pink, tubular flowers. The site was dramatic. An extremely steep slope which disappeared downwards into the invisible mist-filled valley, with *R. anthopogon* perched near the top of the slope in peaty grit. Risks taken in the hazardous scramble to obtain photographs proved quite unnecessary as we panted over the next brow to find thickets of the same attractive pink form.

The next couple of miles were to prove fascinating - a cavalcade of *R. anthopogon* that would have left many a taxonomist scratching his head in bewilderment for here it appeared, *R. hypenanthum*, defined by creamy-yellow flowers and persistent bud scales, arrived from the west to meet *R. anthopogon*, with pink flowers and deciduous bud scales, from the eastern end of the Himalayas. Our next encounter was with plants bearing peach to apricot coloured trusses over brown-green foliage and then, on either side of the path, with flowers of sulphur yellow; finally, at 4000 m., acres of white with just a hint of rose staining the base of the corolla. On the following day, in the valley to the east of Dzongri, we were to find one solitary specimen 45 cm. high and over a metre in diameter growing amidst pumpkin-sized boulders at least two hundred metres from any of its kin. This formed a table top of silvery-sheened leaves covered as if with an embroidered table-cloth or primrose coloured flowers.

R. anthopogon stayed with us right through to 5000 m., its spicily fragrant foliage becoming quite pungent on those occasions when we left the trail to wade knee-deep through thickets to reach the odd fritillaria or lily that had sought the protection of its branches. Due, perhaps, to their associating this species with some of our more breathless ascents, my companions took a distinct dislike to its pervading fragrance. We all, however, owed a debt of gratitude to those short, tough branches for providing many a stable foot or hand-hold on the precipitous slopes above Onglathang. The young shoots are gathered as a substitute for incense and it was with consternation that I watched our Sherpas stripping these together with, inevitably, the spent flowers - our potential autumn seed crop. However, the thousands of acres of this species ensured that neither Sherpas nor

shareholders would go short. At its topmost limit, *R. anthopogon* formed low mats of twiggy growth barely 15 cm. high but in one wet meadow at about 4000m. a sparsely-flowered form with large, thin-textured, khaki-green leaves had straggled to over a metre in height.

Soon after our first acquaintance with *R. anthopogon* we met our second alpine rhododendron. This was *R. setosum* and this, too, held some surprises for us. I have always found this plant difficult to please in cultivation and have wondered if it was worth the effort when its wispy-washy, reddish-purple flowers have appeared. Certainly this form was present in the wild but just as frequently the flowers would be a rich, deep purple. From Dzongri westwards towards the pass into the Bikbari Valley and for some distance north-west along that valley the purple form predominated, while not too far to the north of our camp at Dzongri just a few isolated plants were of a rich, clear crimson. So much did this remind me of the claret form of *R. calostroturn* that I tended to confuse my companions by referring to it as *R. calostroturn*, a plant from much further east in the Himalayas. Fortunately, by late September we were able to collect ample seed of both purple and crimson forms.

Observing *R. setosum* growing cheek by jowl with the easily-pleased *R. lepidotum* and the not too difficult *R. anthopogon*, I was baffled by its intractability in cultivation. Certainly all three species enjoyed the same open situation, gritty, sharply drained growing medium and heavy rainfall during the growing season. It was the discomfort of the latter feature together with the effects of altitude that prevented me from dwelling on this problem. *R. setosum* rests uncomfortably in Series Lapponicum or subsection Lapponica, according to which school you follow. Thus its closest relatives are plants not generally regarded as difficult to cultivate.

Just a few hours of that rare phenomenon, sunshine, would have coaxed into flower our third species, *R. lepidotum*, and judging by variations of leaf and habit, that species too, would have had us seeking out unusual forms. As it was, only the odd plant of *R. lepidotum* var. *elaegnoides*, with clear, butter yellow, 2 cm. diameter rotate flowers borne at the tip of every branchlet, was sufficiently awake after its winter dormancy to welcome us. This little shrub chose a rugged habitat of exposed ridges, moss-filled crannies and old moraines, spreading like windswept heather along the cracks or taking aeons to form perfect little bushlets 5 cm. high by 10 cm. wide. Frequently it was the binding roots of this species that prevented the elements from blunting the knife edge of the ridge.

On our last day in the alpine region just one plant of the taller, larger-leaved, purple-flowered *R. lepidotum* of the wet meadows cautiously opened a flower or two. While the yellow *R. lepidotum* was clothed with tiny, elliptic leaves recently expanded from winter buds at the tips of twiggy shoots, the purple form bore roundish, dark green, scaly leaves of about 20 X 15 mm. Just as *R. lepidotum* will sport a few flowers in autumn, in cultivation, so, in September, when our second team visited Sikkim, the odd flower here and there showed us that this species, too, was quite variable in the range of its colours. One was a light wine shade while others were in varying degrees of reddish-purple.

In cultivation rhododendrons suffer from few maladies and it seemed strange that in the cool, clean air of the mountains, an environment in which they had evolved, they should suffer any serious affliction. In places, however, whole colonies suffered from a disease which caused their seed capsules to enlarge to up to twice normal proportions and then solidify into a chalky mass in which no viable seed could be identified. Such colonies were given a wide berth when it came to seed collecting.

While the three previously mentioned species stayed with us up to about 5000 m. gradually becoming more diminutive, a fourth species, *R. nivale*, did not appear until we reached that height and only occupied a very narrow altitude band of perhaps 50 m. I had been hoping to find *R. nivale*, but must admit to being a little disappointed in it. In habit it was the perfect alpine shrub, forming 10-15 cm. high mats of densely congested twiglets, almost level or slightly domed on top with the small flowers nestling into the solid covering of tiny, deep-green leaves. Though the plants were up to a metre in diameter, none was generously flowered and the paucity of the previous year's seed capsules seemed to indicate that this was not just a bad year. After the richly coloured forms of the other alpine species, the uniform, somewhat pallid lilac in a setting of grey mist of that cloud-shrouded, high Himalayan pass did little to inspire delight.

All the alpine species described would disappear beneath snow between mid-October and late November after perhaps a month of bright, dry days and increasingly severe night frosts. Not until June would the uppermost of these re-appear to be encouraged into growth by temperatures which melted the snow to provide ample moisture to the roots. Before this supply is exhausted the monsoon rains take over, while even during short, rainless intervals, the air is saturated with water vapour preventing almost all transpiration from the foliage. In normal years, that is years other than that chosen for an A.G.S. expedition, the rain has ceased by mid-September and the season's growth ripens to withstand the falling temperatures.

There is little doubt that glaciers have ground the glistening quartzite rock to the sharp, gritty, acutely-drained medium in which these plants grow. In the high alpine pastures, peaty humus has accumulated and is bound together by fibrous roots of rhododendrons, grasses and a variety of other vegetation. Increasingly these pastures are grazed and at the same time manured by sheep and yaks, the organic matter not only providing a rich source of immediately available nutrition, but also gradually enriching the soil in the long term by slowing down the leaching process through the sharp grit. Towards the higher passes the growing medium is of more recently deposited glacial spoil and it was incredible to find the alpine rhododendrons of smaller stature but otherwise in perfect condition growing in grit almost totally devoid of humus. Only one other shrub accompanied the rhododendrons to 5000 m., *Potentilla fruticosa* var. *arbuscula*, with leaves silvered by fine hairs and golden-yellow flowers similar to and equal in size to the Dog Rose of English hedgerows.

**Reprinted from the Quarterly Bulletin of the Alpine Garden Society, with permission. To be concluded in a later issue.*

YOU'VE GOT TO ENTER TO WIN

Fred Gallop - Mississauga, Ontario

The growing of rhododendrons in Canada is a challenge, not only in the more temperate coastal zones, but in the colder interior areas. Meeting this challenge and overcoming the difficulties bring much satisfaction. When we hear, "But they won't grow here!" we may smile a little and point out that, while it may be difficult, it can be done.

In the fall we watch the flower buds take shape and fatten, and hope they survive the winter (and the squirrels). Comes spring, and every day shows progress. The buds swell until that thrilling day when we feel we must tell someone, "They are showing colour!" The buds open, the florets appear and finally, the whole glorious truss is open, displaying its form and colour in a triumphant culmination of development. Happiness is ours.

But there can be further satisfaction and rewards even for the most elementary grower.

We are approaching the season of flower shows and exhibitions. Each year, various segments of our Society hold regional and national shows where we can see an impressive array of rhododendrons and azaleas displayed under the most attractive conditions, not only for the enjoyment of our Society members, but also for the general public. This is when we can answer with confidence, "Yes, they will grow here!"

When Connie and I attended flower shows in the early days of our Society membership, we were somewhat overwhelmed by the quality of the exhibits. We felt we were witnessing a state of rhododendron culture that was the exclusive field of experts, to which we lowly amateurs could never aspire. The individual exhibits were so exquisite, so perfect, so clean, and, viewed as a whole, so breath-taking, that we felt we were in a world in which we were privileged to take a brief peek. We would come away feeling that our own growing efforts were pretty humble. At places like Royal Botanical Gardens, Grimsby, Burlington, the Civic Garden Centre, we thrilled at the sight of flowers so beautiful, so perfect, that we could only look, and not participate.

But one day, for us, all this changed. Someone, perhaps Hank Hedges, perhaps Al Smith, suggested that we enter some of our flowers. At first we thought this was impossible. How could we hope to compete with those superior examples which we had so much admired. But we were urged to realize that our flowers, while perhaps not potential prize winners, were at least good representatives, and worthy of display. We began to feel that exhibiting was possible, so we carefully read the exhibit rules and suggestions for selecting, preparing and entering.

In the weeks before the show, we looked at our plants with a new objective in mind. We were not only going to admire them in our garden, we were going to let others see them in the company of the best.

We were assured that size alone, while an important factor, is not vital - that some of our smaller trusses had merit. We looked for those showing near-perfect development, all florets opening nicely and with a collar of leaves that were a uniform dark green and free from damage. We used coloured markers to identify those that showed most promise, and made sure that at the first sign of foreign invaders, an application of malathion kept them at bay.

As the show date approached, timing became important. What if the blooms reached their peak before the show date? Reviewing previous **Bulletins**, we found a lot of advice on how to hold them at their best. Ruth Behring had found that keeping the cut stems in aerated water (soda water) seemed to help. Mary Cohoe suggested keeping them in a refrigerator. We also learned that small-necked stubby beer bottles make ideal flower holders.

We heard about 'grooming'. Our flowers didn't seem as clean as those we had seen in the shows, but this was easily overcome. Most plants that grow outdoors pick up specks of soot, dust and other debris, and the scales that enclose the buds look untidy. The careful use of tweezers, and a small brush dipped in a mild detergent solution can easily remove these imperfections. After grooming, the blooms look fresh and clean and the leaves sleek and shiny.

We had studied the rules regarding show entries and made sure that our cuttings conformed. We found the rules are quite logical and compliance causes little difficulty. When we looked at the classes, however, it was a different story. We saw that there are classes and sub-classes, and into which did our flowers fit?

Well, that proved to be the least of our worries. As long as we knew the variety, the people arranging the show would very quickly tell us into which classes our entries belonged, and we made the appropriate identification on the entry labels.

When the great day arrived we carefully packed our flowers, in their stubby bottles, in a box large enough to avoid crowding, and joined the many other exhibitors at the show place, to identify our entries, and incidentally, to lend a hand with the many details that must be taken care of. Preparing for a show is certainly a situation in which many hands make light work.

Then it's everyone out of the exhibit room while the judges do their work. During this period there is an air of excitement as the results are awaited. Finally, the last winner is selected, the last ribbon awarded, and we are allowed in to see how our entries have fared.

Did we win? Yes, we did! We won because our efforts to grow rhododendrons had resulted in our blooms being up there among the best there are. We won, because we had learned much about the qualities that are considered most desirable. We won, because we had joined a group whose plants were the best in the business.

Did we get a prize? We were so proud to see our plants on the display tables that a ribbon or award would be just so much icing on the cake. We have been awarded a nice assortment of ribbons, and one year we even won the E. Frank Palmer cup for best species.

So if you want to get the most out of you rhododendrons, plan now to enter some exhibits this year. You will find that by entering, you win!

The 1985 Annual Meeting and Flower Show of the R.S.C. takes place in Halifax, from June 13 to 16.

The Niagara Region has invited the Toronto Region to join them in a Flower Show at Vineland, June 1 and 2.

THE RHODODENDRON SPECIES FOUNDATION

H.G. Hedges - St. George, Ontario

On the campus of the Weyerhaeuser Corporate Headquarters at Federal Way, Washington, about 24 miles south of Seattle, is a 23 acre site housing an organization and garden dedicated solely to the acquisition and preservation of a living collection of species rhododendrons. This is the home of The Rhododendron Species Foundation which was formed in 1964 and established itself at its present location in 1974. The membership of RSF comprises rhododendron societies (including our own), institutions, and individuals.

The RSF is unique in at least two respects. Not only does it have by far the largest variety of rhododendron species of any garden in the world, but also claims to be the only foundation dedicated to collecting and distributing the greatest possible range of species within a single genus. The garden is now the home of more than 600 species. Nearly all hardy species in cultivation, along with many tender and tropical species are represented. Plants have been obtained from private and public collections, botanical gardens, and the wild.

The source for many of the plants has been the gardens of Great Britain, especially such well-documented collections as those in Edinburgh Royal Botanic Garden and Windsor Great Park. A prime consideration in selecting additions is that the plant is a "true" species. When available, whole plants are introduced. But since most of the important sources are overseas, and since plants imported must be bare-rooted, the majority of clones are now introduced by scions.

Unlike most other rhododendron gardens, which tend to focus on hybrids, the RSF garden displays mainly species, many of them relatively unknown to most gardeners, with distinct and natural characteristics of their own. The difference is most noticeable in the long blooming season, beginning with *R. dauricum* in January and finishing with *R. auriculatum* in August.

RHODODENDRONS FOR YOUR GARDEN

KENTVILLE ALL STAR RHODODENDRONS

Donald Craig - Kentville, Nova Scotia

Thirty-two years have sped by since Armistice Day 1952, when the great urge came upon me to get involved with rhododendrons. I had looked at the little group of Research Station 'Ironclads' long enough. They were mature, surrounded by weed trees, shrubs and brambles; often layered and often picked but totally neglected. Vaguely remembering that I had read that rhododendrons could be propagated from semi-hardwood cuttings, leaf-bud cuttings and from seed, I tried my luck. It was beginners luck - all three methods worked well, so I was off to the rhododendron world. Like topsy, the Research Station plantings grew and grew and now that time has permitted a reasonable appraisal it seems only right to choose the 'all stars' from the 85 species, 77 rhododendron and 98 azalea cultivars, plus the thousands of seedlings that have been evaluated at Kentville.

My stars are arranged in alphabetical order lest I be accused of undue bias, although I am going to take the liberty of naming four 'super stars'. I will not dwell on the meritable details of each and every selection, but partially justify my choices by noting some of the traits most appealing to me. Just in case you might wonder about the low winter temperatures experienced at Kentville, the 10 year (1974-84) average for the minimum monthly is as follows: December -19°C, January -21°C, February -20°C, March -16°C. Lowest minimum temperature recorded during this period was -25°C in January 1982.

Rhododendron

Cultivars Flower Color

Bellefontaine	pink
Besse Howells	burgundy red
Blue Peter	light lavender

Appealing Traits and

Comments

flower quality, floret size and scent; plant vigor (3-4 m when mature); a *R. turtunei* x *R. smirnowii* cross requiring plenty of room to express its true beauty; a Kentville introduction, so many flowers on such a nice plant, good foliage. One of Tony Shamarello's best hybrids. an old favorite, eye-catching frilled lavender-blue florets with a purple flare on the upper petal; glossy green foliage; plant equal in height and width; most reliable. flower quality, presentation, almost a mirror image of Bellefontaine but the bonus is that it flowers a week later.

The plants of the garden come from the broadest geographical distribution, ranging from northern Canada and Siberia to Florida, from the European Alps to the New Guinea highlands, and from their ancestral home, China, where the genus ranges from 80-foot Himalayan giants to tiny crevice dwellers high on the slopes of Mount Everest. A generation or two will pass before the garden will display mature specimens of many of its species.

The formal policy of the RSF states that the collection shall include: 1. True representatives of all botanically-described taxons of the genus, including species, sub-species, varieties, and forms; types or typical example of taxons no longer recognized as distinct will be included for study and historic interest; 2. Clones representing the full range of natural variation of each taxon, including growth habit; foliage shape, size and indumentum characteristics; and flower color, size, season, and character, and representatives of each taxon from different areas of its habitat, especially altitudinal range and climatic zone variations; and 3. Selections from the wild and from cultivation, which possess particular ornamental value, including flower, foliage, and habit characteristics, or offer potential of greater cold-hardiness, heat-tolerance, or greater amenability to cultivation.

In order to insure preservation of certain species, the RSF endeavours to make reciprocal arrangements with other botanical gardens to establish auxiliary collections in locations which may be more favorable.

To establish and increase new acquisitions, the garden has developed in its greenhouses a program of vegetative propagation. By experimenting with different strengths and types of hormones and by taking cuttings at different times of the year, the gardeners have succeeded in rooting cuttings of nearly all species, including many formerly regarded as difficult.

Our own society and several of our members have been beneficiaries of the foundation's propagation program. For several years our auctions have included specimens obtained as a benefit of membership, through RSF's surplus distribution program. Each year, in mid-winter we receive and distribute through our regions the catalogue of available species for direct purchase. Recently, at our request, the manager of RSF has volunteered to explore ways in which our members may get some relief from the heavy exchange rates involved in purchasing plants from them.

Through donations and the contributions of its 500 individual and group members, the RSF continues to grow. Its library now contains over 500 volumes on ericaceous plants. Over 100 tons of granite have been installed on a southeastern slope to house masses of alpine species, a major project for the next year. When resources are available, pollen and seed distribution programs will be introduced.

If you wish to visit the foundation, we suggest that you write in advance for a visitor's schedule. The address is: The Rhododendron Species Foundation, P.O. Box 3798, Federal Way, Washington, U.S.A. 98003. As a member of our society you will be given free admission to the garden.

With its more than 22,000 plants, including over 90% of the species that can be grown in a temperate climate, the RSF represents a unique preserve of the genus rhododendron, and with further growth will become an even more valuable resource for those who grow and study rhododendrons.

		Pleasantly-scented large flowers borne in very large trusses firmly held above the foliage. A Kentville introduction. beautiful pink florets plus a dark red petal blotch; a compact plant with quality foliage. A Tony Shamarello introduction.
Holden	pink	very floriferous, large frilled light pink florets, distinctive green flare on upper petal, flower trusses above foliage; a compact plant. A Dexter Hybrid? Selected by David Leach.
Janet Blair	pink	this old timer never fails to perform well; hardy, vigorous, good foliage; deep red florets with a black blotch on the upper petal are very attractive.
Nova Zembla	red	exceptional foliage, dark green in summer, bronze in winter, leaves small, excellent compact plant form, suitable for any garden, early flowering. A P.J. Mezitt introduction.
P.J.M.	lavender pink	a Dexter cultivar, superb in every way, beautiful pastel pink scented flowers, flared throat markings dark pink to gold; deep shiny green foliage plus excellent compact plant form.
Scintillation	pink	very compact, an ideal low border or rock garden type; attractive foliage the year around, leaves less than an inch long, change color throughout the year. A 'must' for every garden from Guy Nearing.
Ramapo	light violet	abundant flowers beautifully presented early in the season; plant compact and hardy; a quality cultivar from Tony Shamarello.
Spring Parade	scarlet red	

These 'all star' rhododendron cultivars provide an extra bonus apart from their great floral beauty. Mature plant height ranges from approximately one meter for 'Ramapo' to 1.5 m for 'P.J.M.' and on up to 3 plus meters for 'Fundy' and 'Bellefontaine'. There could be no excuse for not having a pleasing plant display from this collection. In addition the first florets on 'P.J.M.' appear by May 18 and the last on 'Catawbiense Album' 5 weeks later - five weeks of floral beauty.

Rhododendron Species		
<i>R. yakushimanum</i> (Mist Maiden)	white	a beautiful compact plant; attractive foliage has a deep coat of indumentum on the leaf underside, the foliage alone provides year-around pleasure; pink flower buds open to white florets suffused pink fading to pure white. A David Leach selection.
<i>R. carolinianum</i> (Carolina rhododendron)	white-pink	very hardy, very neat, low growing (1.2 m - 1.8 m high), small glossy leaves; easily produced from seed or cuttings, flower color ranges from white - light pink - pink - dark pink. To quote David Leach "one of the best flowering evergreen shrubs in existence".
Azalea Cultivars	Flower Color	Appealing Traits and Comments
Byron Mayo	orange red	vigorous, tall, good foliage, attractive orange red florets fade to a beautiful 'hot pink'. A Bovee of Oregon introduction.
Cathye Mayo	orange-yellow	medium height, orange-yellow florets flushed pink, flower size and texture outstanding. A Bovee introduction.
Gold Flake	yellow	a superb plant, good foliage, low growing, compact; masses of golden yellow flowers with a deep gold blotch. A Bovee introduction.
Gibraltar	orange-red	an outstanding azalea, excellent flower truss, very floriferous, good plant form, good foliage. Introduced by Exbury Nursery, England.
Homebush	dark pink	small double florets in a very tight globe truss, unusual, very attractive. Introduced by Knaphill Nursery, England.
Knaphill Red	red	vigorous, tall growing, good foliage, clarity of color exceptional. Introduced by Knaphill Nursery, England.

Knaphill White	white	vigorous, tall growing, flower buds pale pink open to pure white; always a good performer. Introduced by Knaphill Nursery, England.
Klondyke	gold	good plant form; deep bronze foliage, deep golden tangerine yellow florets, brilliant. Exbury Nursery introduction.
Minas Princess	pink	a tall plant nicely formed, covered with small dark pink florets in a compact flower head; fairy-like in a woodland setting. A Kentville selection - Ghent ancestry.
Norma	rosy red	a moderately vigorous plant; scented double flowers, light pink with a salmon glow turning to rosy-red at maturity. An outstanding Ghent.
Silver Slippers	white	large white florets flushed pink, gold petal blotch, very attractive; plant medium height, good form. Introduced by Exbury Nursery.
Sweet Sue	pink	plant height medium; florets ruffled, deep pink with a yellow blotch, flower trusses ball like, very nice. A Bovee introduction.
Azalea Species		
<i>R. bakeri</i> (Cumberland Azalea)	orange-red	masses of flowers very late in the season when all other azaleas are past flowering; very attractive; plant tall, foliage glossy green. flower color varies from yellow to orange to scarlet; plant form superior, semi-compact and symmetrical. Others comment "queen of them all"; "the most gay and brilliant flowering shrub yet known".
<i>R. luteum</i> (Sweet Azalea)	yellow	good plant form, flowers bright yellow and very pleasantly scented. A 'must' for every garden.
<i>R. roseum</i> (Rose Shell Azalea)	pink	a compact shrub bearing very fragrant flowers with a clover-like scent. Thrives under rather adverse conditions.

R. schlippenbachii pink
(Royal Azalea)

this Korean native produces fragrant apple blossom pink flowers flecked with gold early in the season. An attractive shrub producing distinctive leaves in whorls of five; foliage changes to shades of yellow, orange and crimson in the autumn.

The 'super stars' I have chosen from each of the four categories noted above are the rhododendron cultivar 'Scintillation', the rhododendron species *R. yakushimanum* selected 'Mist Maiden', the azalea cultivar 'Gold Flake' and the azalea species *R. calendulaceum*. If I could only have four rhododendrons in my garden these are the ones I would dearly like to have.

Finally, a look into my crystal ball shows me which of the recently released Kentville rhododendron and azalea cultivars are most likely to gain 'all star' fame. 'Minas Rose', derived from a 'Nova Zembla' x *R. yakushimanum* selection crossed to a *R. catawbiense album* Glass x 'Elizabeth' selection is the most likely rhododendron candidate. An examination of the parentage explains its hardiness, compactness, attractive foliage, the masses of flowers in compact trusses held well above the foliage. The dark rose flower buds, wavy florets whose petal edge is dark rose fading down the floral tube to light pink, an upper petal flecked dark rose plus plump bright yellow anthers leave little to be desired. In the azalea world, 'Minas Flame' is a most likely candidate for all star status. It appears equal to the very best of the currently available cultivars. Selected in 1980 from a cross made in 1971 between 'Gibraltar' and 'Balzac' it covers itself from top to bottom with brick-red florets in compact flower trusses. Plant form is excellent - upright but compact and vigorous.

These are my 'stars', my 'super stars' and 'stars to be'. There are many more, but rest assured those mentioned above can make a garden of great beauty.

AN ALPINE BOTANIST

by Betty Massingham

Climbing on the roof of the world, designing rock gardens, describing his travels or discovering new plants, Reginald Farrer packed more into his life than people twice his age could manage. He was a loner whose company was fascinating.

The mountain stream that rushes down the hillside by the grey stone cottages of Clapham in Yorkshire gives visitors the impression of wandering into an alpine village. The village is on an incline and the lower slopes of Ingleborough fell descend into it. The air is clear.

This was the home of Reginald Farrer, plant collector, explorer, author, gardener and scholar. Anyone enthusiastic about alpinism could hardly have lived in a more suitable situation and the Farrer rock gardens were eventually to provide varieties of alpinism for gardeners all over Europe.

He was born in Clapham in 1880, son of J.A. Farrer, Liberal MP, and of Mrs. Farrer, described as "strikingly handsome", cultured and a plant-lover. Farrer had enough money to enable him to travel when he came down from Oxford. The background was auspicious but one physical handicap affected his outlook and perhaps helped to dictate his way of life - he was born with a cleft palate (hare lip). Accounts vary about how much this really altered him as a person, but there seems little doubt that he felt he must strive to be witty when he was in company, and to be content in solitary occupations. His parents were keen gardeners and had a rock garden at Ingleborough House. He is reputed to have rebuilt the rock garden when only 14. At Oxford his letters home contained instructions to his mother about maintaining it and collecting plants from neighbouring rocks and screes.

Farrer grew a heavy moustache to conceal his upper lip, but nothing could alter the unfortunate timbre of his voice. It says a great deal for his personality that he overcame this, and people talking to him were so taken up with his conversation and enthusiasms that it often went almost unnoticed.

As a young man he was comparatively free, although the restrictions of his home life were those of a Victorian household. His second cousin, Osbert Sitwell, comments (in *Noble Essences*, Macmillan, 1950), "Reginald had been brought up in an austere if opulent world, where you could have possessions so long as you did not enjoy them, and where each Sunday dragged after it a weary, weekly train of charitable village functions... and the more purely domestic orgies of Missionary meeting and simple family prayer..." It was these family prayers that lined him up in sympathy with Sir George Sitwell, who never attended them, and who did not conceal his delight when a rumour went round that Reginald had become a Buddhist missionary. Sir George took infinite trouble to commend his activities warmly, whether it was writing novels - "which produced consternation" and "frigid grief" - or his conversion to the Buddhist faith, which was thought equally shocking and called forth prayers from the relatives that "the heathen might be permitted so see the true light".

When he stayed with the Sitwells "his mere presence in the house struck a chill to the bones of the faithful" and the young Osbert was sent away. Being 12 years Reginald's junior it must have been thought that there might be contamination of ideas for the boy, although Edith Sitwell had stayed frequently at Ingleborough House and not only liked Reginald but much appreciated his lively conversation and talent.

What may sometimes be overlooked about Farrer is his youth. He had an adult mind, and was experienced enough in his 20s to publish *My Rock Garden* and to write in it, with the wisdom of a Gertrude Jekyll in her 50s, "The wise gardener is he whom years of experience have succeeded in teaching, that plants, no less than people, have perverse individualities of their own and that, though general rules may be laid down, yet it is impossible ever to predict with any certainty that any given treatment is bound to secure

success or failure. There are so many possibilities to be reckoned with, so many differences of soil, climate and aspect." This might have been Miss Jekyll speaking or William Robinson writing in *The English Flower Garden* when he was twice Farrer's age.

In his 20s Farrer was hunting down plants in the Dolomites, sometimes with E.A. Bowles, propagating them at Ingleborough or sending them to friends. In botany he was almost entirely self-taught, although whenever opportunity came for learning he took it. In *My Rock Garden* there were frequent references and acknowledgements to other people's gardens, which show that he must have travelled a good deal while still young, studying things to do with his subject. He writes, "Kew offers everyone a model which it would be impertinent to praise. The Glen form is apt to be monotonous, perhaps, but climatic conditions make it necessary at Kew and in many other parts of England; and Kew has triumphed over the problem of how to make a glen perpetually varied and interesting". He then mentions Miss Wilmott's extensive alpine garden: "At Warley, again there is the gorge-design to be studied - to my own personal taste, a trifle too violent to be altogether pleasant, but still a noble example of definite purpose definitely carried out".

But perhaps the garden most frequently mentioned is that of Edge Hall, Cheshire. "Mr. Wolley-Dod took all the trouble to import mountain limestone to Edge, and though that marvellous garden of his made little claim to artistic construction... yet the beauty of the stone employed completed the attraction of those splendid plants of his". And again: "But even Mr. Wolley-Dod at Edge could only barely keep it alive [of *Gentian vernal*] with barrels, and granite and all manner of contraptions." Farrer regarded him as the alpine expert of the time, referring to *Omphalodes luciliae*, and who was Lucilla? "Mr. Wolley-Dod told me once, but I have forgotten. She owns the Glory of the Snow as well, the grasping Lucilla." Mr. Wolley-Dod died in 1904 at the age of 78 and Farrer must have known him well and have prepared the material for his book well before its publication in 1907; so that he must have been just into his 20s when he first studied the Edge Hall garden. Even allowing only one year before publication date he was young in years but old in experience to have written as he did.

He had also already travelled in the Alpes Maritimes, Austria, Germany and Ireland, as well as knowing well the flora of Durham, Yorkshire - above all of the Ingleborough and Pen-y-Ghent fells, round Malham Tarn - and the Isle of Wainey, of Barrow-in-Furness. By this time he had also made three rock gardens at Ingleborough, no small achievement for a young man of that time with all the opportunities for a life of leisure.

His next important publication was *Among The Hills* (Headley Brothers), in 1911. Like all his horticultural writing, it is an enjoyable book; again it shows a mind mature beyond his years. In it he says, "For, into the actual seeing and enjoying of a thing there always enters the personal element of the moment; and with the personal element, incompleteness. One sees too much, or one is tired, or one is cross and hungry; or one cannot notice the world because of the plants that abound in it.... the whole thing is too big for us at the time. But distance and absence clarify the view; wipe out the confusing touches and reduce the chaos to a composition of bare essential lines. The Alps or the jungle are never so near or so clear as when one is

FUNDAMENTALS OF RHODODENDRON BREEDING

August Kehr - Hendersonville, North Carolina

Hybridizing rhododendrons and azaleas can be lots of fun, an engrossing and rewarding hobby for persons of all ages and backgrounds. It can be as simple or as complex as you wish to make it. You must have only a love for plants, patience, curiosity and eagerness to learn, and you must not be discouraged by a few disappointments.

A beginner should have a word of warning before he embarks on a plant breeding adventure. The progression from rank beginner to full-fledged hybridizer usually runs as follows:

MAKE A FEW CROSSES
▼
INCREASED INTEREST
▼
PERMANENT ADDICTION

This progression, once started, is non-reversible, and the ultimate "disease" is non-curable.

Scaly rhododendrons or azaleas are good choices for beginners because they usually flower within 2 to 4 years and require relatively little space. There is an excitement in eagerly watching for your new creations to flower. This is where disappointment often comes in, because so frequently the long-awaited flowering reveals a plant of mediocre value. One sometimes hears it said: "A breeder spends years in anticipation but only minutes in disillusionment." However, when you develop a true winner, the saying should be amended to: "A breeder spends years in anticipation, and the rest of his life in satisfaction."

Doing a Good Job: If you are starting to hybridize rhododendrons and azaleas, plan to start right and do a good job. It is much more satisfying to do a good job than just to dabble. To do a good job, you must develop a knowledge of existing cultivars, in order for you to judge when you have a superior plant worth propagating for further evaluation. Observe how well different cultivars perform, recognize the differences between them, and gradually develop the ability to choose those which are really outstanding. You must develop the ability to judge superior plants insofar as they are general all-around "good-doers" as well as being beautiful, showy, and having all the good characteristics you want to develop. Extend your ability to select superior plants by visiting many different gardens and by attending rhododendron shows where the better forms are exhibited. Build up a small library of books and study them carefully, especially descriptions of award-winning plants. Success comes from choosing the best plants to use as parents in your crosses. Study the pedigrees of the outstanding cultivars to determine which plants have the most potential as parents.

standing on the shore of Pall Mall or the Mediterranean".

In 1912 Farrer's *The Rock Garden* was published by T. Nelson and T.C. Jack, and in February, 1914, Farrer and William Purdom set off on their first year of plant hunting in Kansu, on the Tibetan border.

On The Faves of the World, Volumes I and II (Edward Arnold, 1917), is Farrer's record of the first year of this expedition. He notes "I had the very great luck of happening on an absolutely perfect friend and helper in Mr. Purdom, formerly of Kew, and he and I, with three untrained Chinese lads from Shansi, made up the whole of the Caravan that left Peking."

What an effort it must have been to write about these adventures, making notes at the time so that precious material was recorded accurately, together with all the other work necessary to keep the expedition going. There was also the fatigue of climbing under difficult conditions (in one situation he describes seeing a plant or shrub with his field glasses and estimating that it should take about half an hour to reach it, when in fact it took nearly 24 hours). Yet his lively prose is sprinkled with humour, there is seldom depression.

His gift for understatement is illustrated in his descriptions. He approached a "typical Tibetan bridge of poor class arching high" to cross a ravine. It was not only in poor condition, it was hardly in existence at all, 'with the rails all gone and half the planks also... Purdom's pony dislikd the look of it... I meanwhile sat philosophically quiet on *Spotted Fat* waiting on his mood... However, all went well. *Spotted Fat* sniffed at the bridge for a moment, and then began solemnly to advance... Beneath me, far down between the gaps of the planks, I could see the boiling, ice-grey water of the racing torrent and in my ear there was a general roar and suddenly I became aware that *Spotted Fat* was sidling out towards the unprotected edge... A paralysis possessed me... Purdom's frozen face of horror advancing to meet me remains photographed on my mind... I was conscious of stumbling subsidence behind me, a splintering crash... *Spotted Fat* and I, no longer one, but two, were falling through 20 feet of emptiness, and down into the glacial abysses of the river. Down and down into the icy water we sank... There was no swimming... Desperately I struck out at each rocky headland as it raced into sight, and raced away behind me again, out of reach."

Farrer eventually waded ashore but the shock and buffeting must have almost beaten him into unconsciousness. However, he recalled that as he was rushed through the roaring waters of the torrent he could "study the Primulas as, in their crannies, they fled blandly by." Later he adds ruefully that as *Spotted Fat* swam directly across to the opposite bank, he could have reached safely without any dramatic dash down the river if only he had hung on to his horse's tail.

To be concluded in the next issue.

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Foremost in doing a good job is to have a **purpose** in your breeding program. Without definite goals in mind, little progress is likely to be made. Never, never make a cross just because there are two plants available. There should be a reason for every cross: consider first, your objectives. A successful breeder will plan his crosses months ahead of time, often spending the winter months in this pastime.

Of almost equal importance, concentrate on a few objectives. Greatest progress is made if you have only one or two primary objectives upon which to concentrate all efforts. A good rule is specialization rather than generalization. It is also a good rule to limit your efforts to only one class of rhododendrons, such as evergreen azaleas, deciduous azaleas, scaly rhododendrons, but not more than one at a time.

Finally, when they flower, select very few superior plants from the total population of seedlings you grow. Unless you are ruthless in discarding just average (or even above average) plants, you will end up with such a large number of random plants of little or no merit that you will be confused and bogged down with the unrewarding routine of caring for too many plants.

Collecting and Storing Pollen

Pollen of all types of rhododendrons and azaleas can be stored, and will remain viable for years if one follows simple and practical techniques. Such storage of pollen permits us to make almost any cross desired, despite months or years of difference in time of flowering.

Briefly, the technique is as follows:

(1) Collect anthers, preferably just before the flower opens, and put them into labelled gelatin capsules. These capsules can be obtained at most drug stores with a doctor's prescription. Numbers 1, 0, or 00 are about the right size. Avoid sizes larger than 00, as they are difficult to use on small flowered sorts. For labelling, strung tags can be glued to the top of the gelatin capsule.

(2) Pre-dry the anthers within the capsules for 2 or 3 days in a home refrigerator (**not** the freezer compartment). Moisture will pass through the walls of the gelatin capsule and drying will therefore gradually occur at an ideal temperature of about 50°F (10°C). Pre-drying is imperative before freezing. If freezing occurs with anthers that are not completely dried, damage will result.

(3) When the anthers are **thoroughly dried**, store the capsules on a cotton padding in sealed jars with a desiccant in the bottom of each jar. Desiccants can be calcium chloride or silica gel. Place the sealed jar in the freezer compartment at about 0°F. (-18°C).

To use the stored pollen, remove the sealed jar from the freezer and warm it in warm water before opening it. The sudden warming does not harm the pollen; neither does repeated thawing and refreezing which occurs when the pollen is used several different times and and put back into the freezer.

Tapping the capsules empties the dried anthers of their pollen. The pollen often sticks to the walls of the gelatin capsule, making it easy to use in crosses. The stored pollen can be used by inserting the pistil of the seed parent directly into the capsules.

Making the Crosses: Step By Step Procedure

Mechanically, hybridizing is simple, as the parts of rhododendron and azalea flowers are fairly large and easily handled. This is the procedure:

(1) Just before the flower to serve as the female (seed) parent opens, emasculate it by pulling off the stamens. A pair of small pointed tweezers is as useful tool. Fortunately, for most plants (but not all) the stigma of the pistil of the flower is not usually ripe to receive pollen as early as the pollen is ready to fall from the anthers of the stamens of that same flower. Removal of adjacent flowers may help to prevent inadvertent pollination caused merely by the branches swaying in the wind.

(2) Pollen stored as described above can be used. However, if you wish to use fresh pollen, it can be done as follows: Pull stamens with their anthers from the flower to be used as the male (pollen) parent. Pollen from the anthers of the male parent should be used immediately after the flower opens. If the anther is picked at a later time, after the flower opens, its pollen may have already been lost or collected by insects. You will quickly recognize the stamens that are still functional, with a little experience.

(3) With stored pollen, merely insert the stigma into the gelatin capsule. When the stigma is ripe and ready to receive pollen, the pollen will adhere to the sticky surface of the tip of the pistil. For fresh pollen carry the stamen to the flower to be pollinated and shake out the pollen onto the stigma.

(4) Tag the pollinated flower to indicate female and male parents - in that order. The female is the seed parent, and the male parent that from which the pollen was taken.

It is not necessary to cover pollinated flowers with bags. If you work carefully, there is little danger of chance-pollination. However, if you are doing genetic studies, it is important to bag the crosses, to assure that no contamination occurs. Examination of numerous flowered crosses has shown that little contamination ever arises, even without protection against insects. Early in the spring insects are searching for pollen and rarely visit emasculated flowers. If stamens have been removed from the flowers you are working with, there is almost no danger of mixture. Rhododendron and azalea pollen is not carried by the wind, only by insects.

Effect of Weather: After years of observation there is indication that weather conditions have much effect on successfully crossing plants. High humidity (and of course rainfall) tend to reduce the number of successful crosses. In work out-of-doors, there are lower percentages of success in the earlier part of the season when temperatures are uniformly low. As the weather warms up, the chances of success improve, especially if the plants are in top health and top growing condition. However, extremely hot, dry conditions will usually reduce seed-setting. Greenhouse conditions at 75-80°F. (24-29°C.) are ideal.

To be continued in the next issue.

SOMETHING BUGGING YOU?

Fraser M. Hancock - Mississauga, Ontario

Are some of your rhododendrons looking a mite peaked? If they do, you may be concerned about what could possibly be troubling them, since you have already checked them for some of the obvious local problems without pinpointing the cause.

The purpose of this article is to outline briefly some details of a potentially serious insect pest that can debilitate and sometimes kill your rhododendrons and azaleas.

The insect under consideration is not the whitefly or the black vine weevil, which are often commented on; it is an insidious and potentially lethal scale insect called *Eriococcus azaleae*, or commonly, the azalea bark scale.

This insect is one that, although not widespread, has shown its face more and more over the last ten years. It is not listed in current manuals and books as being a problem in Canada, more commonly being a problem in the southern and north-eastern U.S., but it obviously can live in our environment. Since so many of the rhodos and azaleas that end up in our gardens come from these regions, it is not surprising that this pest has come north with them. In fact, our first outbreak was noticed in a corner of the greenhouse where new improved cultivars were kept, pending testing for our climate!

The scale insect is a very efficient pest which feeds on the sap of a plant, removing essential nutrients, and over a period of time seriously weakens the infested plant. Most times the scale is not seen until the grower or homeowner decides to look closely at a plant that has shown some decline.

The azalea bark scale appears as a white fluffy spot on the stem of the rhodo or azalea and it seems to enjoy settling in the crotches of twigs and branches, or in protected crevices of the mature bark. The white material is a waxy sac secreted by the organism. The scale itself has a purple colour and is very soft. When ruptured by a fingernail, a blood-coloured residue is seen.

The azalea bark scale overwinters as an immature scale and resumes feeding in the milder spring, reaching maturity in early to mid summer. Eggs are laid under the female's mature body (about 3 mm long) and the eggs hatch in two or three weeks. The crawler stage, or instar, then moves out to explore new feeding sites. These young scales molt through the summer, females twice and the males up to four times. Males, when mature, can fly short distances for mating in the early fall, completing the life cycle.

There are two general approaches to controlling the scale insects, both of which are best utilized together to effectively eliminate a scale insect problem.

Dormant oil is mineral oil and works by smothering the scale insects. It is necessary to take great care to apply the oil to all areas of infestation on branches and bark crevices. If applied too early in the spring, dormant oil can damage the foliage if a hard frost occurs after application, so it is best to delay treatment until danger of frost is gone. Dormant oil works well but is not usually 100% effective.

The best stage to eliminate the scale problem is when the eggs have hatched and the young, crawling instars are migrating to new feeding areas. These young do not have the waxy covering and are prone to chemicals at this time. This occurs in late June to mid July. Sprays such as diazinon, sevin or malathion are effective and should be used as the label advises.

Large rhododendron enthusiasts to look at their plants closely and identify the problems that can be caught in the "bud", to alleviate later problems. The azalea bark scale is one of those insects easy to overlook until it is too late and a cherished plant is beyond recovery.

References:

1. Pirone, Pascal P. 1978. *Diseases and Pest of Ornamental Plants*, 5th Edition. John Wiley & Sons, Toronto. p. 457
2. Walmer, W.E. May 1978. *Journal of Arboriculture*, 4(5). pp. 97-103.
3. Johnson, W.T. and Lyon, H.W. 1976. *Insects That Feed on Trees and Shrubs*. Cornell University Press. pp. 290, 291.

COMPANION PLANTS

WILDFLOWER COMPANIONS FOR YOUR RHODODENDRONS

Jim French - Unionville, Ontario

The culture which best suits rhododendrons, i.e. acidic soil and semi-shade, is also ideal for many of Canada's spring woodland wildflowers. An added bonus is that their blooming period coincides well with that of their protective hosts.

The first wildflower you should consider including in your garden is the beautiful white *Trillium grandiflorum*, Ontario's floral emblem. Its size, 12 to 20 inches (30 to 50 cm), robustness and spectacular polar-white blooms will provide a striking contrast with other plantings. It is almost maintenance-free and is easily transplanted from the wild provided a large ball of earth is taken to protect damaging the rootstock (a plug-like rhizome).

Trilliums are found growing abundantly in our woods and countryside. It should be a simple matter to secure permission from the landowner to remove a few plants for your home garden. Better yet, ask your friends and neighbours who have a cottage or country property if you can remove a few. Chances are they will be happy to oblige. Another source is land that is scheduled for development, although permission should still be secured from the owner. Trilliums can also be purchased from many local nurseries.

While not as abundant as the white trillium, the purple trillium *Trillium erectum* will be found growing in similar habitat. It should be planted next to the white trilliums to provide a pleasing colour contrast.

Another attractive wildflower for companion planting is the large-flowered bellwort, *Uvularia grandiflora*. Its graceful yellow blooms will add a perfect woodland touch to your garden.

A delightful spring bloomer that will enhance your garden is the hepatica, *Hepatica americana* which has round leaves or *Hepatica acutiflora*, with pointed leaves. A tiny plant, its pink, white or lavender blooms are among the earliest to brighten your garden in the spring. Because of their comparatively small size, hepaticas will give you a livelier showing if they are grown in clumps or masses.

Two other spring-blooming wildflowers will be mentioned here, although there are many more (see list below) which will grow very well among your rhododendrons. Foamflower, *Tiarella cordifolia* and Dutchman's breeches, *Dicentra cucullaria* burst forth each spring with sparkling delicate white blooms that will delight you with their beauty.

Listed below are other spring wildflowers that will be at home in your rhododendron garden:

Common Name	Scientific Name
bluebead lily	<i>Clintonia borealis</i>
bloodroot	<i>Sanguinaria canadensis</i>
Solomon's seal	<i>Polygonatum pubescens</i>
starflower	<i>Trientalis borealis</i>
trailing arbutus	<i>Epigaea repens</i>
pink lady's slipper	<i>Cypripedium acaule</i>
trout lily	<i>Erythronium americanum</i>
bunchberry	<i>Cornus canadensis</i>

Jim French was instrumental in the formation of the Canadian Wildflower Society, and is Editor of its magazine, Wildflower.

Nursery-grown wildflowers are available from Hawkwood Gardens, R.R.1, Elmira, Ontario. N3B 2Z1.

OUR BOOK SERVICE

(Operating as a non-profit service to our members, we are able to offer books at a considerable saving. We keep a limited stock on hand, and as a result there may be some delay in filling some titles. Also, (prices and (American exchange) continue to climb, so prices may vary slightly. You may either prepay or request an invoice. Place orders with:

Dr. H.G. Hedges, R.R. 2, St. George, Ontario. NOE 1N0

French, D. *Rhododendrons of the World*. Still the classic; treats every aspect well illustrated. \$55.00

Van Veen, T. *Rhododendrons in America*. Large format, colorful, superb photos. Soft cover. \$28.00.

Frankberger, M. *American Rhododendron Hybrids*. Publication of ARS. Accurate, informative, not illustrated. \$14.00.

American, R.S. *Rhododendrons of China*. Outstanding, translated text. Line drawings. Real value. \$24.00.

Livingston, P.A. *Hybrids and Hybridizers*. Popular with members. Well illustrated. Good value. \$34.00.

Coop, P. *The Larger Species of Rhododendron*. A comprehensive text by an authority. Photos mainly b. and w. In our opinion overpriced. \$44.00

Coop, P. *Dwarf Rhododendrons*. Best book on the subject. A bargain. \$24.00.

Coop, P. *The Smaller Rhododendrons*. In preparation; ready by summer. More than a revision of previous title. Probably \$35.00.

Leach, D. *The Rothschild Rhododendrons*. Outstanding, beautiful book on Leach's. Out of print, now a collector's item. Price escalating rapidly. May be last chance to acquire - if available, \$125.00.

Greer, H. *Greer's Guidebook to Available Rhododendrons*. Thorough, detailed data on species and hybrids. Soft cover. Good value. \$15.00. Clarke, H. *Getting Started with Rhododendrons and Azaleas*. A handy clear reference. \$15.00.

Dawidson, H. *Rhododendron Species Vol. 1: Lepidotes*. A thorough 470 page book, the first of three, others will be 2. *Elepidotes*, and 3. *Azaleas*. (Complete data on each plant. \$65.00.

Haynes, R. *The Laurel Book*. A beautiful, complete text on the genus *Kalmia*. (Color photos. A great gift. \$18.00.

Lee, J. *The Azalea Book*. A complete guide to azaleas. May be out of print and difficult to obtain. See next item. If available, \$25.00.

Cooper, J. *Azaleas*. Still in publication, due Spring of 1985. A revision of Lee, plus much more; price not established. If interested write after April 1.

MINUTES

Rhododendron Society of Canada Thirteenth Annual Meeting

VENUE

The annual meeting of the Rhododendron Society of Canada convened at 1:00 p.m. on the 2nd of June, 1984, in the Floral Hall of the Civic Garden Centre, Toronto, with President Nicholas Yarmoshuk in the chair. Sophia Maitland was executive secretary.

MINUTES

The minutes of the 1983 annual meeting were approved as circulated on motion of R.Birkett and M.Cohoe. [carried]

FINANCES

The financial statement was presented by H.Hedges. Appreciation was expressed to auditors Mr. and Mrs. Gracie. The audited statement is appended. Acceptance was moved by H.Hedges, seconded by J.Looye. [carried] The present balance is \$4417.00 with approximately \$1500.00 outstanding for the last Bulletin. Membership is down from 1983. The treasurer requested members present to try to activate the 87 non-renewals. Recent membership is 342.

CONSTITUTION REVISION

The president presented a resume indicating that of 24 responses received from various members all had supported the proposed revised constitution. A motion to accept the proposed revised constitution as drafted by the Revision Committee (R.Birkett, D.Craig, E.Egelkraut, M.Hancock, S.Maitland, N.Yarmoshuk), presented to the Board and approved by the Board for presentation to the Annual Meeting was made by R.Birkett, seconded by S.Maitland.

In the discussion that followed two members spoke against the motion.

AMENDMENT I: Moved by M.Hancock, seconded by J.vanGemenen, that members-at-large shall elect one member to the Board of the Rhododendron Society of Canada. Voting for, 19. Voting against, 12. [carried]

AMENDMENT II: Moved by M.Hancock, seconded by A.Gracie, that each Region shall elect their representative to the Board of the Rhododendron Society of Canada. [During discussion it was affirmed that this motion not be interpreted to suggest that each Region will have two representatives on the National Board. The intention is that each Region's Board will decide whether it is the President of that Region who will represent the Region on the National Board, or whether some other elected member of that Region will be the representative.] Voting for, 19. Voting against, 11. [carried]

MAIN MOTION: Moved by R.Birkett, seconded by S.Maitland, that the revised Constitution with Amendments I and II be adopted without further amendments. Voting for, 23. Voting against, 4. [carried]

The president's annual report, as circulated, was presented by N.Yarmoshuk.

AUDITORS

On motion of M.Cohoe and Mrs. H.Raymond, and carried, Mr. and Mrs. Gracie will act as auditors for the 1984/85 fiscal year.

RECESS

Following a 10 minute recess the meeting re-convened.

ELECTIONS

Moved by H.Hedges, seconded by R.Birkett and carried, "Operating under the revised Constitution, we proceed with election of a President and a Vice-President, with the provision that the Regional Presidents serve on the Board until an election is conducted in the respective Regions, and that the in-coming Vice-President appoint two members to carry out the administration of this policy until October 1, 1984, or until the full Board has been constituted."

PRESIDENT: Moved by R.Birkett, seconded by L.Laking that Dr. Donald Craig be nominated. There being no further nominations it was moved by L.Laking, seconded by H.Raymond that nominations close. [carried] The chair declared Dr. Craig elected President.

VICE-PRESIDENT: Moved by R.Birkett, seconded by A.Smith that J.vanGemerem be nominated as Vice-President. There being no further nominations it was moved by R.Birkett, seconded by L.Laking that nominations close. [carried] The chair declared J.vanGemerem elected as Vice-President.

NEW BUSINESS:

Suggestion for species collection: J.vanGemerem first expressed thanks for the help with judging. He then proposed that we consider the establishment of a species collection in the mildest area of the central area of the Society because the climate in Montreal was too severe. He is prepared to provide and bring 30-40 species if this is so desired. A motion to investigate was made by J.vanGemerem, seconded by J.Looye and carried. It will be necessary to choose a location and set up a committee to make the necessary arrangements for setting up this collection including proper identification after some size is attained.

ADJOURNMENT:

Moved by J.Cooper, seconded by P.Nilson. The meeting adjourned at 3:40 p.m.

THE RHODODENDRON SOCIETY OF CANADA

BALANCE STATEMENT JANUARY 1, 1983 to DECEMBER 31, 1983

INCOME

Bank Certificates on hand Jan. 1/83		2000.00
Income in certificates (interest)		315.00
Bank balance Jan. 1		445.22
Memberships	4691.00	
Donations	1824.00	
Loans	1500.00	
Interest	40.13	
Auctions	2213.38	
Books	1230.00	
Annual meetings	2458.00	
	<u>13956.51</u>	<u>13956.51</u>
		16716.73

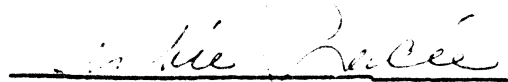

EXPENSES

Memberships	132.09	
Bulletins	2837.24	
Loan repayments	1542.50	
Meetings	2493.53	
Books	1218.31	
Auction	1614.10	
Postage and materials	1855.19	
Regions	782.00	
Rental	536.75	
Expense accounts	608.17	
Bank charges	77.81	
	<u>13697.69</u>	<u>13697.69</u>
Balance in savings account		353.64
Balance in current account		350.40
Bank certificate		<u>2315.00</u>
		16716.73

- Notes: 1. All bills paid Dec. 31, 83
2. No loans outstanding.
3. Net balance \$3019.04


Treasurer

Audited and found correct

Rhododendron Society of Canada

Report on the First Year of the New Constitution

The Rhododendron Society of Canada was founded some fourteen years ago with the objective of assisting members and the public in the culture and growing of rhododendrons. In time, partly because of the scattered residency of our members, a number of Regions were formed. The aims of the Regions were the same as those of the National Society. Indeed, over the years many of the active Region members have been foremost in running the affairs of the National Society. The Regions now consist of Toronto, Niagara, Atlantic, and Georgian Bay-Lakeland (listed in the order of the number of members in each).

Now that the National Society's revised constitution is almost a year old, it is timely to look at the National and determine how it is faring. In our opinion, and in a few words, it is alive but stumbling.

To examine the National Society, a good starting point is to review the 1985 Budget and compare it to the 1984 financial statement. The financial picture for 1985 is not good and shows the effects of inadequate funding. This aspect was recognized some years ago when membership fees were raised in 1984 from \$10.00 to \$15.00 as an interim step. Listed below are the Society's 1985 budget and the 1984 financial statement (the footnote numbers refer readers to comments on individual items which are printed at the end of the statements):

<u>Revenue</u>	<u>1985 Budget</u>	<u>1984 Actual</u>
Memberships ¹	\$5250	\$5067
Donations ²	1000	1862
Loans ³		230
Loan Repayment ³		<230>
Bank Interest		72
Book Revenue ⁴	800	840
Book Expenditures ⁴	<700>	<810>
Annual Meeting Revenue ⁵	200	621
Miscellaneous	100	76
	<u>\$ 6650</u>	<u>\$ 7728</u>

Expenses

Society Memberships	\$ 200	\$ 97
Bulletins ⁶	2500	2800
Annual Meetings, etc. ⁷	1200	976
Printing and supplies ⁸	1100	284
Trophies, Certificates, Etc. ⁹	900	668
Postage	1000	901
Paid to Regions ¹⁰	900	906
Expense Accounts ¹¹	1000	910
Bank Charges	100	18
Other	100	78
	<u>9000</u>	<u>7638</u>
Excess of Revenue Over Expenses	<u>\$ <2350></u>	<u>\$ 90</u>

Represented by

Jan. 1:		
Bank Accounts	\$ 794	\$ 704
Bank Certificates	2500	2315
	<u>\$ 3294</u>	<u>\$ 3019</u>
Invest. in Bank Cert.		185
Increase in Revenue Over Expenses	<2350>	90
	<u>\$ 944</u>	<u>\$ 3294</u>
Deposit:		
Bank Accounts	\$ 944	\$ 794
Bank Certificates	-	2500
	<u>\$ 944</u>	<u>\$ 3294</u>

¹Calculated at 350 members at \$15. Although the National membership is approximately 400, some members are paid up life members.

²Donations from members and Regions.

³Represents a short term loan from a member without interest in order to fund Society activities. This loan has allowed the Society to retain the Bank Certificate until maturity dates without interest penalties.

⁴Sale and cost of books sold to members.

⁵Sale and auction of plants by National.

⁶Cost of publishing two Bulletins (\$1510 and \$1290 in 1984).

⁷Society funding of the National Flower Show. It is hoped this amount can be kept to a minimum.

⁸Printing \$600, Photostating \$300, Office Supplies \$200 for 1985. In 1984 these costs were reduced by the use of non-commercial printing facilities and some of the supply costs were absorbed by the Toronto Region.

⁹Trophies \$300, Certificates \$300 (i.e. The Hancock Award), Tags and ribbons \$300.

¹⁰Regions' share of membership fees (300 X \$3.00).

¹¹Expense accounts submitted by members.

The statements indicate that the Society broke even in 1984, but can expect a deficit (in a "do nothing" case) for 1985. The financing for this deficit, without additional revenue, must come from existing Bank Certificates. This type of financing has occurred in the past and is clearly unacceptable. Alternatives are to increase membership fees, request more donations or support from the Regions, or have the National Society return to fund raising activities such as Plant Sales - or a combination of the above. A start has been made by holding a sale of plants at the RBG on May 10, 1985 (Niagara Region obtained the plants and Toronto Region (Oakvillians) sold the plants): some \$600 has been raised.

Of course, some members feel that less money should be spent on the Bulletin as a means of cutting expenses. The current estimate of \$2500 for two publications, an estimate which is probably low, represents a little over 25% of the National's expenditures. We maintain that the Bulletin is a drawing card for our Society. Much time and effort are given by the Bulletin Committee to produce a publication that is receiving international recognition. If the cost of the Bulletin could be reduced by \$1,000 by using cheaper paper (a move which would, in fact, accomplish only a small saving), reducing contents, employing word processing, etc., the trade off would be to increase substantially the time involved for the Bulletin Committee to produce the magazines (time, we should add, that a group of people doing this work on a volunteer basis do not have). What is more, a financial saving that is this small will not solve the National's financial problems.

Another major area of expenditure is the National's contribution of up to \$1200 to the Region hosting the National Show. As you are aware, the Regions take turns hosting the National Flower Show. Toronto Region incurred a deficit of some \$600 in 1984, and this was paid by the National. Show expenses include publicity, programme printing, speaker's expenses, hall rentals, catering, postage, etc. As a guideline, the Regions have been requested to make the Show as self sufficient as possible to minimize the costs to the National.

The third major area of expenditure is that of expense accounts submitted by members to cover out of pocket expenses. With the Society's executive being resident in different Regions, much higher telephone and travel expenses are being incurred than in the past. In some cases, the expenses incurred have been donated back to the Society. In our opinion, it is unfair to expect individual members pay continually for these types of increased costs out of their own pockets.

The financial statements suggest that if we as a Society wish the luxury of holding annual Flower Shows (which include good speakers, suitable trophies, awards and certificates), and Bulletins of international standards, then the Regions and individual members will have to give full support to the National in its fund raising efforts. It is our objective to keep the National Society financially self-sufficient.

In addition to the financial difficulties facing the Society, however, there are two other problems which the Board is at present trying to address: 1. the inability of some Board members to take an active part in the operation of the Society because of the geographical distances involved; and 2. the need to activate the various Committees identified in the constitution which are to provide services to members. Let us examine the problems and the solutions which the Board intends to pursue.

1. Board Members: With the revised constitution, the number of Directors has been reduced. There are now nine positions on the Board, but two of the Board members fill two positions each (Jack Van Gemeren is Vice President and Representative of the Members at Large; Hank Hedges is Secretary and Treasurer). Thus there are at present only seven members of the Board. To complicate matters, the physical distance between the residences of Board members has made it impossible for the President, the Vice President (and Representative of the Members at Large), and the Lakeland-Georgian Bay Representative to attend meetings and participate actively in the operation of the Society. Fortunately, the Atlantic Representative, Barbara Hall, has been able to attend National Board Meetings.

We suggest two solutions be adopted to overcome this problem:

a) Each Region appoint a representative who can attend all Board meetings. If the President or Vice President is unable to attend meetings, he/she should appoint an alternate to represent him/her. To implement this measure, the Region or the Officer may have to select a person who lives near the site of the meetings (and, in the case of a Regional representative, is an associate

member of that Region) . If a Region or Executive Officer is unable to appoint such an alternate, "vacant" places on the Board should be filled by supplementary representatives from Toronto and Niagara Regions. (According to By-law 1c of the constitution, a substitute can be appointed for any Board member missing more than 40% of meetings. The first such vacancy is to be replaced from the largest Region (Toronto) and the second by the second largest (Niagara).) This suggestion would lead to improved operations and communications within the Society as well as ensuring a more complete representation of all members' wishes.

b) In future, a full complement of nine people be on the National Board (i.e., there should be one person for each position on the Board). This measure would further ensure improved operation of the Society, particularly since the six Committees established by the constitution and the "Special Projects Committee" established by the present Board should each have a Board member on its roster.

2. Activating the Committees: The constitution established six Committees: the Bulletin Committee; the Awards Committee; the Nominating Committee; the Long Range Planning Committee; the Seed and Plant Exchange Committee; and the Special Events Committee. In addition, this year's Board has established a "Special Projects Committee" to undertake fund raising.

For various reasons, the duties of those of the original six Committees which are active have been left for one or two people to carry out. These people have been meeting the challenge well, but they deserve further support from National Board members and assistance from representatives from all Regions. In addition, the Long Range Planning Committee and the Special Events Committee have yet to be activated.

As can be appreciated, any special functions or activities of these Committees must be carried out by members of the Regions or other members under our present constitution. An example of how such co-operation can work is illustrated by the new Special Projects Committee: this Committee was formed to raise additional National funds and is composed of members from the Toronto and Niagara Regions. The first event arranged by this Committee has been the National Sale at the RBG and other fund raising projects will be arranged during the coming year. Only through such co-operation will the Society remain viable.

We suggest, therefore, four measures be adopted to meet this problem of activating the Committees:

The third major area of expenditure is that of expense accounts submitted by members to cover out of pocket expenses. With the Society's executive being resident in different Regions, much higher telephone and travel expenses are being incurred than in the past. In some cases, the expenses incurred have been donated back to the Society. In our opinion, it is unfair to expect individual members pay continually for these types of increased costs out of their own pockets.

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a) Each Region appoint one or two representatives to each of the seven Committees. These representative should be able to attend all meetings of these Committees. (The same procedures of selecting "long distance" representatives suggested above for Board members could also be used here. For example, if there were a Rooted Cuttings Committee located in the Atlantic Region, the Niagara Region might approach one of its members who lives in Nova Scotia to act as its representative on that Committee.)

b) Each Committee establish a schedule of regular meetings at a site convenient to the majority of the Committee members and/or the residence of the Chairperson of that Committee.

c) Each Committee include one of the members of the National Board. This person will not necessarily be the Chairperson for the Committee, but he/she will be responsible for reporting on the Committee's operations to the National Board at each of its meetings.

d) At the same time, the National should encourage all non-Regional members to join one or more Region, since the activities of and for the National Society must be carried out on a co-operative basis at the Regional level.

To sum up, the Constitution and the National Society's problems are before us - and challenge us to work in a co-operative spirit to make the Society work for us. Only through such an effort can we make the Rhododendron Society of Canada healthy and a source of even greater satisfaction.

Respectfully submitted by the Executive of the Rhododendron Society of Canada to all Society members.

REAR COVER

IS

Blank