



# The Victoria Rhododendron Society

## Newsletter

Box 5562 Postal Station B, Victoria BC Canada V8R 6S4

**October 2015**

e-mail: tkmcmillan@telus.net

**Thirty-Fifth Year of Publication**

web page – <http://victoriarhodo.ca>

Doors open 7:00  
Talk and meeting: 7:30

**Monday, October 5, 2015**

**GARTH HOMER CENTRE, 811 DARWIN AVENUE, VICTORIA, B. C.**

**Linda Gilkeson , Pests & Diseases of Rhododendrons**

Linda Gilkeson has self-published two books: *Year Around Harvest: Winter Gardening on the Coast* and *West Coast Gardening: Natural Insect, Weed and Disease Control*. Her recent book, *Backyard Bounty: The Complete Guide to year-Round Organic Gardening in the Pacific Northwest*, has become a BC best seller. As a private consultant, Linda is a regular instructor in the Master Gardener programs in BC and is busy year around giving workshops on pest management and organic gardening.

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### FOR NEW MEMBERS AND VISITORS

By Theresa McMillan

During the Sept-May garden club season, we are always delighted to see visitors, whom we hope will some day become fellow "rhodoholics". However, some people had problems with the time and parking for September's meeting, and we apologize.

### REFRESHMENTS for the next meeting to be provided by:

**Archie and Norah Brown**

**Bert and Norma Buckley**

**Caren Cameron**

**Alan and Sandy Campbell**

**Lynn Collicutt**

**Ruth Cook**

Please let Betty Gordon  
(bbgordon@shaw.ca or phone 250.479.0210)  
know if you are coming with your wrapped  
goodies/snacks.

Coffee and tea are supplied.

Assistance in setting out the food, milk and  
sugar, napkins and helping Betty in the  
kitchen cleanup is really appreciated.

## VICTORIA RHODODENDRON SOCIETY BOARD

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With thanks to Justine Murdy for her excellent suggestions, we have clarified the meeting time in the Newsletter and on the website by adding "Doors open at 7 p.m. "

We have our speakers first, both to help nervous ones and to allow speakers to leave after the talk if they wish to avoid the business session of the meeting.

After the talk we have the business session, then the plant raffle. The raffle starts with descriptions of the member-donated plants. Raffle tickets can be bought before the meeting, or after hearing about special qualities of each plant. Cups in front of each plant enable you to place your tickets to have a chance of winning a plant or plants that you actually want! The proceeds from the raffle help with the cost of the hall rental.

The meeting concludes with refreshments and chat.

Parking at Garth Homer can be a problem when Darwin Street in front of the center is full, but there is more parking in a lot to the left of the Centre and

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## September's Talk

### By Theresa McMillan

Carmen Varcoe's talk was illustrated by many pictures of unusual companion plants for rhododendrons, many of which are in Carmen's garden and the Finnerty Gardens at the University of Victoria. Fortunately for the Latin-challenged among us, a copy of the list of plants Carmen mentioned follows.

Many of us in the garden club recognized several of her plants, but fortunately when we could not, we can type a plant name such as "actaea pachypoda Misty Blue" into a computer's search engine (Google or another type). Thanks to Wikipedia or other plant encyclopedias, we can usually find the plant, and perhaps several pictures of it.

With our own list, we can try to get some of these beautiful plants for our own garden.

## Companion Plants For Rhododendrons

### Perennials

Actaea pachypoda Misty Blue  
Adiantum venustum  
Anemone nemorosa Robinsoniana, Vestal, ranunculoides, seemanii  
Arisaema candidissima, sikokianum  
Arum White Winter  
Asplenium scolopendrium Crispum  
Athyrium f. f. Frizelliae-tatting fern  
Beesia  
Blechnum chilense  
Brunnera  
Cardiocrinum  
Chrysoplenium macrophyllum  
Cyclamen  
Cypripedium formosanum (japonicum)  
Dactylorhiza  
Deinranthe bifida  
Disporum cantoniense  
Dryopteris wallichiana  
Diphylleia cymosa  
Epimedium wushanense, x omeiense  
Glaucidium palmatum  
Hosta Daybreak, plantaginea  
Impatiens omeiense  
Leucosceptrum Golden Angel  
Lilium martagon, platypetalum  
Meconopsis chelidoniifolia, Lingholm  
Mukdenia  
Omphalodes cappadocica Cherry Ingram, Starry Eyes  
Podophyllum pleianthum, Spotty Dotty  
Polygonatum cirrhifolium  
Polystichum neolobatum  
Primula japonica  
Pulmonaria Benediction, Moonshine  
Rodgersia: Chocolate Wings, Fireworks  
Smilacina racemosa, Matteucia  
Trillium chloropetalum

### Shrubs, Trees, Vines

Aucuba Lemon Flash

Acer:

conspicuum Phoenix, palmatum Osakazuki,

japonicum vitifolium

Daphne odora Zuiko nishiki



Actaea pachypoda Misty Blue



Podophyllum pleianthum, Spotty Dotty



Anemone nemorosa Vestal



Cercidiphyllum japonicum  
Cornus: controversa Variegata  
mas 'Variegata'

Hydrangea:

Amagi amacha, aspera, Blaumeise,  
Joga saki, Kayosumi, Lanarth,  
quercifolia Little Honey  
Rotdrossel,  
Sara  
Taube

Magnolia:

Cleopatra, denudata,  
loebneri Encore,

Mahonia gracilipes

Pinus wallichiana

Ribes White Icicle

Rubus tridel Benenden

Sorbus koehneana

Stewartia pseudocamellia

Tropaeolum speciosum



Magnolia "Cleopatra"

## **The Summer of 2015** by Theresa McMillan

In the summer of 2015, people in Victoria had no real water availability problems (except expense) with the record-breaking heat and drought, thanks to a winter wet enough to cause the large Sooke Reservoir to overflow. However, many thousands of B.C. residents were not so lucky. There were water restrictions around Cowichan, Nanoose, Nanaimo, and Qualicum for example.

Gardeners on places like the Gulf Islands have been forced for years to rely on collected rainwater, cisterns, wells, ponds, and in bad cases, water delivered by water supply companies. To keep their plants alive people have used bath or shower water, laundry water, vegetable water, soapy greasy dishwater... These methods are now also needed for other water-starved communities.

Most rhododendrons need summer watering. This year, unprecedented heat and drought killed millions of these plants. People saw their beautiful, expensive rhodo gardens die in spite of pots of water put on them. There are endless rows of dead rhododendrons along busy city streets in Surrey. Even in Victoria, there are many dead plants in gardens because they were not watered, in many cases, because people could not afford the extra time, effort or costs.

We do not know whether to expect more summers like this one, but I'm sure there will not be the usual complaints about all the winter rain we should be getting in the months ahead.

## ***Two Faces of the Summer of 2015....***

*(reprinted by permission from Linda Derkach. The article is from September's edition the Rhodovine, the MARS or Mount Arrowsmith Rhododendron Society's Newsletter)*

Just when it seemed like summer stretched endlessly before us....and the sunny blue skies would never end, here we are on the cusp of Autumn. Many of us will never forget this year for its wonderful warmth, bright days, visits with grandchildren.....and the numerous buckets of gray water -dishwater and shower water - taken to our thirsty plants during the course of this drought! The new motto at our house is - If it's yellow let it mellow...if it's brown...." - well you know the rest! All this is fairly new to us "wetcoasters".

And in the garden, a similar story....

There are our golden lawns and languishing water-lovers who have a new taste for soapy water – in a drought anything will do!

They say gold is the new green! And our lawns will eventually come back. But amazingly, many of our west coast stalwarts have turned out to be (and always were) quite drought tolerant, including Rugosa roses, geraniums, hostas (who knew!), and of course many of the garden-worthy west coast native plants. Many of these survived on very little water and continue to thrive. Even my rhododendrons did very well –especially large, old plants whether in the ground or in pots. Three or four inches of mulch protected the shallow roots and retained moisture. Apparently this is but an appetizer for future summers, so we must adjust and get used to it.

While I have a large number of drought tolerant perennials, I will be seeking out even more and letting

some old friends go. But I will go the extra distance for my hydrangeas, for without them the summer garden would have been a total bust! And since they are now used to being sloshed with buckets of soapy, greasy dishwater, I am sure they intend to hang on through whatever next summer brings.

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Dried out potted evergreen azalea but it may survive



Dried out pine bonsai—a tragic loss

## Membership Renewal Reminder

IF YOU ARE ALREADY A MEMBER BUT THERE ARE CHANGES TO REPORT or if you are a new member, please fill out the form below and either mail it to us, or bring it to the meeting.

Mail to: The Victoria Rhododendron Society, P.O. Box 5562 Station B, Victoria, B.C., V8R 6S4

### Newsletters available by email only

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City and Province: \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please circle one of the following:

Regular (Full) Membership: \$30 ; Local Membership: \$25 ; Associate (with other ARS chapters) : \$10 ;  
Commercial-Corporate: \$90; Sustaining: \$75; Sponsoring: \$150 ; Life, single: \$1,000 (Payable over 3 years);  
Life, family: \$1,500 (Payable over 3 years).

Pay by:      Cash      ☐      Cheque      ☐

**Full membership** includes membership in the VicRS and the American Rhododendron Society of which we are an affiliated Chapter. This brings the ARS quarterly journal with expert articles and colour photographs. Also included is the right to participate in the ARS annual conventions, and the ARS seed exchange and pollen bank. Members also receive the Newsletter of the VicRS. Membership is for singles or couples.

**Local Membership** includes the newsletter and participation in local events, but does not include membership in the ARS.

**Associate Membership** enables members of other ARS Chapters to participate in the activities of the Victoria Chapter.

## UPCOMING EVENTS THIS FALL/WINTER

General Meeting October 5, 2015 (1st Mon.)	Linda Gilkeson	Pests & Diseases of Rhododendrons
October 16-18, 2015	ARS Fall Conference	Long Island, New York
General Meeting November 9, 2015	Members' Photography Evening (see below)	
General Meeting December 14, 2015	Christmas Potluck Dinner 6:30 pm	

### Photography Evening November 9, 2015

#### 1. Prints

All entries to be 5" x 7" mounted on a black mat, no frame. Two categories, black & white and colour prints. Mounted pictures are to be entered November 9, the night of the show.

#### 2. Digital Entries

Email your digital photos to Calvin at victoriarhododendron@gmail.com. Calvin will prepare a PowerPoint presentation with all entries.

On the subject line, please enter the category the photo is intended for and the name of the rhododendron or plant or scene.

#### Categories:

1. Single Rhododendron Truss
2. Whole Rhododendron Plant
3. Foliage Rhododendron
4. Companion Plant
5. Garden Scene
6. Creative/Artistic photos –photos altered by technology

**NOTE: Please enter only two photos per category. Deadline for digital photos is November 1, 2015**