

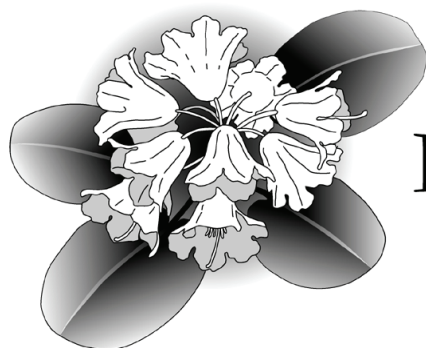
AtlanticRhodo

www.AtlanticRhodo.org

Volume 35: Number 1

February 2011





Atlantic Rhododendron & Horticultural Society

Positions of Responsibility 2010 - 2011

President	Ruth Jackson	454-4681	Director - Horticulture	Audrey Fralic	683-2711
Vice-President	Vacant		Director	Cora Swinamer	826-7705
Secretary	Susan Boyd	835-8916	Director	Wendy Cornwall	477-6121
Treasurer	Jim Drysdale	431-0223	ARS Rep.	Anitra Laycock	852-2502
Membership	Ann Drysdale	431-0223	Newsletter	Mary Helleiner	429-0213
Past President	Sheila Stevenson	479-3740	Website	Bob Pettipas	462-5654
Director - Education	Jenny Sandison	624-9013	Library	Jean White	477-2933
Director - Communications	Mary Helleiner	429-0213	Seed Exchange	Sharon Bryson	863-6307
Director - Social	Shirley McIntyre	835-3673	May - Pre-Ordered Plant Sale	Ken Shannik	422-2413
			May- Public Plant Sale	Duff & Donna Evers	835-2586

Membership (Please Note Changes)

Atlantic Rhododendron & Horticultural Society.

Fees are \$20.00 from September 1, 2010 to August 31, 2011, due September 2010. Make cheques payable to Atlantic Rhododendron and Horticultural Society. ARHS is a chapter in District 12 of the American Rhododendron Society. For benefits see ARHS website www.atlanticrhodo.org

American Rhododendron Society

Combined ARHS and ARS membership cost is \$50.00 Canadian. For benefits see www.rhododendron.org

Cheques, made payable to Atlantic Rhododendron and Horticultural Society should be sent to **Jim Drysdale, 5 Little Point Lane, Herring Cove, NS B3V1J7.**

Please include name, address with postal code, e-mail address and telephone number, for organizational purposes only.

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

Editor:

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Cover Photo: 'Aglo'. [Photo Chris Helleiner]



Calendar of Events

All ARHS 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 meetings or events.

- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| Tuesday Jan. 4 | Ruth Jackson: The GIS program for geographical plotting
Anitra Laycock: A trip to northern Sikkim following in the footsteps of Joseph Hooker |
| Tuesday Feb. 1 | Magnolias. John Weagle will give a talk on this magnificent genus of plants which grow so well for us here in Nova Scotia. |
| Tuesday March 1 | Natural Stone Hardscape. Ken Timmons of The Stone Depot is rescheduled to talk on using natural stone in our gardens. Even those who focus on plants will appreciate his designs. |
| Tuesday April 5 | TBA |
| Tuesday May 3 | Members' Plant Sale at LeMarchant School. Open to all members. Watch for information on the Members' Sale Table in the spring 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 ARHS events, in order to minimize the risk of allergic reactions.



A very warm welcome to our new and returning ARHS members who have joined since the October Newsletter.

John Himmelman &
Helga Guderley
Mary Kingston
Jane Kostek
Bill Mercier
Cathy Nolan
Kari J. Venho
Cathy Watson

Boutliers Point, NS
Oakfield, NS
Halifax, NS
Shad Bay, NS
Oakfield, NS
Lempaala, Finland
Oakfield, NS



Special Notices

2011 Tissue Culture Pickup

Tissue culture plants will be available for pickup on April 2, 2011 at St. Andrew's Centre, 6955 Bayers Road, Halifax at 1.30 pm. If you have pre-ordered tissue culture plants please be certain to make arrangements to have them picked up, if you are unable to do so yourself. Volunteers will be notified about the time they will be required. For more info, contact Audrey Fralic at alfralic2@yahoo.ca.

Pre-ordered Plant Sale (members only)

The list of plants for sale and the order form will be placed on our website www.atlanticrhodo.org when this is ready. An e-mail message will be sent to members when the list is available. Anyone who does not have access to the website should call Ken Shannik 902-222-5927 for information.

Annual Convention of the American Rhododendron Society. May 11-15, 2011.

To be held in Vancouver, Washington (across the river from Portland Oregon). Many well known speakers, workshops and garden tours. For information see the website of the American Rhododendron Society www.rhododendron.org or contact Anitra Laycock, 852-2502.

ARHS Scholarship Winner

Holly Morton, of Bible Hill Nova Scotia, a second year Environmental Horticulture Technology student, was the 2010 recipient of the \$750 Captain Steele Memorial award. The award, funded by ARHS, is presented to a Nova Scotia student in the Environmental Horticulture diploma program. Preference is given to students whose passion for plants is infectious and who will most impact the way we regard and understand plants in both public and private environments. Other criteria include communication and leadership abilities and financial need.



Holly Morton with ARHS President Ruth Jackson. [Photo NSAC]

In Memoriam

Ursula Charlotte Wendt (Komm)

12 April 1917 – 30 November 2010

ARHS has lost one of its most valuable life members, Ursula Wendt of Ellershouse, Nova Scotia. Ursula was a passionate gardener and built a large rhododendron collection at her historic home “Ellershouse”. Ursula and her late husband Paul were some of the first members to join the Society – then RSCAR – at its inception in 1978. When the early seed exchange grew unmanageably the Wendts unhesitatingly offered to run it, a job they did with passion and precision for more than fifteen years. To them we owe its success.

The Wendts always welcomed visitors to their extensive garden and keenly shared plants with all. Everyone was entertained with tea, coffee and delectable homemade desserts from Ursula’s kitchen. No visit went without a tour of the grand old house and stories of its history – an estate which was once so vast it had its own currency and printing press for the same and stretched to the Atlantic ocean via canals. Ursula had a great passion for the native plants of northern Europe and the Alps, especially the perennials.

The Wendts were keen supporters of the early plant sales and usually donated a generous trunk load of plants.

Many ARHS functions and potlucks were held at the Wendts’ and were always a great success.

About two weeks ago I dropped in to see Ursula. There were no cars about and no answer at the door. It was an ominous feeling as one had always been greeted by her big smile and warmth.

The Wendts supported all the Society’s activities in those formative years and it is doubtful it would be as vibrant as it now is without their dedication, commitment and hard work. We will all miss Ursula. Our sincere condolences go out to the Wendt family.

– John Weagle



Dr. Henry “Hank” Hedges

A memorial gathering was held on December 11, 2010, in St. George, Ontario, to celebrate the life of Hank Hedges.

He was a founding member of the Canadian Rhododendron Society, and, over his life time, was the recipient of many awards and forms of recognition from governments and various groups. He was an impressive teacher and ended his formal career as Professor of Education at the Ontario Institute of Studies in Education at the University of Toronto. He was also an author, television and radio personality, superb nature photographer and director of many organizations. His interests were wide and varied. Often he would appear at events with gifts of his own honey, special eggs or lily bulbs. He was renowned for starting a large public lily garden in St. George and was an initiator of the Niagara Training and Employment Centre.

At the remembrance event many people came to reflect on our friend Hank Hedges’ accomplishments and to offer tributes. He is survived by his wife Jean, his children Robert, James and Marjorie, and his nine grandchildren. To all of them we offer our sympathy at this time of loss.

-Richard Birkett

-Peter Neubauer

Plant Portraits

Rhododendron praeevernum



R. praeevernum. [Photos by the Author]

It was E. H. (Chinese) Wilson who, in 1900 on his first trip to China, discovered *R. praeevernum*, growing in forests at 5,000-8,000 ft., and introduced the plant to western gardens. From a particularly fine form of the plant growing at Brodick Castle on the Isle of Arran came the selection of *R. praeevernum* grown and distributed by the Rhododendron Species Foundation (RSF) in Washington State. The RSF Botanical Garden (www.rhodygarden.org) is home to a magnificent collection of choice forms of more than 500 rhododendron species, a must visit if you are in the region. Twenty years ago now I took possession of my first shipment of small rhododendrons from the RSF. Among this group of plants, and others that later followed, there were several rhododendron species that have gone on to be beautiful mature specimens. But a particular favourite for me over the years has been *R. praeevernum*, which should, I think, be more widely grown here. While many of the rhododendron species closely related to *R. praeevernum*, members of Fortunei group of rhododendrons, are not uncommon in cultivation in Nova Scotia and other cold-climate growing regions, *praeevernum* itself is much less frequently to be found.

At twenty years old, my plant of *praeevernum* is a compact umbrella-shaped, basally branched shrub of around of 6 ft. in height, well-clothed with oblong, lance-like leaves up to seven inches in length. Sitting on a small westwards facing bank on the edge of the woods, and overlooking an inlet of the sea some 30 ft. below, the plant remains serenely immune to the potential ravages of sun, wind, snow, ice, salt-spray, or predation. On 22nd December 2008 it faced its sternest test to date when hurricane force winds toppled a raft of 30 foot spruce trees on top of the rhododendron bed. With one stem splinted up, the result of a direct hit from a tree trunk, *praeevernum* emerged unbowed, scarcely a leaf out of place.

One of the great beauties of this plant in our Nova Scotia environment, and what sets it apart from other fine rhododendron plants that keep it company in the garden, is that it flowers very early, very reliably and prolifically, covering the plant with showy, open trusses of pinkish-white flowers, each with its distinctive rich purple basal blotch. Indeed, the name *praeevernum* means “before Spring”. In my garden, which is usually a couple of weeks behind Halifax, *praeevernum* flowers normally in the last week of April, at the same time as *Daphne mezereum*, the February daphne, and a week before those recognized early blooming rhododendrons, *dauricum* and *mucronulatum* hybrids like ‘Mahogany Red’, ‘April Gem’, ‘April Rose’ and ‘Isola Bella’. Last year, the unusually early Spring found the flowers of *praeevernum* open in the middle of April, and for the first time ever in all the many years it has been flowering for me the flowers were destroyed by the heavy frost that hit us so cruelly at that time. Hopefully, this is not going to be a regular consequence of global warming!

-- Anitra Laycock

Frequently Asked Questions

This is a new departure for our Newsletter. We plan to use several frequently asked questions in each issue. They will be directed mainly to our less experienced members, but we hope everyone will find something of interest. If you have a question, please send it to cmhelleiner@ns.sympatico.ca. Deadlines are March 15, August 15 and December 15.

What is a “Yak”?

To rhododendron people, the word “Yak” is short for *Rhododendron yakushimanum*. This rhododendron species is native to Yaku Island, Yakushima in Japanese. Yaku is off the southern tip of Japan proper; it is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. At sea level the vegetation there is a warm temperate rain forest, but at high elevations (1900 meters at the peak) it is much cooler. That is where the famous rhododendron is found. It has many features which make it a favourite garden plant. It is hardy in most parts of Atlantic Canada, it grows fairly slowly into a neat, compact bush, and once it reaches maturity, it flowers freely. In bud the flowers are pink, fading to very pale pink or white as they open. The leaves are a shiny dark green, with rusty fuzz (indumentum) on the under side.

In an effort to extend the colour range of the flowers, while retaining the useful characteristics of the Yak species, many hybridisers have crossed Yak with other rhododendrons. A recent book lists over 200 different Yak hybrids available commercially. Many of them have Yak as one parent. In others, Yak may be a grandparent, or even further back in the pedigree, but they are all commonly called Yak hybrids. In various hybrids, the flowers range from white to pale pink, bright pink, red and even yellow. Many of these are regularly offered in our plant and tissue culture sales.

In our garden we have among others ‘Wintonbury’, ‘Morgenrot’ (red), and ‘Golfer’ (grown mainly for its leaves), as well as ‘Mist Maiden’ (possibly a form of the wild species).

Lepidote, Elepidote –What’s that all about?

The lists of rhododendrons available at the sales of our Society are usually divided into lepidote and elepidote varieties. The words *lepidote* and *elepidote* mean “with scales” and “without scales”. They refer to the presence or absence of tiny scales on the leaves of some rhododendrons –small enough to be invisible without a magnifying glass. Why are those scales of interest to gardeners? In reality they are of little interest in themselves, but the two groups of rhododendrons differ in various other ways which help us to understand what to expect from a plant. The elepidotes (those without scales) are what we generally think of as typical rhodos. They are usually medium to large plants, with big leaves and flowers. Some well known elepidote species include *RR. catawbiense*, *yakushimanum*, *ponticum* and *fortunei*. Elepidote hybrid rhodos are among our showiest garden plants, such as ‘R.A.S.’ (formerly 72-2), ‘Nancy Steele’ (formerly 80-5), ‘Calsap’ and the old “Ironclads” so many people used to grow.

The lepidotes (those with scales) are generally smaller plants, with small leaves and flowers. The species include *RR. fastigiatum*, *impeditum* and *lapponicum*. Some of our most widely planted hybrids are lepidotes, including ‘PJM’, ‘Ramapo’, ‘Weston’s Aglo’, ‘Ginny Gee’ and ‘Bluenose’.

What are “Trace Elements”?

The labels on most commercial fertilizers show letters N, P and K, plus “trace elements”. N, P and K are the chemical symbols for the elements nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium. Plants require substantial amounts of these. One brand of soluble fertilizer intended for feeding rhododendrons contains 30-11-11 NPK, meaning 30%, 11% and 11% of each of these “bulk elements”. However, plants also require much smaller amounts of quite a number of other elements. The same fertilizer contains boron, copper, iron, manganese, molybdenum and zinc, in quantities from 0.33% to 0.0005%. These are *Trace Elements*. Why do plants need them? We know the answers for some of them, but not all. We do know that if any of them is lacking, a plant will sicken and eventually perish. But since the amounts required are so small, ordinary soils almost always provide enough to satisfy a plant’s needs. However, when plants are grown in a soil-less medium, trace elements must be included in the fertilizer. Under ordinary garden conditions, the trace elements in fertilizers are just an unnecessary luxury. By the way, some of the trace elements do not dissolve readily in water. To keep them in solution, a chemical trick is used – a chelating agent is added to the mixture.

What is the Difference Between Azaleas and Rhododendrons?

Azaleas are a group of rhododendrons. They differ from other rhododendrons in technical ways. They *are* rhododendrons, but they can not usually be crossed with other rhododendrons. Some azaleas are deciduous (They lose their leaves in the fall and make a new lot in the spring). Our common native azalea, the rhodora is deciduous. It is not often grown in gardens. But *Rhododendron schlippenbachii*, the 'Royal azalea' from Korea and China, a superb deciduous azalea is very worthy of a spot in the garden. Hybrid deciduous azaleas in our gardens include the super-hardy Northern Lights series – 'White Lights', 'Rosy Lights', etc. and a number of hybrids with vivid yellow, orange and red flowers. *R. kiusianum* is an evergreen azalea from Japan. 'Steele's Late and Lovely' is an interesting hybrid evergreen azalea, with coral coloured flowers, produced as the name says, late in the season. John Weagle has been active in hybridizing evergreen azaleas, and has registered the pink flowered 'Scotian Mist' and 'Scotian Clouds'. Except for rhodora, all the azaleas mentioned have been offered in the sales for members in past years.

– Chris Helleiner

2011 ARHS Seed Exchange

Sharon Bryson ... Seed Exchange Chair

Welcome to the 2011 Seed Exchange for the Atlantic Rhododendron & Horticultural Society. We again wish to thank the faithful contributors who have made this possible. The overall success of our Seed Exchange depends upon seed contributions by our members, so please make a mental note to save some interesting seeds for next year's Exchange. There is always an interest in the Companion Plant section as well as the azalea and rhododendron sections.

Plant enthusiasts outside of our regional society have again made valuable contributions to our annual exchange.

Our list this year seems a bit scanty, so this reinforces the necessity for regular member participation.

The deadline for submitting the members - only order is Feb 28, 2011.

Please remember that the seeds go out on a first-come, first-served basis dependent on seed quantity. Get your orders in early and you have a very good chance of getting everything on your list. It is VERY helpful to list second choices on the order form. If none are listed, we have to make a small "editorial decision"!

We are again anxious to encourage people to try growing rhododendrons and azaleas from seed. Anyone who needs information on growing rhododendrons from seed is encouraged to check out the CD from the ARHS library. Online information is available at both the AtlanticRhodo and the Willow Garden websites.

To this purpose we are offering a FREE package of seed to anyone interested, whether or not you order any other seeds. This is noted in the seed list. Please send the order form and \$2 to cover postage in the usual way. If you need further planting instructions, please ask.

At the end of each Seed Exchange there are inevitably left-over seeds. We still have found no predictable or useful method to make good use of these seeds, but welcome suggestions.

Once again we will post the seed list on the Internet and insert many images and links to help in your decision-making. Check this out at <http://www.willowgarden.net> Follow the links for ARHS Seed Exchange.

A link to the list will be inserted on the AtlanticRhodo site. www.atlanticrhodo.org

The Seed Exchange will be open to "the world at large" after our Feb. 28 member's-only dead line, and will end April 30, 2011. Stories of your past successes and/or failures with seed growing are most interesting and welcome. Comments or suggestions regarding the Seed Exchange are also encouraged. You can send a note with your order or email willowgarden_ns@hotmail.com ☐

ARHS 2011 SEED EXCHANGE

INSTRUCTIONS

Seed packets are \$2.50 CDN each for collected wild, \$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 February 28, 2011.** Save this seed list for some of the footnote information.

Send all orders to: **Sharon Bryson, #407 Old Maryvale Rd., RR#3 Antigonish, Nova Scotia B2G 2L1 CANADA**
Please make your cheque or money order payable to 'Atlantic Rhododendron & Horticultural Society'. Add \$2.00 CDN for postage & padded envelope. Please list substitutes as quantities for some lots are small.

US regulations now require an import permit and a phytosanitary certificate. Seeds sent to the US will be shipped without a phytosanitary certificate and at the orderer's risk.

SEED LIST

DONORS: **BIR** - Jens Birck, Copenhagen, Denmark **CLY** - Bruce Clyburn, New Waterford, NS
COR - Wendy Cornwall, Halifax, NS **CRA** - Donald Craig, Kentville, NS **HEL** - Mary Helleiner, Halifax, NS
SHA - Ken Shannik, Halifax, NS **THE** - Kristian Theqvist, Finland **WEA** - John Weagle, Halifax, NS
WIL - Bill Wilgenhof, Antigonish, NS

Rhododendron Species - Hand-Pollinated - \$2.00

- 001 WEA *R. albrechtii* (very dark)
- 002 WEA *R. camtschaticum*, pure pink, large flowers
- 003 WEA *R. camtschaticum*, pink-purple, vigorous form
- 004 WEA *R. carolinianum* (Barbara Hall's best), sibbed
- 005 CRA *R. cumberlandense* 'Top of The Mountain'
ex seed collected wild, Georgia at 4,000ft.
* this is the best selection, orange/red, very late
flowering
- 006 THE *R. dichroanthum* 'Böhmen' †1, selfed †17

Rhododendron Species - Open-Pollinated - \$1.50

- 007 THE *R. ledebourii* †2
- 008 CRA *R. calendulaceum*
- 009 CRA *R. cumberlandense* 'Top of the Mountain'
- 010 WEA *R. oreodoxa ssp. fargesii* (Bayport best)
should come true, isolated and reluctant to cross
- 011 WEA *R. kiusianum*, mixed selections light pink, dark pink,
purple, lavender, red/orange, white. Fairly isolated so a
high percentage will be kiusianum itself
- 012 WEA *R. maximum* (Boulderwood red leaf)
- 013 WIL *R. maximum*, pinker form
- 014 WEA *R. minus*, Carolinianum Group, Bayport robust
ex Jackson's, isolated so should come true.
- 015 WEA *R. minus* x *R. carolinianum* ('Mincar')
- 016 WIL *R. minus* Carolinianum Group, pink
- 017 WEA *R. mucronulatum* v. *taquetii* Dwarf purple,
Expect about 40% true
- 018 WIL *R. mucronulatum*, pink
- 019 WIL *R. mucronulatum*, white form
- 020 SHA *R. schlippenbachii*, good pink form
- 021 SHA *R. vaseyi* - pink, doesn't cross with other species
- 022 SHA *R. vaseyi* 'White Find', doesn't cross with other
species

Rhododendron Hybrids - Hand-Pollinated -\$2.00

- 023 BIR *R. aureum* (Doi) x *R. macabeaunum*
- 024 BIR *R. aureum* (Doi) x 'Nancy Steele' †3
- 025 CLY 'Augie Kehr' x 'Nancy Steele'
- 026 BIR *R. brachycarpum* v. *roseum* (Doi) x
R. citriniflorum v. *haraeum*
- 027 CLY 'Catalga' x [(yak x lacteum) x 'Powder Snow']
- 028 BIR 'Charme-La' x *R. cinnabarinum* Roylei Group
- 029 BIR 'Charme-La' x 'Biskra'
- 030 LOO {'China Boy' x ['Nova Zembla' x ('America' x
'Mars')]} X 'Fireman Jeff'
- 031 LOO 'Cindy Lou' (Delp) F2 x 'Fireman Jeff' †4
- 032 THE 'Eino' †4 x 'Burgundula' †6 †18
- 033 CLY 'Golden Sceptor' x 'Nancy Steele'
- 034 THE 'Hellikki' †7 x 'Goldprinz' †8
- 035 THE 'Hellikki' x 'Matador' †9
- 036 THE 'Hellikki' x *R. ochraceum*
- 037 THE 'Helsinki University' †10 x 'Christian' †11
- 038 THE 'Helsinki University' x *R. fortunei* 'Best Form' †12
- 039 THE 'Mikkeli' †13 x 'Matador'
- 040 THE 'Mikkeli' x *R. ochraceum*
- 041 THE 'Pekka' †14 x *R. fortunei* 'Best Form'
- 042 THE 'Pekka' x *R. prattii*
- 043 CLY *R. catawbiense* "U.Paim" x 'Babylon'
- 044 BIR *R. sanguineum ssp. didymium* Rock#44 x
R. brachycarpum v. *roseum* (Doi)
- 045 CLY 'Russel Harmon' x 'Babylon'
- 046 LOO 'Sandra Hinton' x (*R. maximum* x *R. fortunei*)
- 047 CLY Steele white *R. catawbiense* hybrid x [(yak x
lacteum) x 'Powder Snow']
- 048 CLY 'Vinecrest' x 'Nancy Steele'
- 049 CLY ('Whitestone' x yak) x (yak x *lacteum*)

Rhododendron Hybrids - Open-Pollinated - \$1.50

- 050 WIL 'Peter Tigerstedt', OP
- 051 WIL 'Red River', very late red, *R. maximum* hybrid
- 052 WIL seedling from ARS92#608, aka "Ivory Cloud"
- 053 WIL seedling from ARS92#765, aka "Ruby Lemon"
(Janet Blair' x 'Barbara Cook')

Azalea Hybrids - Hand-Pollinated - \$2.00

- 054 CLY 'Gibraltar' x 'Balzac' (fr.2010)
- 055 CLY 'July Jester' †15 x (*R. cumberlandense* x 'Cream Puff') (fr.2010)
- 056 CLY 'July Jester' x (*R. cumberlandense* x *R. luteum*) (fr.2010)
- 057 CLY 'July Jester' x *R. mollis ssp. japonicum* (orange) (fr.2010)

Azalea Hybrids - Open-Pollinated - \$1.50

- 058 WIL ex 'Home Bush', ball-shaped pink trusses
Great performer - mid-late blooming
- 059 WIL Unnamed azalea seedling from ARHS'01#74
(*R. arborescens* x *R. cumberlandense*),
scarlet/orange, late
- 060 WIL Unnamed azalea seedling from ARS2001#539,
Late blooming pink, very fragrant
- 061 WIL Unnamed seedling from 'Homebush' x 'Mt. St.
Helen's', raspberry with golden blotch
- 062 WIL Unnamed seedling from 'Homebush' x
unnamed pink, red ball-shaped truss
- 063 WIL Unnamed seedling from 'Homebush' x
unnamed yellow, large peach florets
- 064 WIL Unnamed azalea seedling small yellow florets
vivid fall foliage (likely luteum mix)
- 065 WIL Deciduous azalea, mix - **FREE**

Companion Plants - Open-Pollinated - \$1.50

- 066 SHA *Aconitum fischeri* (a few only) blue flowers in
late fall, sturdy - Per
- 067 SHA *Aconitum japonicum*, blue flowers on arching
stems in late summer - Per
- 068 SHA *Actaea spicata*, creamy-white fragrant flowers
followed by shiny black fruit. Poisonous - Per
- 069 WIL *Aquilegia* sp. 'Irish Elegance' White with
green splash ~30" -Per
- 070 SHA *Anemonopsis macrophylla* Choice woodlander Per.
- 071 WEA *Arisaema ciliate*, burgundy striped flowers
topped by a whorl of narrow leaves
- 072 SHA *Callicarpa dichotoma*, clusters of tiny purple
berries in fall - Shrub
- 073 HEL *Caulophyllum thalictroides*, Blue Cohosh
1-3 Ft. - Per
- 074 SHA *Cimicifuga racemosa* 'Hillside Black Beauty'
(now *Actaea racemosum*) (Black Snakeroot)
Very dark foliage and fragrant white flowers
in late summer. 5'(1.5m) - Per
- 075 SHA *Clematis koreana* - Shrub
- 076 SHA *Clematis viorna*, small, thick, purple-pink
urn- shaped flowers Herbaceous- Per
- 077 WEA *Cyclamen hederifolium* (silver-leafed form) -Per †16

- 078 SHA *Deinanthef bifida*, Blue, 18"(.45m), part shade,
hydrangea relative - Per
- 079 SHA *Deinanthef caerulea* - Per
- 080 WIL *Dictamnus fraxinella* (Gasplant) Pink ~30"
Good foliage, handsome seed heads -Per
- 081 HEL *Disporum flavens*, Fairy Bells primrose-yellow,
pendant blooms on tall, 30-inch stems. Early
spring Per
- 082 SHA *Diphylleia cymosa* Bold foliage plant for moist
part shade. Small white flowers followed by
dark blue berries held above foliage - Per
- 083 SHA *Enkianthus campanulatus*,
ericaceous shrub, brilliant fall colour - Shrub
- 084 SHA *Gentiana asclepiadea* (WillowGentian) Blue
flowers, arching stems ~2Ft -Per
- 085 SHA *Gentiana asclepiadea* 'Alba' ~2 Ft - Per
- 086 HEL *Glaucidium palmatum*, Japanese Wood Poppy
White poppy-like flowers in spring - Per
- 087 HEL *Glaucidium palmatum*, Japanese Wood Poppy
Mauve poppy-like flowers in spring - Per
- 088 COR *Halesia monticola* (Mountain Silverbell) White
flowers followed by winged Fruit - Tree to 30 Ft.
- 089 SHA *Helleborus argutifolius* - Per †19
- 090 SHA *Helleborus foetidus* 'Wester Flisk' green flowers
very early in spring above evergreen foliage - Per †19
- 091 WIL *Kalmia latifolia*, OP pinks - Shrub
- 092 WIL *Leucothoe fontaneisiana* (Drooping leucothoe)
Handsome evergreen shrub, broader than tall
Small white flowers in spring - Shrub
- 093 SHA *Lilium candense*, red form - Bulb
- 094 WIL *Lilium martagon* White drooping recurved
blooms, earliest lily - Bulb
- 095 WEA *Lilium mackliniae* Pink, fading to white, ~30"
Plant deep, avoid drought - Bulb
- 096 WIL *Magnolia loebneri* hyb. ex. 'Leonard Messel',
pink, mid-sized Tree †17
- 097 WEA *Magnolia sieboldii* ex Korean plant h.p.
(selfed) white with pink stamens, vigorous -
Tree †17
- 098 WEA *Menzesia ciliicalyx v. purpurea* (dwarf form)
- Ericaceous shrub
- 099 WEA *Nomocharis maire* Heavily spotted, summer
flowering. - Bulb
- 100 SHA *Ophiopogon planiscapus* 'Nigrescens'
Black Mondo Grass makes a great groundcover
or edge plant for the border of a garden 12"+/-
(about 75% should come true) - Per
- 101 SHA *Podophyllum hexandrum* (Himalayan Mayapple)- Per
- 102 SHA *Primula viallii* Chinese Pagoda Primrose
Produces a stout 1-2' stalk bearing a mauve-
scarlet, rocket-shaped, flower cone. - Per
- 103 WIL *Rudbeckia* 'Prairie Sun', golden yellow with
green centre 24-30" - Per or Annual
- 104 SHA *Smilacina racemosa* (now *Maianthemum*
racemosum) (a few only) - Per
- 105 SHA *Stewartia pseudocamellia*, noteworthy peeling
Bark - Tree

- 106 SHA *Streptopus roseus* (Rosy Twisted Stalk) flowers bell-shaped, with 6 rose or white with purple streaked, recurved petals; early-summer. -Per
 107 COR *Styrax japonica* Slow growing, ~ 2.5 metres after 18 years, white bell-shaped flowers in the summer - Shrub
 108 WEA *Viburnum betulifolium*, spectacular red fruit, appears to be self-fertile - Shrub

FOOTNOTES

- †1. 'Böhmen' is pretty hardy and probably a form of *dichroanthum* ssp. *scyphocalyx*. Selfing should give variation as the orange flowered 'Böhmen' is a suspected hybrid .
 †2. R. ledebourii, probably selfed as it flowered earlier than other lepidotes
 †3. 'Nancy Steele', formerly BPT#80-5, yellow
 †4. 'Fireman Jeff' is ('The Honourable Jean Marie de Montague' x 'Grosclaude') dark red flowers
 †5. 'Eino' is a hardy Finnish hybrid with purple flowers.
 †6. 'Burgundula' is 'Azurro' x 'Blue Boy', cross by H. Hachmann.
 †7. 'Hellikki' is a Finnish red hybrid.
 †8. 'Goldprinz' syn. 'Goldschatz', good yellow, ('Festivo' x 'Alice Street'), cross by H. Hachmann.
 †9. 'Matador', red flowers, *R. griersonianum* x *R. strigillosum*, cross by Lord Aberconway.
 †10. 'Helsinki University' is a super hardy Finnish hybrid with pink flowers.
 †11. 'Christian' has large yellow flowers. Parentage ? Grows at Sofiero Castle, Sweden.
 †12. R. fortunei 'Best Form', aka 'German Form', found from Hobbie Rhododendronpark.
 †13. 'Mikkeli' aka 'St. Michel' is a hardy Finnish hybrid.
 †14. 'Pekka' is a hardy Finnish hybrid
 †15. 'July Jester' = (*R. prunifolium* 'S. D. Coleman' x *R. cumberlandense* 'Scarlet Salute')
 †16. Wash seeds thoroughly in soapy warm water, rinse, soak for 24 hours in lukewarm water, sow 1/4" deep.
 †17. Magnolia seed has been stratified. Store in fridge in plastic packet as received until March/April then sow in warm soil.

- †18. cp = Controlled Pollination, where stigmas have been protected before and after pollination. All contributions from K. Thequist are c.p.
 †19. Hellebore seed may take 6-18 months (or more) to germinate; however, if you start with fresh seed and sow it soon after harvest, then your chances of achieving high germination percentages are quite good. For example, sowing fresh seed in damp media at room temperature for eight weeks followed by a cool period in the refrigerator for another eight weeks or so will yield good results. We shall try to ship "treated" seed.

NOTES

1. Open-pollinated species, with the exception of a very few, may not come true from seed. Cultivars, with the exception of a few perennials do not come true. Plants from these seeds should be labelled as being "ex" that species or cultivar.
2. The 2011 Seed List will be posted on the Internet with insertion of images and links to help in your decision-making.
<http://www.willowgarden.net> Follow the links for ARHS Seed Exchange. A link to the list will be inserted on the Atlantic Rhodo site. www.atlanticrhodo.org
3. Also see the ARHS website for an article on growing rhododendrons from seed.
4. When sowing rhododendrons on peat we recommend you sterilize it first. Microwave it for 15 minutes or pour boiling water through it several times. Allow to cool.
5. 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. Seed of uncommon trees, shrubs and perennials is always most welcome. ☐

President's Report 2009 — 2010

By Ruth Jackson, President ARHS

The Atlantic Rhododendron and Horticultural Society (ARHS) had a successful 2009-2010. A total of 233 individuals and institutions are members. Our members had the opportunity to enjoy the club's many activities such as the lectures at the monthly meetings between September and May. For details see the program for the monthly meetings included at the end of this summary. The 23rd Annual Steele lectures were given by Ron Rabideau. Ron talked about the best new and old hybrid rhododendrons, as well as his plant expeditions in China and his breeding work at his Rare Find Nursery in New Jersey.

The society provides several ways of obtaining plants including seed and cutting exchanges. The tissue culture and plant sales are enthusiastically supported by the members. The club ordered and distributed 1200 tissue culture plants supervised by Audrey Fralic. Ken Shannik and Donna and Duff Evers, provided the leadership for the members and public plant sales.

This year the garden tour was on the south shore. The tour began on the outskirts of Liverpool with the dedication of Pine Grove Park to Dick Steele. The plaque reads as follows "Pine Grove Park dedicated in Memory of Captain Richard M. Steele. Bowater Mersey Paper Company Ltd created Pine Grove Park in 1987 as forest garden to commemorate Queen County's year as the "Forestry Capital of Canada".

Captain Richard M. Steele, Canada's "Captain Rhododendron" became Pine Grove's foremost adviser, benefactor, and supporter. He selected most of the rhododendrons, azaleas and magnolias planted throughout this park, among them plants of his own breeding, many of which he donated. Over more than two decades Dick cultivated as many wonderful friends of Pine Grove as he contributed spectacular plants. They continue to support the Park.

Captain Steele died on March 14, 2010 at the age of 94.

In June 2010 amid the Spring profusion of bloom and among his friends in the ARHS, Bowater Mersey dedicated the Pine Grove Park in Captain Steele's Memory. Captain Steele believed passionately that gardens hold the power to soothe the human spirit.

"May your time in this special be a time of peace."

The azalea beds were particularly stunning during the dedication and are shown on the homepage of the ARHS website.

The gardens on the June tour continue to inspire, teach and open the eyes of our members to the many possibilities for creating unique gardens in our region. The rain did not dampen the enthusiastic tour participants. The pot luck was held at Audrey Fralic's home and garden. The selection of food was particularly good and generous this year.

The ARHS has a popular newsletter that is sent to the members three times a year (February, May and October). It carries news on upcoming events as well articles on gardens, plant portraits, book reviews and much more. The ARHS also has a website <http://www.atlanticrhodo.org/> with a variety of information including but not limited to: a calendar of the ARHS events, how to join, when and where the meetings take place, a list of proven performers and bloom dates for the region. The ARHS has a library for its members. The complete list can be found on the website.

Our society has outreach projects. On Saturday April 24 it refurbished a rhododendron planting at Regatta Point. The planting had been established by the late John Meagher, a dedicated member of our Society, and a holder of the American Rhododendron's Society (ARS) Bronze Medal in 1999. This year the Japanese knotweed was

attacked, and more rhododendrons and azaleas were planted. Several individuals living near the planting thanked the volunteers for their efforts.

ARHS gave financial support to two students one at the Nova Scotia Agricultural College, Heather Spurrell and the other at Kingstec, Annie Jivalian. The scholarships are called the Passionate Plant Person awards. The amount has been increased from \$500 to \$750.

Fifty-three members of our society have completed a survey that has been input into Geographic Information System to plot the location and success rate of the plants that we acquired through the society. Dr. Bob Maher of the Centre of Geographic Sciences is providing technical support and expertise for the project.

Our society, one of the three clubs (Niagara, Toronto and ARHS that also form the Rhododendron Society of Canada) that make up District 12 of the American Rhododendron Society (ARS) is providing a District Director Anitra Laycock for a term. This role will revolve through each of the clubs in turn. Our club's tenure will come to an end at the Spring 2011 meeting. The District 12 Directorship will then rotate to Niagara Chapter - then in three years to Toronto Chapter.

I would like to thank the executive and the many volunteers for their support and enabling of our many activities for the enjoyment of all the clubs members.

Program for the monthly meetings:

Tuesday Sept. 1	Lloyd Mapplebeck: Designing Perennial Borders. Lloyd is the owner of Hill'n'dale Nurseries and has extensive experience in designing borders with zap.
Tuesday Oct. 6	Steele Lecture. Ron Rabideau; Searching for the Best. Ron will talk about the best new and old hybrid rhodos, as well as his plant expeditions in China and his breeding work at his Rare Find Nursery in New Jersey.
Tuesday Nov. 30	Philip MacDougall A former member now living on the west coast, will return to speak. Always a blast!
Tuesday Jan. 5	Jeff Morton. Jeff Morton will speak on Diseases and Pruning of Ornamental Evergreens. Jeff is an instructor at the Agricultural College and gave this very informative talk during our spring workshop last year. Here he will be able to reach a wide audience.
Tuesday Feb. 2	Jeremy Lund. Jeremy Lund will speak on Green Roofs. Architects these days are using the roofs of buildings and even their walls to create green spaces. Jeremy will inform us of some aspects of this most timely subject.
Tuesday Mar. 2	Bob Howard. Bob Howard will talk on Garden Design. Bob is a member and a garden designer who recently moved here from Colorado. He will speak on how he makes gardens and the challenges of moving to a new locale.
Tuesday Apr. 6	Discussion and question Forum. Several of our members will make up a panel and will try to answer any questions you may want to put to them. We have a lot of expertise in the Society and it may be a good opportunity for you to clarify some horticultural problem you have. ☺

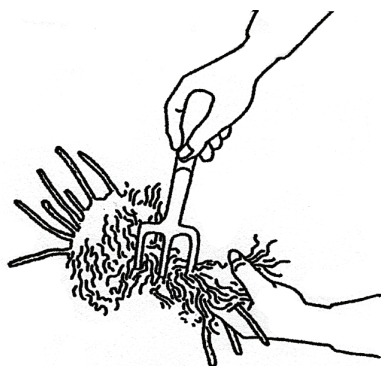
Making More and Still More – Easy Propagation Techniques – Part I

By Jenny Sandison

One thing I have come to value when making or changing parts of my garden is getting the ground covered. Bare soil will be a mass of weed seedlings in ten days if the soil is workable and the air temperature mild. Covering the ground with mulch will prevent most weed seeds from germinating, but I want my ground to be productive, to be full of beautiful and interesting plants. If the new bit of ground is only modest in size it will still cost a considerable amount of money to plant completely. Spreading some of your existing plants around can go a long way to covering the ground and preventing the weeds from taking over.



Even if in the end you remove some of the common plants from the new planting it will always look fuller in the short run if you cover the ground. I have one perennial, *Coreopsis* 'Moonbeam' which is low, covered in pale yellow daisies for weeks, and makes for a great edging plant. I can divide a mature plant and make a mass of divisions and they will give a great show their first year and make that new planting quite lovely.



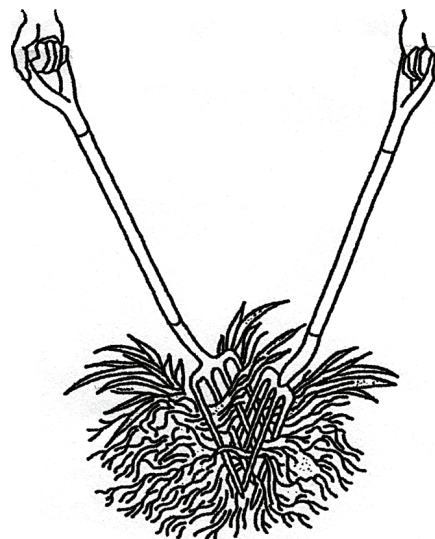
Division

This simple technique can give you dozens of extra plants. Usually this is best done in the early spring before the plant has really got going but as long as it is showing some growing points. Dig the perennial up getting most of the root structure with it. Now you have to break it apart. Some small perennials such

as primroses can be broken into pieces with your hands. Some which have a stronger root system may need a hand fork or knife to cut through the roots. Don't be timid. As long as the pieces have a good bit of root attached, and you plant them properly, spreading the roots out and keeping them watered for a few weeks, they will flourish.

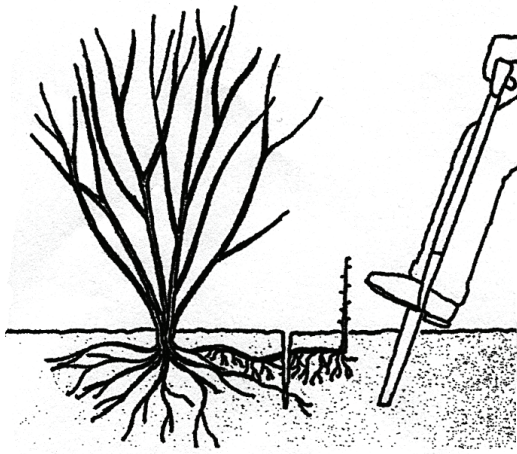
However some perennials are larger, have a stronger root system, and you need to be more aggressive. Here again I would dig the whole root-ball up and lay it on the ground. Insert a garden fork through the root-ball using your weight through your foot on the fork. Insert another fork back to back, as per the diagram, and then you can use the handles of the forks to rip the root-ball apart. If it is a large plant you may be able to get up to ten new plants from the old one. Over the years perennials get quite woody in the centre of the plant. We are advised to discard this part of the new little divisions, though I confess I don't really bother about that very much.

You may eventually find that some plants have a root system which is extraordinarily tough. Hostas fall into this category and I think many of us have wrestled with them. The concept remains the same. Dig up the whole plant and put it on a flat surface so you can really get at it. Some people have resorted to taking an axe to the roots of hostas! That may sound draconian but the plant will survive. You may destroy a few of the growing points on the new plant but as you are giving it new ground and more space it will quickly overcome the insult.



Shrubs can also be divided if they are the kind that sends out underground shoots, called suckers. Lilacs do this and red-stemmed dogwoods. When dealing with shrubs, division is best done in spring before the leaves of the shrubs have opened. Choose a healthy sucker that has sprouted maybe a foot above the ground. With a sharp spade or shovel cut through the ground between the shrub and sucker. Dig all around the sucker and then dig it

up, taking care to get as many of its own roots as possible. Plant it elsewhere at the same level and keep watered until established.



Sometimes, for quickness, you can make a division by just using a spade to cut a piece of the root ball off the mother plant without lifting it from the ground. This is particularly useful if your friend is admiring a plant and you want to give them a piece and do it before you forget. In this case I often will cut a piece out like I would a wedge-shaped piece of pie.

One of the most difficult plants I have ever divided is Yellow Wax Bells, or *Kierengeshoma*, a charming plant for partial shade, whose root ball is an almost impenetrable woody mass. A saw might be of assistance here, but I believe I managed by using the edge of a very sharp shovel to bit by bit cut across the root ball. *Kierengeshoma* is difficult to find in nurseries and very slow growing so having broken its roots into about eight different pieces I was delighted to think I could now have a drift.

We are often advised to plant in drifts, which probably means at least eight plants of the same thing in a long irregular group, and which might cost us \$100 or more. That is why we all get very keen on division! Your friends will also be very keen to get their hands on some of your more unusual plants and you can always sell them at the Members Plant Sales and use your profits to finance more adventurous gardening! Go for it! ☺



Viburnum tormentosum. [Photo Bob Pettipas]

A War Memorial Garden in New Brunswick

By Harold T. Popma



One of the Canadian corvettes of WWII was named HMCS “Sackville” to recognize the contribution made to the war effort by the citizens from this corner of New Brunswick. HMCS Sackville has survived and is on display in Halifax harbor. 2010 was “The Year of the Navy” and the Sackville Legion made plans to mount the anchor of the ship in the local Memorial Park.

When I was asked to plant a garden to go with the hardware it had the makings of a Perfect Storm: my grateful Dutch background, a place to plant rhodies and magnolias, and the memory of Capt. Steele, navy man and rhodie breeder. SRB, (“Sackville Rhodie Boys”...the three man local Rhododendron and Azalea Society), knew that Dick Steele would want to see, as he often said, “Rhodies and Magnolias all over the town”. The 60' x 20' plot in the Memorial Park in the centre of Sackville seemed like a good place to start.

The local garden club was willing to supply some money and digging/planting experience. In the fall of 2009, after the town crew removed the sod and went over the area with a tiller, we dug the whole area by hand to ensure good drainage. A couple of loads of compost on top and we were ready for an early spring plant.

Thanks to the Captain’s example and enthusiasm for propagating plants, from seed and through layering, we had plenty of plants to donate. Whereas I do not usually have a planting plan, this time, with twelve volunteers on hand and 46 plants, some organization was necessary to prevent chaos. Planting Day was May 2, 2010 and after four hours of work the mulch was spread and the garden ready for the official opening on May 15. The ‘Navy Lady’ rose was especially bred and named for the Year of the Navy, and they planted ten in the bed as well.

At time of writing, Jan. 8, 2011, all the plants have done well. Wind and dry weather during the summer were a challenge. Mulch, extra water and good staking were essential for survival. There was plenty of rain in late fall to ready the plants for winter. On last check before the first snowfall there were a lot of flower buds and no casualties. January lows have been down to “only” -12 C so far, although our usual deep cold snap that often occurs later in the month (down to -25 C to -30 C) can still be expected, along with nasty thaws. It is a good thing that nature gave the garden a good soaking during the fall and early winter.

The park/garden is located 5 minutes from the Trans Canada Highway...might be worth a look in the spring if you are traveling this way.

Thanks to Kathy Popma for help with the preparation of this article. ☐

Plant List (plant donated by HP unless otherwise indicated)

+ = plant grown by SRB from seed provided by Dick Steele

* = nursery stock

** = bred, grown and donated by H. Popma

T = plant grown from tissue culture

S = plant grown from ARHS seed exchange

Microbiota decussata (2) *

R. 'Buttercup' x 'Golden Lights' **

R. 'Barmstedt' (T)

Rosa 'Navy Lady' (10) *

R. 'Lola'

R. 'Richard Arthur Steele'

R. 'Northern Hi Lights' *

R. 'Pohjola's Daughter' *

R. #44 (S)

R. 'Roseum Elegans' *

R. *mucronulatum* pink form (S)

R. 'Haage' *

R. 'Ramapo'

R. *schlippenbachii* (seed from Sandy Burnett, grown by HP)

R. 'U. of Helsinki' *

R. 'Everestianum' (T)

R. 'Boule de Neige' (layering from local plant brought originally from Buctouche, N.B. by H. Michaud)

R. 'Lemon Lights' *

R. 'Olga' *

R. 'Mikelli' *

R. 'Capistrano' *

R. 'Golden Lights' x 'Buttercup' **

R. 'Grand Pre'

M. 'Leonard Messel' *

R. *mucronulatum* 'Dauphin' x 'Mahogany Red' +

M. *kobus* + (seed germinated by HP; grown and donated by Sandy Burnett)

R. *carolinianum* +

M. 'Royal Star' *

R. 'Orange Ruffles' +

R. 'Homebush' *

M. 'Anne' *

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Atlantic Rhododendron & Horticultural Society
Income Statement
For The Year Ended August 31, 2010

<u>Cash Inflows</u>	Actual
Memberships	4,262.62
ARS-CDA Rebate	732.00
May Plant Sale	24,760.92
Tissue Culture	5,173.55
Seed Exchange	652.02
Total Cash Inflows	35,581.11
<u>Cash Outflows</u>	
May Plant Sale	18,785.59
Tissue Culture	3,847.67
Seed Exchange	256.64
Workshop	
Social/Christmas	485.79
Auditorium	220.03
Administration	239.88
Memberships	980.05
Website	73.50
Newsletter Printing	1,973.78
Newsletter Postage &	1,246.97
Envelopes	
Programs	582.69
Steele Lecture	1,530.19
Library	
Student Award	1,000.00
Donations	
Miscellaneous	157.73
RCS/ARS	2,216.79
Outreach	99.10
Total Cash Outflows	33,696.40
Net Cash Inflow (Outflow)	1,884.71

Atlantic Rhododendron & Horticultural Society
Budget and Actual Comparatives
To August 31, 2010

<u>Cash Inflows</u>	Actual	2009-2010 Budget	2010-2011 Budget
Memberships	4,262.62	4,000.00	4,000.00
ARS-CDA Rebate	732.00	500.00	500.00
May Plant Sale	24,760.92	27,000.00	25,000.00
Tissue Culture	5,173.55	6,000.00	5,500.00
Seed Exchange	652.02	1,000.00	800.00
Workshop		1,200.00	1,200.00
Miscellaneous		100.00	100.00
Total Cash Inflows	35,581.11	39,800.00	37,100.00
<u>Cash Outflows</u>			
May Plant Sale	18,785.59	22,000.00	19,000.00
Tissue Culture	3,847.67	3,800.00	3,800.00
Seed Exchange	256.64	200.00	300.00
Workshop		1,000.00	1,000.00
Social	485.79	500.00	500.00
Christmas		300.00	-
Auditorium	220.03	300.00	300.00
Administration	239.88	300.00	200.00
Memberships	980.05	200.00	1,000.00
Website	73.50	400.00	400.00
Newsletter Printing	1,973.78	2,100.00	2,000.00
Newsletter Postage & Envelopes	1,246.97	1,200.00	1,300.00
Programs	582.69	1,500.00	1,500.00
Steele Lecture	1,530.19	2,000.00	2,000.00
Library		300.00	300.00
Student Award	1,000.00	1,000.00	2,000.00
Donations		1,000.00	500.00
Miscellaneous	157.73	500.00	500.00
RCS/ARS	2,216.79	2,500.00	2,500.00
Outreach	99.10	1,000.00	500.00
Rhodo 101		200.00	
Total Cash Outflows	33,696.40	42,300.00	39,600.00
Net Cash Inflow (Outflow)	1,884.71	(2,500.00)	(2,500.00)

**Atlantic Rhododendron & Horticultural Society
Balance Sheet
As At August 31, 2010**

<u>Cash in Bank</u>	50302.58
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Total Assets	50302.58
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<u>Equity/Surplus</u>	50302.58
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Total Equity	50302.58
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The 2009-2010 fiscal year for the A.R.H.S. was my last year as treasurer. I took over the position from Dexter Kaulback in 2003. It has been a positive experience and one that was quite worthwhile.

My thanks go to David Lacusta who assisted me over the years and my best wishes go to Jim Drysdale who will carry on.

Respectfully submitted

Christopher Hopgood



Winter Aconite (*Eranthis hyemalis*) [Photo Sterling Levy]

Our Landscape Challenge

By Ann Drysdale



The garden in December 2010. [Photo by the Author]

In the early summer of 2002, Jim and I, new to retirement, were heading east to a property we had purchased many years earlier as a well-treed harbour front 2+-acre lot. Many visits to the property occurred between the time of land purchase and the finalization of our building plans. During these visits some initial work was done to prepare the site, including clearing trees and establishing an entrance to the property.

In the planning process we were faced with many decisions about the location of house, septic etc. as there were streams of water running through the property, which needed to be considered. Several perc tests had been completed prior to the land purchase but with the formation of the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) regulations had changed from County to City. Inevitably the septic system was the deciding factor in the position of the house. A 1000-gallon tank and a pump up tank were placed adjacent to the house and the leaching fields off to the south part of the property – nowhere near

any of the aforesaid perc test holes! A 4" weeping pipe was installed between the leaching field and the tanks to allow a "dry brook" to flow during storms without harm to the field. With the requirements for HRM fulfilled, our landscape challenge began.

It should be noted that apart from a large outcropping of granite rock, the land sloped dramatically to the harbour. Before we left Mississauga, fifty-eight truckloads of blue rock had been dumped onto the site, mostly forming the backyard and allowing for the house to be built on a downward slope. We were fortunate to have only a small amount of granite chipping necessary for the foundation. The leaching field was seeded and the house started. We were subsequently told that many lovely maple trees were lost with the creation of the leaching field. With the house nearly finished and the rough landscaping done, we planted an Austrian pine and a couple of blue spruce, behind the leaching field to replace the lost maples. Now what to do with the septic tanks and the leaching field itself? The truckloads of blue rock would be covered with a small amount of soil and sodded to form what is now the backyard. The tanks were covered with enough soil to form an herb garden. All slopes were sodded with the exception of a section near the house cascading from the herb garden.

The sod on the leaching field was washed out the day after it was laid. Our landscaper replaced this sod with a "tear drop" of beach stones. This area of the leaching field and the accessibility to the tanks were to become our landscaping challenge over the next few years. As we quickly discovered we must also take into account the wind & rain from those howling nor'easters common here in Nova Scotia. Additionally, we needed to deal with various water flows, some of which ran between the large piece of granite rock and the leaching field, which became much worse during a nor'easter. We studied the situation over the winter months and drew the first plans. It should be noted that sod was laid in the yard and scattered seed was used on the leaching field well before the sod was laid; so they did blend well together, at least visually from a distance. I won't deal with what actually grew on the leaching field as its face got changed overtime. Things progressed nicely through the summer and we had a fruitful herb garden. Hurricane Juan came that September and other landscape plans for the property had to be developed but for now we will only deal with the septic system.

Our water problem persisted with water flowing from the area where the "dry brook" goes underground and over the landscape and past the herb garden. This flow of water took on the appearance of a river. We planted four arctic willows and some junipers on the apron of the leaching field. By this time we had covered up the grass on the face of the leaching field with blue fescue grass, some juniper, snow-in-summer and candytuft. On top of the field some variegated grass was added. The "beach stone" area, on the apron, was expanded; a bridge was put over the water problem area on the east side of the field.

Planting continued behind the field with more native spruce and maples, which we moved from other areas of the property. One thing hurricane Juan taught us was that trees, especially spruce, don't last very long when growing on granite rock. Consequently a lot of the spruce we moved came from atop a rock. Given spacing and a bit of soil, these trees flourished and are now meters tall.

Still concerned about the source of the water on the east side of the field, we decided to clear off the large granite rock and develop the area that lay below it. Over the next two years various attempts to bring this to a satisfactory plan for us were made. Clearing the top of the rock proved intriguing; and, it has now taken on a life of its own as our alpine rock garden.

We decided that the best plan for the area below the granite rock was to integrate it into the garden that existed on the apron of the field. Initially, we made this a terraced garden with a rock wall separating the levels, using rocks collected around the property. Although this garden was somewhat pleasing to the eye, water still pooled at the base. We went to work to dig a 50-foot trench, lay weeping tile, and cover with gravel and landscape fabric before re-sodding. The grass grew very well at the base of this garden because it was always wet! In desperation we removed the rocks that we used to terrace and used them instead to build a wall at the base of the garden. This wall is now two rocks high and transitions into some beach stones (formerly the "tear drop") where the willows grow. The beach stones have been drastically repositioned; and an arbor has been added to the bridge. We then proceeded to plant shrubs (evergreen & deciduous), tall grasses, perennials and some cascading ground covers. Dahlias were intermixed among the small shrubs to give a full garden appearance. Specimens in this garden were upright and globe cedars, spreading green & golden junipers, mugo pines, dogwoods and perennials such as daisies and *Echinacea*. *Dianthus* now cascade over the low level wall. By this time the face of the leaching field was taking on a new look and filling in nicely with blue fescue, snow-in-summer, cotoneaster, variegated grasses, spreading junipers and some ground covers. Although we have between 40 and 50 rhododendrons and azaleas on the property, only two are to be found in this area of the garden – 'Mandarin Lights' and 'Northern Lights'.

This garden no longer has a water problem at its base and many new plants have been added. And, of course in the coming spring, we will be re-arranging those new plants!! A crusher dust & stone walkway has been incorporated and provides a nice divide between the large granite rock formation and the garden planted on the apron.

The herb garden on the top of a slope that runs to the backyard has produced many annual and perennial herbs. The flowering thyme and stepping-stones separate the herbs in this garden. The slope cascading from the herb garden was covered with shrubs, which now cover the whole slope and are in need of trimming. Specimens on this slope are different types of spirea, nest of spruce, cotoneaster, spreading juniper and bearberry. To add color in spring and summer, peonies and roses are interspersed.

The herb garden has been modified to allow easy access to the main holding tank of the septic system (required for pumping out) and a box has been build around the pump tank. This box is filled with a small amount of soil (easily removed if required) and is conducive to planting heat-loving plants. This is also a great place for an early planting of lettuce.

Hurricane Earl and the subsequent storm that left over 120 mm of rain on the property proved to be of no consequences to our garden; and, we are hoping our water problems are solved. Refinements to this section of our garden will continue for some time to come.

The winds of the last two storms of this year caused three more trees to split and fall and the original Austrian pine to fall against a rock wall. Fortunately we were able to straighten and stake it. We will watch it closely through the winter. Our arctic willows were also damaged; two last year had to be pulled out and another lost a large branch in the recent windstorm. So, our challenge continues! ☐

The Back Cover: Hours of Sun

The maps on our back cover show the hours of sunlight in July in Nova Scotia for four years, 2007 to 2010. The colours are graded from pale yellow (highest number of hours of sunlight) through red to blue-purple (fewest hours of sunlight.). Many of us have found that we had a terrific budset on our rhodos this summer (2010), a summer with a high number of hours of sunlight in July, which, unless the winter defeats us, means a wonderful show of rhodo blossom in the summer of 2011. We also saw that we had a poor budset in 2009, and many fewer flowers in 2010. This also corresponds with the lack of sunlight shown on the map in 2009 (dark blue).. Again, 2008 had a very sunny July, and in 2009 we had excellent flowering.

This data suggests that the number of hours of sunlight in July has a strong effect on budset and hence flowering in the following year. Of course, we do not know if rainfall, temperature, humidity or other factors also affect budset. Nor do we know if the hours of sunlight in other months are also involved. Still, it does seem as if the weather in July strongly influences flowering the following year.

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M.H.



Magnolia macrophylla. [Photo Bob Pettipas]

