

# AtlanticRhodo

[www.AtlanticRhodo.org](http://www.AtlanticRhodo.org)

Volume 27: Number 1

February 2003



# Rhododendron Society of Canada - Atlantic Region

## Positions of Responsibility 2002 - 2003

<b>President</b>	Sheila Stevenson	479-3740	<b>Director</b>	Sandy Brown	683-2615
<b>Vice-President</b>	Anitra Laycock	852-2502	<b>Newsletter</b>	Mary Helleiner	429-0213
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<b>Membership</b>	Betty MacDonald	852-2779	<b>Tissue Culture Sale</b>	Audrey Fralic	683-2711
<b>Past President</b>	Ken Shannik	422-2413	<b>May - Advance Plant Sale</b>	Ken Shannik	422-2413
<b>Director - Program</b>	Jenny Sandison	624-9013	<b>May - Mini Show</b>	Jenny Sandison	624-9013
<b>Director - Communications</b>	Christine Curry	656-2513	<b>May- Public Plant Sale</b>	Duff & Donna Evers	835-2586



## Membership

ARS/RSC District 12 (National) Membership fees for 2003 were due on December 1 and 'Local' membership fees were due on January 1. If you have not renewed your membership please do so now. If you are not sure if you have renewed, please contact **Betty MacDonald** our **Membership Secretary**, (902) 852-2779. The current dues structures are as follows:

**1. R.S.C. - A.R.S.** Membership (which includes Atlantic membership) \$42.00 Canadian for individual membership. Please make your cheque payable to - "Rhododendron Society of Canada" and send to **National Treasurer, Mr. Robert Dickhout, R.S.C. District 12 A.R.S., 5200 Timothy Crescent, Niagara Falls, Ontario L2E 5G3.** Be sure to specify Atlantic Region.

**2. Atlantic Society only** (which includes all privileges, mailings and activities of R.S.C. Atlantic only) \$15.00 for individual or family membership. Please make your cheque payable to "R.S.C. Atlantic Region" and send to **Atlantic Membership Secretary, Betty MacDonald, 534 Prospect Bay Road, Prospect Bay, Nova Scotia, B3T1Z8.**

When renewing your membership please include your telephone number. This will be used for RSCAR purposes only (co-ordination of potluck suppers and other events) and will be kept strictly confidential. Thanks!

*AtlanticRhodo* is the Newsletter of the Rhododendron Society of Canada - Atlantic Region. We welcome your comments, suggestions, articles, photos and other material for publication. Send all material to the editor.

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Cover Photo:

Rhododendron 'Chikor' One of the Glendoick Lepidote Hybrids. [Photo John Weagle]



# Calendar of Events

All R.S.C.A.R. meetings are held on the first Tuesday of the month, from September to May, at 7:30 p.m. in the Nova Scotia Museum Auditorium, 1747 Summer St., Halifax, unless otherwise noted. Paid Parking is available in the Museum lot. Friends, guests and anyone interested in rhododendrons, azaleas or companion plants are always welcome at R.S.C.A.R. meetings or events.

- 7 January**      **Meeting:** Mary Helleiner: Alpines of the Dolomites and Southern Austria
  
- 4 February**    **Meeting:** John Weagle: Evergreen Azaleas. Another look at this wonderful group of rhododendrons. For new members, an introduction to this easy and most rewarding side to rhodo gardening. For long-term members, another chance to revisit them.  
**Workshop:** Ken Shannik will present a preview of the May Sale plants, illustrated with slides.
  
- 4 March**        **Meeting:** Roslyn Duffus: Growing Plants from Seed. Another member will share her secrets for success in growing from seeds. This is by far the cheapest way to fill your garden with plants, and you will always have a particularly fond spot for those you grew yourself.
  
- 1 April**         **Meeting:** To be announced
  
- 12 April**        **Workshop:** This is now in the planning stage. Details to be announced.  
(Saturday)
  
- 6 May**          **Meeting:** Speaker to be announced.  
Members' Plant Sale. See more details in Special Notices, this Newsletter.

**Please Note:** Some members, who have environmental sensitivities, are asking their fellow members please to use no perfumes, scented soaps, etc., on the days or evenings of RSCAR events, in order to minimize the risk of allergic reactions.



A very warm welcome to our new and returning R.S.C. Atlantic Region members who have joined since the October 2002 Newsletter:

- |                            |                     |                       |                      |
|----------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Lynn Brooks                | Stillwater Lake NS  | Margaret M. MacDonald | Dartmouth NS         |
| M. Wayne Duncan            | Dartmouth NS        | Elizabeth May         | Dartmouth NS         |
| Rai Evens                  | Toronto ON          | Ruth Ann Moger        | Boutilier's Point NS |
| Pam Ferro                  | Hammonds Plains NS  | Liz Naylor            | Halifax NS           |
| Katherine Flynn            | Wellington NS       | Linda & Wayne O'Leary | Dartmouth NS         |
| Kenneth Gross              | East Concord NY USA | Debbie Richard        | Dartmouth NS         |
| Maxine Hardy               | Ingonish NS         | Karen Rutherford      | Dartmouth NS         |
| Christopher Henningsen     | Walton NS           | Mary Wheeler          | Halifax NS           |
| Kimberley Jenner           | Dartmouth NS        | Jean White            | Halifax NS           |
| Ron Lawlor & Alanna Miller | Hatchet Lake NS     | Heather Wildsmith     | Dartmouth NS         |

# Special Notices

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## Membership Dues

2003 membership fees for both categories are now past due. **If you have not renewed your membership please do so now. This is your final notice.**

## RSCAR 2003 Tissue Culture Advance Sale

The plants will be available for pickup at the Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History 1747 Summer Street Halifax. Pickup time will be between 2:00 pm and 4:00 pm on Saturday, 5 April 2003. Your order will be available when you arrive. You will be able to purchase any leftover plants at that time. Volunteers will be needed to help sort plants that day, 12 noon – 2pm. Contact Audrey Fralic at (902) 683-2711, or at the March meeting.

## Members' Plant Sale

**During Regular Monthly Meeting  
Tuesday, 6 May 2003**

Members are encouraged to bring plant material to sell at the regular monthly meeting in May. Plants should be rare, unusual or hard to find varieties of perennials, annuals, shrubs, etc., that are not readily available commercially. Rhododendrons, either species or hybrids (seed grown or rooted cuttings) are especially encouraged. Members are required to price and sell their plants themselves. This is a great way to find homes for those surplus plants while recouping some of your expenses for pots and soil. Please participate, especially as a vendor!

Vendors are encouraged, but not required, to provide information about their plants. You may have great plants, but if the members don't know them and they don't look particularly spectacular at sale time, they are apt not to sell.

Anyone who has interesting material that they plan to sell should let Stephen Archibald know in advance (479-3740), so that enough space and tables are provided.

## Articles Wanted!

We need articles from our members for future issues of **AtlanticRhodo**.

Our future plans include a series on our members' gardens, large and small, mature or in the process of development.

We also hope to have an article on a rhododendron species in each issue, and one on a rhodo hybrid. These can be as long or short as you like; please write and tell us about your favourite rhodo.

Articles on other topics are equally welcome, as are ideas for future articles.

For information call the editor, Mary Helleiner, at 429-0213 or e-mail [chellein@is.dal.ca](mailto:chellein@is.dal.ca).

# May 2003 Advance Plant Sale For Members

Members may pre-order plants from the nursery grown stock to be brought in for the May Plant Sale. This year's offering features a tremendous selection of rhododendrons and azaleas as well as many rare and unusual shrubs, trees and perennials.

Quantities of some items are small and others we may not receive at all. You may list substitutes for specific plants on the order form. (i.e. You are ordering plant #1, and if it is not available, you would like to receive plant #3 - enter the number '3' in the 'sub' column beside plant #1.)

You may order more than one plant per variety. However, plants will be allocated in the order in which they are received on the basis of one plant per variety per membership. Following this allocation, an adequate reserve will be held back for the public sale in May. Any surplus will be divided up amongst multiple orders. Some items listed have been offered to members in the past few years and will only be available at the public sale in May. These are indicated as 'Public May Sale Only' and cannot be preordered. Please complete the enclosed order form and return it no later than March 15, 2003.

Plants are to be picked up at 5 Sime Ct., Halifax, NS on Saturday, April 26, 2002 between 10:00 am and 2:00 p.m. Sime Ct. is in the Kingswood subdivision off Hammonds Plains Rd. Take Kingswood Dr. (between Kearney Lake Rd. and Farmer Clem's) to Brenda Ct. (the first street on the right) and follow it to the first left which is Sime Ct. Plants are to be paid for when they are picked up. Do not send payment with your order form. Plants will not be shipped. Any plants not picked up will be offered for sale at the public May Plant Sale.

Return your order form to: Ken Shannik, 1421 Edward Street, Halifax, Nova Scotia B3H 3H5

## Lepidote Rhododendrons

**R. 'Abeille'** (*keleticum* x *dauricum*) Open-pollinated. A very floriferous & early blooming Brueckner hybrid with bright reddish-purple flowers. Small narrow foliage. Dwarf, dense, mounded habit growing to 20"(.5m) high x 27"(7m) wide in 7 years. Hardy to at least -22°F(-30°C).  
(2 gal. - \$20.00)

**R. 'Bluenose'** ('Russautinii' x *dauricum* Sempervirens Group) Large, 2" funnel-shaped, clear blue flowers in lax trusses of 3-5. Upright, open habit to 7.5'(2.3m) high and wide in 15 years. Olive green foliage. A Brueckner hybrid bred in New Brunswick. Bud hardy to -17°F(-27°C). Plant hardy to -25°F(-31°C). (2 gal. - \$25.00 Public May Sale Only)

**R. 'Jack's Blue'** [(Delp's tetraploid *carolinianum* x *fastigiatum*) x 'Blue Ridge'] A new hybrid from Jack Looye in Ontario. Blue flowers and good foliage. Vigorous. Compact, rounded habit to 4'(1.2m) high. Zone 6.  
(2 gal. - \$20.00)

**R. 'Karin Seleger'** (*impeditum* x *dauricum*) A very free flowering Brueckner hybrid with purple-violet flowers in ball shaped trusses. Early blooming. Tiny dense foliage on a mounded dense plant. To 30"(7.5m) high x 42"(1.1m) wide in 18 years. Bred in New Brunswick. Hardy to -25°F (-32°C).  
(1 gal. - \$15.00 Public May Sale Only)

**R. 'Kickoff'** ('Achiever' x *micronulatum*) - Pink flowers with a hint of mauve and a paler center grace this Delp hybrid. Zone 6 or hardier.  
(2 gal. - \$20.00)

**R. 'Legacy'** ('April Glory' x 'Princess Susan') Double dark purple flowers grace this Mezitt hybrid. Early blooming. Plant is similar to 'PJM'. Vigorous & dense. To 3'(9m) high x 2'(6m) wide in 7 years. Hardy to -20°F(-29°C).  
(2 gal. - \$20.00)

**R. 'Lemon Twist'** (*keiskei* v. *ozawae* x *lutescens* 'Bagshot Sands') Large wavy-edged, greenish-yellow flowers. Low spreading habit to 2.5'(75m) high x 4'(1.2m) wide in 11 years. Plant hardy to at least -16°F(26°C). Buds hardy only to -5°F(-21°C). A Dick Brooks hybrid. A few only.  
(2 gal. - \$20.00)

**R. 'Montafon'** (probably *ferrugineum* x *kotschy* but may be a selection of the former) Flowers are crimson-purple fading to purple-pink. Late-blooming. Slow growing with a dense, compact habit. Resents drought. Named by Brueckner. Z5. A few only.  
(2 gal. - \$25.00)

**R. 'Patty Bee'** (*keiskei* 'Yaku Fairy' x *fletcherianum*) A beautiful & very floriferous clear yellow Berg hybrid. Early. Dense dark green foliage turns maroon-red in winter. Very dwarf - 1.5'(45m) high x 2'(6m) wide in 10 yrs. An ARS Superior Plant award winner. Zone 6.  
(1 gal. - \$15.00 - Public May Sale Only)

**R. 'Pink Pom Pom'** (*carolinianum* x *racemosum*) Pale pink flowers in tight round trusses. Red stems & good winter foliage. Early-blooming. Leslie Hancock hybrid from Ontario. Hardy to -15°F(-26°C).  
(2 gal. - \$20.00)

**R. 'Weston's Pink Diamond'** ('P.J.M.' x *micronulatum* 'Cornell Pink') Frilled, semi-double, pink flowers have a silver-toned centre giving a sparkling effect. A very early blooming and floriferous Mezitt hybrid. Red, orange & yellow fall colour. Bronzey winter colour. Vigorous, wide upright habit. To 6'(1.8m) high x 4'(1.2m) wide. Hardy to -18°F (-28°C).  
(1 gal. - \$15.00 - Public May Sale Only)

**R. 'Widgeon'** (*carolinianum* x *calostrotum* 'Gigha') A Cox hybrid with large saucer-shaped purple-pink flowers with darker spotting. Very floriferous. Dense, dome-shaped spreading habit to 2'(6m) high. Very nice. Zone 5b.  
(2 gal. - \$20.00)

**R. 'Wren'** (*ludlowii* x *keiskei* 'Yaku Fairy') Clear yellow flowers stand up like pansies above a creeping mat of shiny, dark green foliage. Floriferous. Foliage turns bronzy-red in winter. At its best planted on a bank or in a raised bed. A beautiful Cox hybrid ideal for the rock garden or small spaces. Zone 6.  
(1 gal. - \$15.00 - Public May Sale Only)

## Elepidote Rhododendrons

**R. 'Beaufort'** ('Boule de Neige' x *fortunei*) Fragrant white flowers emerge with a touch of mauve. Large leaves. Compact habit. To 5' high in 10 years. Needs plenty of sun to bud well. A Gable hybrid. Zone 6. A few only.  
(2 gal. - \$20.00)

**R. 'Connecticut Yankee'** (*catawbiense* hybrid) Clear bluish-purple flowers in dome-shaped trusses of up to 20. Free-flowering and late blooming. Foliage is dark green. Vigorous, dense wide spreading habit. To 8'(2.4m) high x 14'(4.3m) wide in 25 years. Mehlquist hybrid. Hardy to -25°F(-32°C). (1 gal. - \$20.00)

**R. 'Golfer'** (*yakushmanum* x *pseudochrysanthum*) Perhaps the finest foliage of any hybrid. Long-lasting silvery tomentum and pale beige indumentum. Flowers are clear pink fading to white in dome-shaped trusses. Broad, well-branched dense habit. To 2.5(.75m) high x 3.5'(1m) wide in 15 years. A Berg hybrid. Zone 6 or colder? (1 gal. - \$15.00 Public May Sale Only)

**R. 'Henry's Red'** - A very hardy Mezitt hybrid with dark blood-red flowers held in tight trusses against dark green foliage. Free-flowering. Broad, irregular open habit to 5'(1.5m) high and wide in 10 years. Zone 5. (2 gal. - \$25.00 Public May Sale Only)

**R. 'John T. Meagher'** (*brachycarpum* Tigerstedtii Group x 'Mrs. T.H. Lowinsky') We are very pleased to be able to offer this new hybrid. Large trusses of white flowers with a dark brown blotch sit on top of lush shiny dark green foliage. Dense habit to 5'(1.5m) high x 8'(2.4m) wide in 10 years. Grown by the late John Meagher from a cross donated to the RSCAR seed exchange by Dave Hinton. Bud hardy to -10°F(-23°C) possibly colder if brief. (2 gal. - \$25.00)

**R. ('Lath House Red' x *yakushmanum*)** Another we are very pleased to offer is a Capt. R.M. Steele hybrid from Boulderwood. Small tight dome-shaped trusses of medium pink flowers sit perfectly proportioned atop whorls of rich dark green foliage. Stunning. Open, upright-spreading habit. Zone 6b. (2 gal. - \$25.00)

**R. 'Morgenrot'** (*yakushmanum* 'Kochiro Wada' x 'Spitfire') Rosy-red flowers fading to pink with a paler pink center in ball-shaped trusses. Very floriferous. Glossy dark green foliage. Vigorous. Dense, compact, rounded habit to 4'(1.2m) high in 10 years. Hardy to -8°F(-22°C). A Hachmann hybrid. (1 gal. - \$15.00)

**R. 'Nicoletta'** ['Fantastica' x ('Hachmann's Ornament' x 'Furnivall's Daughter')] Light rose-pink flowers with a large red blotch. Fades to paler pink with a fine darker pink edge. Very floriferous. Dark green foliage. Dense, compact, rounded habit to 2'(.6m) x 3'(9m) in 10 years. Another Hachmann hybrid. Rated as hardy to -10°F(-23°C). (2 gal. - \$20.00)

**R. 'Parker's Pink'** - Full trusses of stunning large pink flowers with a paler center and red spotting. Fragrant & floriferous. Large deep green leaves. To 5'(1.5m) high & wide in 10 years. A Dexter hybrid. Hardy to -15°F (-26°C). (2 gal. - \$25.00 - Public May Sale Only)

**R. 'Peaches'** (*fortunei* hybrid?) Large flowers with very good substance are as close to peach as you will find! Slightly fragrant. Broad habit to 5'(1.5m) high x 8'(3.6m) wide in 12 years. A Gable hybrid. Always admired at Boulderwood. Zone 6. (2 gal. - \$20.00)

**R. 'Pink Scallop'** (Bosley-Dexter #1005 x 'Catalglá') Pink flowers with a lighter center and strong blotch. Fragrant. Late-blooming. Medium-tall in size. A Pride hybrid grown by Brian Schram. Zone 5. (2 gal. \$20.00)

**R. 'Pink Tipp'** ['Pink Icing' x (*catawbiense* 'Rubrum' x 'Caroline')] Beautiful flowers emerge pink and fade white with delicate pink tips. Compact habit to 4'(1.2m) high in 10 years. A Pride hybrid. Zone 6, probably colder. (2 gal. - \$20.00)

**R. 'Purple Passion'** - A very hardy new hybrid with dark violet-purple flowers with a white throat. To 6'(1.8m) high x 4'(1.2m) wide in 10 years with a dense rounded habit. Hardy to -29°F(-34°C) (2 gal. - \$20.00)

**R. 'Regatta Point Grex'** - To ensure their survival, these plants were propagated from a series of plants grown by the late John Meagher and planted in the bed at Regatta Point. While the records have been lost, it is readily apparent that the 5 plants (Clones 1 through 5) came from the same seed lot and have *yakushmanum* in their parentage. The plants are very compact. The flowers lavender-pink with paler centres giving a bicolor effect. Clones will be allotted randomly. Should you wish to try several clones, this will be accommodated subject to availability by simply ordering more than one. (2 gal. - \$20.00)

**R. 'Sandra Hinton'** [*brachycarpum* Tigerstedtii Group x (*smimowii* x *yakushmanum*)] An extremely hardy, late-blooming hybrid from Dave Hinton in Orono, Ontario. Strong pink buds open to very pale pink flowers with light green spotting. Dark green foliage. To 5'(1.5m) high and wide in 12 years. Hardy to at least -30°F(-34°C). A few only. (2 gal. - \$25.00)

**R. 'Supernova'** (tetraploid 'Nova Zembla') A new Briggs introduction. It has the same fuschia-red flowers as 'Nova Zembla' but hopefully will retain its colour better. Wavy foliage is glossy dark green and thick textured. The extra chromosomes hopefully may have improved the habit. Be one of the first to find out! To 5'(1.5m) high and 6'(1.8m) wide in 10 years. Zone 6, possibly colder. (1 gal. - \$20.00)

**R. 'Vinebrook'** (*smimowii* x 'Lady Bessborough') Pink buds open to large wavy-edged white flowers with a red flare and spotting. Large, round trusses of 15 flowers. Upright-spreading habit to 6'(1.8m) high in 25 years. An Ontario hybrid from Vineland Station. Hardy to at least -16°F(-27°C). (2 gal. - \$20.00)

**R. 'Vinecrest'** {[('LaBar's White' x *fortunei*) x *wardii*] x *wardii* Litiense Group] Peach buds open to yellow flushed with peach and fade to yellow in dome-shaped trusses. Stunning. Olive green foliage. Upright, rounded habit to 4'(1.2m) high & wide in 12 years. Another Vineland Station hybrid. Hardy to at least -16°F(-27°C). (1 gal. - \$15.00)

**R. 'V-65101'** [(LaBar's White' x *fortunei*) x *wardii*] This Vineland hybrid is the mother of 'Vinecrest'. Pale yellow flowers on a very large tree-like plant. Floriferous. Hardy to at least Zone 6b. (2 gal - \$20.00)

**R. 'V-6609'** {'Hassan' x (*schlyphocalyx* x 'Catalglá')] x 'LaBar's White'} Large trusses of orange-pink flowers. Hardy to at least Zone 6b. Yet another Vineland hybrid. A few only. (2 gal - \$20.00)

**R. *williamsianum* 'Caerhays'** A beautiful species with lax trusses of pale pink bell-shaped flowers. Early-blooming. Beautiful small rounded dark green leaves emerge copper. Dense mounded habit to 2'(.6m) high. Hardy to -5°F(-20°C). Only for Zone 7 or warm microclimates in Zone 6b. (1 gal. - \$15.00)

**R. 'Wojnar's Purple'** - Vivid reddish-purple flowers with a dark purple flare in dome-shaped trusses of 15-20. Compact spreading habit to 4'(1.2m) high in 10 years. Hardy to -20°F(-29°C). (1 gal. - \$15.00)

**R. *yakushmanum* (*degronianum* v. *yakushmanum*)** A superb species for our climate. Long narrow leaves have a tan-white indumentum. New growth is covered in silver tomentum. Dense foliage covers a plant which is symmetrical and broadly mounded in shape. Slow growing and floriferous. Best in a half day of sun. Zone 5. Two selections are offered this year.

**'Mist Maiden'** A larger growing selection growing to 4'(1.2m) high and 11'(3.5m) wide. Rosy-pink buds open to form large apple blossom pink flowers which fade to white. If you were to grow only one rhododendron, this should be the one. Possibly a hybrid. (2 gal. - \$25.00 Public May Sale Only)

**'Pink Parasol'** - A sister seedling of 'Mist Maiden', the leaves on this selection are slightly larger and the flowers a bit darker. To 5'(1.5m) high and 10'(3.0) wide. Again, possibly a hybrid. (1 gal. - \$15.00)

## Evergreen Azaleas

A. **'Al's Picotee'** ('Elsie Lee' x *kiusianum*) A delightful bicolor hose-in-hose hybrid with white flowers edged with soft pink. Tight mounding habit and good winter leaf retention. Very floriferous. Grown and raised in Ontario by Al Smith. Hardy to -20°F (-29°C).

(2 gal. - \$25.00 Public May Sale Only)

A. **'Herbert'** (*poukhanense* x 'Hexe') Frilled hose-in-hose flowers are reddish-purple with a dark blotch. Slightly fragrant. Dense, spreading habit to 3'(9m) high. A Gable hybrid. Zone 6.

(2 gal. - \$20.00)

A. **'Joseph Gable'** [(Rose Greeley' x 'Nadine') x 'Nadine'] White hose-in-hose flowers with red spotting. To 6'(1.8m) tall or more. A very hardy Pride hybrid. Zone 5.

(2 gal. - \$20.00)

A. **'Stewartstonian'** - An early blooming bright red Gable hybrid. Early and very floriferous. Glossy dark green foliage turns dark red in autumn. Upright, broad, twiggy habit. Grows 4-5'(1.2-1.5m) high. Hardy to -20°F (-29°C).

(2 gal. - \$25.00)

## Deciduous Azaleas

A. **'Satan'** - A Knaphill-Slococock hybrid with vivid orange-red (almost true red) flowers. Late blooming. Bronze fall colour. Grows 6-8'(1.8-2.4m) high and 4-6'(1.2-1.8m) wide. Zone 5

(2 gal. - \$20.00)

A. **'Weston's Lemon Drop'** (*viscosum* hybrid x unknown) Elegant tubular-funnel-shaped pastel yellow flowers with a darker yellow flare open from peach coloured buds. Elegant. July-blooming with a light lemony fragrance. Blue-green foliage turns dark pink-red and yellow in fall. Mildew resistant. Vigorous upright habit. Grows 6-8'(1.8-2.4m) high. A Mezitt hybrid. Hardy to -34°F (-37°C).

(2 gal. - \$20.00)

## Other Ericaceous Shrubs

(Cultivation as per Rhododendrons)

*Gaultheria miqueliana* (Spicy Wintergreen) A low dense evergreen shrub with small dark green foliage. Small urn-shaped white flowers borne in terminal racemes in early summer are followed by small white berries. Grows 4-12"(1-.3m) high with a spreading habit. A great little plant for the rock garden or front of the rhododendron border. Zone 6. (1 gal. - \$15.00)

*Kalmia latifolia* **'Bay State'** (Mountain Laurel) A cultivar with reddish-pink buds opening salmon-pink to coral-pink. Glossy, dark green evergreen foliage is thick textured & leaf spot resistant. Dense habit to 4'(1.2m) high & wide in 10 years. Probably best in full sun but needs excellent drainage and protection from winter wind. Zone 5.

(1 gal. - \$15.00)

*Leucothoe* **'Scarletta'** (syn. **'Zebldid'**) (Fetterbush) An evergreen shrub closely related to *Pieris* with panicles of fragrant, white, pieris-like flowers in spring. It is spreading shrub with thick arching stems of leathery dark green foliage. The jury is out on the parentage of this fine form - it can be found listed as a form of *L. fontanesiana*, *L. axillaris* and a hybrid of the two. It boasts bright red new foliage and spectacular brilliant burgundy-red winter colour. Grows 2-3'(6-9m) high and up to 6'(1.8m) across. For moist, well-drained soil in part to full shade. Zone 6b, possibly colder depending on its actual parentage.

(1 gal. - \$15.00)

x *Phylliopsis* **'Sugarplum'** - A bigeneric hybrid (*Kalmiopsis leachiana* x *Phyllodoce caerulea*) developed by Barry Starling. Sugary pink-plum, globe shaped flowers are borne against small linear foliage in spring & sometimes again in fall. Mounding habit growing 1-2'(3-.6m) high & 2'(6m) wide. Requires excellent drainage & full sun. Dislikes drought & high temperatures. Zone 6b.

(1 gal. - \$15.00)

*Pieris japonica* **'Bisbee Dwarf'** - An evergreen shrub with panicles of white lily-of-the-valley type flowers in early spring. The flowers buds, also in panicles are formed in the fall and add winter interest. This is a low

growing selection growing 2'(6m) high with a dense mounded habit. Foliage emerges with a red tinge and has a slight twist. Zone 6b.

(1 gal. - \$15.00)

*Pieris japonica* **'Cupido'** - A new cultivar with arching panicles of white flowers in early spring. Narrow dark green foliage emerges light red. Dark bronzy red flower buds. Slow growing with a dense, broad upright habit eventually reaching a height of 2-3'(6-9m) and wider spreading. Zone 6b.

(1 gal. - \$15.00)

*Pieris japonica* v. *yakushmanum* **'Prelude'** - A dwarf selection growing only 2'(6m) high & 3'(9m) wide with a dense mounding habit. White flowers borne in upright-arching racemes in spring. Floriferous. Long lasting & later blooming than most. Glossy dark green foliage emerges bright pink. Showy pink flower buds in winter. Zone 6.

(1 gal. - \$15.00)

## Conifers

*Cedrus libani* ssp. *stenocoma* (Cedar of Lebanon) I won't go into great detail describing this majestic tree - we only have two to offer and those who know it will want it. This subspecies is the hardest & has a narrow pyramidal habit when young. Takes many decades to develop its flat topped, tiered habit. Short dark green needles with a fine texture. Grows 60'(18m) or more tall. Requires full sun & good drainage. May be grafted on *C. deodora* so only for the mildest parts of Nova Scotia. Very rare.

(1 gal. - \$35.00)

*Chamaecyparis nootkatensis* **'Green Arrow'** - For those who want to grow a Nootka Falsecypress but thought their garden was too small this is the answer. This is an extremely fastigate form with light green drooping branches. Slow growing to 20'(6m) or more high, yet only 2-3'(6-9m) wide. A focal/exclamation point in both small & large gardens! Zone 5b. Large 4'(1.2m) plants.

(5 gal. - \$120.00 - A few Only)

*Chamaecyparis pisifera* **'Baby Blue'** (Sawara False Cypress) A sport of 'Boulevard' with tiny, dense, bright turquoise foliage. Starts out as a dense upright globe eventually forming an upright-conical plant to 6'(1.8m) high. Relatively slow growing - 6-8"(150-200mm) per year. Bronze winter colour. One of the hardest varieties. Zone 5.

(1 gal. - \$25.00)

*Chamaecyparis thyoides* **'Red Star'** (syn. - **'Rubicon'**) (Atlantic White Cedar) A very tight compact columnar form with soft feathery foliage. Dark blue-green foliage emerges with a reddish tinge and turns a beautiful plum-purple in winter. Slow growing to 5'(1.5m) or more. Full sun. Tolerates wetter soils. Zone 5.

(1 gal. - \$25.00)

*Chamaecyparis thyoides* **'Top Point'** (Atlantic White Cedar) A slow growing dwarfish form with a conical to columnar habit. Fine textured bluish-green foliage turns deep purple in winter. To 3'(9m) high & 16"(4m) wide in 10 years. Cultivation as per 'Red Star'. Zone 5. A few only.

(1 gal. - \$25.00)

*Pseudolarix amabilis* (syn *P. kaempferi*) (Golden Larch) A beautiful larch relative from China with soft bluish-green needles which emerge lush emerald green and turn a stunning golden-yellow in fall. Slow growing. Will grow into a broad, open-pyramidal deciduous tree, 20-40'(6-12m) high & 15-25'(4.5-7.5m) wide. Full sun in rich, well-drained soil protected from strong winds. Zone 6.

(1 gal. - \$20.00)

*Taxus x media* **'Maureen'** - A hardy & slow growing fastigate yew reaching only 4'(1.2m) high x 1'(3m) wide in 10 years! Zone 6. Left over from last year - a year older - same price.

(1 gal. - \$20.00)

*Tsuga canadensis* **'Forest Fountain'** (syn. **"Dwarf Upright"**) (Eastern Hemlock) Not really dwarf, this is a slow growing variety - 6"(150mm) per year. Small needles are borne on thin upward arching branches. To 6'(1.8m) high in 10 years with a broad upright habit. Zone 5. Rare. Sounds wonderful!

(1 gal. - \$25.00)

## Shrubs

***Abeliophyllum distichum*** (White Forsythia) Fragrant white flowers with yellow centres in dense clusters are borne along its arching bare branches very early in spring. Earlier than forsythias! Grows 3-5'(9-1.5m) high & 3-4'(9-1.2m) wide with a dense rounded habit. Deciduous. Best in full sun & well-drained soil. Must be pruned regularly to ensure good flowering & habit. Immediately after flowering, prune out oldest one third of wood every year once established or cut back to 8"(200mm) every 3-5 years. Zone 5b. (1 gal. - \$15.00)

***Disanthus cercidifolius*** - A deciduous shrub related to witchhazels with brilliant fall colour. Large blue-green heart-shaped leaves turn a variety of colours in fall ranging from orange to red to purple. Inconspicuous dark purple flowers in fall. Grows 6-10'(1.8-3m) high x 8-10'(2.4-3m) wide - multi-stemmed with slender branches & a rounded spreading habit. Best in rich moist soil in light shade protected from the wind. Drought intolerant. Zone 6. Rare. (1 gal. - \$25.00)

***Exochorda x macrantha 'The Bride'*** (Pearlbush) A dense compact hybrid with profuse racemes of cup-shaped pure white flowers in late spring against deciduous grey-green foliage. Dense arching mounded habit growing 3-4'(9-1.2m) high & wide. Full sun to part shade in moist rich well-drained soil. Drought tolerant once established. Zone 6. (1 gal. - \$15.00)

***Halimodendron halodendron*** (Salt Tree) This spiny Siberian deciduous shrub in the pea family is very hardy and salt tolerant. Masses of pink to violet pea-like flowers are borne in early summer against silvery pea-like foliage. Grows 4-6'(1.2-1.8m) high & 4'(1.2m) wide with a suckering upright-spreading habit. Very drought tolerant. For full sun in poor, dry, well-drained soil. Great for that windy sea-shore spot but will not tolerate standing water. Zone 4. (2 gal. - \$20.00)

***Hydrangea anomala ssp. petiolaris 'Mirranda'*** (Variegated Climbing Hydrangea) Most are familiar with the climbing hydrangea, a most serviceable plant in our climate whether climbing a tree, growing on a substantial trellis or scrambling over a bank or retaining wall. This variety has the same large flat clusters of white flowers in spring. What makes this variety unique is that it is variegated! Leaves have broad irregular golden yellow margins. Sure to brighten up that dark corner. Zone 5. Be one of the first to own this one. (1 gal. - \$25.00)

***Hydrangea quercifolia 'Snow Giant'*** (Oakleaf Hydrangea) This variety according to Dirr may be the same as 'Snowflake'. Large, long-lasting, pyramidal trusses of double white flowers with a touch of green in the center of each flower. Summer blooming. More beautiful & much showier than the single flowered varieties. Slightly fragrant. Coarse, dark green foliage resembling a red oak in shape turns crimson-red in the fall. Suckering in habit it can grow to 8'(2.4m) high x 10'(3m) wide but likely to reach only half that size in our climate. Prune after blooming as flowers are born on old wood. Full sun to part shade in rich, moist, well-drained soil. Zone 6b. (1 gal. - \$15.00)

***Schizophragma hydrangeoides 'Brookside Littleleaf'*** Perhaps one of the most taxonomically muddled plants. *Schizophragma hydrangeoides* 'Brookside Littleleaf', *Hydrangea anomala ssp. petiolaris* 'Tiliifolia', *Hydrangea quelpartensis* ... all are names applied to plants which may or may not be the same. We acquired these plants as 'Brookside Littleleaf' so will maintain that name here & describe it as a small-leaved climbing hydrangea. Foliage is shiny dark green, about an inch long (25mm) and is reported to increase in size with age. Flowers are reportedly similar to *Hydrangea anomala ssp. petiolaris* but I'm still waiting for mine to bloom. Zone 6, probably colder. (1 gal. - \$20.00)

***Viburnum plicatum v. tomentosum*** (Doublefile Viburnum) A deciduous shrub with a horizontal arching habit and 4" dark green leaves. White flowers are produced in cymes (usually like laccaps) along the branches in double rows. Late spring blooming, the flowers are followed by

red fruit ripening to black. Two clones may be required for good berry set. Sun to part shade in moist, well drained soil. Not drought tolerant. Dirr speculates that this may be the most graceful flowering shrub. Zone 6. The following two varieties are available this year.

**'Mariesii'** - A very highly rated cultivar with a beautiful, distinct horizontally tiered habit to 10'(3m) high. Flowers are large, creamy white and held high above the foliage. Floriferous. Dark maroon fall colour.

(1 gal. - \$15.00 - Public May Sale only)

**'Popcorn'** - Flowers are born in cymes shaped like golf balls but slightly larger. Listed as *v. tomentosum* but more likely belonging to the type species. Extremely floriferous - the flowers can obscure the foliage. Deep green leaves turn scarlet in fall. To 7'(2.1m) tall. A Leach selection.

(2 gal. - \$35.00)

## Deciduous Trees

***Acer griseum*** (Paper-Bark Maple) A small, slow-growing tree with an upright, rounded or oval habit, 20-30'(6-9m) tall. Trifoliate dark green leaves with silvery undersides emerge bronze. Variable shades of chartreuse, orange & red possible in fall. Grown for its spectacular translucent peeling cinnamon coloured bark. Best in full sun, especially where the setting winter sun can illuminate the bark. Moist, well-drained soil best. Dislikes drought. Zone 6, possible Zone 5b. Seldom available as a small plant. (1 gal. - \$15.00)

***Acer palmatum 'Beni ubi gohon'*** (Beni ubi gohon Japanese Maple) The smallest in the red *Linearilobum* group - both in leaf and ultimate plant size. New leaves emerge red then deepen to purple-red holding their colour well through the summer. Fall colour is red. Leaves narrowly lobed & sharply pointed. Develops a compact layered habit with age. To 6'(2m) high & wide. Zone 6. Rare. (1 gal. - \$30.00)

***Acer palmatum 'Ibo nishiki'*** (Ibo nishiki Japanese Maple) A *Palmatum* Group cultivar with rough corky (warty) bark & green foliage, tinged bronze in spring. Orange, yellow and red fall colour. Upright horizontal-layered habit. Grows 11-15'(3.3-4.5m) tall and 6-10'(1.8-3.0m) wide. Zone 6b. Rare. (1 gal. - \$35.00)

***Acer palmatum 'Korean Gem' ('Koreanum')*** (Korean Gem Japanese Maple) A lovely *Palmatum* Group selection with green leaves and red petioles & bark. Red bark intensifies in the fall and autumn. Yellow, orange and sometimes red fall colour. Grows to 15'(4.5m) high with an upright round-topped habit. Vigorous. Zone 6. Rare. (1 gal. - \$30.00)

***Acer palmatum 'Omure yama'*** - An absolutely incredible weeping Japanese maple. Upright with arching branches when young. With age the branches become weeping. To 15'(5m) high & wide in many years with a rounded crown. Brilliant green, 7-lobed, deeply cut leaves have an orange cast in the spring and turn gold, orange and red in fall. Vigorous. Zone 6. Stunning. We were able to offer a few last year were able to get a few more this year. (1 gal. - \$35.00)

***Acer palmatum 'Saoshika'*** (Saoshika Japanese Maple) Delicate, star-shaped, 5 or 7 lobed leaves grace this *Amoenum* group variety. Dark green foliage emerges bright yellow-green with red tips. Golden-yellow fall colour. Forms a broad layered shrub to 10'(3m) high & wide. Zone 6. Rare. (1 gal. - \$35.00)

***Acer palmatum 'Shishigashira'*** (Lion's Head Japanese Maple) Dark green, 7-lobed crinkled leaves are densely born on upward-outward spreading branches. Brilliant orange to orange-red late fall colour. Vase shaped habit to 10'(3m) tall. *Palmatum* group. A unique specimen plant. Zone 6. (1 gal. - \$30.00 / 3 gal. - \$45.00)

***Acer palmatum 'Ukigumo'*** (Floating Cloud Japanese Maple) Medium green leaves are so heavily variegated with white & dusted with pink that there is almost no green! It has performed beautifully for the past 8 years in the south end of Halifax. Upright in habit to 8'(2.4m) high x 4'(1.2m) wide. It will probably need to be shaded from hot mid-day sun. Zone 6, maybe colder. (1 gal. - \$20.00 Public May Sale Only)



*Acer palmatum* 'Villa Taranto' (Villa Taranto Japanese Maple) A delicate Linearilobum group variety with spidery thin 5-lobed leaves. They emerge reddish-green and mature bright green. Golden yellow fall colour. To 8'(2.4m) high with an upright-rounded open bushy habit. Very delicate and airy. A must have. Zone 6. (1 gal. - \$35.00)

*Cornus controversa* 'Variegata' No you have not drifted off into dreamland. We are indeed offering the Wedding Cake Tree. A wide-spreading dogwood with a tiered habit to 20'(6m) high and wide. The medium green leaves have broad creamy-white margins which turn bright pink in fall. Bright red new twigs. Flat-topped racemes of white flowers in early spring may develop into purple-black fruit. Best in full sun in moist, well-drained soil. Zone 6, possibly colder. Stunning & very rare. (3 gal. - \$75.00)

*Ginkgo biloba* 'Tubiformis' (Tubeleaf Maidenhair Tree) (syn. 'Tubiforme', 'Tubifolia', 'Tubeleaf') A very rare form of this ancient tree. Light green leaves emerge rolled forming narrow, upward facing tubes that actually hold water. They flatten with age forming attractive dissected foliage. Golden-yellow fall colour. Slow growing & smaller than the type. To 8'(2.4m) high & 4'(1.2m) wide in 10 years. Full sun. Male. I saw this in a 2" pot in a nursery 10 years ago & haven't seen it since. Zone 5. (1 gal. - \$35.00 - A Few Only)

*Halesia diptera* 'Magniflora' (Two-winged Silverbell) In late spring, white bell-shaped flowers dangle beneath the branches of this graceful tree. Twice the size of *H. carolina* (Carolina Silverbell), they are borne in clusters of 2 to 4 in late spring. Very floriferous & blooms at a young age. Sun to part-shade in moist well-drained soil. Broad open-rounded habit. To 30'(9m) high & wide. Zone 6b. (1 gal. - \$25.00)

*Hamamelis x intermedia* (Hybrid Witchhazel) An exceptional late-winter flowering shrub or small tree. Spidery, narrow-petalled, fragrant flowers - borne in clusters along the bare branches - unfurl in February or March dependent on the weather. Should the weather turn too cold they will close up and open again when the temperature is more to their liking.. Excellent fall colour. Best in full sun in moist well-drained soil. Dark flowered varieties look best backlit by the sun or against an evergreen background. Grows 12'-20'(3.6-6.1m) high depending on the variety. See the Feb. 2001 newsletter for an excellent article on witchhazels. Zone 5b. Sure to brighten those late winter days when we think spring will never come. The following varieties are available in a rarely offered small size. Start a collection without depleting the bank account!

'Arnold's Promise' - Large bright yellow flowers with a reddish base. Very fragrant & floriferous. Later blooming than most. Excellent yellow to orange fall colour. Upright vase-shaped habit when young with a more spreading habit with age. To 20'(6.0m) high. The most popular yellow-flowered variety. (1 gal. - \$25.00)

'Diane' - Coppery-red flowers with a mild fragrance. Yellow, orange & red fall colour. Graceful spreading habit to 12-15'(3.6-4.6m) high. Early flowering. Perhaps the best red variety. (1 gal. - \$25.00)

'Jelena' (syn. 'Copper Beauty') - Multi-coloured twisted petals from a distance appear coppery coloured but are actually red at the base, orangish in the middle and yellow at the tips. Sweetly fragrant. Orange-red fall colour. Wide spreading habit to 15'(4.6m) high & 15'(4.5m) wide. (1 gal. - \$25.00)

*Liriodendron tulipifera* (Tulip Tree) A fast-growing aristocratic tree related to magnolias. Unique leaves have a single lobe on each side & an almost flat tip. The cup-shaped, 2-3"(50-75mm) high flowers, face upright on the branch tips. Slightly fragrant, they are yellowish green with an orangish base and emerge in late spring after the foliage. Yellow fall colour. Massive tall straight trunk with deeply furrowed bark and an oval to round crown. Grows 40-100'(12-30m) and 20-40'(6-12m) wide. Best in full sun in moist well-drained soil. Zone 5. Not for the small garden.

(B&B 150cm - \$75.00 - A Few Only)

*Magnolia x 'Daybreak'* ('Woodsman' x 'Tina Durio') We are most excited to offer this variety - one of the best magnolia hybrids. Large 10"(200mm) deep pink flowers have no purple tones. Late spring blooming and very fragrant. Vigorous, narrow, upright columnar habit to 30'(9m) high & 10'(3m) wide. A Kehr hybrid hardy to Zone 5. Normally we order only 3 or 4 of larger sized plants - we've ordered 12 of this one. It's a definite must have! (Potted 120cm - \$90.00)

*Magnolia 'Galaxy'* (*liliflora* 'Nigra' x *sprengeri* 'Diva') Fragrant, 9'(275mm) pale red-purple flowers grace this very floriferous & vigorous hybrid. A fast-growing single stemmed tree to 25'(7.5m) high with a beautiful upright pyramidal habit. Lower branches may be pruned up to free up space underneath. An exceptional hybrid from the US National Arboretum. Zone 6. (1 gal. - \$15.00 - Public May Sale Only)

*Magnolia stellata* 'Centennial' - One of the best Star Magnolia selections. Large white flowers with a tinge of pink and up to thirty tepals(petals) born in early spring. Very floriferous. Upright pyramidal-conical habit growing 15-25'(4.6-7.5m) high. Vigorous. Zone 5b. Very nice. (1 gal. - \$15.00)

*Parrotia persica* (Persian Ironwood) Related to the witchhazels, this small tree is revered for its fall colour. Dark lustrous green foliage - similar to witchhazels - emerges bronze-purple and develops brilliant yellow, orange and/or crimson colour late in the fall. Curious flowers with no petals are borne in late winter/early spring are not showy but create a crimson-maroon haze when backlit. Gray-brown bark on older wood 4-8"(100-200mm) flakes exposing patches of gray, green, white & brown. Single or multi-trunked with a variable habit - oval or round headed or broadly spreading. Develops a tiered horizontal branching habit. 20-40'(6-12m) high x 15'-30'(4.5-9m) wide. Sun to light shade in moist well-drained soil. Pest resistant. Zone 6. Dirr gushes about this one. Rare. (1 gal. - \$20.00)

### Perennials

*Brunnera macrophylla* 'Jack Frost' (Siberian Bugloss) A truly spectacular new cultivar with large heart-shaped leaves that are frosty silver with green veins and a narrow green margin. Clusters of small blue forget-me-not flowers are born above the foliage in late spring. For part shade or shade and best in moist, rich, well-drained soil. 1-1.5'(3-.45m) high x 1.5'(45m) wide. Zone 4. (3.5" pots - \$7.00)

*Trilliums* - Beautiful perennials for the woodland garden. Grow them in shade (deciduous) or part shade in rich organic well-drained soil. Spring blooming. They may go dormant in summer especially if they get too dry. They can be divided in fall while dormant but are probably left undisturbed if happy.

*T. erectum* (Wake Robin) A species native to Nova Scotia somewhat similar to *T. grandiflorum* with dark red-purple flowers and large leaves. Prefers slightly acidic soil so will need a dose of lime or bone meal every year or two in highly acidic soils. To 16" (400mm) high. Zone 5. (1 gal. - \$20.00)

*T. recurvatum* - A sessile species with narrow red-purple petals held upright on top of the foliage. Prefers slightly alkaline soil so will need a dose of lime or bone meal every year or two. Resents being moved. Dark green leaves with purple mottling. To 16"(400mm) high. Zone 5. (1 gal. - \$20.00)

*minor 'Illumination'* le) Green edged leaves have a rich golden yellow centre which slowly ages to cream. Typical blue er for shade or part shade. Sure to brighten up that dark spot. Zone 5. Presold poorly last year but were quickly snapped pick- (1 gal. - \$10.00)

# RSCAR Seed Exchange: A Retrospective

By Sharon Bryson

Welcome to the 2003 Seed Exchange.

Since 1994 Cathy Chute has managed the annual Seed Exchange and we wish to thank her for her efforts. This year we have a new 'manager' so we thought it might be an auspicious time to take a quick glance at the Seed Exchange over the last few years.

The success of the exchange is, of course, dependent upon both seed 'donors' and seed 'growers'. Looking back over the last five years, the number of both donors and growers has been more or less constant. We seem to be making more money, but that is perhaps not the important thing. *See Table1*

We need to thank all the faithful 'donors' of seed. Without them there would be no exchange.

There are several individuals who have faithfully purchased seeds for the last five years (or more in some instances), and we wish to commend them for their interest. We would also like to ask anyone who has been growing the seeds from the 'exchange' to contact me with some story of their successes or failures. The time frame required to grow Rhododendrons from seed can sometimes be quite generous, but five years should see some tangible results. We think there ought to be some interesting stories out there.

Azaleas, on the other hand, are usually much quicker to mature and show results (a hint to anyone who hasn't tried growing them from seed).

We would also like to hear from people who have been reluctant to try growing rhododendrons or azaleas from seed. Is this because of lack of growing information, lack of space or some other reason? Are there any suggestions anyone would like to make regarding the Seed Exchange?

One other aspect of this information would be to give seed donors some well-deserved feedback regarding the fate of seed they gather and donate. It all boils down to needing some member feedback. I would love to hear your questions, comments or observations. If you have problems growing, I am sure we can find someone in the Society who could solve any problem!

You can contact me, Sharon Bryson, at the address attached to the order information or email [sbryson@ns.sympatico.ca](mailto:sbryson@ns.sympatico.ca)

Table 1. *Statistics for the past five years.*

<b>Year</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>1998</b>
<b># Choices</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>96</b>
<b># Donors</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>10</b>
<b># Orders</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>19</b>
<b># packets</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>287</b>	<b>257</b>	<b>240</b>
<b>\$ value</b>	<b>506.50</b>	<b>519.00</b>	<b>512.00</b>	<b>460.00</b>	<b>247.00</b>

# RSCAR 2003 Seed Exchange

## Instructions

Seed packets are \$2.00 CDN each for hand-pollinated and \$1.50 CDN each for open-pollinated seed. One packet per lot per person. More may be ordered but are subject to availability. **All orders must be on the form provided and should be received by March 15, 2003.** Save this seed list as seed will be identified by number only.

Send all orders to: Sharon Bryson/Bill Wilgenhof, **RR#3 Antigonish, Nova Scotia B2G 2L1 CANADA**

Please make your cheque or money order payable to 'RSC Atlantic Region'. Enclose a self-addressed mailing label and add \$2.00 CDN for postage & padded envelope.

Many of our members who utilize the seed exchange reside in the United States. New regulations require an import permit and a phytosanitary certificate. These new regulations at time of publication do not appear to be enforced. We are willing to post seed orders to you but unfortunately we are unable to provide the necessary documentation this year and can bear no responsibility should you not receive your seed. We welcome your input on how we may be able to better serve you in future years.

**DONORS:** **DOI** - Yasuyuki Doi, Japan, **DUF** - Roslyn Duffus, Waverley, NS, **HAR** - Joe Harvey, Victoria, BC, **HOP** - Chris Hopgood, Halifax, NS, **LOO** - Jack Looye, Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON, **MEA** - Gail Meagher, Halifax, NS, **PEA** - Richard Pearson, Vancouver, BC, **SHA** - Ken Shannik, Halifax, NS, **WEA** - John Weagle, Halifax, NS, **WEI** - Barbara Weinz, W. Bath, Maine, USA, **WIL** - Bill Wilgenhof, Antigonish, NS

## Seed List

### Rhododendron Species Hand- - \$2.00

001 HAR pachysanthum x pachysanthum

### Rhododendron Species - -Pollinated \$1.50

- vivid pink, deciduous azalea

(does not hybridize)

003 WEI bureavii

- fuschia

(does not hybridize)

005 WIL carolinianum - -white

006 WEA microleucum (from Walter Ostrom's plant) (if not selfed hybrids should be well worth growing)

- pink from

008 WIL mucronulatum -

009 WIL muc - white form

010 WEI schlippenbachii (does not hybridize)

- mixed selected forms

### Rhododendron Hy - Hand Pollinated -

012 LOO 'A. Bedford' \*1 x 'Mim's Burgundy' \*2

013 LOO 'A. Bedford' \*1 x 'Jonathon Shaw'

OO 'A. Bedford' \*1 x 'Wojnar's Purple'

rly

-flowered pink, late

017 HAR bureavii x pachysanthum

018 HAR bureavii x pseudochrysanthum

020 WEI 'Ch

021 WEI 'Chionoides' x Walter Winkler white fortunei hyb.

ne' x Walter Winkler peachy-

fortunei hybrid

023 HAR degronianum ssp heptamerum 'Enamoto' x bureavii

num ssp heptamerum 'Enamoto'

x pseudochrysanthum

rothschildii

ra' x chamaethomsonii

Goal: hardy early red, compact

hardy early red, large

028 WEA 'Henry's Red' x strigillosum "Copenhagen Hardy"

Goal: hardy early red, large

029 WEI 'Katherine Dalton' x 'Accomplishment'

030 HAR 'Maxibra' \*4 x macrophyllum

032 MEA 'Mrs

033 WEA 'Mrs Furnival' x proteoides R#151

Goal: dwarf,

034 WEA 'Mrs Furnival' x (yakushmanum x pronom)

Goal: dwarf yellow ('Mrs. Furnival' said to throw yellows)

036 HAR pachysanthum x rothschildii

037 WEA 'Parker's Pink' x proteoides R#151

Goal: semi dwarf, clear pink, flower substance

rdy"

-dwarf, clear pink, flower substance

039 WEI 'Pink Fondant' x Walter Winkler fortunei hyb.

' x Walter Winkler fortunei hyb.

042 WEA pumilum x mucronulatum 'Cheju'

Go

043 LOO 'R.O. Delp' \*5 x (yakushmanum x 'Crest')

044 LOO 'R.O. Delp' \*5 x 'Earl Cordy' \*6

### - Open Pollinated -

046 WIL "Sproeten" \*7

047 LOO [(Tetraploid carolinianum x fastigiatum)

x 'Crater Lake']

049 WIL unnamed hybrid red petioles \*8

### Azalea Hybrids Open- - \$1.50

050 WIL 'Golden &/or Spicy Lights' -

agrant

- late red

- 052 WIL "June Bride" \*9 - pink  
 053 WIL mixed - all colours - free!  
 054 WIL mixed - from the late Alex Muntz -  
 seed is old but still viable  
 055 WIL unknown - red  
 056 WIL unknown - white with yellow blotch, large florets

#### Companion Plants - Open-Pollinated - \$1.50

- 057 WIL *Allium karataviense* - purple, 12-18" - Bulb  
 058 WIL *Allium karataviense* 'Ivory Queen' - white,  
 12-18", nice foliage - Bulb  
 059 WIL *Allium* 'Purple Sensation' - 4' - Bulb  
 060 WIL *Ampelopsis brevipedunculata* (Porcelain  
 Vine) - blue berries, vigorous - Vine  
 061 WIL *Asclepias incarnata* (Butterfly Weed) - white, 3'+ -Per.  
 062 SHA *Baptisia australis* (False Indigo) - blue, 4' - Per.  
 063 WIL *Buddleia davidii* (Butterfly Bush) - purple, 4-5' - Shrub  
 064 WIL *Catalpa speciosa* (Northern Catalpa) -  
 white & purple flowers in early July, to 100' - Tree  
 065 WIL *Clematis orientalis* - yellow, late-  
 blooming, sprawling, herbaceous - Per.  
 066 WIL *Clematis stans* - blue, late-blooming,  
 sprawling, herbaceous - Perennial  
 067 SHA *Deinanthef bifida* - white, 18" - Perennial  
 068 DUF *Dictamnus albus* (Gasplant) - 16", sow  
 outside a.s.a.p. - Perennial  
 069 SHA *Digitalis grandiflora* (Foxglove) -  
 creamy-yellow, 2-3' - Perennial  
 070 WIL *Digitalis purpurea* (Foxglove) - white, 4' - Bien.  
 071 WIL *Digitalis obscura*?? (Foxglove) - Ivory  
 with brown interior, 2' - Perennial  
 072 SHA *Diphylleia cymosa* (Umbrella Leaf) -  
 large, bold foliage, white flowers, blueberries - Per.  
 073 DUF *Dracocephalum argunense* (Dragon's  
 Head) velvet blue flowers, 4-8", compact - Per.  
 074 WIL *Echinops exaltus* (Globe Thistle) - blue,  
 5-6', handsome plant - Perennial  
 075 SHA *Enkianthus campanulatus* v. *sikkokianus* -  
 unusual, darker bell-shaped flowers, spectacular  
 red fall colour - Shrub  
 076 SHA *Gentiana lutea* (Yellow Gentian)  
 beautiful bold foliage, 5' - Perennial  
 077 WIL *Geranium* (*pratense* x 'Splish Splash')  
 (Cranesbill, Hardy Geranium) - white  
 with lilac streaks, 30" - Perennial  
 078 SHA *Glaucidium palmatum* - lilac flowers, 2', - Perennial  
 079 SHA *Iris tectorum* (Roof Iris) - purple-blue,  
 arching pleated foliage, 2' - Perennial  
 080 SHA *Iris sintenisii* - purple-blue, 1', narrow  
 spikey foliage - Perennial  
 081 WIL *Kalmia latifolia* 'Minuet' (Dwarf Mountain Laurel) - Shrub  
 082 WIL *Kalmia latifolia* 'Pinwheel' (Mountain Laurel) - Shrub  
 083 HOP *Leucothoe fontanesiana* 'Winter Red'  
 (Fetterbush) - Bayport selection with  
 exceptional burgundy-red winter foliage - Shrub  
 084 WIL *Lychnis x arkwrightii* - scarlet-red  
 flowers, reddish foliage, 8-10" - Per.  
 085 WIL *Magnolia x loebneri* 'Leonard Messel' -  
 pink, strap petals - Tree  
 086 WEA *Magnolia x loebneri* 'Spring Snow' - smaller than  
 most loebneris, white, selfed - Tree  
 087 WIL *Magnolia sieboldii* - white - Tree  
 088 WEA *Magnolia sieboldii* "Halifax Hardy" -  
 hardy, vigorous, good flowers, selfed

- 089 WEA *Magnolia sieboldii* - ex cw Korea Seed  
 - Excellent form with large out-facing flowers,  
 very vigorous, upright, probably selfed - Tree  
 090 WEA *Magnolia sieboldii* - ex cw Korea Seed  
 & "Halifax Hardy" mixed - Tree  
 091 WEA *Magnolia sieboldii* (Wainwright Gdn)  
 sister of Halifax Hardy, selfed - Tree  
 092 PEA *Magnolia sprengeri* 'Diva' - large early  
 pink flowers, Zone 6b, large - Tree  
 093 WIL *Magnolia stellata* - white flowers - Small Tree/Shrub  
 094 SHA *Paeonia paradoxa* - vivid fuschia pink  
 single flowers. Long blooming with  
 beautiful blue-green foliage. - Perennial  
 095 WIL *Paeonia lactiflora* - mixed, 24"+ - Per.  
 096 WIL *Platycodon grandiflora* (Balloonflower) - blue, 3'+ - Per.  
 097 DUF *Pulsatilla vulgaris* - fuzzy claret  
 flowers, attractive seed heads, 8" - Per.  
 098 DUF *Pulsatilla vulgaris* - fuzzy amethyst  
 flowers, attractive seed heads, 8-12" - Per.  
 099 WIL *Salvia sclarea* - lilac-purple bracts,  
 aromatic, greyish foliage, 2'+ - Biennial  
 100 DUF *Verbascum phoeniceum* - pink to  
 purple shades, 2-3', very nice - Perennial or Biennial  
 101 WIL *Veronicastrum virginicum* (Bowman's Root) - white,  
 5', striking architectural plant - Perennial

#### FOOTNOTES

- \*1. syn. = "Arthur Bedford"  
 \*2. "Mim's Burgundy" - hardy plum-purple-burgundy  
 \*3. 'Royston Radiance' = (*auriculatum* x 'Last Rose'). Trusses of  
 12 huge flowers, light pink with rose spotting in late July .  
 \*4. 'Maxibra' = (*maximum* x *brachycarpum*)  
 \*5. 'R.O. Delp' = 'Lodestar' x 'Marybelle'  
 \*6. 'Earl Cordy' = (*catawbiense* x *fortunei* x *campylocarpum*) x 'Rio'  
 \*7. "Sproeten" = ('Barbara Cook' x 'Janet Blair') ARS#92-765 -  
 Frilled, pale pink with red freckles & throat, good foliage.  
 \*8. Sister seedling of above. Pale pink with a paler center &  
 greenish-tan blotch.  
 \*9. "June Bride" = Open pollinated seedling of 'Homebush' cross

#### NOTES

**1. Open-pollinated species, with the exception of a very few (and these are noted), may not come true from seed. Cultivars, with the exception of a few perennials do not come true. Plants from these seeds should not be labelled as being that species or cultivar. Be sure that you label the plants as being 'OP' in the case of species and 'ex' in the case of cultivars.**

**2.** *Magnolia* seed #085 to #093 has been partially stratified. Store in plastic packet in fridge until March/April then sow in warm soil.

**3.** See the RSCAR Members' Handbook for an article on growing rhododendrons from seed. The article can also be found on our website. Sow #075 (*Enkianthus*), #081 & #082 (*Kalmia*), & #083 (*Leucothoe*) as per rhododendrons.

**4.** We would like to thank the seed donors for their time and effort making crosses, collecting and cleaning seeds. We would also like our membership to take note of the types of seeds donated this year. We highly encourage members to attempt their own hybridization of rhododendrons. Should you not aspire to this, open-pollinated seed of rhododendron species are always most welcome as are seed of uncommon trees, shrubs and perennials. ☺

# Hybridising at Glendoick

By Kenneth Cox

## Part 1. The lepidote bird series.

*Ken Cox gave the Steele lectures in October 2001; his topics were “The Riddle of the Tsang Po Gorge” and “Hybridising for Cold and Northern Climates”. This article relates to his second lecture.*

The hybridising of rhododendrons and azaleas has a long history, dating from the early 1800s, but for much of this time the scaly-leaved rhododendrons (the lepidotes) have been considered the poor relations of their larger-growing relatives (the elepidotes) by those breeding garden hybrids. The best known of the early lepidote hybrids are the purple-blues such as 'Blue Tit' and 'Blue Diamond' and the crosses using *R. cinnabarinum* and *R. maddenii* which have produced hybrids such as 'Royal Flush', 'Alison Johnstone' and 'Lady Chamberlain.' The reason for the emphasis on larger hybrids in Britain was quite simply due to the size of hybridisers' gardens: before 1939, growing rhododendrons was chiefly the preserve of the British aristocracy who filled their almost limitless woodlands with new species and the hybrids bred from them. Lionel de Rothschild at Exbury was said at one time to have had 100 gardeners. Post 1945, things began to change. The number of smaller town or suburban gardens was increasing and new hybrids were needed for these smaller spaces. Such hybrids have come several sources: *R. yakushimanum*, *R. forrestii* and *R. williamsianum* have been used by many breeders in Europe, America and elsewhere to produce many excellent hybrids.

But at Glendoick it was not these species which inspired my father Peter Cox to start breeding compact and dwarf hybrids. He was interested in the potential of the little or never used lepidote dwarf species, especially those with yellow flowers. The first that caught my father's eye was *R. ludlowii*. Its virtues are its compact habit, its bright yellow flowers which are relatively large for the size of



*R. 'Razorbill'* [Photo John Weagle]

leaves, and the fact that it is free-flowering. The main drawback of *R. ludlowii*, found only once in the wild in 1936 on the India-Tibet border by Ludlow & Sherriff, is that it seems to have little will to live. We struggle with it here at Glendoick on the east side of Scotland, and I have only seen healthy specimens in a handful of other gardens. Miraculously though, it proved to be a great parent, and its offspring have been much easier to grow than the species itself. Any rhododendron hybridiser will tell you that the percentage of really successful crosses is incredibly low – some say as low as one in a hundred. My father had obviously never heard this, as his first cross *R. ludlowii* x *R. rupicola* var. *chryseum* as the pollen parent produced 'Chikor', (named in 1962) a delightful award-winning plant only a few inches in height which covers itself in yellow flowers in early May. *R. ludlowii* crossed with the pale yellow *R. fletcherianum* resulted in the even better 'Curlew'. These two hybrids have since sold in thousands all over the world. They are quite easy to grow in Britain, forming cushions wider than they are high. In more severe climates they can be grown in

containers in alpine houses or with the aid of other forms of protection. Neither likes summer heat and 'Chikor' in particular is hard to please in the Pacific Northwest.

After this early success, with help from my grandfather Euan Cox, my father began systematically crossing as many of the dwarf lepidote species as he could, concentrating on the yellows, pinks and whites as these were the colours where previously very little work had been done. 'Teal', 'Chiff Chaff', 'Euan Cox', 'Goosander', 'Wagtail' and 'Woodchat' and the delightful bells of 'Merganser' are all yellows. 'Ptarmigan', the 'snow grouse', was another of the early crosses. This spreading hybrid grows to about 46 cm (18 in) in height and opens its pure white flowers over a long period in March and April, putting on a good show in most years even if there is frost. By now readers will be starting to see a pattern here. Besides rhododendrons, my father has always been interested in wildlife, especially birds, and he saw a way of combining these two interests in the naming his rhododendrons. For pinks my father and later on myself have used several sources. 'Phalarope' and 'Snipe' are almost identical pale lavender pink *R. pemakoense* x *R. davidsonianum* selections. Incredibly free-flowering, they are often sold as 1-year olds in B&Q (the equivalent of Home Depot) in the U.K. To improve the colour I crossed 'Snipe' with *R. racemosum* in the early 1980s and the resulting very bright pink selection 'Pintail' we now grow instead of the similar 'Anna Baldsiefen' which was lousy with rust with us. 'Wigeon', (*R. calostrotum* x *minus* Carolinianum Group) is one of the hardiest birds. We no longer grow

very many but I have seen good plants on Long Island and in Nova Scotia. The white 'Eider' (*R. minus* Carolinianum Group x *R. leucaspis*) has stunning pure white flowers but is reluctant to produce a decent root system. A similar cross of *R. dauricum* x *R. leucaspis* has equally fine flowers but we never named it due to its semi-deciduous habit. It does well in Denmark. We tried to cross these two but unfortunately 'Eider' seems to be sterile.

*R. keiskei* 'Yaku Fairy' was introduced into the USA by Warren Berg and to the U.K. by Barry Starling in 1969-70 from Hideo Suzuki in Japan. This has proven to be the best parent of all for dwarf hybrids. Warren Berg's triumvirate of 'Patty Bee', 'Ginny Gee' and 'Wee Bee' are probably the best selling dwarf lepidotes of all now. My father and I have also used 'Yaku Fairy'. Of course it had to be put on *R. ludlowii* to produce a gem for the rock garden, 'Wren' which as it sounds is very small and slow-growing: great flowers and handsome bronzy winter foliage. This is many people's favourite of the Cox yellows. I wanted to produce a pure white 'Ginny Gee' so used a white rather than pink *R. racemosum* to repeat Warren Berg's cross. 'Crane' has pale yellow-cream buds opening pure white. Warren's 'June Bee' is similar with a little more pink in the flower and several eastern American hybridisers have made similar crosses. The same white *R. racemosum* 'Whitelace' crossed with white *R. campylogynum* produced one of my father's most striking hybrids 'Egret' with masses of tiny pure white bells. From 'Yaku Fairy' crossed with a dark dwarf form of *R. glaucophyllum* (probably a hybrid with *R. campylogynum*) we got an almost red hybrid recently named 'Quail'. This has deep red buds which open reddish-pink. It is deeper coloured than the bright pink 'Oban' which is stunning but rather difficult to please: above all it hates any drips from trees and must be out in full sun. Red is the holy grail for lepidote hybridisers. Pat Halligan from Washington State has been engaged on this quest for many years.

We have achieved several pure deep red lepidotes derived from *R. campylogynum*/*R. calostrotum* Gigha crosses but all of them are very prone to rust. Only 'Grouse' was named but we no longer grow it. Recent crosses using *R. dendrocharis* have given us another avenue to try. We have not cracked it yet.

*R. spinuliferum* is another lepidote which may prove to be a good source of red. Pat Halligan has used it extensively. For us it has given pinks and creams. It would be easy to claim that 'Razorbill' was an inspired bit of hybridising as it is easily the most popular *R. spinuliferum* hybrid. The truth is that my father spotted it as a rogue seedling in a pan of *R. camtschaticum* and for curiosity, decided to grow it on. The curious clusters of tubular pink flowers on a compact plant are a winning combination. *R. spinuliferum* is obviously one parent. The other may be *R. calostrotum*. We crossed *R. spinuliferum* with *R. keiskei* 'Yaku Fairy' and have named two selections, 'Waxbill' with pink flowers and 'Wheatear' with cream flowers striped pink.

Our recent goal amongst the lepidotes has been to try to raise hardy compact scented dwarf hybrids which we can grow outdoors at Glendoick. We replicated the cross which produced the rather tender 'Lady Alice Fitzwilliam' using the hardest forms of *R. edgeworthii* and *R. ciliatum*. The resulting plants are compact and bud hardy and put on a good show every year in our woodland garden. The largest flowered selection with a good sweet scent has been named 'Tinkerbird'. The next goal was to try to get some pink into the mix. We chose to use *R. moupinense* and the recently introduced deep pink *R. dendrocharis* for this and now have hybrids of most combinations of these last four species. Most surprising of all is that the *R. dendrocharis*-*R. edgeworthii* cross has produced an intense pink (from red buds) with a good scent. This really is a breakthrough and it is now being

tested for hardiness and commercial performance.

So what is there left to do in dwarf lepidote hybridising? Compared to the work done on elepidote hybrids, this work is still in its infancy. Wolfgang Reich in Germany, whose work was reported in a recent A.R.S. journal, is making all sorts of interesting and previously thought impossible crosses. We find most hybrids are very hard to get to set seed. Many have little or no pollen, so crossing demands patience. Desirable characters that hybridisers should aim at include extreme hardiness, heat tolerance, frost-resistant flowers, late flowering (June onwards), true reds, scent, coloured foliage and pest and disease resistance. I'm sure there are others, but this list will keep us going for a while yet. The great joy of lepidote hybridising is that they take up little space and you don't have to wait so long: 3-4 years from seed, your plant should be flowering and you can easily root lots of cuttings from small plants. The percentage of good crosses is much higher than with the elepidotes in our experience.

In the time that the Glendoick bird hybrids have been introduced, dwarf rhododendrons have gone from invisible to omnipresent. Every U.K. garden centre is full of them. It really has been a quiet revolution.

#### Climate note

Glendoick is on the east coast of Scotland, a few miles from the Tay estuary. The coldest winters recorded have reached  $-18^{\circ}$  C ( $0^{\circ}$  F) but this happens only a few times a century. A cold winter is usually more like  $-12^{\circ}$  C ( $10^{\circ}$  F). We have few summer days over  $27^{\circ}$  C ( $80^{\circ}$  F). Rainfall is 600-760 mm annually (24-30 in). Our greatest problem is late spring frosts after periods of mild weather: flowers and growth are often frosted and bark-split can result. ☹

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## The complete list of named Glendoick dwarf lepidote hybrids.

Date given is of registration/introduction.

- 'Arctic Tern' (*trichostomum* x *Ledum*) white fls. Cross by Larsen. Reg. 1982.
- 'Chiffchaff' (*hanceanum* Nanum x *fletcherianum*) yellow flowers. 1976.
- 'Chikor' (*ludlowii* x *rupicola* ssp. *chryseum*) yellow flowers. 1962.
- 'Crane' (*keiskei* 'Yaku Fairy' x *racemosum* 'White Lace') White flowers. 1993.
- 'Curlew' (*ludlowii* x *fletcherianum*) Yellow flowers, red spotting. 1970.
- 'Eider' (*minus* Carolinianum x *leucaspis*) pure white flowers. 1981.
- 'Egret' (*campylogynum* white x *racemosum* 'White Lace') tiny white flowers. 1982.
- 'Euan Cox' (*ludlowii* x *hanceanum* Nanum) Bright yellow flowers. 1981.
- 'Goosander' (*ludlowii* x *lutescens*) yellow flowers with red spots. 1981.
- 'Grouse' (*campylogynum* Bodnant red x *calostrotum* Gigha') red flowers. 1977.
- 'Merganser' (*campylogynum* white x *luteiflorum*) yellow bell-shaped flowers. 1981.
- 'Oban' ('Grouse' x *keiskei* 'Yaku Fairy' deep pink flowers. 1995.
- 'Phalarope' (*pemakoense* x  *davidsonianum*) pinkish-lavender flowers. 1969.
- 'Pintail' (*racemosum* x 'Snipe') bright pink flowers. 1999. (not reg)
- 'Pipit' (*lowndesii* x *lepidotum*) natural hybrid, pink flowers. 1971.
- 'Ptarmigan' (*orthocladum* var. *microleucum* x *leucaspis*) white flowers. 1965.
- 'Quail' (*keiskei* 'Yaku Fairy' x *glaucophyllum* Peter Chapell form) red buds, deep pink flowers. 2001.
- 'Razorbill' (*spinuliferum* seedling) pink tubular flowers. 1976.
- 'Snipe' (*pemakoense* x *davidsonianum*) lavender pink flowers. 1978.
- 'Teal' (*brachyanthum* x *luteiflorum*) yellow flowers. 1977.
- 'Tinkerbird' (*ciliatum* x *edgeworthii*) white scented flowers. 1998.
- 'Waxbill' (*keiskei* 'Yaku Fairy' x *spinuliferum*) pale pink flowers. 1998.
- 'Wheater' (*keiskei* 'Yaku Fairy' x *spinuliferum*) cream flowers with pink markings. 1998.
- 'Wigeon' (*minus* Carolinianum x *calostrotum* 'Gigha') pink flowers. 1982.
- 'Woodchat' (*brachyanthum* x *ludlowii*) yellow flowers, late. 1982.
- 'Wren' (*ludlowii* x *keiskei* 'Yaku Fairy') yellow flowers. 1984.



R. 'Wren' [Photo John Weagle]

# Lepidotes and the Cox Hybrids in Nova Scotia

By John Weagle

In the mid 1970's no one in Canada save for Joe Brueckner, in New Brunswick, and a few brave souls in British Columbia was interested in lepidotes or lepidote hybrids. Brueckner was doing some very interesting lepidote work thanks in part to Euan Cox (father of Peter Cox), who was supplying him with copious amounts of rare pollen and cuttings. However most rhodophiles were smitten only by *R. carolinianum* hybrids like 'PJM' and 'Ramapo' and by the mid 1980s these would become staples of even the supermarket garden centres. Walter Ostrom, in Indian Harbour, Nova Scotia, was the local lepidote guru. He was into the "other" lepidotes, the dwarf ones and I was infected by his enthusiasm. No one we knew sold these lepidote species and hybrids. Our lepidote fantasies were based on a few dark photos, the small black and white line drawings and some exquisite colour drawings in *Dwarf Rhododendrons* by Peter Cox. That was our bible and still is one of my most prized possessions. We would spend an hour or so on the phone five times a week, reading and discussing every word in this great little book. Brueckner had trialed quite a few species but he was in much colder Saint John, New Brunswick and we had dreams we could do better. Cox's "Good in southern Sweden" was the only inkling we had of a species' possible hardiness here. These phone marathons went on for years. The plants were still elusive. Then on a visit to Vancouver Walter landed a large collection of lepidote species from Evelyn Jack, propagator for UBC's Physical Plant. Evelyn reckoned they were worthy of trial here.

Within two years the circle of keeners had grown: Dick Steele was becoming enthralled with them, Walter's new plants were thriving in his wind-swept and fogbound garden and it was clear our cool summers gave us the edge with these plants. Meanwhile, Dianne McLeod was collecting an astonishing assortment of colour forms of *R. lapponicum* with varied habits in western Newfoundland and James Cullen, who revised the taxonomy of the lepidotes for Edinburgh, visited Halifax twice, gave lectures and sent cuttings of high altitude forms to Bayport. Within a few years Peter Cox revised his book on lepidotes and in 1985 published *The Smaller Rhododendrons*. A dizzying list of new Cox lepidote hybrids appeared in it. We had to have them all. Peter kindly sent us cuttings and we rounded up all we could on visits to Vancouver and Seattle.

First and foremost these Glendoick hybrids are beautiful plants; they are not big gaudy hybrids but small gems. For quite a while they were the darlings of the connoisseurs of the rhododendron world. Species purists unashamedly included these hybrids in their collections. By the early 1990s they became more available to everyone along with the new Berg hybrids: 'Patty Bee', 'Ginny Gee', 'Golden Bee' and 'Golden Princess'.

These hybrids should be planted where they can be enjoyed at close range and their everyday wants and needs met – in

the peat bed or rock garden. They are not difficult to grow once you understand their requirements. Try one until you get the hang of it and don't be afraid to move them around if they are not performing. When successful add a few more varieties. Initially small young plants seem to perform best when planted rather close together in groups; I believe this avoids constantly moist stagnant soil in proximity. The *ludlowii* and *chryseum* hybrids I grow under the light shade of an old Scotch Elm. The elm, I believe, pulls all the excess moisture from the soil. This is a hazardous solution to sharp good drainage and makes a keen eye and supplemental watering in summer imperative. When well settled in they should be moved to give lots of space around each one as crowding will cause branch die back due to poor air circulation and shading. Only 'Wigeon' can be planted and left to fend for itself; the rest need a bit of TLC until established; then they are quite easy to grow. My hardiness ratings are based on experience and conjectures.

## 'Arctic Tern'

Zone 6a. RSCAR offered this hybrid at the 2000 May Plant Sale. It was mistakenly labeled *R. primuliflorum*. So far it has proven to be hardy and based on the parentage there is no reason to think it will not continue to do well in coastal Zone 6. Worth a try in Zone 5b. Doing well in St. John's.

## 'Chiff Chaff'

Zone 7a / 7b. A wonderful cross between two great yellow species. *R. hanceanum* 'Nanum' has never been hardy here and *R. fletcherianum* is probably even more tender. This one might be worth a try in a protected spot in the Yarmouth area.

## 'Chikor'

Zone 6a. A wonderful dwarf whose rusty leaves contrast beautifully with the dark yellow flowers. It is not easy to grow which is not surprising as both of its parents are a challenge to grow: *R. ludlowii* nearly impossible and *R. rupicola* v. *chryseum* cranky at best. It seems perfectly hardy in Halifax when well situated. Fifteen years ago I bought a picture perfect plant in a four litre pot; by late summer half the plant was dead. The problem was the plant was too perfect, all pumped up with fertilizer. The die-back was a simple case of the top getting in tune with a poorly developed root system. The trick seems to be to grow it lean – no fertilizers – in part shade with perhaps three to four hours of morning sun. It should never dry out and must be planted in a raised bed with a fast-draining gritty, peaty soil. Flower buds have never been damaged even in snowless cold winters. It took me ten years to get the tuning right but it is well worth the trouble.

## 'Crane'

Zone 6a. A white 'Ginny Gee'. My plant is a year old but there is no reason to expect it to differ from 'Ginny Gee' in hardiness. Worth a try in Zone 5b where snow is reliable.





*R. 'Wigeon'* [Photo John Weagle]

**'Curlew'**

Zone 6b? The mother is *R. ludlowii*, the Holy Grail of dwarf yellows, a demanding if not impossible species to satisfy and grow well. I have never been able to determine *ludlowii*'s hardiness as only one plant survived a winter then died the next summer. The other two died before winter – three more than anyone is allowed to kill in a lifetime. I have seen *R. ludlowii* in only one garden, Lynn Watts' in Bellevue, WA. A long row grew to perfection on rotten logs but all were eventually stolen and no doubt met their demise shortly thereafter. The father, *R. fletcherianum*, as noted above is a Zone 8 plant. Curiously 'Curlew' rarely blooms in Halifax yet stays evergreen. Walter Ostrom, near Peggy's Cove, blooms it occasionally but it loses its leaves in most winters. A satisfactory pot plant.

**'Eider'**

Zone 6a. A delectable little early white with prominent dark anthers. Unfortunately the plants RSCAR received as tissue cultures had very shaky root systems. The plant periodically blew out of the ground during high winter winds. It certainly must be hardy despite its Zone 8 mother *R. leucaspis* as it has frequently bloomed after rolling about the yard for several weeks. Worth rooting and trying again in a dryish spot to encourage roots. A perky little fellow.

**'Egret'**

Zone 6b. This is a delectable and charming hybrid with dancing dainty white bells. My guess is that given its parentage it will need a protected spot in Zone 6a. It too makes a wonderful pot plant.

**'Euan Cox'**

Zone 7a. Growing in full sun in a dryish spot and in meagre soil this hybrid has been damaged regularly. Not surprising considering its parentage, both discussed previously. A good yellow that I have no intention of heaving onto the compost heap. Perhaps better growing conditions and a more protected spot is advisable.

**'Goosander'**

Zone 7a. I don't know this hybrid but the mother is cranky and the father is very unreliable in Zone 7. Yarmouth might just get away with it.

**'Grouse'**

Zone 6b? The mother *R. campylogynum* is not hardy here and the father *R. calostrotum* 'Gigha' is just hardy in Zone 6a. Another Yarmouth trial is in order.

**'Merganser'**

Zone 7a. Again *R. campylogynum* as mother and the father is *R. luteiflorum*, Zone 8. The rating of Zone 7a may be overly optimistic.

**'Oban'**

Zone 6a. *R. keiskei* 'Yaku Fairy' seems to have toughened up 'Grouse' for Zone 6a. Ken Cox complained that 'Oban' had spotted foliage in Perth. Here it seems to be clean when grown in an open sunny but cool spot. A unique, shockingly clear pink shade reminiscent of watermelon.

### **‘Phalarope’**

Zone 8. *R. pemakoense* (as *R. patulum*) could be barely kept alive here and always moved its buds too early in spring. It finally died after a snowless cold winter. The father *R. davidsonianum* is as tender. Though a beautiful hybrid it does not have much promise for Nova Scotia. The Brueckner hybrid ‘Charme La’ (*carolinianum* x *patulum*), Delp hybrids ‘Showoff’ and sister ‘Gayday’ (*carolinianum* ‘Epoch’ x ‘Charme La’) and Starling hybrid (*keiskei* ‘Yaku Fairy’ x *pemakoense*) are the only *pemakoense* hybrids hardy enough for Halifax. A pot plant for keeners.

### **‘Pintail’**

Zone 6b / 7a. The mother *R. racemosum* is at the very edge of its hardiness here. I’d be very surprised if it made it through a Halifax winter. Yarmouth or better.

### **‘Pipit’**

Zone 6b? Walter Ostrom's quest for 25 years. He has managed to keep it alive in his lath house since the mid 1990s. A cross between two exquisite species and well worth a try with plenty of prayers. Sharp drainage and conditions as recommended for ‘Chikor’.

### **‘Ptarmigan’**

Zone 6a. This was my first Cox lepidote received as a small rooted cutting in 1979. Walter Ostrom already had the plant for several years. Its mother *R. orthocladum* v. *microleucum* is bone hardy; its father *R. leucaspis* is not only a very tender Zone 8 but it blooms in winter in the UK. In those early days Walter and I assumed the hybrid would be a Zone 7 at best. We both experienced very early frozen flower buds in late April, frequent foliar damage in winter and a poor structure. Now the curious thing is that, as the plant has aged, the blooms come later – now mid-May – the habit has improved and the plant seems indestructible. A rare case of increased hardiness with age or is it a case of reduced vigour (i.e. less willowy growth) in old age? My plant is now 30 cm or more high by a meter across. Sharp drainage.

### **‘Quail’**

Zone 6a. Ken Cox suggested this might be too tender for Halifax. I intend to prove him wrong given another spate of mild winters. The descriptions and slides of this plant are tantalizing.

### **‘Razorbill’**

Zone 6a (!) This is a great puzzle. A snappy little hybrid with pink firecracker-shaped flowers. The mother *R. spinuliferum* is frequently killed to the ground in the mildest gardens around Seattle. Gail Meagher and Chris Hopgood have beautiful examples of ‘Razorbill’ in their Halifax gardens and Ken Cox was amazed. These have bloomed the last few years.

### **‘Snipe’**

Zone 7a/b. Same parents as ‘Phalarope’ and the same applies.

### **‘Teal’**

Zone 7a/b. *R. brachyanthum* is surely a Zone 7b and the father, *R. luteiflorum*, has been noted earlier. Subject to leaf spotting as a pot plant with me.

### **‘Tinkerbird’**

Zone 8a/b. Two desperately tender parents. Best as a pot plant in this region.

### **‘Waxbill’**

Zone 6b / 7a. Both this and ‘Wheatear’ root and grow like weeds. Catchy firecracker flowers. Given the luck some members have had with ‘Razorbill’ these should be slightly hardier.

### **‘Wheatear’**

Zone 6b / 7a. see ‘Waxbill’.

### **‘Wigeon’**

Zone 5b / 6a. Thoroughly hardy with me in Halifax. It forms a nice compact dome 50 cm high and 75 cm wide. Blooms heavily and highly recommended. See the May Sale list in this Newsletter.

### **‘Woodchat’**

Zone 6b / 7a. If *R. ludlowii* has any hardiness at all this will be worth a try only in our mildest areas.

### **‘Wren’**

Zone 6a. My one concern with Kenneth's article – he is far too modest in his assessment of this hybrid. It is spectacular! My mat measures 75 cm across by only a few centimeters tall. Prominent big fat dark yellow saucers sit above the foliage. This is the closest thing to *R. ludlowii* in a growable plant. One's inclination is to grow it in full sun, a mistake I believe. Grow it as per ‘Chikor’ in part shade and with similar drainage and moisture and it is a vigorous clean mat. My hands-down favourite lepidote in the garden. A better yellow than the picture in the *Journal of the American Rhododendron Society* indicates. My desert island rhododendron.

Curiously missing in the Cox list is **‘Wagtail!’** (*lowndesii* x *keiskei* ‘Yaku Fairy’). Zone 6a. *R. lowndesii* is second only to *R. ludlowii* in Holy Grail status. Growing sometimes in dryish rock clefts in its native haunts it forms 5 cm high mats laden with bright yellow "pansies" which dance above the foliage. I have only seen one *R. lowndesii* and it grows to perfection as a meter wide mat at June Sinclair's garden in Port Ludlow, WA. in bright open shade. I have never seen it for sale in North America. My one tiny 1 cm high plant planted in a trough sailed through this past summer's muggy stretch under shade cloth. In ‘Wagtail’ we have a hardy hybrid as close to *R. lowndesii* as may be possible. Thank you *R. keiskei* ‘Yaku Fairy’! By March ‘Wagtail’ can be deciduous like *R. lowndesii* and appears winter-killed in April. It quickly leafs out again and grows away without batting an eyelash. Part shade and never too dry, it loves to creep through loose mossy soil. The pale yellow flowers are a bit pinched compared to *R. lowndesii*. ☺

# The Elusive Blue Poppies

By Finn Haugli

*Finn Haugli gardens in Tromsø in northern Norway. He gave a fascinating talk to our Society last winter on the plants in his own garden, and in the Arctic-Alpine Botanic Garden in Tromsø.*

Meconopsis leave few people indifferent. Some do not like them (“I think they are too leafy”). But most people adore them. The warmer the climate of the gardener, the more adoration. (This follows from the fact that people in really warm climates cannot grow them, thus desiring them so much more). Reading the following in the introduction to James Cobb’s *Meconopsis* book (Timber Press), few will remain untouched: “Meconopsis have the purest red, the softest pink, the most exquisite blue, the clearest yellow, the most faultless white and the most imperial purple of any genera of plants”.

Does that sound attractive? Many gardeners think so! Here I will largely stay with “the most exquisite blue”. The genus contains between 40 and 50 species (it is hard to keep up with the botanists). Many of these, while extremely beautiful and often not too difficult to cultivate in a suitable climate, are monocarpic (that is, they die after the first flowering and seed production). Here I shall be concerned only with those that are more or less blue (often more!) as well as perennial. This means that only the following four species, and occasional hybrids between them, will be discussed: *Meconopsis betonicifolia*, *M. grandis*, *M. quintuplinervia* and *M. delavayi*.

## History of cultivation

The interesting question of where cultivated plants originated is often overlooked. Here is a brief history of introduction to cultivation of these four species.

*Meconopsis betonicifolia*, growing in Tibet, Burma and the adjacent Chinese mountains, was first introduced into cultivation in England and Scotland in 1934 by one of the most distinguished of plant hunters, Frank Kingdon Ward. It ranks as one of the most famous plant introductions of all times. We believe that this species came to gardens in Tromsø around 1950.

*Meconopsis grandis* has been introduced several times. It grows in the wild from western Nepal to southwestern China and Burma. Sadly, strangely and maybe surprisingly it is doubtful whether the species is in widespread cultivation presently. More on that below. The most famous introductions are both connected to George Sheriff. With the 1934 introduction of seed from Bhutan, George Sheriff brought into cultivation a strain of *Meconopsis grandis* referred to as George Sheriff 600 (or GS 600; a reference to his collection number) which again is generally viewed as one of the most wonderful plant introductions of the twentieth century. His wife, Betty Sheriff, is connected to

another glorious introduction in 1949. This plant, known as “Betty’s Dream Poppy”, has a romantic story attached to it as Mrs Sheriff one night, camped in the high Mountains near Shingbe in Bhutan, dreamt that her husband instructed her to look for plants at a specified location. Next day Betty Sheriff, taking the dream seriously, came across this most beautiful *M. grandis* variety.

*M. grandis* was widely cultivated in Scotland for years after these introductions, and supposedly has been all along up to our days. Or so we all thought. Recently, however, the Meconopsis Group, organized by Evelyn Stevens of Sheriffmuir in Scotland, and now cooperating with Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, have come to the conclusion that most plants figuring as *M. grandis* today are in fact hybrids between *M. grandis* and *M. betonicifolia*. These hybrids, which are referred to as *M. x sheldonii*, are usually sterile. Occasionally, however, such plants may have undergone a chromosome duplication making them fertile (allopolyploidy). Such plants then are probably what most people grow as *M. grandis* today, since they can be seed propagated and mostly look quite similar to the species. The plant which we have grown in Tromsø since 1980 as *M. grandis*, is likely to be such a hybrid. This is referred to under the somewhat ungainly name of Meconopsis “Fertile Blue Group”, and “our” plant is likely to be identical to the Scottish cultivar ‘Lingholm’.

Sorry folks—this is confusing. Let me end this now by telling you that the Meconopsis Group is working hard to find out whether some of the old introductions of the species are still in cultivation. Meanwhile, new introductions of the species slowly become available. In the future, if you want to be certain that you really have the species, it should probably be vegetatively propagated from a *bona fide M. grandis*.

Finally: do not be sorry if you end up growing one of the fertile allopolyploid hybrids of *grandis* and *betonicifolia*, or for that matter some of the sterile hybrids. They are absolutely glorious plants, and unless you are a fanatic species collector, you will be perfectly well off with one of these in your garden.

*Meconopsis quintuplinervia*, Reginald Farrer’s “Harebell Poppy” is a delightful and graceful perennial plant which is easy to grow. Much smaller than *M. grandis*, with which it is closely related, its pendant lavender bells are very attractive. Reginald Farrer, another of the great plant hunters, in his book *The Rainbow Bridge*, an account of his travels in the South West Chinese mountains early in the twentieth century, really “took off” after an encounter with



*A blue perennial Meconopsis hybrid? grown from garden collected seed. [Photo Sterling Levy]*

this plant. Read this: “And now, immediately, the beauty of the Harebell Poppy began to break upon us. It was everywhere, flickering and dancing in millions upon millions of pale purple butterflies, as far as the eye could see, over all the enormous slopes and bays of the grass. The sun was now coming up, and its earliest rays slanted upon the upland in shafts of gold-dust; in the young fresh light the whole alp was a glistening jewel-work with dew in a powdered haze of diamond, with the innumerable soft blue laughter of the poppies rippling universally above a floor of pale purple Alpine Aster...” etc.

I believe Farrer was also the one who introduced the species into cultivation, and this was probably just before 1920. Like *M. betonicifolia* it has been with us ever since.

*Meconopsis delavayi* is the fourth and last of the perennial blue poppies we shall be concerned with here. While *M. betonicifolia* and *M. grandis* (and their hybrids) really do have “the most exquisite blue” flowers, this is not true of *M. quintuplinervia* with its lavender blue bells, nor is it true for *M. delavayi*. This species, however, rather lives up to another of James Cobb’s exultations cited above. It has “the most imperial purple” of flowers. It is also a really dwarf plant, an alpine gardener’s dream with the relatively large flowers on a diminutive plant. It hails from rocky limestone areas in the high mountains of South West China. Early introductions did not persist in cultivation. However the 1990 introduction of Ron McBeath has given rise to a somewhat precarious cultivation in Scotland as well as here in Tromsø, and possibly other places unknown to me. Thus at the present time *M. delavayi* is with us once more.

### **Growing the Blue Perennial Meconopsis.**

Enough of the history. Let us have a look at what it all really boils down to: how to succeed with their cultivation. It is suitable to discuss *M. betonicifolia*, *M. grandis* and *M. quintuplinervia* together. These are all quite easy to grow, and they are usually soundly perennial, thriving under similar conditions.

Much has been written about the soil mixtures needed to have success with these plants. I live in a cool, even cold, and reasonably moist, climate. Here in Tromsø any gardener can succeed with these species, regardless of their soil and without fussing over the plants. Thus, I can’t help feeling that climate may be the most important factor for success. In a climate which tends towards hot and dry summers, shade becomes important. The hotter the climate, the more shade the plants should be given. If too hot and dry, of course, all hope for successful cultivation vanishes. Under these circumstances the soil composition also may become more important than it is in Tromsø. Generally a sandy loamy soil with lots of coarse humus added will be to their liking. It is important that the soil should never become dry. It is also very important that the plants get plenty of nourishment. Thus, using moderate amounts of a balanced fertilizer during the growing season will be very beneficial. Then acidity: this is often mentioned as being of great importance to get the true “electric blue” colour in the flowers. We are rather relaxed about this in Tromsø, but then we hardly ever see really alkaline soil. A pH around 5.5 to 6 is what I usually find when I check my soil, and I believe this is quite adequate. If you have extremely acid soil, a bit of coarse magnesium containing limestone would probably be beneficial. If, on the other hand, alkaline soil is your problem, all I can suggest is mixing in some acidic peat.

*M. quintuplinervia*, it should be added, is stoloniferous and will run with short underground stolons, thus building sizeable colonies if allowed to.

Now for *M. delavayi*. The plant is basically soundly perennial. It does not, however, have quite the same strong constitution as the others. I believe the worst problem, at least here in Tromsø, is winter wet and ice formation. This can cause the crown to rot. When this happens one will often find that the thick tongue-like roots are perfectly fresh. So, here is a trick should your plant appear to be in trouble after the winter: take the root, chop it up and mix the root bits into the soil on the site. Wait 3-4 weeks, keeping the soil moderately moist, and expect (or at least hope) to see dozens of plantlets sprouting from the bits of root. This has happened to me several times, and is also as recorded in James Cobb's book.

The plant grows in rocky limestone areas in the high mountains of South West China. It is incredibly neat and beautiful. Only 4 or 5 inches tall at flowering, the large rich purple flowers rise from a neat little rosette of lanceolate leaves. As the years pass a plant will develop several crowns and can carry an amazing number of flowers. But even where young, with fewer flowers, it is a gem and the kind of plant which a true rock- and alpine gardener will totally love.

### Acquiring and Propagating Plants

I should think that both *M. betonicifolia* and *M. grandis* (or what passes as *M. grandis*) will be quite readily available from good nurseries in the region covered by *Atlantic Rhodo*. Another matter might be obtaining alba forms or really exciting hybrids. There are quite a few such plants around, but most have to be propagated vegetatively, thus becoming difficult to acquire (unless you travel around shopping in Scotland, maybe). However, speaking of the species, or the fertile hybrids, growing them from seed is the best way by far. Seed should be available from the major seed exchanges, or can be bought from seed companies such as German Jelitto or Anglo-American Thomson and Morgan. In Tromsø we always give the seed a winter (stratification) and let them germinate around 15 degrees centigrade in the spring. Now comes the critical time: seedlings of almost all species are very prone to damp-off (fungal death). The best way to avoid this is to have lots of air circulation and to let the seed germinate through a good layer of grit or gravel, so that the transition between root and leaf-stalk is kept dryish, while the roots should never lack moisture, yet they must also have ample aeration. Thus grit and gravel become key elements in the compost. Once pricked out and grown to a stage with several leaves the plants seem to become much tougher and usually are growing on well, as long as they get plenty of food and water.

In fairness it should be added that seed of *Meconopsis delavayi* is very difficult to come by, whereas the other three should be quite readily available.

### Vegetative Propagation

Vegetative propagation is quite easy for the three first species. When plants have been left in peace for maybe 6 or 7 years, the number of crowns could be quite large. In the end such plants will start to decline. Before that happens, lift the clump, preferably before flowering in the early spring (but after flowering also works for me). Tease the individual rosettes or plantlets, or clusters of these, apart and pot them up. Be aware that the leaf stalks are extremely brittle and break very easily, but some loss may be beneficial since there will be fewer leaves for evaporation to stress the plants. New roots will grow very soon, but do protect the plants against sun and dryness during the critical period before new roots can sustain the plants. Such divisions could start flowering in a year with good care, but usually expect two years before they are back in shape.

For *M. delavayi* vegetative propagation could not be recommended unless you are of the brave, reckless type who would sacrifice a plant, chop up the root and hope for the best, as indicated above. Also, this species cannot be transplanted. It has a thick, deep, tongue-like root and absolutely refuses to be lifted and moved (at least I have invariably lost plants when I have been foolish enough to try such a thing).

I have left out a number of monocarpic blue species, not to mention the red and yellow ones, from this description. The most commonly cultivated blue monocarpic species are: *M. horridula*, *M. aculeata* and *M. simplicifolia*. Delightful *M. henricii* with "royal purple" flowers much like those of *M. delavayi* should also be mentioned. The two first are by far the more common ones and should be quite easy to obtain seed of. *M. simplicifolia* can be a very beautiful plant. There are some exquisite hybrids between this and *M. grandis* or *M. betonicifolia*. We grow a couple of these in Tromsø, but that is really another story. And so is the fabulous blood red *M. punicea* and the incredible lemon-yellow flowered *M. integrifolia* and *M. pseudointegrifolia*. In the Arctic-alpine botanic garden in Tromsø we try to keep groups of these going, but it is always a gamble if one will succeed with seed production, germination, growing on or winter survival.

I send all readers of *AtlanticRhodo* my warmest regards as I think back on my visit in March 2002, in Ottawa and Montreal, then in Halifax and St. John's, Newfoundland. I was so well taken care of by everyone I met. My special thanks to Phil Reilly and Ian Efford in Ottawa, and to Maria Galetti, René Giguère and Dave Demers in Montreal/Quebec. And, not least, to John Weagle in Halifax, and Bodil Larsen and Todd Boland in St. John's. ☘

# Rhododendrons in New Brunswick

By Harold Popma

If there is any gene for gardening, in my case it would have come from my mother. In 1956 my family moved from Indonesia to Victoria B.C. and I clearly remember my mother's gardens in both places. I still have a mental picture of her huge flowering cactus which towered over my head beside our front door in Surabaya. I also remember her roses, a small pond with perennials, a large weeping willow and a wisteria in the back yard in Victoria.

At age thirteen I made myself available for garden and lawn care. It was better than delivering newspapers. Besides, I got an honourable discharge from the *Victoria Times* because I did not behave well at the ASales@ meetings (i.e. how to beat the bushes for new subscribers). I also worked part time at a nursery where I gained experience with propagating techniques and transplanting routines. I think the die was cast.

We moved to Sackville N.B. in 1977, Zone 5B, on the upper Bay of Fundy. The property was two acres of mess. However, I did notice the soil was basically sandy and well-drained. There were few trees: a few old apples, two Scotch elms, an ornamental cherry, a Norfolk pine. We bought some evergreen shrubs and two rhodies. The local large department store sold elepidotes, red and purple. I planted them near the foundation of the east side of the house and they did poorly. The cedars and yews were OK. The red rhodie was particularly temperamental; a Adog of a plant@ anyway. The >Nova Zembla= was moved to the back of the house and survived; the *catawbiense* >Boursault= was moved and took off. (It is now over 7 ft. tall). We were into our first Afive year plan@ with two children in elementary school.

## Bayport discovered!

One summer in the 80's we happened to pick a house to rent for a week in the Kingsburg, Nova Scotia area and loved the setting near Hirtle's Beach, etc. We will never know what guardian angel brought us to that particular spot that particular summer, AND ... there happened to be a nursery near by. Actually, it was a plant farm; I have always been partial to establishments which can boast the sale of plants they have actually grown themselves as opposed to reading Amade in Ontario@ labels. The Bayport Plant Farm had a profound effect on me and my association with rhododendrons and other plants.

Back in Sackville, I encouraged two friends to visit Bayport with me and we formed a clandestine subsection of the RSCAR; Paul Bogaard, Sandy Burnett, and me.

We arrived at the Plant Farm the next summer at a time

when Capt. Dick Steele was looking for someone to test rhodies in New Brunswick; he was breeding for hardiness, and he sensed we were interested in his suggestions for propagation. After all, I had two rhodies and two acres. That is when I started layering my plants and collecting seed.

The next Christmas there was a small package from Bayport in the mail ... four small bits of folded up paper, each the size of a loonie, labelled: *Azalea japonica*, *Azalea* >Orange Ruffles=, *R. carolinianum*, and *R.* >ForCat= with instructions. With sphagnum from the local bog, I just had to add the seed, put them together ... we were away! By March the next year we had about 40-50 babies to look after.

We must have passed some kind of a test because the next year we were invited to join Capt. Steele for a Rhododendron/Native Plant expedition to Newfoundland. That was an experience which helped greatly with tackling genus and species names of native plants and others. The open spaces of Labrador with their dwarf forms and alpiners were a real inspiration, not to mention that we found plenty of *R. lapponicum* and *Loiseleuria*.

I now have collected about 20 species of rhodies and about 80 hybrids (or more). The two acre property is changing rapidly partly because of the need for more space to transplant small seedlings. Within the past five years I have managed a few of my own crosses of >Buttercup= x >Orange Ruffles=, >Golden Lights= x >Buttercup=, and >County of York= x >Francesca=. These as well as F2 and F3 generations of >Orange Ruffles= are now about three inches high. >Orange Ruffles= is quite mildew resistant and I am looking for interesting variations in foliage and fall colour.

## Success in New Brunswick

Rhodies certainly *do* grow in New Brunswick! Historically, >Boule de Neige= has been established in Sackville for many years. The original plant came from a family farm in the Kouchibouquac area. Thirty to forty years ago William Prescott in Port Elgin had rhodies and azaleas brought over from the Kentville Research Station. His >Bellefontaine= is an excellent plant and has been propagated by layering. His *cat. alba* has a very attractive habit and large trusses .

My favourites in early spring (first two weeks in May) are: *R. fargesii* (which I have to keep well watered otherwise it goes limp); >April White=, >April Rose=, *mucronulatum*; >Spring Glory=. The >Lights= azaleas are tough and give a good show year after year. The following from Capt. Steele have done well: >Boulderwood 72-2', >Pinehurst 83-M=

(*metternichii* x *makinoi* ›Daupin‹) x ›Mahogany Red‹, ›Buttercup‹, ›Big Joe‹, *R. carolinianum*; ›Bayport‹, Best Yellow‹, and ›Scintillation‹ (which was thought to be too tender but does fine). Others which have proven themselves over the years include: *R. schlippenbachii*; ›Towhead‹, ›Dora Amateis‹, ›Blue Peter‹, ›Francesca‹, ›Elsie Lee‹, *R. kiusianum*; ›Olga‹, ›Normandy‹, ›Grand Pré ‹, ›Mardi Gras‹, ›Rangoon‹, ›Hong Kong‹, ›Waltham‹, Pink‹, ›Sue Gunn‹, ›Weston‹, Innocence‹, ›Brittany‹, ›Mildred Mae‹, azalea ›Aztec‹, ›Wyandanch‹, ›Crimson Red‹, ›Peter Tiegerstedt‹, ›Janet Blair‹, *R. impeditum*; ›Mikelli‹, ›U . Of Helsinki‹

The plants which I have bought year after year from the tissue culture and the May plant sales (designated for Zone 5) have all survived with only a few exceptions which were probably my fault. The Finnish hybrids take time to settle in. My ›Elviira‹ just up and died. I mulch with tree bark/ chips but do not provide *any* winter protection. Places in the garden do provide natural protection from severe wind and it is not uncommon for rhodies to get moved around to [Abetter@locations](#) . Once my leaf compost really gets going I

will be top dressing with the black stuff . (The local garbage collection has agreed to drop off the bagged leaves at the bottom of our property.) Alpines and dwarf forms are attractive additions to large beds; e.g. *Betula nana* , *Salix purpurea* ›gracilis‹, *nana*, *Abies* ›Lasiocarpa‹, dwarf *Ulmus* etc. In early spring the primulas are irresistible and in later fall (November) the *Gentiana sino-ornata* in bloom is a marvel. *Lewisia*s are very special. Other plants which have done well and are very rewarding are: several varieties of *Magnolia* and *Viburnum*; *Pieris*; *Halesia*; *Stewartia*; *Cercidiphyllum*; *Acer palmatum*; varieties of *Kalmia*; *Wisteria* and others. Then just for fun one has to grow a few herbs, onions, tomatoes and lettuce ... and garlic to keep you healthy.

Of course in the winter I just move indoors and continue gardening. One of my favourites is one I bought at the Plant Farm and brings me full circle to my tropical roots... a *Vireya* ›Red Prince‹ x ›Lochae‹, which is in bloom as I write. I wish my mother could see that little piece of Indonesia happily existing so far from its home. ☺



*Magnolia sieboldii*. Several selections of this species are available in the 2003 Seed Exchange. [Photo Sterling Levy]

# A Seaside Garden in Queens County

By Audrey Fralic

My garden is located on Bell Point Road in Queens County on the back part of Port Mouton Bay. Surrounded on three sides by woods, the perimeter of the property has been left pretty much in its natural state with a mixture of oak, maple and new growth pine. The back of the property borders the bay and the swampy coastal area is a wonderful mix of tall wild grasses, wild roses, native holly and in the drier spots a variety of ferns.

My interest in gardening began on a cold winter day when I happened upon two garden magazines and spent much of the winter planning my first real garden. When spring arrived I was anxious to begin, but then reality set in. This was hard work! Long hours were spent digging and amending the soil with peat moss, loam, and composted manure. By early July it was ready and the shrubs and perennials could be planted. For a backdrop there were several kinds of evergreen shrubs and interspersed were euonymus, buxus, spiraea, and a variety of perennials, mostly old fashioned types such as hollyhocks, foxgloves and black-eyed susans. Coreopsis, daylilies and sedums completed the garden. Everything grew wonderfully and looked great for a couple of years. Then the perennials outgrew their space and had to be dug up, divided and replanted. That meant more garden space had to be created.

The new garden was made quite differently and was not so labour intensive. Instead of digging up good sod, sheets of newspaper were spread over the new garden area and then covered with layers of soil, peat moss, composted leaves and seaweed to make a raised bed. When the desired thickness was reached it was left for the winter to compost. By spring it was ready to be planted with roses, lavender and perennials.

Over time I had collected a small selection of rhododendrons, mostly PJM types, and a few elepidotes purchased

mainly from supermarkets. Then I heard about the Rhododendron Society; decided to join; began going to a few meetings and then I was hooked on rhododendrons! My collection began to grow by leaps and bounds. Now they're everywhere on the property.

There are two gardens at the front of the house separated by a strip of lawn. One is a wooded area where rhodos 'Bali', 'Minas Snow', *metternichii* and a dozen or so others grow happily among small pines. The other garden is a mixture of several rhodos and evergreen azaleas, kalmias, pieris, leucothoe, and small evergreens with hostas, perennials and grasses mixed in. The rhodos in this garden are both elepidote and lepidote and are all sizes. R. 'Janet Blair' and *Catawbiense* 'Boursault' anchor this garden and makeup the backdrop for RR. 'Mary Craig', 'BPT. 80-5', 'Ken Janeck' and evergreen azaleas 'Bixby', 'Alexander' and many others. An Oregon grape, a *Chamaecyparis nootkatensis* 'Pendula' and a viburnum also add interest to this garden.

Along the south end of the property are more mixed gardens of rhodos, blue hollies, Japanese maples, evergreen azaleas and various evergreens. There are also several clematises, heathers, rose bushes, perennials and a variety of heaths for early spring colour.

The back of the house has large garden areas separated by a grass path. This recently renovated garden is easily seen from inside the house so has been designed for winter and early spring interest. The largest portion of this garden lies under a big old pine tree and consists of medium and large evergreens, a large burning bush, and a large variety of rhodos such as 'Teddy Bear', 'Lem's Form', 'Golden Gala', 'Yaku Princess' and several lepidotes. Since this garden is so well protected it makes a good home for the more tender varieties of rhodos such as 'Taurus' and 'Elizabeth Hobbie'. Mixed with the larger plants are hostas, a variety of

spring blooming perennials such as pulsatillas, primulas and a significant planting of hellebores.

There are several more garden areas filled with small to medium size rhodos, several magnolias, *Cornus kousa* 'Satomi', evergreen azaleas, daylilies, hostas and other companion plants. The north side of the property gets the hot afternoon sun and several Norway pines planted about fifteen years ago are now beginning to provide shade for the many plants under them. Most of these plants were acquired as small plants and are just beginning to put on growth and set buds. So almost every year now another one or two bloom for the first time with a beautiful splash of color.

Many of my rhododendrons have been purchased as tissue culture plants and have to have special care for a year or so. To accommodate these tiny treasures we built a cold frame. Constructed of wood it is approximately 7 ft long, 5 ft wide and 2 ½ ft high. It was then filled with a mixture of loam, peat moss, composted leaves and pine bark mulch to a depth of 12 to 14 inches. After the tissue culture plants are hardened off and the weather warms up in June they are planted in the cold frame, watered and the entire frame is covered with shade cloth. In two years it was amazing to see how much they had grown in their sheltered home and even more amazing to see the size of the root ball on some of these plants. An example of how well they do is R. 'Gordon Jones' which was in the cold frame for two years, then planted in the garden two years ago and which has bloomed for these past two years. The microclimate produced by this protection alleviates most of the stress of extreme cold and heat on these small plants and gives them a much better start. Since using the cold frame I have had very few plants die. Anyone can have a cold frame. It needs only to be the size required by the gardener just as long as the plants have enough space to grow without encroaching on the other plants. ☼