

Indumentum

Newsletter of the Vancouver Rhododendron Society

Volume 34, Number 7, April 2003



The
Vancouver Rhododendron Society
is a chapter of the
American Rhododendron Society

2003 Executive

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Todd Major (2 years)

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This Month's Meeting: April 17th, 7:30 pm, Floral Hall,
VanDusen Botanical Garden

Program: **Peter Cunnington:** "Rhododendrons and Related
Plants from Home and Abroad"

Education: **Les Clay** on "Winning Trusses" and "Tips on Successful
Grafting"

Plants in Bloom - *Rhododendron luteiflorum*

This charming little lepidote rhododendron (to 1m) was first described as a variety of *R. glaucophyllum*, a species that it resembles primarily in leaf and stem. The flowers of *R. luteiflorum* are yellow, whereas those of *R. glaucophyllum* range from white through pink to reddish-purple. *Rhododendron luteiflorum* was first collected by Frank Kingdon-Ward in 1953 in northern Burma, where it forms thickets on open granite ridges at between 2900 and 3300m.

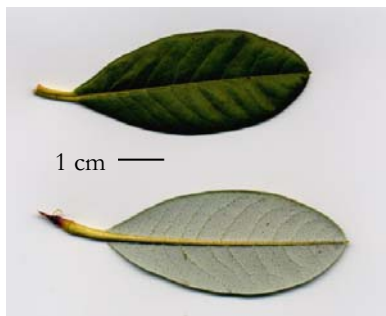
The species flowers in Vancouver area gardens anywhere from early March to late April or May. At UBC, there are plants in both the David C. Lam Asian Garden (pictured below) and the E.H. Lohbrunner Alpine Garden. The alpine garden's sunnier aspect and quicker draining, gravelly soil seem to suit the plants better, but there they lack some of the overhead protection given by the forest in the Asian Garden, which can be a benefit to flowers that open this early. In Britain, *R. luteiflorum* is one of a number of early-flowering species that regularly lose flowers to late frost, although Cox (in *Dwarf Rhododendrons*) suggests that it "is worth any amount of trouble."

continued on page 2





Rhododendron luteiflorum
Scans: Douglas Justice



The greenish-yellow to bright yellow flowers are bell-shaped and backed by a persistent leafy calyx. They are held in lax trusses of three to six individual flowers, and plants are generally free-flowering. The com-

monly grown cultivar 'Glen Cloy' (Kingdon-Ward 21556) with "Dresden yellow" flowers received an FCC in 1966.

Leaves are green above and strikingly glaucous under—a feature seldom noticed except where plants are grown in containers. One of the most ornamental features of the species is its cinnamon-brown bark.

Douglas Justice

President's Message

Many thanks to **Penny Pearse** and **Glen Patterson** who, over the past two years, have donated our \$100 membership fee to the Rhododendron Species Foundation. We want to continue to support this fine organization. If you would like to donate the membership fee for 2003, please see our Treasurer, **Barb Sherman**.

I also appreciate the years of hard work put into the VRS Open Gardens program by **Joe Ronsley**. **Lothar Mischke** has taken over from Joe and has already arranged for us to visit several spectacular gardens between April and June. Please contact Lothar if you would like to open your garden to other VRS members.

Thanks also to **Joanne Ronsley** for finding businesses to advertise in the *Indumentum*. Joanne has taken on other responsibilities and the advertising tasks are being assumed by **Tony Clayton**. Tony would appreciate your suggestions for businesses that might be potential advertisers.

Finally, a huge thank you to **Martie Irwin** who, for many years, has sent out publicity announcements each month concerning our VRS speakers and programs. **Gail Lehman** will be handling publicity for us, beginning this summer.

While I'm on the topic of wonderful VRS people, I continue to be amazed by, and very grateful for, the dedication of the members of our executive. In addition to assuming leadership in all the areas required for our Sale and Show, many have developed new initiatives designed to improve our club. For example, last month **Gerry Gibbens** and **Todd Major** decided they would like to see the VRS have its own logo. At the present time we use the ARS logo and seem to be the only chapter in BC that has not created its own.

Gerry and Todd are looking for ideas for our new VRS logo. In order to assist them, I have submitted a logo that I think might be suitable for our VRS letterhead, advertising posters, e-mail headers, publicity announcements, etc. A copy of this logo is presented below. You will notice that the graphic presents a regal image as befits a club with the stature of the VRS. The slogan conveys an enthusiasm for the genus *Rhododendron*, with a modern flair.



There are some executive members who think we should look further afield for logo designs. Therefore, I have been asked to open up the issue to our membership. If there are any VRS members who have artistic talents and different ideas about logos than I do, please see Todd or Gerry in the next month. They seem most anxious to receive alternative input.

Ron Knight

April Program

Peter Cunnington, our speaker for the evening of April 17th, has sent me information on his horticultural career on which I feel I cannot improve, so I pass it on to members in his own words. The title of his talk will be **'Rhododendrons and Related Plants from Home and Abroad'**.

This, he hopes, will allow him 'to say something about these plants at Ness and relate it to those that I have been lucky enough to see in the wild. I shall bring into my dialogue a little about those plant collectors particularly associated with Ness, especially George Forrest'.

'My career in horticulture began at the Chelsea Physic Garden in London, one of the oldest of gardens, established by the Society of Apocetharies in the 17th century. After two years I moved to a north London parks department working on ornamental plantings and then in 1963 to the alpine nursery firm of W.E.Th. Ingwersen for experience in rock garden construction and mountain plants. It was here that I developed my love of alpiners.

'I spent two years at the college of the Royal Horticultural Society at Wisely, graduating with Honours, and took an appointment at the University of Liverpool Botanic Garden, Ness, in 1966. I was appointed Curator in the autumn of 1989 and held that post until retirement in January 2002. My work has enabled me to travel in search of plants to the mountains of Europe, Central Asia, the Himalayas and China both on collecting expeditions and as tour leader for a number of companies. I am presently employed by a Canadian company operating from Toronto.

'Married with three children and two grandchildren, I play field hockey on a weekly basis and run navigation courses for the Scout Association.

I was awarded the M.B.E. in the Millennium New Year Honours List for services to meteorology, one of my other hobbies, and hold the Alpine Garden Society Certificate of Honour. N.B. I cannot, however, control the weather, nor do I take responsibility for it, except when it is favourable.

While Peter cannot do anything for us about the weather, alas, there is no doubt in my mind that his talk will be of considerable interest to all of us. Moreover, none of us should miss the opportunity of meeting him.

Joe Ronsley



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Membership

I am pleased to announce we have two new members, **David Leith** and **Justin Case**. Please join me in welcoming them to the VRS Chapter. Please look for new members who are sporting an ARS logo on their name badges. The logo will identify them to us as joining within the year.

New Members are always welcome. Chapter membership offers excellent value at \$25 VRS (single or family); \$50 ARS/VRS (single or family; includes four quarterly journals) or Associate Memberships \$10 (single or family; must be member of another chapter). See details and benefits of membership on our website <http://www.rhodo.citymax.com> or contact me.

The **ARS District Convention** in Olympia, Washington, April 29-May 5, 2003 advertised in the Winter 2003 edition of the ARS journal has been reprinted and is available to our Members. Please stop by the Membership Table when you get your name tag and raffle ticket and pick one up.

Carole Conlin, VRS Membership Chair
Tel: 604 921 7260 conlin@sfu.ca

Open Garden Details and Directions (see schedule on page 8)

Charlton-Sale Garden (Bucket Hill) - April 26

From Hwy #1 in North Vancouver, take the exit marked Mt Seymour Provincial Park. Proceed to Mt. Seymour Parkway (turn right at the light) and continue your ascent up the Parkway until you reach (on your left) the Parkgate Shopping Mall. Turn left just past the Mall at the sign for the Park (there is a traffic light at this turn) and then turn right at Indian River (just before the road curves). Take the 2nd left at the sign for "Woodlands" and drive almost 6km (4 miles) to Fire Lane 6 (The fire lanes are not in complete sequence—fire lanes 7&8 come before 1 through 6). You will know you are close when you come to a stop sign at the top of a steep hill. Turn left at Fire Lane 6. At the white gate it may be necessary to open the gate. (Push the button on the left-hand side.) You will see the garden on your left as you proceed up the lane. Our driveway is the 1st on the left and requires a 3-point turn to proceed up it.

There is parking part way up the driveway and also at the top. There is also room for two cars beside the tie wall just inside the white gate.

Mischke Garden - April 26

Follow directions to Bucket Hill until you reach 3.5 km on Indian River Drive. Turn left through chain link gate and follow signs to Fire Lane 8 (Sasamat Lane). Turn left at the "Y" junction and follow Sasamat Lane until you reach a residence surrounded by a cedar fence. The entrance may be found on the turnaround just past the fence. Please park on the uphill side of the lane wherever possible. All signage is quite clear so you shouldn't have any problems.

Lamont Garden - May 10

The Lamont garden is part of a 0.9 acre property in Clayton Hills in Surrey. It consists mainly of rhododendrons and companion plants. VRS members Mark Lamont and Glenda Powroznik created the majority of this garden for Mark's parents in 2000. Most of the rhododendrons and companion plants were moved from the Lamont's previous 3-acre woodland garden in Langley in the spring of 2000 (some of you may have had the pleasure of touring the Langley garden in 1999). To save as many rhododendrons and their companions as possible from the bulldozers and lumberjacks, Mark and Glenda basically picked up the Langley garden and moved it to Mark's parents' new home in Clayton Hills and incorporated them into the existing garden. Hope you can come and see these plants in their new home!

From Highway #1: take the 176th Street exit to Surrey and head south for approximately 3 miles on 176th Street until you come to Fraser Highway. Turn left on Fraser Highway and head east for 1 mile until you come to 184th Street. Turn right on 184th Street and head south for about a block and the first road you come to is 68th Avenue. Turn right on 68th Avenue and head west about ½ mile. The house is on your left.

From Highway #99: take the Highway #10 exit to Surrey/Cloverdale. Drive through Cloverdale on Highway #10 until you come to 184th Street. Turn left on 184th Street and head north for about 1½ mile until you come to 68th Avenue. Turn

left on 68th Avenue and head west about 1/2 mile. The house is on your left.

Darts Hill Garden Park - May 17

Darts Hill is a "must see" garden in the White Rock area. There are, however, some changes in the way tours are handled. The Surrey Parks and Recreation's Culture Department now administers Darts Hill and tours are booked through them. Only Wednesdays and Saturdays are available; also only 2 times per day (10:00 am or 2:00 pm) are available. In addition, a five-dollar entrance fee is now charged per person. I have booked the garden for May 17 from 2:00 pm until 4:00 pm exclusively for the VRS. Other days are available but you will have to do the booking in advance.



Hedychium coccineum 'Tara' (hardy ginger)
Photo: UBC Botanical Garden

Palm Grove, Keats Island - May 25

Palm Grove is a "woods and hillside" garden above south-facing Peggy's Cove on Keats Island. The mild microclimate of the protected waterfront area consists of a series of terraces planted with a huge variety of subtropical plants, including bananas, palms, eucalyptus, gingers and tree ferns. The wooded area above has over one hundred plantings of rhododendrons, including eight-footers planted in the late 1950s.

There are a number of options for getting to Palm Grove. If you have a private boat, you can disembark on one of the nearby private floats and walk over. If you prefer to come as a group, park in Horseshoe Bay and catch the 9:20 am ferry to Langdale. On arriving at the Langdale terminal, walk down the nearby ramp to the waiting Dogwood Princess (a 48-passenger ferry) for a pleasant trip to Keats Landing. A twelve minute walk across the meadows leads to Palm Grove. There are return sailings of the Dogwood Princess at 3:25 and 5:45 pm. For those unable to come on Sunday, arrangements can be made to see the garden on Saturday, May 24 (call Larry at 604 988 2355).

Trachycarpus palms grown from seed collected at Palm Grove will be made available to VRS members.

Turner Trees - June 7

The collection consists of trees only—more than 400 species (no cultivars) of conifers and broadleaves. Specimens are not labeled. A guided tour will be available 1:00-3:00 pm.

Please patronize our advertisers; they support the VRS and make the newsletter possible

Subscription Rates

VRS + ARS Membership (US & Overseas)	\$50.00 \$US 28.00
VRS Membership (no ARS Quarterly Journal)	\$25.00
Associate Membership (member of another ARS Chapter in Canada)	\$10.00
Associate Membership (member of another ARS Chapter outside of Canada)	\$US 10.00

Advertising Rates

	1 month	3 months	8 months
Business card	\$10.00	\$25.00	\$50.00
$\frac{1}{4}$ page	\$25.00	\$67.50	\$160.00
$\frac{1}{2}$ page	\$40.00	\$108.00	\$256.00
full page	\$70.00	\$189.00	\$448.00

To advertise in *Indumentum*, contact **Tony Clayton**
Tel: 604 921 7947 tclayton@telus.net

News and Notes

VRS Annual Rhododendron Sale and Show

Park and Tilford Garden, Main Street, North Vancouver

- **Saturday, May 3rd**, 10:00 to 4:00
- **Sunday, May 4th**, 12:00 to 4:00

Free Admission

- Show of Judged Rhododendrons - Rose Room
- Bonsai Display by Roger Low - Tea House
- Educational workshops - in the gardens
- Rhododendron Raffle - membership table at main gate
- Rhododendron Sales - in the gardens (east end)

Growers may bring sale plants to the gardens anytime before 6:30 pm on Friday, May 2nd. Rhododendrons for the show should be brought to the Rose Room between 3:00 and 6:30 on Friday, May 2nd. Judges and clerks start their work at 8:00 am on Saturday, May 3rd.

Dozens and dozens of volunteers are needed to help ensure that our Sale and Show is a success. Please say **YES** to Douglas Justice, Joe Ronsley and their phone committee members when they call you to ask for assistance.



Rhododendron 'Bric-a-Brac'
Photo: Ron Knight

Library: Please drop by the VRS library table to welcome our new librarian, **Jasbir Gill**, and borrow a book or two at our last meeting for the season. You have the whole summer to enjoy the books taken out at this time!

Milner Gardens Propagation Program

Milner Gardens near Qualicum on Vancouver Island, which is associated with Malaspina University College, is proposing to establish a rhododendron propagation program. They intend to conduct a survey of rhododendrons and their locations in BC, then create a list of selected rare hybrids and species for propagation and release by Milner Gardens. These plants will be offered first to ARS chapters within BC, then to the general public. All of the chosen plants will be displayed at Milner Gardens. Their Executive Director, **Jim Cadwaladr**, will keep us informed as the initiative progresses.

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The following is another of **Todd Major's** treatises on pruning. Originally written for rose fanciers, the information is appropriate to all kinds of pruning.

Anglers versus Squares

The subject of pruning roses is always controversial, particularly when it comes to the issue of square versus angled cuts. I often discuss this with visitors to Park and Tilford. About a third volunteer they are angle cutters, a third are square cutters, and the remaining people are confused or don't care. New gardeners and rosarians are often swayed one way or other by persuasive arguments from both the squares and the anglers, and often express confusion and dismay at the extent of disagreement between the camps.

Beginners also say they are confused over different pruning styles with respect to different groups of roses (floribunda, damask, hybrid, floribunda, mini, etc.). I tell visitors that we prune them all the same, regardless of type. This tends to confuse people, as books indicate different pruning requirements for all the different groups. Let us have a look at the two sides and their respective positions.

Anglers love their way for many heartfelt reasons. They claim it helps run water off the stem, which prevents rot. Anglers say the angled cut allows the stem to die back in a more natural way and that it is easier to make the cut when you slice on an angle. They also cite numerous published experts claiming the angled way is the right way. I am sure they have thoroughly researched all of these claims. Some anglers explain that if they did it that way successfully back in the old country, then who are we to second-guess those traditions?

Squares also love their way for the best of reasons. They claim less surface area is exposed by a cut perpendicular to the stem, which means there is less protruding stem (above the bud) to harbour rot organisms. The square cut allows more live wood to remain intact, they point out, so there is better structural attachment for the new shoot. They further claim that their way is faster, easier and more in keeping with modern science. Squares sometimes claim that a plant's cells line up under the influence of the sun and according to the earth's magnetic field (i.e., parallel to the ground), so cutting square causes less cell damage. I am sure they have researched these claims.

In the mythical end of all things on earth, there will be one angler and one square. Imagine the conversation between these last two survivors (I've heard the comment: "I wouldn't prune that way if you were the last man on earth"). With new members and budding gardeners joining the ranks everyday, what are we to do with the anglers and the squares?

Squarely,
Todd Major



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Map showing location at 192nd St and Hwy #1, Surrey, 88th Ave.

Email: info@artsnursery.com Website: www.artsnursery.com

◆ **Contributions to the Raffle Table** help offset the rental of the Floral Hall. Plants, books, ceramic pots, etc. are always welcome!

◆ **For the Refreshment Table**, donations of cookies, cakes, cheese, and other snacks are greatly appreciated.



Alert! We all know VRS members like to have a little nibble at the close of the monthly meeting, but we badly need more squares, cookies, cakes and other goodies for the refreshments table (according to **Frank Dorsey**, one member was admitted to hospital suffering from malnutrition on the way home from the March meeting).

ARS Members & Friends Portland Garden Tour - May 17th to 19th, 2003

There are a number of spaces left on the Portland Garden Tour. Tour organizer Mike Bale has provided a provisional itinerary, but because of space limitations here, garden descriptions have been omitted (but see also below). The complete itinerary of this exciting tour is available from Mike, and can also be viewed on the club website at <http://www.rhodo.citymax.com>.

Saturday, May 17th

- **Kubota Garden** (Seattle)
- **Cecil & Molly Smith Garden** (South Portland).

Sunday, May 18th

- **VanVeen Nursery**
- **Crystal Springs Rhododendron Garden**
- **Portland Classical Chinese Garden**
- **Japanese Garden at Washington Park**
- **Bovee Nursery.**

Monday, May 19th

- **Elk Rock Garden** (the Bishop's Close)
- **Lakewold Garden Estate** (Tacoma)



Photo: June West
UBC Botanical Garden

Here's just a taste of the stops on the tour:

Cecil & Molly Smith Garden – South Portland. The Cecil and Molly Smith Garden was founded in 1951 and after more than thirty years of intensive loving care the garden was acquired by the Portland Chapter in 1984 and together with the assistance of the Willamette Yamhill County and Tualatin Valley chapters continued the preservation and development of the garden. The garden has many exquisite and mature species, including *R. protoides* and *R. falconeri*. It is also the site of the many outstanding hybrids developed by Cecil Smith, which include 'Nomo Brave' (*R. 'Nomo Chief' × R. yakushimanum* 'Koichiro Wada') and Cinnamon Bear (*R. bureauvii × R. yakushimanum* 'Koichiro Wada'). Our visit has been coordinated by members of the Portland ARS Chapter, and in particular, by Anya Averill, chair of the garden committee.

Van Veen Nursery. The Van Veen Nursery is one of the oldest and best known rhododendron nurseries in the world. Established in 1925 by Ted Van Veen, the nursery has continued its international reputation as a family managed rhododendron nursery ever since. The founder's granddaughter Kathy Van Veen has generously invited us to visit the nursery and will personally direct our visit.

Elk Rock Garden (The Garden of the Bishop's Close). Founded by Peter Kerr on 13 acres on a cliff above the Willamette River the garden was donated by his daughters in 1957 to the Episcopal Diocese of Oregon. The garden has an extensive collection of rare and interesting plants from all over the world.

Cost: \$325.00. Please forward a deposit of \$50.00 and a post-dated cheque (April 17) for the balance.

Make cheque payable to "ARS Garden Tour - M. Bale"

send to: Mike Bale, 33623 Wildwood Drive, Abbotsford, BC V2S 1S1.

VRS Open Gardens 2003

The following is a list of VRS. members that have generously opened their gardens to fellow members this spring. Included are a variety of gardens as different as the gardeners themselves. Gardens large and small in many varied settings offer visitors a chance to experience collections not only of rhododendrons, which may be of primary interest, but also of many other fine plants. Directions and further information can found on page 4.

April 26 Saturday

Margaret Charlton & Charlie Sale (Bucket Hill) 12-5
Fire Lane 6, Indian River Drive
North Vancouver (see directions)

Lothar & Cindy Mischke 12-5
Fire lane 8, Indian River Drive (Sasamat Lane)
North Vancouver (see directions)

May 10 Saturday

Bill & Suzanne Spohn 11-4
2950 Palmerston Ave
West Vancouver

Lamont Residence 12-5
17918 68th Ave
Surrey (see directions)

May 11 Sunday (Mother's Day)

Michael & Pattie Bale 10-6
33623 Wildwood Drive
Abbotsford

Gordon & Vern Finley 10-4
10476 -125B Street
Surrey

May 15 Thursday

VanDusen Botanical Garden
Sino-Himalayan Garden tour 7 pm
(confirm time)

May 17 Saturday

Francisca Darts 2-4
Darts Hill
1660-168th Street, White Rock (see description)

May 18 Sunday

Joanne & Joe Ronsley 11-4
250 Oceanview Road
Lions Bay

Richard & Heather Mossakowski 11-4
155 Highview Place
Lions Bay

Lies Ganske 10-2
360 Mountain Drive
Lions Bay

May 22 Thursday

Penny Pearse 6-9pm
6450 Elm Street
Vancouver

Judy Williams 6-9pm
6365 Elm Street
Vancouver

Rachel Mackenzie 6-9pm
6389 Elm Street
Vancouver

May 25 Sunday

Larry Wick
Palm Grove
Keats Island (see directions)

June 1 Sunday

Gerard Pury 11-4
86 West 40th Ave
Vancouver

June 7 Saturday

Alan Turner 12-3
1437 212th Street
South Langley (see description)

