

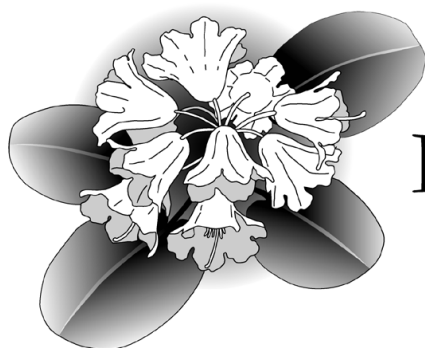
AtlanticRhodo

www.AtlanticRhodo.org

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Atlantic Rhododendron & Horticultural Society

Our Mission

ARHS supports and promotes the development and exchange of expertise and material relating to the creation and maintenance of year-round garden landscapes featuring rhododendrons and other plants.

Inside this Issue

Calendar of Events

President's Report Jim Sharpe

Trekking Adventure to Nepal Michael Dudeck

Spring 2025 ARHS Garden Tour

2024 ARHS Seed Exchange Sharon Bryson

The Miniature Maidenhair Joe Harvey

After The Vortex Sharon Bryson

Photos in articles are by the authors, unless otherwise identified.

Membership

Atlantic Rhododendron & Horticultural Society (ARHS). Membership renewals are now **due**. The current membership period is September 1, 2023 to August 31, 2024. The membership fee is \$30.00. For benefits and to download a membership form see ARHS website **www.atlanticrhodo.org**

American Rhododendron Society: ARHS is a chapter in District 12 of the American Rhododendron Society. Combined ARHS and ARS membership cost is \$84.00 Canadian.

An on-line payment system is now available on the society's website at: <https://atlanticrhodo.org/shop/>. You can also still pay by cheque, made out to "Atlantic Rhododendron & Horticultural Society" sent to **Jim Sharpe, 6231 Watt St, Halifax , Nova Scotia, B3H 2B9**. Payment can also be made by e-transfer to atlanticrhodo@gmail.com. Please include your name, address (with postal code), e-mail address and telephone number, for organizational purposes only

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

Interim Editor:

Jim Sharpe

Layout:

Sterling LEvy

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Cover Photo: R. 'Earl Cordy'. [Photo Bob Howard]



Calendar of Events

Meetings are normally held in the Nova Scotia Museum Auditorium. *Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History, 1747 Summer St. Halifax, Nova Scotia Canada*

The ARHS will continue to offer our programming by Zoom for those who cannot attend in person. Details and link will be sent to members.

January 2, 2024 @ 7:30 pm - 8:30 pm Interesting Plants, Roslyn Duffus



Come and join us for a presentation by Roslyn Duffus of photos of her most rare and unusual plants. Roslyn Duffus, President of the Nova Scotia Rock Garden Club, is a long time ARHS member. Join us at the Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History or by Zoom. The Zoom link will be sent out by email. For further information, contact Jim Sharpe at Atlanticrhodo@gmail.com

February 6, 2024 @ 7:30 pm - 8:30 pm Native Azaleas, Tara Spears, Jenkins Arboretum & Gardens



Tara Spears is the Curatorial Assistant at Jenkins Arboretum & Gardens and works closely with their Nationally Accredited Rhododendron Collections. She is also a graduate student at the University of Pennsylvania where she studies Environmental Science, and is conducting research with *Rhododendron smokianum*, a newly described species of Rhododendron in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. She presented at the American Rhododendron Society and Azalea Society of America National Convention in 2023, is co-organizer of the Early-Career Rhododendron Research Conference in 2024, and is co-organizing the Azalea Society of America National Convention in 2025.

North America is home to many native *Rhododendron* sect. *Pentanthera* species, commonly referred to as native azaleas. They are primarily found in the eastern United States, but can range from Canada to California, too. This presentation explores the different species, their ranges, and popular selections.

Join us at the Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History or by Zoom. The Zoom link will be sent out by email. For further information, contact Jim Sharpe at Atlanticrhodo@gmail.com ☞

March 5, 2024 @ 7:30 pm - 8:30 pm Namaqualand Superbloom, Freeman Patterson, Photographer



A few times each century the wild flowers of Namaqualand South Africa, experience a “SuperBloom.” Our ARHS rhodo gardener and landscape photographer Freeman Patterson received a phone call in June 2023 that it had been a wet winter in Namaqualand and a SuperBloom was imminent. A few weeks later he was on a plane to photograph this wonderful natural beauty. At our March 5, 2024 meeting will share some the images from his trip by Zoom. See -

<http://freemanpatterson.com/newsletters-SuperBloom-Oct2023.htm> and

<http://freemanpatterson.com/documents/newsletters/FreemanPattersonOct2023.pdf>

Join us at the Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History or by Zoom. The Zoom link will be sent out by email. For further information, contact Jim Sharpe at Atlanticrhodo@gmail.com ☞

President's Report

Jim Sharpe

I always enjoy the members' slide show at our December meeting and social and this year did not disappoint. I was especially pleased to view pictures from Nicole Lafleur of Sutton, PQ, the President of the Quebec Rhododendron Association and three sets of photos from New Brunswick: Ellen Ruddick from Shediac, new member Jackalyn Darling from Quispamsis, and Freeman Patterson from Shamper's Bluff. With Bob Howard's stunning Rhodos and Sharon Bryson's presentation on the impact of the polar vortex on her plants (see pictures in this newsletter) it was very inspiring to see what can bloom in our climate. We had an equal number in attendance at the NS Museum as on-line by Zoom, so it bodes well for future hybrid monthly meetings.

For future programs I have included information for our upcoming meetings: January 2 with Roslyn Duffus on “Interesting Plants;” February 6 with Tara Spears from the Jenkins Arboretum in Wayne, PA on “Native Azaleas;” and March 5 with Freeman Patterson on “Namaqualand Superbloom” which he witnessed last August. For April we are arranging a panel discussion on naturalization strategies. Arrangements are proceeding for the May plant sale as well. For our spring garden tour Freeman Patterson has invited us to see his 2000+ Rhodos and azaleas at his home and studio in Shamper's Bluff, on the Kingston Peninsula near Saint John New Brunswick.

Each year, the ARHS gives a “Passionate Plant Person” award to students in the two horticulture education programs in Nova Scotia, the Nova Scotia Community College, Kingstec in Kentville and Dalhousie Faculty of Agriculture Campus in Truro. I'm pleased to announce that the 2023 recipient for the Dal AC Passionate Plant Person Award is Ian Logan. Ian is from Saint John, NB and is enrolled in the Bachelor of Technology, Landscape Architecture program in Truro. The 2023 recipient for the Kingstec award is Jasmine, a second year Horticulture and Landscape Technology -- Operations student who has chosen horticulture after serving almost eight years in the Royal Canadian Navy.

Lynn Brooks, our membership director, reports that the new system on the atlanticrhodo.org website is working well with over 130 members joining or renewing. Thank you all for your commitment to ARHS.

At our November AGM the membership elected Judy Estey from Garden Lots, NS as our ARHS Treasurer. Welcome Judy to our ARHS Board. I am pleased to announce that Susan Hazelwood, who has extensive experience with the Dartmouth Horticultural Society and the Nova Scotia Association of Garden Clubs is also interested in joining our ARHS board to help coordinate the June 2024 garden tour to New Brunswick. We still need an editor for Atlantic Rhododendron as Dennis Steubing finished with the last issue. If you are interested please contact me at atlanticrhodo@gmail.com. ☞

I have just received a notice from David Griffiths that he is planning a three week customized trekking adventure to Nepal with Canadian Himalayan Expeditions to view the Rhododendron forests in bloom during March or April. If interested in doing the same please contact him at david.griffiths@dal.ca. It is being organized by Canadian Himalayan Expeditions ☞

Trekking Adventure to Nepal

Michael Dudeck

Canadian Himalayan Expeditions Ltd. has been operating adventure travel trips for over three decades. These adventures are all now all over the world, with our initial primary focus on The Himalayas. The Atlantic Rhododendron Society came to my attention courtesy of Mr. David Griffiths who has done a number of Himalayan adventures with our company.

<< In remote eastern Nepal, nestled in the foothills of the Himalaya, the Mike Danda region nurtures some of the world's most spectacular rhododendrons forests. There are over 20 different species of rhododendron to be found in the trek area, and forests should be in full bloom in mid April, the one time of year this trek is run. In addition more than 250 species of birds and many species of red-tailed deer. Although the rhododendron is under siege throughout the greater Himalayas, this area is still relatively unsettled and little trekked, and effort are underway to have it declared a national park. The trek is designed to explore many aspects of rhododendrons and cloud forests, but the dramatic fascinating villages makes this appropriate for anyone wanting a two week walk in Nepal. >>

We operate this trek on a custom private basis, for as few as two people, with up to ten participants. The itinerary is fully flexible, customized. I have attached the itinerary that Mr. Griffith will be doing this coming spring (2024) with a friend, and should anyone from your organization & friends wish to do such an adventure in spring 2024 in Nepal, I would customize a private adventure/trek with any dates, with prime season between mid March and end of April.

Don't hesitate to reach out to me with any questions. I have attached one picture to this email and a few more pictures on a separate email sent to you now. Feel free to use for any purposes. Should you have time to include the "blurb" above or similar with any picture(s) to the soon to be sent winter newsletter that would be terrific. ☺



Photo: Canadian Himalayan Expeditions Ltd.

Spring 2025 ARHS Garden Tour

The Rhododendrons of Freeman Patterson at Shamper's Bluff, New Brunswick

Freeman Patterson, an accomplished landscape photographer, photography teacher and ARHS member, has given several talks to ARHS (Monet's Two Gardens, April 23; Namaqualand Superbloom, March 24) and has an extensive collection of over 2000 rhododendrons and azaleas at his home/studio at Shamper's Bluff on the Kingston Peninsula near Saint John, New Brunswick. He advises that with moisture from the summer of 2023 he has the most extensive rhodo bud set he has ever seen which will result in a spectacular display in June 2024 as long as we don't have another "polar vortex" of sudden temperature drop which was experienced in 2023. Historically, his plants bloom three to four days after Kentville, so the best time to plan for a garden tour is June 10.

In past years ARHS has scheduled the garden visits for the weekend, but we do not want to conflict with the Nova Scotia Association of Garden Clubs conference in Yarmouth scheduled for June 7-9 (see <https://nsagc.com/>), so we are proposing Monday, June 10 for the visit to Freeman's garden. Those attending the Nova Scotia conference can travel to Saint John by the Digby Ferry, while others can drive directly to Saint John (about four hours from Halifax). We have made reservations for up to twenty rooms at the Quality Inn and Suites Amsterdam in Quispamsis, NB for June 9 and 10 at \$140 plus tax, for single/double which you must reserve directly by contacting Tina Waugh at tina.waugh@stayatchoice.com (506) 849-8055 by March 9, 2024.

Freeman can offer light refreshments for the garden visit between 10 am and 2 pm on June 10. He is also willing to welcome early risers to his garden for the best light of the day for photographing flowers is between 6 and 8 am. We are also working on arranging garden visits for two or three other gardens in the Saint John/Hampton area. Other sites to consider include Kingsbrae Gardens in Saint Andrews (100 KM), Fredericton Botanical Garden (80 km) and stopping at Corn Hill Nursery (between Sussex and Petticoadiac, NB) and Harold Popma's Rhodos in Sackville, NB on the return trip to Nova Scotia.

ARHS June Garden Tour Committee
Susan Hazelwood, Jim Sharpe, Jackalyn Darling, Freeman Patterson

2024 ARHS Seed Exchange

Sharon Bryson ... Seed Exchange Chair

Welcome to the 2024 Seed Exchange for the Atlantic Rhododendron & Horticultural Society.

The electronic approach to the Seed Exchange seems to work very well. The seed list and order form will go out to all members with email addresses as in previous years.

The Seed List will be posted on the Internet and will have a full complement of links to many images and information to help in your decision-making. The online version will have periodic updates on seed lot availability, so that version is best to check as time goes on.

Visit The Willow Garden website and follow the link for 2024 ARHS Seed Exchange. That link will be activated sometime in January, 2024.

A link to the list will be inserted on the Atlantic Rhodo site.

Electronic payment options will again be welcomed for this year's Exchange. This would be either an e-transfer or via PayPal. This is especially helpful for those out of the country.

I will accept email orders for this year's Exchange with an electronic payment. I would request you email the completed Order Form as an attachment. Try to avoid taking a picture if possible. I shall endeavor to make the online form fillable. The email address to use for both is sbryson@ns.sympatico.ca

Sending a cheque or money order and the paper Order Form is still an option.

The Seed Exchange had a modest price increase in recent years, which did not seem to adversely affect ordering. Strong support of the Seed Exchange has been helpful for the Society.

The charge for shipping is still \$4.00. This will hopefully cover increased postal and printing costs.

Our thanks go out to the faithful contributors who have made this Exchange 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 years’ Exchange. There is always an interest in the Companion Plant section as well as the Azalea and Rhododendron sections. Success also depends upon members purchasing seed. Many interesting plants can be added to our gardens by simply growing a few seeds.

There are many interesting species Rhododendrons, offering the chance to grow species that would not normally be available. They might also require some degree of “homework”.

The assortment of hand pollinated rhododendron hybrids is extensive and interesting. The keen hybridizers have been busy as “Bees”.

Our 2024 list will have several seed lots “recycled” from the 2023 list. The 2023 season was a challenging one for many. The extreme cold in February 2023 resulted in a drastic reduction in bloom. This meant that many planned crosses were unable to be accomplished.

That being said, there have been many interesting and unique contributions.

One example are seeds donated by Ken Griffith from North Carolina. Ken grew and hybridized Orchids for over 40 years. When he “retired” from that pursuit he became hooked on acquiring and ultimately hybridizing rhododendrons and azaleas. He has worked with several well-known hybridizers such as Delbert Brim and Marshall Stilwell. The aim was for better yellows but has branched out to producing reds. He plans to scale back his hybridizing and growing efforts and was kind enough to send seeds from many of his 2023 crosses of both Rhododendrons and deciduous Azaleas. The themes of red and yellow will be apparent in the crosses. Even though Ken lives in North Carolina, most of the parent plants also have reasonable hardiness which should be appreciated by our more Northern growers. Where possible there is a link to parentage information for some varieties which might not be as familiar. The quantities of seed are quite small but should be a treat for many.

We are also happy to have received seed from many of our faithful contributors from far and near.

The deadline for submitting members-only orders is Feb. 15, 2024.

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, I do make a small “editorial decision”!

In an effort to encourage people to try growing Rhododendrons and Azaleas from seed we are offering a FREE package of seed to anyone interested, whether or not you order any other seeds. These will be noted in the seed list. Please send the order form and \$4.00 to cover postage in your preferred way. If you need further planting instructions, please ask. Online information is available at both the Atlantic Rhodo and the Willow Garden websites.

The Seed Exchange will be open to “the world at large” after our Feb.15 members-only deadline and continue until April 30, 2024. Members can, of course, order at any time up to the April 30 deadline. Feel free to share the list with other gardeners who might not be members of the ARHS. Local garden clubs might find the seeds offered of interest. We have had orders from many places in the world over the last few years.

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 sbryson@ns.sympatico.ca ☺

Joe's Jottings # 20. The Miniature Maidenhair – a Treasure from Vancouver Island

Joe Harvey

I tell people that I live on a beautiful island in the Pacific Ocean, home to rare plants and animals some of which occur wild occur wild nowhere else in the world. This is true.

That this is Vancouver Island, a mere 460km long slice of rock but minute compared to the remainder of the Province of British Columbia, Canada, to which it is economically and politically attached. Hence it tends to be downgraded in importance. In fact it has organisms which hint at long isolation and ancient origins and biologically it is outstanding.

While gardeners and botanists may be jealous of the publicity and effort put into saving the Vancouver Island marmot, there are little-known flowering plants, lichens and ferns with a similar degree of isolation and rarity. Here I deal with the Vancouver Island miniature maidenhair fern, the smallest maidenhair in the world. There is enormous confusion around this fern and I emphasise that I refer to the plant as described by W. H. Wagner and named by him subspecies subpumilum. Most references on, say, Google are something else and not subpumilum. The entire group of maidenairs across North America needs a serious study. Here I deal only with this single rare plant.

What is the Vancouver Island Maidenhair Fern?

It is a low, compact fern with crisped fronds adapted to the exposed, windy and storm-lashed west coast of Vancouver Island, known locally as the "Wet Coast".

The official name is *Adiantum aleuticum* subspecies *subpumilum*. This mouthful may be translated thus: *Adiantum* from 'a', not and 'dia', through, referring to the incredible water repellency of the fronds; 'aleuticum', 'from the Aleutian Islands' where the first specimen was collected; and 'subpumilum' from 'sub' below or less than, 'pumilum' dwarf, thus emphasising the very small size.

Grown outside it is a hardy deciduous fern with little drought resistance. However kept indoors, particularly under lights, it becomes evergreen and this property may be used to hasten propagation.

The fronds grow tightly clustered 5-12cm tall, the latter height only reached after several years of cultivation. The clumps expand slowly. While it is too small for the fern border it shines in a pot or planted on the shady side of one of the Czech-style slab rock gardens championed locally by gardener Paul Spriggs.

How to Get One

Do not take the obvious route and rip plants off their native rocky outcrops. This is a rare plant protected (whatever that means) by Provincial Rare Plant Regulations. Fortunately Provincial Botanist Hans Roemer collected plants when he was employed by the Royal British Columbia Museum, where his pressed specimens are preserved in the Provincial Herbarium (V). These plants came from a population south of the original Wagner discovery on the Brooks Peninsula. I refer to this as the 'Roemer form' but it is probably identical to the Wagner form.

Hans also grew plants in his former garden and kindly gave me a specimen which I have propagated and make available either as divisions or grown from spores. Hence I conclude by giving instructions for growing plants from spores.

Spores are Fun

Spores differ from seeds in having no food resources. They have to germinate on a damp surface in light, form a flat pad of cells containing chlorophyll and have sex. The resulting offspring are tiny sporophytes which slowly grow into the mature ferns that we know. All that we humans have to do is provide a damp surface on which the spores may germinate and wait. The spores know what to do.

Required

1. Small, clean plastic containers, kitchen cling-film, rubber bands
2. Damp, sterile medium such as potting mix or your own blend of peat, Perlite or other, just avoid garden soil with its bugs, seeds and spores.
3. Spores. I provide packages of spores which may appear empty since spores are tiny. Do not open the packet until you have it positioned over the surface of your growing medium.

Preparation consists of putting a couple of inches of damp medium into your container and pressing flat. Hold your unopened spore packet over the container and open it. Spores are actually dense and will fall straight down, they do not float away as dust motes.

Cover the container with a sheet of cling film held in place with a rubber band. This forms a water-proof seal and no additional water will be required for many months. Label the container with the date and name of plant, then place on a north-facing window-ledge but not in the sun which will overheat it.

Within a few months a mass of tiny sporophytes will grow and when they reach about a centimetre tall, clumps may be dug out, teased apart in a saucer of water and plantlets or small clumps transplanted into a larger container (I use 4litre ice cream containers) similarly covered and grown on to a size large enough for potting up.

For the Impatient

Years ago I invented 'Joe's Cutting Cooker' as a means of rooting softwood cuttings of difficult to root trees and shrubs. This same system works with ferns.

At the heart of a JCC is an LED lamp of the kind that replaced the old 100watt tungsten filament lamps. The advantage is that LED's run cool and may be placed inches away from the cuttings/spores without damage to the plant while producing intense light which greatly accelerates growth. Avoid those commercial pinkish lights, they are not as effective. I use a desk lamp with a flexible stem to hold the bulb over the plants. I suggest people who have success with masses of sporophytes share them with others. ☺

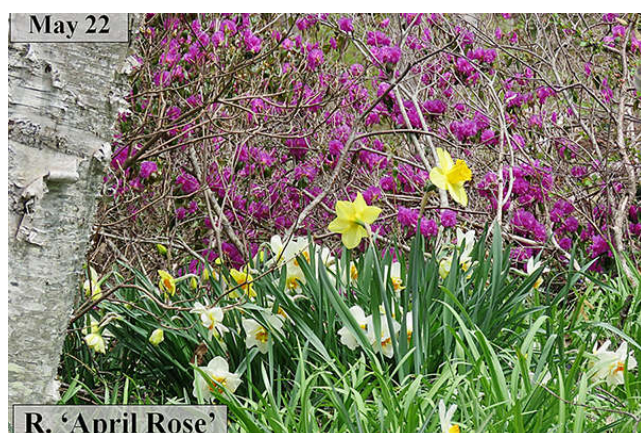
Canadian Himalayan Expeditions Ltd. Rhododendron Adventure

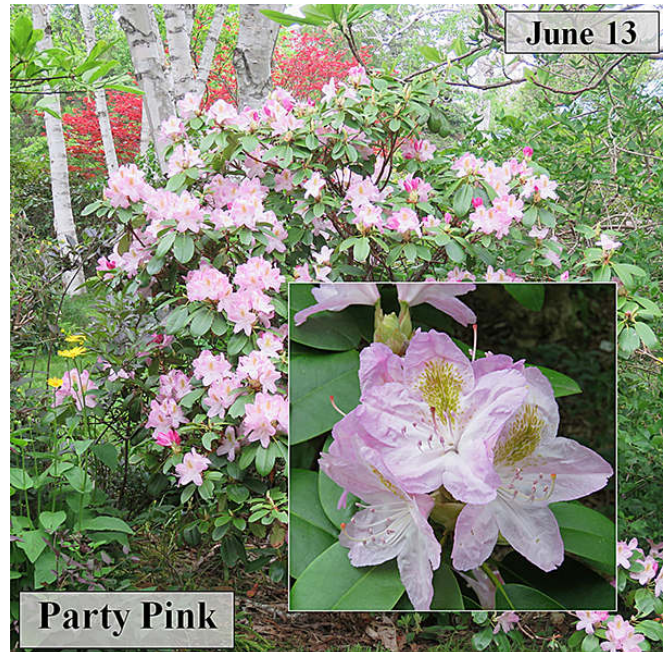
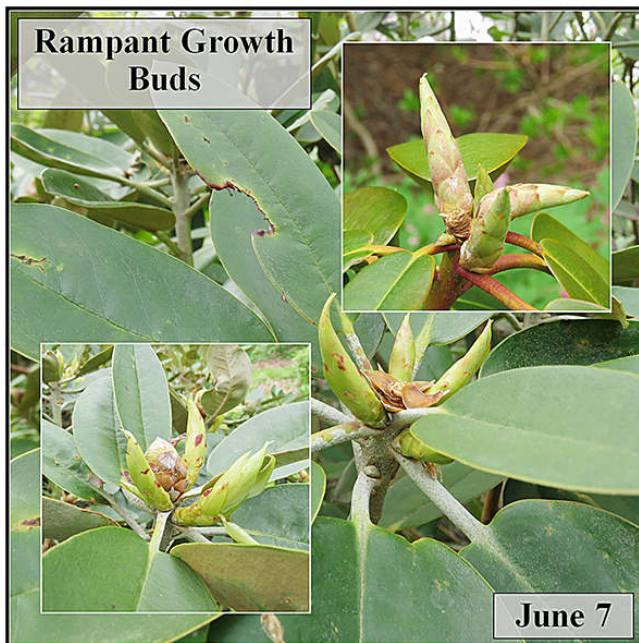


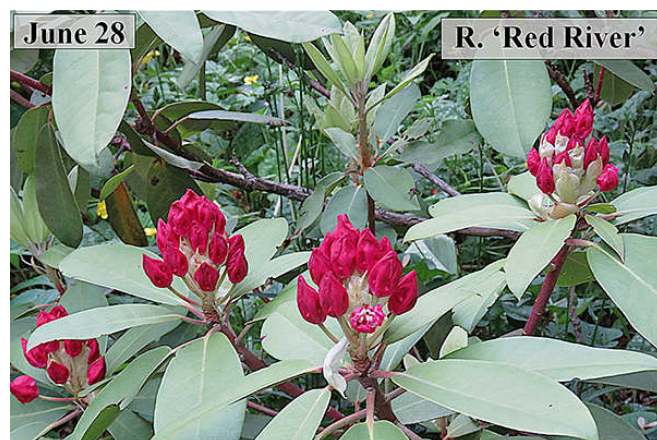
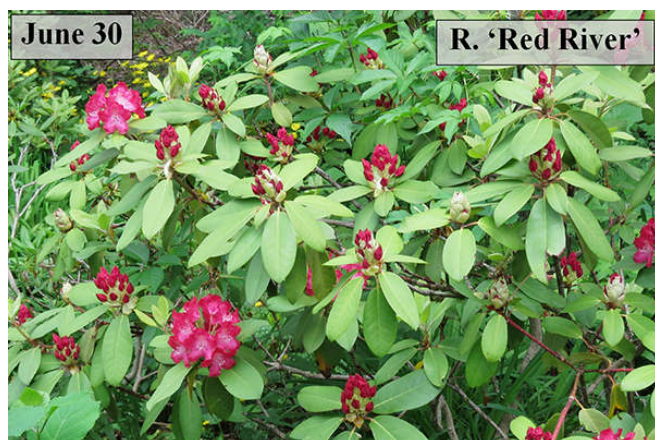
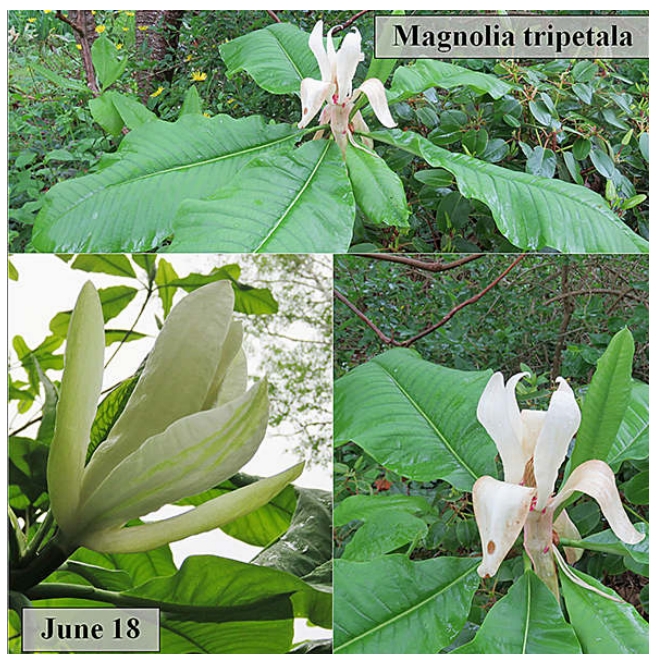
Photo: Canadian Himalayan Expeditions Ltd.

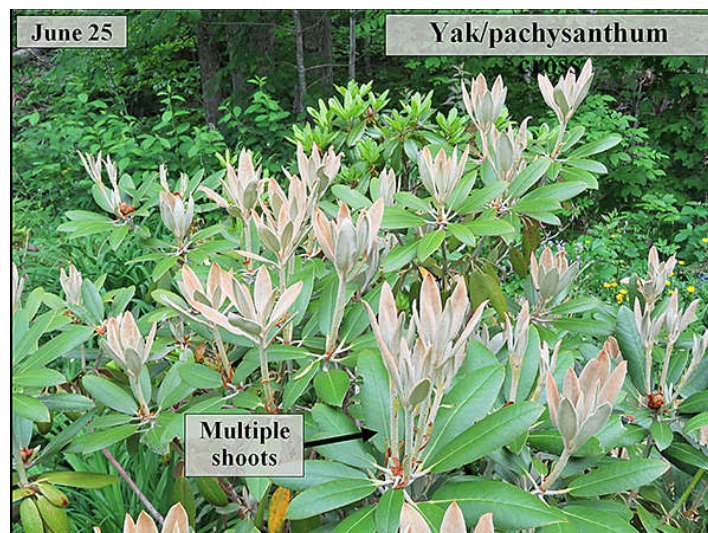
After The Vortex – A presentation at the December 2023 ARHS Meeting

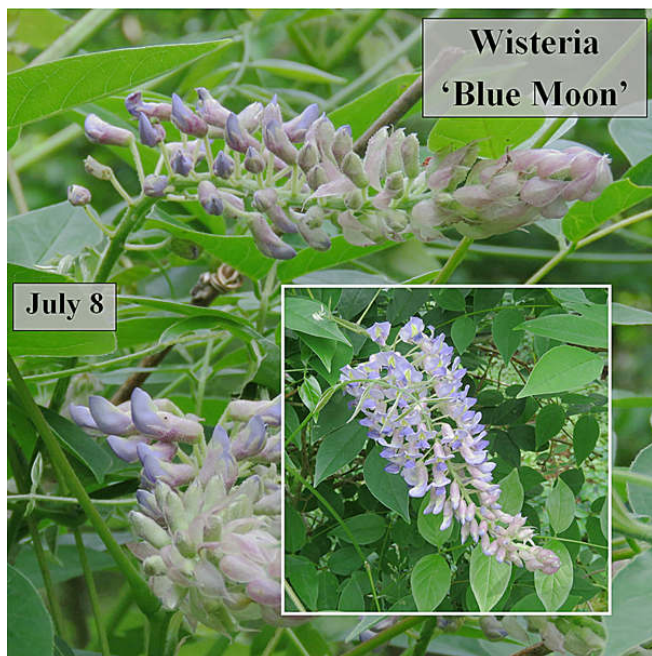
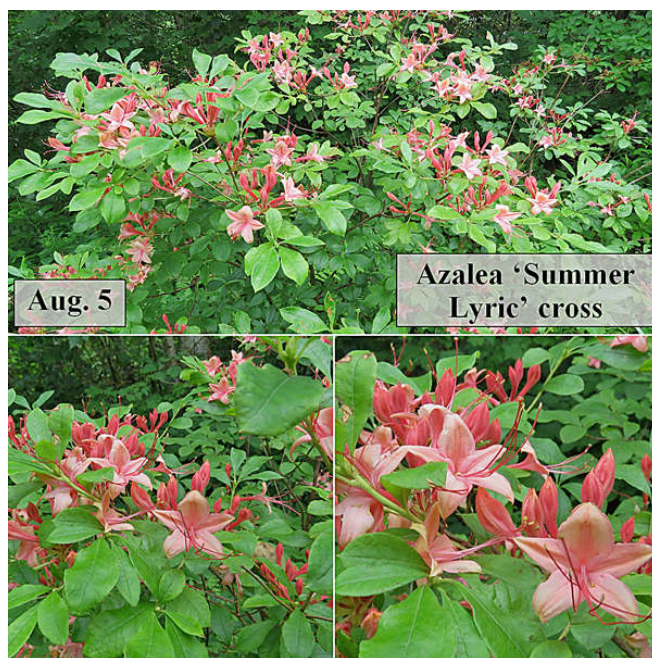
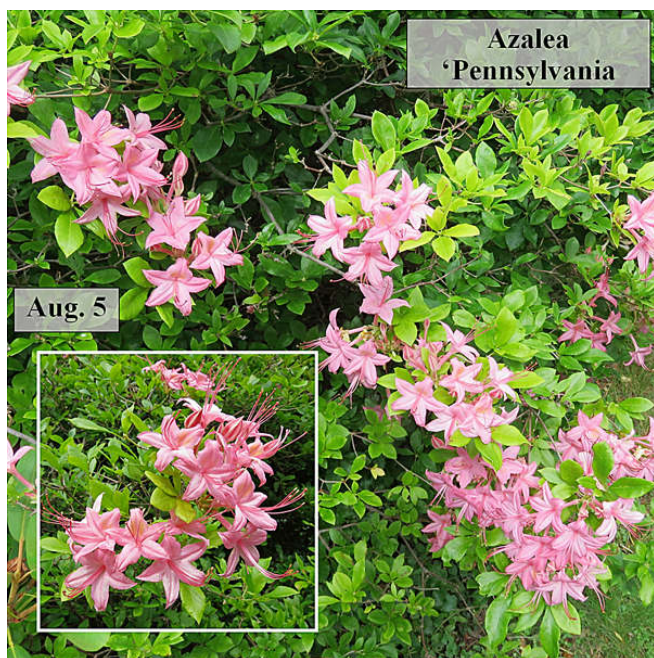
Sharon Bryson













Wild flowers of Namaqualand, South Africa - 2015 [Photo Chris Helleiner]

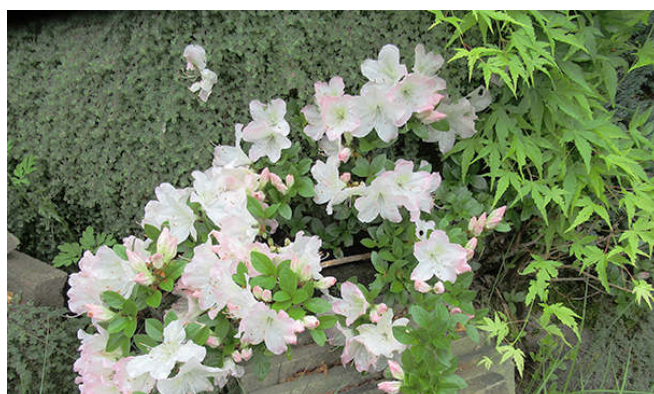
Atlantic Rhododendron and Horticultural Society Board Members and Other Roles

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES	NAME	CONTACT INFORMATION
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Seed Exchange Coordinator	Sharon Bryson	atlanticrhodo@gmail.com
Membership Coordinator	Lynn Brooks	atlanticrhodo@gmail.com
Garden Outreach	Chris Hopgood	atlanticrhodo@gmail.com
District 12 ARS Representative	Jim Sharpe	atlanticrhodo@gmail.com

Photo Album - A selection of photos by Bob Howard.



'Steele's Late and Lovely'.



'Scotia Mist'.



R. pachysantum



'Wren'.



'Grand Pre'.



'Ramapo'.



'Nancy Steele'.



'Wagtail'.