

# AtlanticRhodo

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

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# Atlantic Rhododendron & Horticultural Society

## Positions of Responsibility 2004 - 2005

<b>President</b>	Penny Gael	826-2440	<b>Director - Social</b>	Sandy Brown	683-2615
<b>Vice-President</b>	Available		<b>Director - Horticulture</b>	Audrey Fralic	683-2711
<b>R.S.C. (National) Rep.</b>	Sheila Stevenson	479-3740	<b>Director</b>	Anitra Laycock	852-2502
<b>Secretary</b>	Lyla MacLean	466-449	<b>Newsletter</b>	Mary Helleiner	429-0213
<b>Treasurer</b>	Chris Hopgood	479-0811	<b>Website</b>	Tom Waters	429-3912
<b>Membership</b>	Betty MacDonald	852-2779	<b>Library</b>	Shirley McIntyre	835-3673
<b>Past President</b>	Sheila Stevenson	479-3740	<b>Seed Exchange</b>	Sharon Bryson	863-6307
<b>Director - Education</b>	Jenny Sandison	624-9013	<b>May - Advance Plant Sale</b>	Ken Shannik	422-2413
<b>Director - Communications</b>	Mary Helleiner	429-0213	<b>May- Public Plant Sale</b>	Duff & Donna Evers	835-2586

## Membership

Fees are due on January 1, 2005. Annual dues are \$ 15.00 for individuals or families. Make cheques payable to Atlantic Rhododendron and Horticultural Society. Send them to **ARHS Membership Secretary, Betty MacDonald, 534 Prospect Bay Road, Prospect Bay, NS B3T1Z8**. Please renew your membership now. When renewing, please include your telephone number and e-mail. This information will be used for Society purposes only (co-ordination of potluck suppers and other events) and will be kept strictly confidential.

The Website address for the American Rhododendron Society is **[www.rhododendron.org](http://www.rhododendron.org)** for those wishing to renew their membership or become new members of the ARS.

*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.

Published three times a year. February, May and October.

### Editor:

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Cover Photo:

*Paeonia mlokosewitschii*. [Photo Leo Smit]



## 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.

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|--------------------------|--|
| <b>6 and 7 September</b> | <b>7:30 p.m. 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Steele Lectures</b> by Jens Nielsen  |
| <b>7 September</b>       | <b>7:00 p.m. Annual General Meeting of ARHS</b>  |
| <b>5 October</b>         | <b>Meeting:</b> Judith Jones "Fantastic Ferns"<br>Judith is an expert grower of ferns; she owns Fancy Fronds, a fern nursery in Oregon.  |
| <b>2 November</b>        | <b>Meeting:</b> Bill Wilgenhof and Sharon Bryson<br>"Growing Rhododendrons from Seed"<br>Bill and Sharon's garden near Antigonish, "The Willow Garden", is filled with rhodos in all stages of growth. They have been very generous, giving many seedlings to members. |
| <b>7 December</b>        | <b>Christmas Party and Members' Slides.</b><br>See Special Notices in this Newsletter.   |
| <b>4 January, 2005</b>   | <b>Meeting:</b> Wendy Cornwall "The Cornwall Garden".<br>See article about this garden in this issue.  |

**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 May 2004 Newsletter:

Cheryl Bridson  
Patrice Gibson  
Margaret Mulholland  
Maria Podor

Granville Ferry NS  
Liverpool NS  
Hubley NS  
Windsor Junction NS

# Special Notices

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## **Captain Steele Honoured**

On July 29, 2004, the Governor General announced the following award of the Order of Canada:

Richard M. Steele, C.M.  
Mahone Bay, Nova Scotia  
Member of the Order of Canada

For over fifty years, Richard Steele has made outstanding contributions to horticulture in Canada. One of North America's leading experts in rhododendrons and azaleas, he is renowned for having developed hundreds of new hybrids that can withstand Atlantic Canada's harsh growing climate. His infectious enthusiasm for rhododendrons and his willingness to share his vast knowledge have earned him the respect of plant breeders nationally and internationally. Bayport Plant Farm, his nursery of 30,000 ornamental plants, will be a living legacy for generations of Canadians who share his passion.

## **Honorary Life Membership**

The Executive of the ARHS conferred Honorary Life Membership on Jens Christian Birck of Copenhagen, Denmark. The Society's thanks go to Jens for his participation in and valuable contributions to our Society's Seed Exchange. Jens' contributions have given members a chance to grow some rare species collected in the wild and also some exceptional hybrid crosses.

## **20<sup>th</sup> Annual Christmas Wine and Cheese Party**

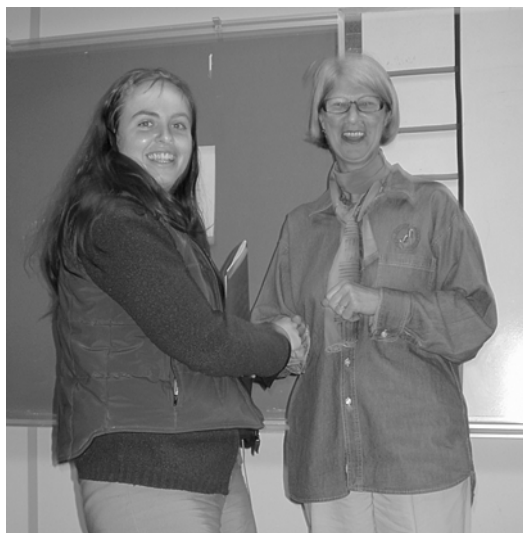
**Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History Auditorium  
7 December, 2004, 7:30 p.m.**

Come and enjoy an evening of good food, wine and conversation.

There will not be a speaker. Members are encouraged to bring a few slides of their gardens and interesting or favourite plants.

The Society will provide the wine due to Liquor License Board regulations. Members are asked to bring finger foods and sweets.

## ARHS Passionate Plantsperson for 2004



Passionate Plants Person Mandy MacLean receiving the award from Sheila Stevenson, past president. [Photo Tim Amos]

The Atlantic Rhododendron and Horticultural Society is pleased to recognize Mandy MacLean, as Passionate Plants Person for 2004. Mandy received the cash award from past president Sheila Stevenson, at the awards presentation for the Horticulture - Greenhouse - Nursery program at NSCC Kingstech in April.

“Talking about and knowing about plants is the one thing I don’t get tired of,” she told Sheila afterwards. Mandy says she chose the Kingstech program because she was looking for a hands-on experience. A New Glasgow-area native, her previous experience with plants included helping her grandfather in his vegetable garden and taking over her mother’s “abandoned” houseplants.

Eventually she wants to get into the design side of horticulture, having taken an introductory architecture course at Dalhousie. She would like also to have a little garden of her own. In the meantime, Mandy is headed for a summer job with more hands-on experience, working with John Dubé in River John, propagating and harvesting aquatic plants.

Congratulations Mandy, and best wishes from all of us in the ARHS. ☼

## Rhododendron of the Year: North East Region

By Sheila Stevenson

The American Rhododendron Society’s “Rhododendron of the Year” (ROTY) program is an educational and promotional program intended to keep rhododendrons in the public eye. By identifying proven performers in each region of the continent, the ARS hopes that growers and retailers will have plants available for the public for the year for which the selection is announced. Rhodos have been chosen for each year up to 2007, in order to give growers time to prepare for sales.

Since the original lists were submitted in 2000, the plants listed in the following table have been selected as ROTY for the North East Region, which includes Chapters in Districts 6 (Cape Cod, Connecticut, Maine, and Massachusetts), 7 (New York, Princeton, Tappan Zee), 8 (Greater Philadelphia, Lehigh Valley, Pine Barrens, Susquehanna Valley, Valley Forge), as well as Atlantic Canada and our sister chapters, Toronto and Niagara, in District 12.

The ARHS recommendations for ROTY 2007, by the way, which we made to the co-chairs of the ROTY Committee for the North East district, were

Elepidote: ‘Minas Grand Pré’

Lepidote: ‘Bluenose’

Deciduous Azalea: *R. vaseyi*

Evergreen Azalea: ‘Cascade’ (Shamarello)

Thanks to Audrey Fralic for coordinating our submission.

Year	Elepidote	Lepidote	Deciduous Azalea	Evergreen Azalea
2002	‘Janet Blair’	‘Mary Fleming’	<i>R. schlippenbachii</i>	‘Day Spring’
2003	‘Roseum Pink’	PJM Group	‘Homebush’	‘Hardy Gardenia’
2004	‘Nestucca’	‘Pioneer’	‘Crimson Tide’	‘Helen Curtis’
2005	‘Anita Gehnrich’	‘Aglo’	‘My Mary’	‘Rose Greely’
2006	‘Ken Janeck’	‘Manitau’	‘Gibraltar’	‘Red Red’
2007	‘Scintillation’	‘Windbeam’	<i>R. vaseyi</i>	‘Madame Butterfly’

## ARHS 2005 Tissue Culture – Advance Sale

It's time again to order your tissue culture plants for 2005. This year we have some new varieties and also some older ones that our newer members may not have. The cost to you for these plants will be approximately \$5.00. We try to keep the price as low as possible.

DO NOT SEND ANY MONEY WITH YOUR ORDER. YOU WILL BE BILLED WHEN YOUR ORDER IS PICKED UP OR SENT. (Special shipping charges may apply.)

These plants will be available for pick-up in early April. The time and location will be announced at a later date. All members will be advised of the date and location once confirmation is received of the plants' arrival date. In addition to your order you may also be able to purchase leftover plants if any are available the day of pick-up.

An order form is included with this newsletter. Please make sure your phone number and your email address are included on the form. If your order cannot be picked up in Halifax please indicate on the order form. Sorry, this sale is available only for our members in the Atlantic region.

Orders that are not picked up in Halifax on the pick-up date will be sent collect by the method indicated on the order form. Where shipping options are limited, the parcel will be shipped by Canada Post at your cost. PLEASE REMEMBER TO MAKE A COPY OF YOUR ORDER.

Please send orders to:

ARHS  
c/o Audrey Fralic  
RR # 1, Port Mouton, N.S. B0T 1T0      Phone 1-902-683-2711

Remember that these plants have NOT been hardened off. We recommend that you give them a good watering and pot them up in 3-inch pots. You can use a mix of one part commercial mix, one part peat and one part perlite. Wet this mix with hot water and mix well. Let cool completely before transplanting the little plants into it. DO NOT OVER WATER. Keep them inside under lights in a cool place until all risk of frost is past. (At least late May). In June, gradually place them outdoors.

Do not leave them in their pots. Plant them in the ground in a coldframe or some other well protected area. Mulch to keep the moisture and soil temperature stable and make sure they are watered as needed.

For the first winter provide some protection. Use a coldframe, burlap or conifer boughs and make sure you use some mulch. Do not use clear plastic as it will cause burning and may even kill them.

Good luck with your plants and make some notes on how they do. We would appreciate some feedback on their performance.

Happy Gardening! - Audrey Fralic

### **Rhododendrons** (all rhododendrons are elepidotes unless otherwise stated)

Variety	Hybridizer	Description
Capistrano	Leach	Outstanding yellow from David Leach. Excellent foliage. Grows 5'X 5'. Very hardy.
Henry's Red	Weston Nurseries	Deep red flowers. Blooms late May – early June. Extremely hardy with good foliage. Grows 5'X 5'.
Hong Kong	Leach	Primrose yellow flowers on a super hardy plant. Leaves are glossy green. Blooms early June. Grows to 5' and is hardy to -20F.
Janet Blair		Frilled, light pink flowers have distinctive green flare on the upper petal. Vigorous, good looking plant. Grows to 6' and blooms mid-late. Hardy to -15F.

Variety	Hybridizer	Description
Lemon Dream		Abundant soft yellow flowers on compact plant. Dark green leaves. Slight brown/orange indumentum on underside. Grows 3'X 4'. Blooms mid –late May.
Manitau	Knippenburg	<b>Lepidote.</b> Compact and sun resistant with dense medium green foliage. Prolific light pink flowers darken to deeper pink with age. Foliage turns bronze in winter. Grows 3'X3. Hardy to – 25F.
Mary Flemming	Nearing	<b>Lepidote.</b> Interesting plant with bisque yellow flowers streaked with salmon pink. Attractive foliage with good winter color. Grows to 3'X 3'. Hardy to -15F.
PJM Elite	Weston Nurseries	<b>Lepidote.</b> Flowers are deeper pink than PJM and blooms later. Very cold hardy and heat resistant. Grows to 5'X 5'; hardy to –25F. Blooms mid May.
Scintillation		Foliage is a deep shiny green. Flowers of heavy substance, pink with green and bronze marking. Grows 5'X 5'. Hardy to -15F. Excellent plant.
Yaku Princess	Shammarello	Apple blossom pink flowers with green spotting appear in ball shaped trusses in late spring. A compact plant grows to about 3 ft. Hardy to-10F.

#### Deciduous Azaleas

Arneson Little Gem	Arneson	Large soft orange flowers on an extra-ordinarily small plant. At 15 years the original plant is only 18"X 24". Great for the smaller garden. Very hardy.
Fragrant Star	Briggs Nursery	Bluish green foliage with extremely fragrant white blooms. Heat tolerant. Grows to 4 ft. Hardy to zone 4.

#### Companion Plants

Cimicifuga 'Hillside Black Beauty'		The darkest of the black foliated snake-root. White, fragrant flowers stand above the gorgeous glossy black-purple foliage. Blooms late summer. Prefers some shade.
Fothergilla gardenii		Choice low growing shrub known for its light honey-scent; white bottlebrush like flowers and brilliant orange-red fall color. Grows 3'X 3'. Award winner in 2002. Hardy to zone 5.
Hakonechloa macra 'All Gold'		Another fabulous Japanese forest grass with luminous, metallic gold foliage. Great with Kalmias and Rhododendrons. Hardy to Zone 6.
Halesia 'Arnold Pink'		This wonderful choice form of Mountain Silverbell has pink bell-shaped flowers in Spring. Stems and twigs also have a rose colouration – a striking winter attraction. Zone 6.
Phylliopsis 'Sugar Plum'	Starling	A superb little ericaceous plant with pink heather-like flowers which last for over a month. Mounding habit make it a wonderful addition to an alpine planting or rock garden. Grows 24"X 24". Zone 5.

# Message from the President

Just about a year has passed since we became "incorporated" as the Atlantic Rhododendron and Horticultural Society. It is true that this move hasn't changed the Society very much, nor did we want it to. As they say, don't fix it if it ain't broke! Most of our programmes and projects have continued in much the same way, and we are aware that for most of our members there really has been very little difference. However, we feel that the change has given us more control and clarity over our structure and role as an independent Society. However, our mission and intent is not only to be an "independent" society, but to also remain part of the larger "Rhododendron" society.

I will attempt to explain this because when talking to many members at our meetings it is clear that there is still some mystery surrounding our status.

When links were set up in Canada with the "Rhododendron" community, we became part of the Canadian Rhododendron Society. When a decision was made to join the American Rhododendron Society, the Atlantic Region pushed hard to also keep a "Canadian" link, and so we became one of the Chapters of the Canadian Region. (There are two other chapters in this Region, both in Ontario).

The advantages of this arrangement were that we had a "voice" and a link through the Canadian Region with the larger American Rhododendron Society, but did not have to incur the expense etc. of having to attend rather costly and time-consuming meetings ourselves.

The terms for membership as a Region in the American Rhododendron Society require that there be three chapters in the Region. A certain proportion of those members in the chapters were supposed to be members of the American Rhododendron Society, and a different fee structure was set up for them so that they became members of both organizations. (We then received a minimal amount back for those members from the American Society).

We have had far fewer than required members of the American Rhododendron Society for some time (?always?) and currently have "lost" more members because the fees have risen considerably. Also, last year we "separated" our fees from those of the American Rhododendron Society, compensating for this somewhat by creating two "new" memberships for the Executive in the American Rhododendron Society. (With the intention of keeping the ARS publication for members in our library).

The question is: "Where do we go from here?" Many of our members feel quite strongly that our connections with the ARS are invaluable and indeed one of our missions for the Society is to continue our "links" with the greater world of rhodophiles.

At our last Executive meeting we decided we should explore other possibilities for connecting with ARS. We cannot become our own "Region" because that requires three chapters. It also would require considerable resources that we don't feel we have at this time. We will explore our options over the coming year, but in the meantime, we continue as a chapter of the Canadian Rhododendron Society, and as such are part of a Region of the American Rhododendron Society. We will continue to purchase two memberships to the ARS for the Society, and individual members may wish to join (or continue to do so).

This year has seen us "grab" some opportunities to develop our "horticultural" status and to offer our help and expertise to the larger community. Hopefully these initiatives are only the beginning of an extended role for our Society.

I want to thank the very many volunteers who have made this year such a success. Once again we will be asking you to donate some of your time and energy and sign up to help on our various projects. We couldn't manage without you, but it is also a great opportunity for you to learn and share your knowledge. We have tried to identify the "tasks" under the different Directorial portfolios, in an effort to improve communications and clarify the structure of the present Society.

I look forward to seeing you all in September and to another successful year.

**- Penny Gael**



# Plant Portraits: Bulbs, Corms and Tubers

## *Arisaema*

As I was growing up in Bedford, I remember a large clump of our native Jack in the Pulpit (*Arisaema triphyllum*) growing on the west side of the house in the rich river valley soil. They were not exactly what you might call beautiful but certainly commanded attention.

There are about 150 species of arisaema, and those in cultivation come mainly from the Himalayas, China, Japan and North America. Most do well in rich moist soil in part shade, and some that might be considered borderline hardy may be wintered successfully by planting a little deeper and mulching well, or by lifting and storing in barely damp peat in the fridge.

In recent years, as I became interested in growing plants from seed, I decided to try to build a collection of the different species and since tubers of the more exotic species can run \$40.00 or more, this seemed like less of a risk although more time consuming. Seed is relatively easy to germinate after a week or so of soaking. The water should be changed daily as this washes away the germination inhibitors that a winter outside would do naturally. In order to get flowers sooner, I grow the seedlings on until they die back and then store them in barely damp potting medium in the fridge for two or three months. They are then brought into growth again for the second cycle in the year.



*Arisaema ringens*. [Photo Roslyn Duffus]

*Arisaema flavum* was my first successful attempt from seed in 1996. It flowers very young with a small square yellow spathe. This arisaema makes copious quantities of seed and produces offsets vigorously. You must be prepared to wait as it does not show itself above ground until late June or early July, so mark it well.

*Arisaema bockii* germinated in the spring of 2002 and flowered in 2004 after three growth cycles. A classic form of spathe in green and yellow stripes.

*Arisaema ringens* was bought as a tuber in 1999, flowered in 2003 and made offsets for the 2004 season, two of which flowered as well as the original tuber. This species is listed as Zone 7, so I have not taken a chance on wintering it out. Now that I have extra offsets I may try it under a good winter mulch.

I am currently working on getting *AA. consanguineum*, *japonicum*, *sikokianum* and *triphyllum* to flowering size.

## References:

Foster, H. Lincoln and Laura Louise Foster, *Cuttings from a Rock Garden*.

Brickell, Christopher, Trevor Cole and Judith D. Zuk, *Reader's Digest A – Z Encyclopedia of Garden Plants*.

Gusman, Guy and Liliane, *The Genus Arisaema*.

- Roslyn Duffus

## *Erythronium* 'Pagoda'



*Erythronium* 'Pagoda' [Photo Sterling Levy]

Depending on which reference you check, the genus *Erythronium* contains twenty to twenty-five species. Most are native to North America but a few are found in Europe and Asia. They belong to the lily family (*Liliaceae*) and have a bulbous root that is long and tapered like a fang. This likely explains why one of the common names is "dog tooth violet". The flowers may be yellow, white or pink. One yellow species, *E. americanum*, is native to eastern North America and grows wild in parts of Nova Scotia.

At present, I am growing two varieties; 'Pagoda' which is a yellow-flowered hybrid and 'White Beauty' a species selection. Both have their origins in the West. My first plants of 'Pagoda' were planted in 1984 and have multiplied steadily to form clumps that provide a welcome splash of early colour.

In spring, the bulb sends up a pair of shiny bright green leaves that are sometimes mottled or spotted with brown. The flowers are bell-shaped with the edges of the petals curved outward. There are only three or four blooms to a stem but they are held well above the leaves making a good show of colour.

Many of the species are woodland plants but my plants seem to tolerate a variety of growing conditions. I have them in partial shade under trees as well as in the open garden. They grow well in good humus soil with a reliable supply of moisture while they are in active growth. After they finish blooming and go dormant, the soil in some areas can get quite dry, but they don't seem to mind.

I have dug up and moved plants around but they tend to sulk for a season or two before settling in again. It is probably best to put them in a spot where they can be left alone.

'Pagoda' is commonly available and usually sold with the fall tulips and crocus. Examine the bulbs carefully. They can dry out quickly and start to shrivel; often they show signs of mould or dry rot. Most of the ones on sale locally last autumn were in very poor condition and I did not buy any.

The only problem I have had with pests has been from deer. I use hoops of chicken wire over the plants to keep them from being cropped. The bulbs can survive but you will lose the flowers for the year.

'Pagoda' does not set seed in my garden but various species are available from seed exchanges. Stored seed usually needs two cold periods to germinate and may take up to five years until their first bloom. This is a process that requires patience and perseverance.

They are very worthwhile plants for the early garden.

- Sterling Levy

## *Lilium nepalense*

*Lilium nepalense* is, as the name says, native to Nepal and northeastern India. We have a plant in flower in our Halifax garden as I am writing this. The flowering stem is slender, a little under two feet tall. It has a single splendid flower near the top, a nodding bell about five inches across with somewhat reflexed petals and sepals. It started out lime-green, fading to pale yellow, with a large, deep purple blotch inside. The pollen is yellow, making a nice contrast with the blotch.

We grew our first *Lilium nepalense* from seed quite a long time ago, and got it to flowering size after several years, but lost it after a couple of seasons, trying to grow it in a pot. Fortunately, two years ago, John Weagle gave us a bulb to have another try to grow this plant in our garden, though the books often say that it really needs a cool greenhouse. It bloomed in the summer of 2003, and again this summer, starting around the end of July. It has a strong desire to wander underground,

throwing up stems here and there in unexpected places. This year there were thirteen of them in addition to the main one with the flower, some of them more than three feet away. Eventually we hope that all of them might grow up to maturity and make a patch of flowering stems. What was the secret of our success? I can only tell you what has worked for us so far. The plant is growing in a raised bed, about eight inches above the usual level of the soil. The soil is a sandy loam brought in from a commercial source. It gets watered in dry weather. The site gets about half a day of sunlight, mostly in the afternoon. In the late fall we cover the spot with a generous layer of spruce boughs. When we take them off in the spring, nothing happens for quite a while – the plants are late to emerge. That's all, except for keeping an eye out for the scarlet lily beetle and spraying it with Safer's soap when we see it. We feel a certain amount of pride in managing to grow this supposedly tricky plant, and enjoy its dramatic, unusual looking flower.

- Christopher Helleiner

### *Cyclamen coum*

For many years we have grown the ivy-leaved cyclamen, *Cyclamen hederifolium*, formerly *C. neapolitanum*. It succeeded in both sun and quite deep shade, and was not fussy about soil. It bloomed late in the fall, later than everything else in our garden except the Himalayan gentians, with pink flowers which were miniature replicas of the giant greenhouse cyclamen. After a few years seedlings appeared around the plants, which seemed to be evidence that the plants were content.

After this success, we decided to try the spring flowering species, *C. coum*. In Britain it flowers in winter, and in Halifax it flowers as early as it possibly can, as soon as the snow (and ice) are gone and the winter covering removed. My records show it in flower on April 10. The bright magenta flowers of this cyclamen are not quite as elegant as those of the ivy-leaved cyclamen, but in early April, amid sleet and snow storms, who could possibly criticize it for that? The leaves of this cyclamen are attractive, dark green and rounded, and sometimes marked with grey or silver; once again, not quite as elegant as those of its ivy-leaved relative. They appear in the fall, survive the winter and grow on into the summer, when they finally disappear.

Unfortunately, slugs appear to like the flowers. Keep a careful watch.

Once again, encouraged by the success of *C. coum*, we decided to try another cyclamen outdoors. *C. purpurascens* (*europaeum*) was grown from seed and planted out in a shady area that had received a little dolomitic lime; it flowered but has still to survive an outdoor winter.

*C. hederifolium* is available from several mail order nurseries and possibly locally; *coum* can be found in at least one nursery in British Columbia; I have not found a source for *purpurascens*, which is why I grew it from seed.

- Mary Helleiner



(L) *Lilium nepalense*, (R) *Cyclamen coum* [Photos Christopher Helleiner]

## ***Crocosmia* ‘Lucifer’**

Years ago, when the Halifax City Market was located underneath the police station, one of the local sellers used to bring in cut flowers from her garden to sell, and I was always attracted to her small orange montbretias, (as they then were). I should have realized then that they were hardy somewhere in Nova Scotia. I used to buy bunches of the flowers, but it never occurred to me to try to grow them.

Then in the spring of 2003, I found a package of small dry corms of *Crococsmia* ‘Lucifer’ at a supermarket. (*Montbretia* had now become *Crococsmia*, a member of the iris family.). I planted them in a west facing raised bed which had been filled with a few yards of purchased soil. This bed received full sun for about three hours in the middle of the day and dappled sun in the late afternoon, and was watered from time to time. The corms, ten of them, all sprouted gladiolus-like leaves but only one flowered. But what a flower! The stem was four feet high and had twenty-four blazing scarlet flowers, much larger than the old montbretias I remembered. One friend compared it to a bird of paradise. In late November of that year, we covered the crocosmias, and indeed the whole of the raised bed, with a heavy layer of spruce boughs.

The following year, 2004, the plants had multiplied and produced ten tall blooming stems in mid August: absolutely spectacular! Most fortunately they had been planted beside a group of clear yellow daylilies which flowered at the same time, and these, together with a very dark cimicifuga to cool down the colours, made a very satisfying group. Late August is a slow time in most gardens, and crocosmias can go a long way to brighten things up.



*Crococsmia* ‘Lucifer’ [Photo Christopher Helleiner]

On the strength of the one flower spike in the previous year I bought three more packages of corms in the spring of 2004, this time in a garden store: one red variety, one orange and one yellow. They all grew, but none bloomed. I have high hopes for next year.

- M. H.

**HELP: We need more Plant Portraits. Wouldn't you like to see some new ones by new authors?**

In the February issue our Plant Portraits will feature Perennials: rare, common, unusual or beloved oldies. Please help with a Portrait or an idea for one. Contact Mary Helleiner, [cmhelleiner@ns.sympatico.ca](mailto:cmhelleiner@ns.sympatico.ca). The deadline for the February issue is December 15. ☿

## **Hurricanes and Other Hazards in the Cornwall Garden**

**By Wendy Cornwall**

*This spectacular hillside garden in Purcell's Cove is familiar to many members because of Wendy's and John's generosity in opening it for garden tours. It is located in one of the areas hardest hit by hurricane Juan.*

The summer of 2003 seemed to be ending on a high note. The very heavy bud set on rhodos and related plants was clearly evident, leading us to hope that a winter less harsh than the previous two would allow the promised display to materialise. Perhaps more satisfying, our routine garden chores were well in hand, thanks to the early start we had made in preparation for the YWCA garden tour. This happy state of affairs allowed us to contemplate the possibility of shortening our list of other garden projects; usually, we're

grateful if completed projects offset the new additions so that the list doesn't get longer. No one in the Halifax area will be surprised to learn that it was about to get quite a bit longer.

Hurricane Juan struck on the night of September 28<sup>th</sup> with enormous force in our area. The roar of the wind was so loud as to drown out any sound of the havoc taking place. The next morning revealed the extent of the damage. We

had lost about forty trees, many of them mature birch, maple and spruce. Some had fallen alone, others had taken neighbours with them, and yet others were snapped off several feet from the ground, like giant matchsticks. Only two ornamentals were down: a laburnum and, sadly, a *Liriodendron tulipifera*, which had just bloomed for the second time and was now blocking our drive. Almost incredibly, there was no damage to the house, cars, or to other plants, although some of these were thrown out of the ground as nearby trees were uprooted and some were bent out of shape beneath the branches of fallen trees.

Our new project was to rescue plants from such predicaments and to move others to create access for the removal of downed trees. In the sunny days that followed Juan, it was apparent that the garden was no longer a shady woodland setting for the plants that grew there. Our greatest concern was whether the sparse (or non-existent) soil could hold enough moisture when exposed to the sun, especially in the summer droughts that seemed to have become a regular event. Most of the trees were cleared away by mid-November, but it was too late in the year to do anything but wait for spring.

While we were waiting, a second weather event exacted its toll: on February 18-19 “White Juan” dropped close to a metre of snow. Not only was there a lot of it, it proved to be very durable; I think we had snow on the ground until the end of March. The heavy snow caused far more destruction to our shrubs than had the hurricane. Some quite large branches were broken off rhododendrons, kalmias and pieris. The greatest surprise was the extent of winter damage. We could not recall the weather being exceptionally cold, but there was a good deal of bud loss and leaf damage. This was not confined to ornamentals; it included native plants with *R. groenlandicum* (Labrador tea) among the worst hit. Also, deer had snacked their way through the garden sampling a wider array of plants than usual. It was difficult to judge whether the plants were stripped of leaves by the weather, or by deer (because of the weather). The worst affected were kalmias and a blue lepidote ‘Boulderwood Old Blue’.

The long cool damp spring caused the early rhodos to bloom late, overlapping with the mid-season bloomers. There was a lot of bud damage; many of the yellows and salmons—a Bayport yellow hybrid, ‘Goldfort’, ‘Marybelle’ and ‘Hello Dolly’ among them—failed to bloom at all, but ‘Hong Kong’ was better than it has ever been. The blue-flowered lepidotes were also flowerless. For the first time we saw bud damage to *R. yakushmanum*. Many evergreen azaleas were stripped of leaves, and more than a few of their branches killed. Despite all of this, the effect of the bloom was eye-popping. We have a lot of rhodos, many of them quite large, so the loss of a few flowers, even of entire plants, could not reduce the impact when the cool spring weather caused them all to bloom in unison. The effect was amplified by hurricane Juan having removed enough trees to allow a large area of them to be seen at once. Dazzling though it was, it is not an effect I would strive for.

The extra light provided by Juan together with our cool, damp spring and early summer have resulted in phenomenal growth of some woodland herbaceous plants. The ligularias are six feet tall, rather than the routine four feet they achieve in the usually dry shallow soil where they are planted. *L. stenocephala* wilts in the mid-day sun, but recovers by late afternoon, and both *stenocephala* and *dentata* have many more flowers than we normally see. Other plants have benefited similarly. There has been far more bloom on the iris beside the stream (which has flowed rather more consistently than we have seen in recent years), and better flowering of the many woodland plants we have collected, suggesting that they were in rather too much shade before. A good example of this is *Helleborus orientalis*; some of these plants are still blooming in mid-August.

The improved light and moisture have also promoted weed growth like nothing we have seen previously. There are many more weeds, both in number and variety, and they are very big. We cannot pretend to be entirely on top of the weeding this year; as fast as we clear one area of them, they are regenerating in another. But this is not all bad news. I think there must be plenty for the deer to eat in the woods,



The Cornwall garden before and after Juan. The same stone is marked with an X in each photo. {Photos Wendy Cornwall}

as they have done very little damage in the garden this year. Their favourite target for spring munching has been all shapes and sizes of hosta, which they reduce to uniform stumps along the sides of paths. This year, we have all sorts of hostas, some enormous, so large that they are jostling each other for space and threatening to smother other plants introduced to fill the gaps left when the deer had sheared them. Only recently have we seen some damage—each day a few more of their flowers are eaten.

Whilst we were able, with some help, to remove some of the larger roots left behind when trees were removed, many roots are still in place. These are now producing large crops of sprouts which are being relished by passing deer. The deer have so far left one such root untouched; the *L. tulipifera* has produced several strong new stems with leaves that are easily four times normal size, some being close to 30 cm long. When they fall, we'll select one stem in the hope that a new tree will grow. We have made a good start in replacing fallen trees. Downed pines, which were apparently very attractive to porcupines, have been replaced by Norway spruce and silver fir, which our experience suggests will not be troubled by the local wildlife. Other additions include hemlock, oak,

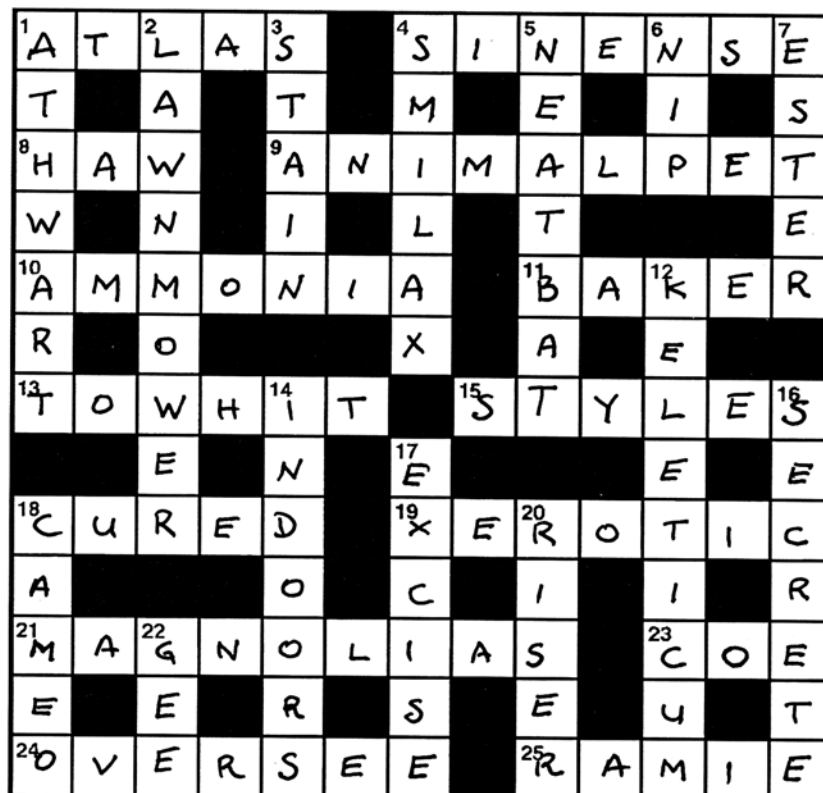
birch, catalpa and magnolia. In all, we have planted sixteen trees, although since most are small we must learn to garden in a changed environment.

Although it's now August, it is still difficult to assess the longer term effects of this series of weather events. This is largely because of the high levels of moisture throughout the spring and summer. For many years, we have had very dry conditions in the woods, both because of summer droughts, and because the large spruce trees sheltered many plants from lighter rains. Moisture came from the heaviest downpours and, because we are on a hillside, from run-off. During dry summers we had often pondered the question as to whether the shade provided by the spruce conserved more moisture than they extracted from the ground. The answer would allow us to better plan the garden. The shade has gone, but we still do not know the answer.

Currently, the garden looks quite healthy and very green, bathed as it is in fog for a good part of each day. The true test of its capacity to survive will come with the next summer drought. ☼

## Garden Crossword:

Here is the solution to the puzzle in our May issue.



# Introducing Species Peonies

By Leo Smit



*Paeonia veitchii* with a golf ball shown for scale. [Photo Leo Smit]

There are about 35 species of peony identified by various botanists and taxonomists, give or take several species depending upon whose treatment of the genus one wants to go by. The natural ranges of a number of the species are under pressure of one kind or another, and several are rather remote. They occur only in the temperate zone of the northern hemisphere, often at higher (subalpine) elevations; and only two are native to North America. The most recently published reference is that of the Czech botanist and seed specialist Josef J. Halda, *The Genus Paeonia*, Timber Press, 2004.

While the species peonies do not have the large spectacular flowers that gardeners generally associate with what I call garden peonies, they are nonetheless rewarding and still showy plants in other ways. Their attributes (depending on the species) include shorter stature; strong stems which stand through all weathers; interesting foliage shapes, textures and colours; simple flowers of clean lines, with slightly differing bloom times; lower maintenance requirements; and, in some cases, suitability for shady habitats. So they are, in general, excellent landscape plants providing interest from the first emergence of the leaves until late summer or well into autumn. A garden with a good selection of species plants and named cultivars will have peonies in flower for more than six weeks.

This is in some ways an exciting time to become enthusiastic about species peonies, as the habitats of many are in areas of the former Soviet Union and China which were essentially closed to the west until the early 1990's. Even now some habitats remain fairly inaccessible due to armed conflict resulting from the breakup of the USSR. The new accessibility of some species is accompanied by an element of confusion in nomenclature and lack of English-language reference materials and knowledge of the natural variability of the more wide-ranging species, but this enhances the excitement of growing a plant for several years before really knowing what it is you have!

Culturally, some of the species are quite easy in Canadian climates, while others are more demanding and provide a challenge to experienced growers.

## Representative Species

A few words on some representative herbaceous species: (photos and additional information about some species can be found at the Canadian Peony Society website, << <http://www.peony.ca/> >>)

***Paeonia lactiflora*:** This is the historical parent of the majority of named cultivars, descended through many centuries of selection and breeding in China and more recently in the west. It is also involved in the parentage of most of the hybrids. Fragrant and extremely hardy. The wild species is almost never grown, but there have been some recent seed collections from wild populations in remote areas of Mongolia/ Siberia/ Manchuria, where it grows in dry grasslands and scrub in the mountains.

***Paeonia officinalis*:** This species is native to woods, scrub and rocky slopes, mainly on limestone, in southern Europe, and is classified geographically into several sub-species. A number of named selections, including doubles of different colours, are propagated as cultivars, most notably cultivar 'Rubra Plena' which is a huge double very deep red. Flowers in the species are mainly shades of crimson, up to about four inches across. Foliage is attractive, with three terminal leaflets deeply divided into three lobes and tends to dormancy in early fall. Hardy in most of Canada, and fairly easy in good garden soil.

***Paeonia veitchii*:** A nice tidy plant native to alpine meadows, scrub and mountain steppes in north west China. Flowers are nodding and poppy-like, about two inches across, in shades of pink to magenta, sometimes white; with more than one per stem which makes for an extended bloom period; but nonfragrant. Flowering begins about three weeks before the *lactiflora* cultivars, but there is also a late-blooming form. Stems are strong and self-supporting, to about two feet tall but reaching nearer three feet in wetter summers. Foliage is mid-green, deeply cut and very attractive; on some plants the veining has an etched-like texture. Seed pods of some plants may be tinged with red, and the seeds are bluish while fresh. Quite hardy and easy to grow; suitable for rock gardens and borders. Subspecies *woodwardii* is similar but about half the height.

***Paeonia anomala*:** Native to coniferous woods, rocky hillsides amongst shrubs, and in dry steppe grasslands over a large range from the Kola peninsula (Finland) through the Urals of Russia possibly into north China (depending on which authority one follows), this species has the most



northern range of all. In some respects similar to *P. veitchii*. Flowers are borne one to a stem (sidebuds may occur in rare instances), upward facing, about two inches across, ranging in colour from pink (rarely) to deep magenta and with a silky sheen, sometimes white; nonfragrant; among the very earliest to flower except after warm wet winters, when it flowers somewhat later. Very sturdy upright stems, to about two feet tall but may reach three feet in deeper shade or during wetter summers. The foliage is shiny green and deeply-cut, the width of the segments variable from about a quarter of an inch to one inch. Illustrative photos are usually of the finer foliage and darker flowered form. Seed pods are hairy, the seeds black. Very hardy and easy to grow, with some shade tolerance and drought tolerance too. There are a few subspecies and they possibly overlap in appearance with geographically adjacent species.

***Paeonia mlokosewitschii*:** The golden peony. (Worth practicing to get the tongue around the name.) Native to sunny slopes in or on the margins of hornbeam and oak forest in a small area of the south east Caucasus. Flowers one per stem, to four inches across, in shades of yellow varying from ivory to butter-yellow but usually somewhere between; the best known or perhaps only truly yellow herbaceous peony; slight fragrance; blooming about two weeks before the *lactiflora* cultivars. Sturdy burgundy-tinted stems to about two feet tall. Foliage very attractive, emerging in burgundy and becoming greyish blue-green, with large rounded leaflets lasting well into the fall and gradually becoming lighter in colour. Interesting seedpods when open: satiny light red lining with small bright red aborted seeds and shiny black or blue-black developed seeds. This plant is traffic-stopping at all stages of growth! It should be growable in most of Canada provided it is irrigated on the prairies and is grown in a sandy soil in the Maritimes; however, there are perhaps some root divisions of non-vigorous plants in circulation. While *mlokosewitschii* is a diploid, there is a tetraploid species *stenianiana* which was apparently derived from it millennia ago and which is said to be worth seeking out, but information is only just becoming available.

***Paeonia tenuifolia*:** The Fernleaf Peony. Probably the most widely grown and available species in Canada after *P. officinalis*, although it is by no means common. Native to dry grasslands in south east Europe. Flowers one per stem, to four inches across, usually startlingly bright red but varying to magenta; nonfragrant; early blooming, about two and a half weeks before the *lactiflora* cultivars. Foliage is extremely finely divided, with segments from one to five mm. wide depending on the plant; bright green in the finest form. The foliage provides outstanding interest from emergence (when it looks like a critter from the pages of Dr. Seuss) until mid-summer or early fall, when it may go dormant, depending on location and climate. Should be fairly easy of culture in most of Canada, but is especially good on the prairies, while in wetter parts of the Maritimes imperfect drainage may cause problems. There are several named cultivars available, including double-flowered forms (at least

one of which is a few weeks later to bloom than the species proper) and a pink-flowered form.

***Paeonia emodi*:** A distinctive and attractive plant native to forest clearings in the western Himalayas. Flowers are a pure ice-crystal white, to about three inches across, and with sidebuds on mature plants. The flower is held high over the leaves, outwards-facing; height about two to three feet. Some descriptions indicate that it is fragrant. Early-flowering, and looks good with blue-flowered companions such as *Aquilegia* or masses of *Myosotis* (forget-me-nots). The delicately-textured foliage is light green, deeply divided with narrow pointed lobes, and with darker stems; the central veins are narrowly furrowed, with a pale green vein clearly visible. Seed pods deep red/brown. Given its origins and early emergence it may require extra care in siting in hot and/or humid regions; I find that morning shade is essential here.

There are several species of tree peonies which have also been eclipsed by more showy named selections and hybrids but which are now experiencing a surge of interest. The hardiest is ***Paeonia rockii*** (synonym *P. suffruticosa* subsp. *rockii*) although most of those sold under this name are probably hybrids to some degree. ☿

*Leo says he gardens casually amongst weeds in and around a small patch of woods near Mt. Uniacke Nova Scotia, which is in the winter snow belt due to the altitude of 650 ft above sea level. He operates El Summit Perennials Nursery from his backyard, and is working towards a special emphasis on species peonies. He is a member of the Canadian Peony Society, for which he runs a Seed Exchange, and is a focal point of sorts for the CPS Species Group. He is also interested in rhodos and has been trying to grow almost every tissue culture item the RSCAR has had on offer since about 1990. Other memberships are the Nova Scotia Rock Garden Club and the North American Rock Garden Society.*



*Paeonia mlokosewitschii* [Photo Leo Smit]



# ARHS and the Halifax Public Gardens

From: **The Atlantic Rhododendron and Horticultural Society**  
c/o Sheila Stevenson, Past-president, 17 Stanbrae Rd, Fergusons Cove. 479-3740

To: Robert Pace, Chairman, Halifax Public Gardens Foundation

Re: **Horticulture in the Halifax Public Gardens**

Date: June 11, 2004.

This is a copy of the document that we submitted to Colleen Mercer Clarke, Project Manager for the Public Gardens Restoration, Phase 1 on April 26, 2004 and to Peter Bigelow on June 10, 2004.

As you will see below, we are keen to participate in and to support a reinvigorated horticultural program in the Gardens. We look forward to discussion with you about how to do that.

## **Who we are and why we are interested**

We have a real interest in the horticulture in the Gardens. As members of the Atlantic Rhododendron and Horticultural Society, we understand what motivated Joseph Howe and other members of the Nova Scotia Horticultural Society to create the public garden in Halifax in 1836. Like them, we are plant enthusiasts and advocates, living in the same coastal environment at the edge of the Atlantic Ocean. We share a horticultural passion, and our mission is not dissimilar: to support and promote the development and exchange of horticultural expertise and material relating to the practice of creating and maintaining year-round garden landscapes featuring Rhododendrons and other plants suitable to this part of the world. Our membership includes Nova Scotians but also people from other parts of Canada, the U.S., and Europe - and some leading experts in horticultural matters.

The NS Horticultural Society wanted to demonstrate proper horticultural techniques and to make a collection of interesting botanical specimens. A public garden would accomplish not only these ends but provide an audience for their efforts as well. (This was, after all, a period in which education for everyone was a key issue, tied in with the amazing intellectual awakening that had started much earlier in Scotland and England.) During the last 50 years, the Gardens has been losing ground on these two fronts. Without a stellar and vibrant plant collection, well-grown in healthy soil, the Gardens falls short of the hype it is accorded as a gem and a showcase. Visitors to the gardens deserve to see trees and other plants that would knock your socks off. People should be exclaiming "What a beautiful specimen that tree is. " and "Isn't that a stunning plant!" and "I didn't know that plant will grow here".

There is no question that hurricane Juan dealt a vicious blow to the Public Gardens, but it has also provided the opportunity to revitalize the Gardens. The Rhododendron and Horticultural Society wants to work with HRM, the Foundation, and the Friends of the Public Gardens to restore the horticultural dimension of the Gardens, so that they once again demonstrate proper horticultural techniques and showcase an exciting collection of interesting botanical specimens, including trees, shrubs, perennials, annuals, and bulbs. That is our prime interest and area of expertise.

It's wonderful that the main gates are being refurbished, the canteen is being renovated, and the sad state of the pond and waterways is being addressed. (Incidentally, we hope in future the duck population will be controlled rather than allowing the ducks to control the pond and large sections of the Gardens.) We look forward to a reinvigorated horticultural program as well.

## **Here is how we see the issues and some strategies related to a reinvigorated horticultural program:**

### **1. To address the issue of sustainability and long-term health of trees and shrubs, and before any more planting is done, we would like to see**

- an action plan for restoring and maintaining the health of the soil. E.g. Close a different section of the garden every year for soil rejuvenation until yearly regular annual maintenance is sufficient to maintain same. Demonstrate use of leaves and compost to provide necessary organic material.
- a plant audit to assess the condition and the garden-worthiness of every plant in the garden. Garden-worthy, from our perspective, means plants that are choice, or new, or consistently good performers. The Gardens is a place for the extraordinary rather than the ordinary.
- a multi-year plan to reduce stress from over planting, respecting the needs of the individual trees and shrubs; include a plan for replacing aging and/or unworthy trees. New plantings should not threaten other plants.

- informed and responsible/empowered personnel who can see and will know when to curb plants, move plants, add or remove plants. Consider an endowment to fund a superb Head Gardener.
- duck control

## **2. To address the lack of interesting botanical specimens and good garden design that will exploit our particular climate and extended growing season, we see the opportunity/need to**

- select plants that demonstrate how to take advantage of the climate and growing season to achieve year-round interest and colour (winter and fall, as well as spring and summer), e.g. magnolias, winter trees such as witch hazels, grasses that provide fall and winter interest, as well as plants developed by local hybridizers and plants people, e.g. rhododendrons, evergreen azaleas. The Public Gardens could (and we say should) be a showcase for locally-developed hybrids as well as specimens that increase the gardener's understanding and inspire the imagination.
- develop and feature a dynamic border program that demonstrates current knowledge and interests to exploit our climate and extended growing season e.g. feature summer perennials like delphiniums which thrive in our climate and soil; imagine a fabulous bed of Meconopsis (blue poppies) to illustrate what we can grow here; use annuals to provide exciting colour displays that will change from year to year; add fall borders with late blooming asters and grasses.
- develop a propagation and distribution program to take advantage of the great plant stock that will be accruing in the Gardens to supply other gardens and public spaces in the HRM with seeds and rooted cuttings from the Gardens stock.
- provide year-round interest on the outside perimeter of the park with a great display of winter- and spring-flowering trees and shrubs as well as those with interesting bark and shapes which passersby can enjoy when the Gardens is closed for the winter
- choose trees that are great specimens
- be inspiring with the selection and arrangement of container plantings.
- provide educational strategies: an educational centre and meeting area, labelling plants in the gardens; do some interpretation with outdoor panels of the Gardens' history and mostly 19<sup>th</sup> century central features and trees (and not the recent spate of memorial trees): fence, bandshell, gates, pond, fountains.
- develop mechanisms and plans to work with partners such as the Atlantic Rhododendron and Horticultural Society (ARHS) and the horticultural program at NSCC Kingstec, in the spirit of the 20/20 Vision for the HRM and citizens, to pursue these restorative horticultural strategies.

### **What can the Atlantic Rhododendron and Horticultural Society do?**

Immediately and Shorter-term: Contribute expertise, for example

- Provide connections to horticultural and design expertise, both local and "from away". e.g. Stefan Mattson, superintendent of parks for the city of Enköping, Sweden
- Identify and source plant materials.
- Access donations of some excellent plants from retail nurseries and wholesale nurseries from the region and beyond.

Longer-term: depends upon what happens in the immediate and shorter-term ☞

## **The 2005 Seed Exchange**

*A look ahead to the 2005 ARHS Exchange and a look back at the 2004 Seed Exchange*

**Here we are in the autumn of 2004 and the time for planning, collecting, and cleaning of seed is upon us once more. At the risk of being repetitive, there are a number of reminders to pass on.**

First, we encourage more people to donate seed to the exchange... whether it is rhododendron, azalea or interesting companion plants. Even one interesting variety adds to the whole. Seed for the exchange should be fresh, clean, labeled and

sent to me by Dec. 15, 2004. (If you are unsure about cleaning seed, Bill has kindly volunteered to assist you with that task. Make sure your contributions are in a "leak-proof" envelope. That may necessitate sealing it with tape around the seams.)

Secondly, we would 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? We welcome suggestions anyone would like to make regarding the Seed Exchange. Any ideas regarding an effective way to make good use of what can be considered "leftover" seed would be welcome. We're still seeking feedback from anyone who has been growing seeds from the "exchange". Would you please contact me with some of your successes or problems you might have encountered. We think there ought to be some interesting stories out there. One important aspect of this information would be to give seed donors some well-deserved feedback regarding the fate of seed they gather and donate. We need to hear your questions, comments or observations.

You can contact me by telephone (902-863-6307) or email ([sbryson@ns.sympatico.ca](mailto:sbryson@ns.sympatico.ca))

The mailing address is

Sharon Bryson  
#407 Old Maryvale Road  
RR#3 Antigonish NS B2G 2L1

The 2004 Seed Exchange was a great success. We had quite a busy time dealing with the seeds and the orders. We had a few changes and some off-calendar items, but hope we managed to get everyone reasonably well satisfied. The opening of the Exchange on the Internet after our regular exchange resulted in some extra seeds being dispensed, but was not overwhelming.

We look forward to receiving the new seed lots for the next exchange.

Thanks are extended again for all the generous donations of seed. Remember seed growing information is available from past newsletters, the Atlantic Region website ([www.AtlanticRhodo.org](http://www.AtlanticRhodo.org)) and our 'Willow Garden' website ([www.infinitymedia.ns.ca/willowgarden](http://www.infinitymedia.ns.ca/willowgarden)). ☼

*Here is a little table of trivia from the 2004 Exchange.*

No. of Choices	No. of Donors	No. of Purchasers	No. of Pkts. Sent	\$ Value
158	18	43	610	\$1131.00

## Proven Performers for Atlantic Canada

The American Rhododendron Society Public Education Committee in 2000 asked chapters to compile lists of the best performing rhododendrons in their areas. Not only were these to be plants with good form, foliage texture and flowers, but also they were to be cold and heat hardy for the area and resistant to pests and diseases. The integrity of the lists is based upon the fact that the plants have proven their ability to perform well in members' gardens. The response to the request was overwhelming with almost all chapters sending lists. As a result, the Society and its chapters are able to make these lists available to the public to guide them in selecting rhododendrons that do well in their local area..

The chapters were asked to list ten each of elepidotes, lepidotes, deciduous azaleas, and evergreen azaleas, and where pertinent, vireyas. The Society now has a "Proven Performer" list of rhododendrons that do well in specific regions, along with culture tips specific to the area. The ARS Journal began publishing the lists in the fall 2000 issue, starting with District 1. The listing concluded in the summer 2003 issue, where the list of Proven Performers for District 12 was published.

District 12 includes the Atlantic, Toronto and Niagara Regions of Canada. However, **we have included here only the list for the Atlantic Region.** An asterisk (\*) indicates the name is not registered.

### **Elepidotes** (large-leaf)

'Bellefontaine' (Zone 6)

'Calsap' (Zone 5)

'Catawbiense Boursault' (Zone 5)

'Francesca' (Zone 5)

'Golden Gala' (Zone 5)

'Janet Blair' (Zone 6)

'Minas Grand Pré' (Zone 5)

'Roseum Elegans' (Zone 5)

'Scintillation' (Zone 6)

*R. degronianum* ssp. *yakushmanum* 'Mist Maiden' (Zone 5)

### **Lepidotes** (small-leaf)

'April Rose' (Zone 5)  
'Bluenose' (Zone 6)  
'Dora Amateis' (Zone 6)  
'Ginny Gee' (Zone 6)  
'Manitau' (Zone 5)  
'Olga Mezzitt' (Zone 5)  
'Ramapo' (Zone 5)  
PJM Group (Zone 5)  
*R. keiskei* 'Yaku Fairy' (Zone 5)  
*R. minus* Carolinianum Group (Zone 5)

### **Deciduous Azaleas**

'Cannon's Double' (Zone 5)  
'Coccinea Speciosum' (Zone 5)  
'Gibraltar' (Zone 5)  
'Homebush' (Zone 5)  
'White Lights' (Zone 4)  
*R. canadense* (Zone 4)  
*R. luteum* (Zone 6)

*R. molle* ssp. *japonicum* (Zone 5)  
*R. schlippenbachii* (Zone 6)  
*R. vaseyi* (Zone 5)

### **Evergreen Azaleas**

'Boudoir' (Zone 6)  
'Cascade' (Glenn Dale) (Zone 6)  
'Elsie Lee' (Zone 5)  
'Hino-red' (Zone 6)  
'Poukhanense Rosea' (Zone 5)  
'Rosebud' (Gable) (Zone 6)  
'Springtime' (Gable) (Zone 6)  
'Stewartstonian' (Zone 6)  
'Diamant Series, e.g., 'Diamant Purpur'\* (Zone 6)  
*R. kiusianum* - all forms (Zone 5)

Proven Performers: District 12 (reprinted in part from the *ARS Journal*, vol. 57, Number 3, Summer 2003).

If there is/are proven performer(s) in your garden not on this list, please submit information to Audrey Fralic. ☞

## **Photo Album**



Paying for all those plants at the Members' May Sale. [Photo S. Archibald]



Some of the folks who worked on the beds at the Halifax Public gardens. [Photo Christopher Helleiner]



Penny Gael, ARHS President, helping to clean beds at Kentville Research Station [Photo S. Archibald]



Don Craig, centre, shows his gardens - as well as its records, to Society members Chris Hopgood (who coordinated the '04 clean-up at the Research Station), Penny Gael, Sheila Stevenson, Stan Dodds. [Photo S. Archibald]