

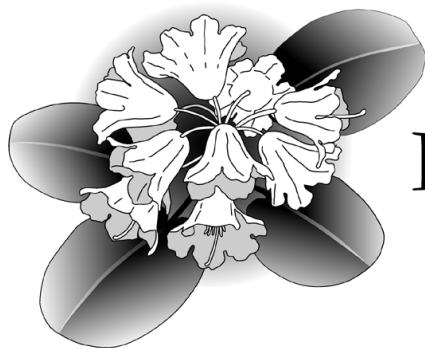
AtlanticRhodo

www.AtlanticRhodo.org

Volume 46: Number 4

November 2022





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

President's Report Jim Sharpe

A Word from the Editor Dennis Stuebing

Some Ideas for the Fall Garden Bob Howard

2023 ARHS Seed Exchange Sharon Bryson

Atlantic Association of Landscape Designers (AALD) Tour Anita Jackson

Native Plants and Possible New Source for Perennials Ruth Jackson

Lapageria, Chilean Bellflower Joe Harvey

Interested in Writing for AtlanticRhodo? Dennis Stuebing

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

Membership

Atlantic Rhododendron & Horticultural Society.

Membership renewals are now due. The current membership period is September 1, 2022 to August 31, 2023. 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.

Cheques, made payable to Atlantic Rhododendron & Horticultural Society, should be sent to **Jim Sharpe, 6231 Watt St, Halifax, NS B3H 2B9. Payment may be made by e-transfer to atlanticrhodo@gmail.com**

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

The Society is working on an on-line payment system. All details will be available on the Website when the new system is ready.

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.

Editor: Dennis Stuebing
dennis.stuebing@hotmail.com

Published four times a year. February, May, August and November

Cover Photo: *Acer palmatum* 'Ryu Sei'. [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*

Meeting notices will include a sign-up form for those who wish to attend in person. Space will be limited due to social distancing requirements as posted by Public Health at the time. 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.

Tuesday, December 6, 2022 7:30 PM

Members Photo's Gardens, and Garden Tours Choose the six best photos from this year's blossoms, your garden, or gardens you have visited. We must limit the number of photos from each person to allow for all to contribute

Tuesday, January 3, 2023 at 7:30 pm

Programs of the American Rhododendron Society (ARS)

This meeting will start with one of the last presentations prepared by Harold Greer, "Rhododendron Foliage to Delight: Another Reason to Enjoy Rhododendrons", which was presented at the ARS 2022 Convention. It will continue with a Zoom discussion with representatives of the ARS their activities and programs and end with a presentation on the joint 2023 Convention with the Azalea Society of America, "Georgia with Azaleas on My Mind" in Atlanta, Georgia from April 19-23.

Tuesday, February 7, 2023 at 7:30 pm

Jenny Sandison, Garden Designer and ARHS Member "New Trends in English Gardening" Last summer, garden designer Jenny Sandison returned to the gardens of Britain and visited the new Royal Horticultural Society "Bridgewater" in northern England. She will report on the new trends in garden design from Bridgewater and other English gardens.

Tuesday, March 7, 2023 at 7:30 pm

Sam Hoadley, Manager of Horticultural Research, Mt. Cuba Center "Wild Hydrangea for the Mid-Atlantic Region"

After a five-year trial learn which *Hydrangea* received top marks from a garden perspective and which species and cultivars tallied the most pollinator visits. Included will be tips for successful cultivation and care of wild hydrangea in your home landscape

Tuesday, April 4, 2023 at 7:30 pm

Freeman Patterson, Landscape Photographer: "Les Deux Jardins de Claude Monet/ The Two Gardens of Claude Monet" Claude Monet worked and succeeded spectacularly in two artistic media – gardening and painting. For him, the two were deeply entwined. Freeman's images from both early spring and late summer reveal how Monet's house garden and water garden are clear expressions of his personal and artistic growth.

Tuesday, May 2, 2023 at 7:30 pm

Member-to-Member Plant Sale Come to talk and purchase plants from our members in our always-popular plant sale.

ARHS Garden Tour

Early June 2023. We are still planning our garden tour for June. If you want to open your garden to ARHS members or have a suggestion for gardens on this year's tour please contact ARHS at atlanticrhodo@gmail.com.

Thank you for avoiding the use of perfumes and scented products when you come to ARHS events.

Membership Renewals and Welcome to our New Members!

Rebecca Lancaster

We want to remind everyone who has yet to do so, to renew your membership as soon as possible, and no later than **31 December!** The funds we raise through membership fees, makes it possible for us to pay guest speakers and other aspects of our annual programming. Thanks for your ongoing support.

We also would like to extend a warm welcome to new members:

Scott Croucher (Lakeside)

Alyce Holt (Oakfield)

Eric Luiker (Fredericton, NB)

Quincy Russell (Halifax)

Sarah Wells

Junseng Zhang (Halifax)

President's Report from the ARHS Annual General Meeting (AGM) Held on November 1, 2022 at the NS Museum of Natural History and via Zoom

Jim Sharpe

Even with the continuing COVID-19 restrictions, 2021-22 was another successful year for the Atlantic Rhododendron and Horticultural Society (ARHS). The use of computer conferencing with Zoom has greatly increased the geographic reach of our society, with many members from throughout the Atlantic Provinces and even further, participating in our monthly meetings. In the November and December we had hybrid meetings with some members attending at the NS Museum of Natural History (NS Museum), while in the winter months with the renewed meeting restrictions, we only met by Zoom. Thank you to Rebecca Lancaster, Vice-President, for providing the Zoom account and technical support for our meetings.

Last Fall I had the privilege of awarding the American Rhododendron Society (ARS) Bronze Medal to two of our members, Sharon Bryson and John Brett. Sharon has made an important contribution to the promotion of rhodos in Atlantic Canada by coordinating our Seed Exchange for the last twenty years. John was President of ARHS for over five years and was instrumental in bringing the 2021 ARS Convention to Nova Scotia. Thank you Sharon and John for all your contributions to ARHS.

We had two garden tours last year, in September 2021 we visited three gardens in Prospect, Boutilier's Point, and Rose Bay, while in June 2022 we visited four gardens in the Fall River and Oakfield areas north of Halifax. Thank you to all who opened their gardens to ARHS members and to Lynn Rotin and Carol Morrison for organizing these visits.

We also had a very successful Seed Exchange, pre-ordered Members Plant Sale, and Member-to-Member in-person Plant Sale last year. Thank you again to Sharon Bryson for organizing the Seed Exchange. Our Seed Exchange has many rhodo breeders and propagators from throughout North America and beyond, sending-in and ordering seeds. It is truly amazing to see the impact of our work through ARHS. Dennis Crouse and his committee, Jane Rostek and Catherine Deveau-Abbass, expanded the Members Plant Sale from local providers to include heaths and heathers from B.C. Thanks for all your work and for the funds raised for the ARHS.

Dennis Stuebing volunteered to be the editor of our newsletter, the *AtlanticRhodo*. He started with the winter issue, after a very successful fall issue edited by Jean Henshall. Dennis has expanded the number of issues to four per year with a new August issue. With the increased cost of printing, we are evaluating whether to continue printing issues, as the costs work out to almost \$20 per copy, far more than we collect from members.

We continue to provide scholarships to students in two horticultural programs, the Horticultural Technology Program at Kingstec (NSCC) and the Landscape Architecture Program at Dalhousie Faculty of Agriculture (Truro Campus).

With continued strong membership revenue and the proceeds from the Seed Exchange and Plant Sale, ARHS had a healthy surplus this year. In part this was also due to savings in travel costs for our external speakers (Lionel de Rothschild on "Exbury Gardens," Kate Kerin on "Innisfree in NY State," Panayoti Kelaidis on "*Ericaceae* Plants of Tibet" and Glen Jamieson on the "Smaller Hardier *Rhododendrons*") who presented using Zoom. We have a very healthy bank balance to continue our work of promoting *Rhododendrons* in Atlantic Canada.

A highlight of the year for me was attending the American Rhododendron Society Convention in Vancouver, Washington in May. With a two-day pre-convention tour to gardens in Washington State (including Heronswood, Bloedel Reserve and Rhododendron Species Foundation), a three-day post-Convention tour to the Willamette Valley and Oregon Coast, and the daily tours during the Convention, I visited 24 gardens and nurseries, truly a horticulturalist delight. The highlight was meeting fellow *Rhododendron* enthusiasts from across North America. I suggest that we should plan to send a full delegation to the 2023 Joint-ARS Convention with the Azalea Society of America in Atlanta, Georgia from April 19-23, 2023.

The biggest problem this year has been lack of volunteers for important positions with ARHS. This includes the position of Treasurer, which I have filled and Membership Coordinator, which our Vice-President, Rebecca Lancaster continues to coordinate. We hope to contract a bookkeeper next year to make the Treasurer position less onerous and to use our *AtlanticRhodo.org* website for our membership system. We look forward to welcoming the new members on the Board of Directors for the next year.

Overall, the Atlantic Rhododendron and Horticultural Society is thriving, with good attendance at monthly meetings, engaging speakers, great plant sales, and wonderful garden visits. I look forward to working with the Board and members for a great year promoting *Rhododendrons* in Atlantic Canada.☺

Nominations for the 2022-23 Board of ARHS:

Jim Sharpe
Rebecca Lancaster
Nancy Lewis Lynn Rotin
Dennis Crouse

Dennis Stuebing
Carol Morrison
Lynn Brooks
Jane Rostek

A Word from the Editor - In this Issue

Dennis L. Stuebing, PhD



Leaves in chicken wire.

I am writing this introduction to Volume 46, Issue 4 of the *AtlanticRhodo* on 20 November 2023 while a heavy blanket of snow falls outside. The Annapolis Valley has been spared up till now of any significant onset of, the ‘season-that-shall-not-be-named’. But, I guess there’s no denying we’ve now crossed into, that cold, dark time of year, despite my ongoing protests.

Like many of you, I have been preparing my gardens over the past few weeks. One of my favourite annual tasks is gathering leaves to be used as mulch. Admittedly, I begin raking far too early. We are blessed with multiple red maples, *Acer rubrum*, that all seem to be on their own schedule. I don’t want to lose, what I consider to be the valuable resource they provide, so I make sure to get out when the first tree finishes dropping all of its leaves. My partner uses the lawnmower to partly shred them. I then pack them into a chicken wire framed enclosure (see photo). As additional leaves fall, I pack them on top, even if they don’t get shredded. Periodically, throughout the ‘season-that-shall-not-be-named’, I drive my spading fork into the pile to help moisture and air penetrate the pile. In the spring, I add a healthy layer to our gardens along with compost or manure. Topping-up our raised vegetable beds in this way is particularly helpful to offset the settling that occurs.

Gathering leaves and using them in the garden reminds me of my childhood. I grew up in Kitchener, Ontario, and my neighbourhood was an interesting mix of people. It included folks who had escaped the Holocaust, some who had been persecuted, others who were part of the status quo but affected nonetheless because the impacts of armed conflict and genocide are pervasive. My next-door neighbours, the Bergs, used to welcome the bounty we’d share from the massive maple

trees in our backyard. My dad was eager to get rid of the leaves, as he wasn’t interested in composting. The Bergs on the other hand had a huge vegetable garden that they relied on and used the leaves to help build the soil, organically. Perhaps their experiences of deprivation gave them an appreciation for free resources that cannot be put into words. Nonetheless, the memory of raking leaves down the small hill between our yards and piling them onto the garden comes to mind every autumn as I do my annual raking.

I’ve also been busy with other garden tasks and hope all of you have been collecting seeds for the annual Seed Exchange as well as paying your annual ARHS membership fees. Information about both of those annual milestones is included in this issue, thanks to Sharon Bryson and Rebecca Lancaster, respectively. You will also find a great article by Joe Harvey on *Lapageria*, the Chilean Bellflower and its ability to survive on Vancouver Island. Jim Sharpe, ARHS President, Program Director, and interim Treasurer has provided his President’s Report as well as an overview of what to expect in the 2023 ARHS program. Bob Howard has written an article on ideas for the fall garden, Anita Jackson has summarized her experience in Pennsylvania on the Atlantic Association of Landscape Designers tour, and Ruth Jackson has provided our members with a possible new source for native plants. Finally, in order to encourage our members to contribute to the *AtlanticRhodo* (yes, that’s you dear reader), I’ve written a short guide on how to write an article for the newsletter.

ARHS is made up of gardeners with diverse interests and unique perspectives. The newsletter as an extension of the Society supports and promotes the development and exchange of expertise relating to the creation and maintenance of year-round garden landscapes featuring rhododendrons and other plants. I encourage you to be part of that exchange of expertise.

If you would like further encouragement or help developing an idea, don’t hesitate to contact me at dennis.stuebing@hotmail.com ☞

Some Ideas for the Fall Garden

Bob Howard



Rhododendron brachycarpum prostrate form & *R. orbiculare* x *brachycarpum*.



Dwarf conifers with fall foliage & ornamental grass.

Spring bursts forth with garden energy, planning, and planting. Witness the massive arrival of springtime pop-up garden centres in grocery store parking lots. By fall, gardeners seem to be ready to lay down the trowel. It's a more reflective time. I find myself looking out the window more often and wandering around in the garden, moving more slowly, looking at plants and plant groupings.

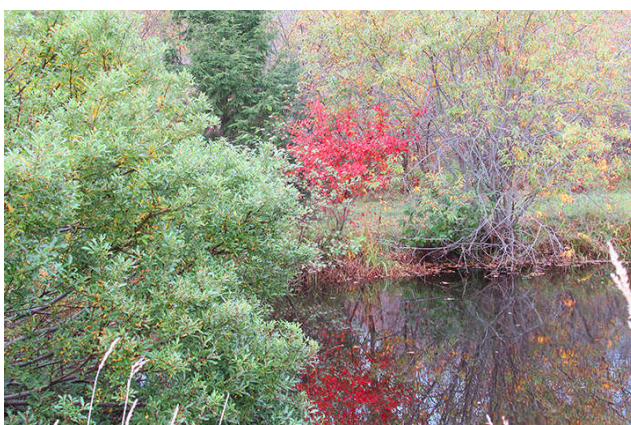
In the fall, I have three planting themes in mind. First, is evergreens specifically *rhododendrons* and dwarf conifers. Second, since nature does a pretty good job all by herself, I want to use natives and to garden within the already established context. Third, I'm always looking for something fresh and a little surprising. In this article, I feature some very late blooming perennials, *Aster* 'Little Carlow' and *Chrysanthemum* 'Sheffield Pink'.

The evergreens are essential to my fall (and winter) garden because they are green when all the deciduous plants are mere sticks. Evergreens are the context and confidence of the fall garden. To illustrate this feeling, I've included a photo of two *rhododendrons* (*R. brachycarpum* prostrate form and *R. orbiculare* x *brachycarpum*) with red maple leaves scattered about. There's also a photo of several nearby dwarf conifers (and a young *R. 'Ginny Gee'*) with red maple and *Viburnum plicatum* var. *tomentosum* 'Maresii' foliage in the background.

The second theme is the natural setting. Taking the lead from nature, we can use several natives for garden effect in the fall. Red maple (*Acer rubrum*) is a native shade tree, grows quickly, has vibrant colour, and tolerates urban conditions well. For a smaller tree, or large shrub, serviceberry (*Amelanchier canadensis*) has red, orange, and/or yellow fall foliage, white star-like spring flowers, and red-purple fruits in early summer. It's easy to grow.



Red Maple.



Amelanchier by the pond.



Canada Holly

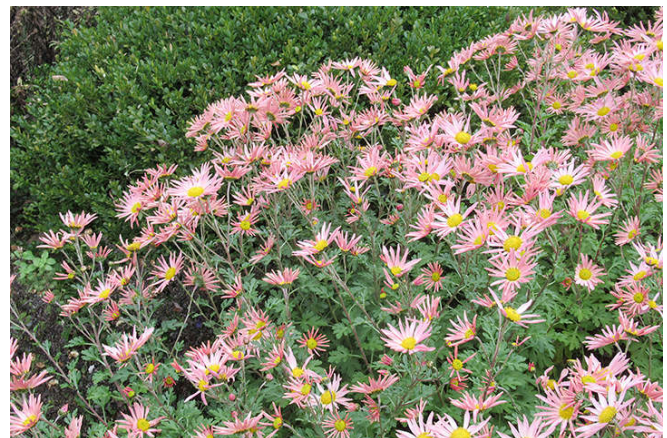
We have many beautiful shrubs for fall colour in the Maritimes. In the fields near my home in the Annapolis Valley, Canada holly (*Ilex verticillata*) forms massive drifts of large shrubs festooned with innumerable, brilliant red berries at this time of year. Blueberries (*Vaccinium* spp.), wild raisin (*Viburnum cassinoides*), black chokeberry (*Aronia melanocarpa*, and specifically more compact varieties like 'Autumn Magic' and 'Iroquois Beauty'), as well as Inkberry (*Ilex glabra*—again look for compact varieties like 'Nova Scotia' or 'Shamrock'), are handsome native shrubs for garden use. Here's a link to information about native plant gardening and some nurseries in Nova Scotia with the plants: <http://nswildflora.ca/links/naturalization/>.

My third theme is to bring something inventive and a little surprising to the garden. "Inventive" does not necessarily mean: "never seen before". In my case, both plants I want to recommend are old, but newly discovered by me. *Aster* 'Little Carlow' was introduced in the 1930's in England and received the Royal Horticulture Society Award of Merit in 1993. A cross between the New England aster and *Aster cordifolius*, 'Little Carlow' is much healthier for me than other fall asters. The long-blooming abundant flowers are light violet-blue, 1" – 1 ½" wide, appearing in September and extending into late October on plants that are 3'-4' tall. They stay upright if they can lean on their neighbors; they flop forward if at the front of a border, an effect I wholly endorse. My photo shows it with the purple foliage of *Hydrangea* 'Blue Billow' and *H.* 'Tiara', and the yellow leaves of *Corylopsis spicata*.

Chrysanthemum 'Sheffield Pink' was introduced by Fred McGourty of Hillside Nursery, in Norfolk, Connecticut, or some say "re-introduced". This plant was given to me by my friend, Lorraine Beswick, whose splendid garden is filled with treasures. She in turn received it from a friend who had bought it in the 1970's from a nursery in Dundas, Ontario. The flowers are about 3" wide, salmon pink, with a yellow central disk and green eye, on plants 18" tall. The plant is healthy, hardy, and flowers very late, from October into November. Easy to divide and propagate, my one plant has become a big drift in a few years' time. Planted at the Post Office in Annapolis Royal, it surprises and charms many passers-by. In part, I think, not only because it is beautiful, but also because it appears so late, and provokes fresh thinking about our gardens in the fall. ☼



Aster 'Little Carlow' with *Corylopsis* & *Hydrangea*.



Chrysanthemum 'Sheffield Pink'.

2023 ARHS Seed Exchange

Sharon Bryson, Seed Exchange Chair

Welcome to the 2023 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 (links included below) 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 2023 ARHS Seed Exchange. The link will be activated sometime in January 2023. A link to the list will be included on the ARHS website usually found in the Sales section under News and Program.

The Willow Garden website can be found at: <http://www.willowgarden.net/>

The ARHS website can be found at: <http://atlanticrhodo.org/>

Electronic payment options will again be welcomed for this years' 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 years' 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 two years ago, which did not seem to adversely affect ordering.

Strong support of the Seed Exchange has been helpful for the Society. The cost for shipping will increase to \$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 2023 list may have several seed lots "recycled" from the 2022 list. Final analysis will be done soon. It is always a challenge to handle those "pesky" leftovers.

The deadline for submitting members-only orders is Feb. 28, 2023. 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.

The Seed Exchange will be open to "the world at large" after the Feb.28 members-only deadline and continue until April 30, 2023. 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 offerings 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 ☺

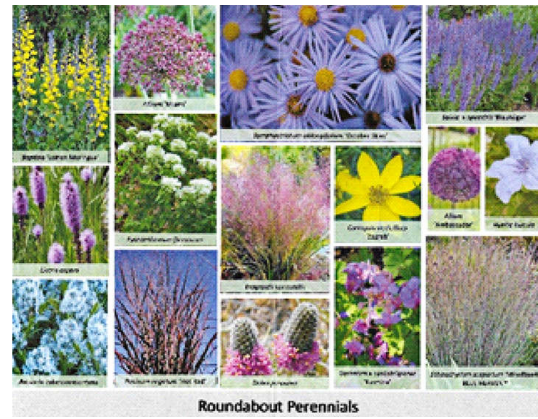
Atlantic Association of Landscape Designers (AALD)

Tour of Gardens in Pennsylvania on the Theme of Naturalistic Planting Design

Anita Jackson, CLD

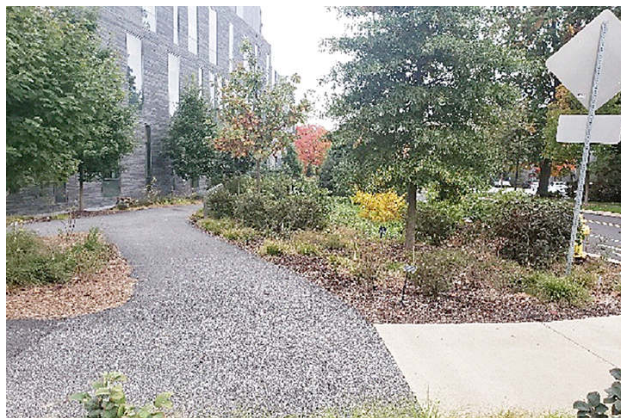
In mid-October, a group of 12 AALD members and gardeners visited a series of gardens in the Philadelphia area of Pennsylvania. Our liaisons for the trip were Jeff Jabco, Director of Grounds and Coordinator of Horticulture for the Scott Arboretum of Swarthmore College and Joe Henderson, Horticulturalist at Chanticleer Garden. They helped Jim Sharpe, our leader and tour organizer, to arrange the tour visits and on-site experts to meet and guide us as we focused on the theme of Naturalistic Planting design.

We stayed in the beautiful village of Swarthmore located next to the Scott Arboretum at Swarthmore College. The campus and Scott Arboretum aims to delight, educate, and inspire visitors to enjoy the many benefits of horticulture. Established in 1929 with a generous gift from Edith Wilder Scott, the Arboretum displays over 3000 kinds of trees, shrubs, and vines, as well as perennials, annuals, and tropical plants in specialty gardens and collections integrated with the college buildings.



Left: Image of gravel gardens at traffic Roundabout and neighbouring sidewalks. Right: Image of Planting Recipe with 5% Structural plants, 35% companion plants, 50% ground cover and 10 % fillers.

Jeff started our tour at the roundabout area with a detailed look at traffic islands planted in gravel that were inspired by the mixed perennial plantings of Cassian Schmidt and Bettina Jaugstetter, the dynamic plantsman and landscape architect team from Germany. We then continued onto the campus grounds to look at the elegantly designed new Dining Hall and Community Commons building, the organically managed rose garden, and the Ecoregion gardens around Singer Hall. Of particular interest to us Maritimers was the Coastal Plain-Hardwood Swamp planted with *Nyssa sylvatica*, *Acer rubrum*, *Ilex verticillata*, *Vaccinium*, *Comptonia* and *Myrica*.



Coastal Plain- Hardwood Swamp planting by Singer Hall and example of interpretive signage explaining one of the five the Ecoregion plantings.

Other areas of interest were the amphitheatre designed by Thomas Sears in the 1930's, the biostream, green roofs, lawn alternatives, porous pavement, and the collection of Noble trees.



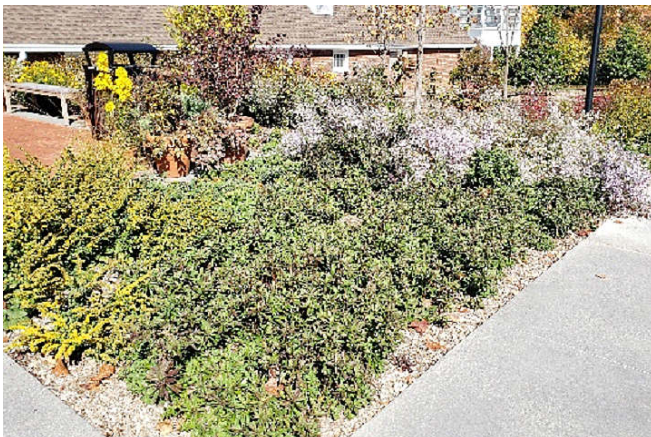
The Webb Farmhouse located at the far end of the 86-acre managed at Longwood Gardens.

At Longwood Gardens, the famous show garden of the DuPont's, we started our visit with the delightful horticultural display gardens. It is one of the largest and most visited botanic gardens in the US. There was a *Chrysanthemum* show, bonsai display, the newly renovated Orchid House, model train garden/landscape, and a fountain show to music, but our main destination was the 86 acres of managed Meadow. Lea Johnson, in charge of Landscape Stewardship and Ecology at Longwood and Kristie Anderson, horticulturalist on the ground, met us to answer questions about the evolution of management techniques. A key concept is that for meadows to be sustainable they must have regular disturbance to stop woody species from taking over. Management techniques ranged from hand pulling invasive Stilt grass, burning biomass to the ground every 3 years, varying mowing regimes, and integrated pest management to control invasive weeds.

The Mt. Cuba Center is a botanic garden that highlights the beauty and value of native plants with the intention to inspire conservation. Once the private estate of Pamela and Lamott du Pont Copeland, the garden is now open to the public and spans more than 1000 acres. It features garden pathways through formal and informal gardens as well as meadows, ponds, stunning vistas, and scenic trails throughout its woodlands.

Mt. Cuba is recognized as a leader in native plant research and open space preservation. Mt. Cuba's Trial Garden, managed by Sam Hoadley, evaluates native plants and their related cultivars for their horticultural and ecological value. Trials run for a period of 3 years for perennials and 5 years for shrubs. Data is available online for *Echinacea*, *Helenium*, *Phlox*, *Monarda*, *Baptisia*, *Coreopsis*, *Heuchera* and aster trials.

Block plantings of superb quality native plants were located at the entrance garden. Of particular interest are the Heath, Aster 'Snowflake', and Goldenrod 'Golden Fleece'.



Left: Block plantings of superb horticultural and ecological plants at the entrance to the Visitor's Center at Mt. Cuba Center. Right: *Solidago* 'Golden Fleece'

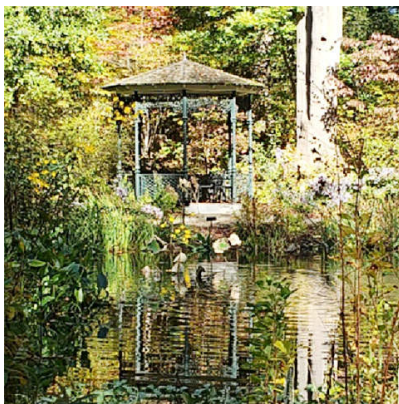


Arden Pontasch, Horticulturalist, leading us through the show gardens at North Creek Nursery.

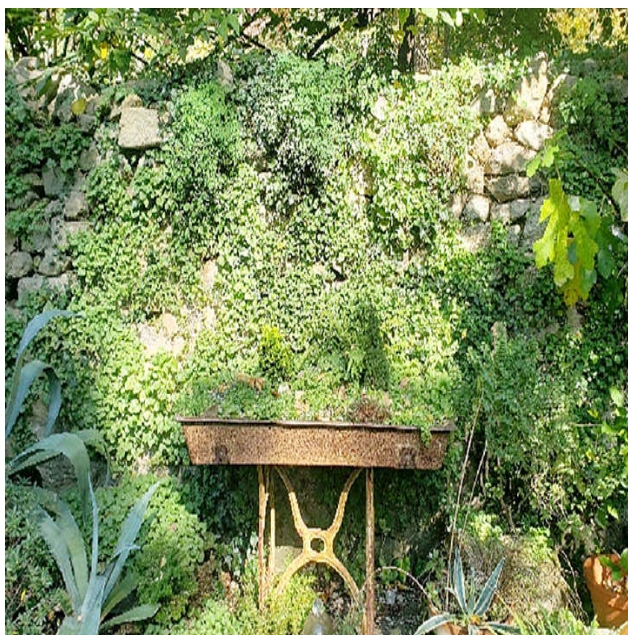
We were met at North Creek Nursery by Carrie Wiles, (Marketing), Tim McGinty, (General Manager), and Arden Pontasch (Gardener). Our entire group was very impressed with their operation. Many of the plants we saw at Mt. Cuba and Swarthmore are in production at North Creek Nursery. The management team here has worked diligently to acquire Systems Approach to Nursery Certification (SANC). In the show garden we discussed lavenders ‘Sensation’ and ‘Phenomenal’, and *Heucheras* ‘Guacamole’ and ‘Magma’. We saw *Germander* ‘Pride of Georgia’ used as a border plant. There was a menu of *Carex* including *pensylvanica* ‘Straw Hat’ and *Carex woodii*. *Salvias* included ‘May Night Improved’ as well as ‘Snow Hill’ and ‘Caradonna’. They grow *Allium* ‘millennium’ and many more. There was great interest in the ability of the North Creek staff to organize shipping to Atlantic Canada.

At Chanticleer we were met by Joe Henderson, the horticulturist responsible for the Asian Woods, Bell’s Wood, as well as the ponds and streams. Chanticleer is called the most romantic, imaginative, and exciting public garden in America. The garden is a study of textures and forms, where foliage transcends flowers. The gardeners lead the design and even the drinking fountains are sculptural. It is a garden of pleasure and learning, relaxing yet filled with ideas to take home. Joe Henderson led us through the ‘cook’s tour’. We visited the main feature areas, had lunch in the greenhouse and an insider’s look at the carpentry and metal shops, and a walk through the Rosengarten house.

At Chanticleer they strive to reduce their environmental impact. They reuse, recycle, and compost. Solar panels reduce 20% of electricity consumption. Cisterns spread over 50,000 gallons of rainwater for irrigation. Basins release storm water. Meadows, sedges, ferns, and other lawn alternatives replace turf in some areas, and they are eliminating invasive weeds. The new paths have been surfaced with ‘porous pave’. Joe discussed the use of bio char and Finesse GVH Soil Amendment around beds with mature trees, and the use of ‘AirSpade’ to loosen soil around trees where foot traffic has caused soil compaction.



Left: A view across the Pond Garden. Middle: Containers around Visitor’s Entrance, Chanticleer. Right: *Liatris elegans* in the gravel garden



Left: A view to innovative trough plantings in the courtyard area Right: Maroon and amber colours of the meadow.

The garden has evolved greatly since opening in 1993, but the estate's impressive trees and lawns still remain. There are seven horticulturalists, each responsible for the design, planting, and maintenance of individual areas. Lisa Roper gave us a tour of her area of responsibility, the Gravel Garden. Lisa is also an expert photographer. Hundreds of trees have been planted. Furniture is made from wood cut on the property. It is truly an immersive experience and a delight for gardeners and designers alike. A must see!

Brandywine Cottage is the home and garden of David Culp. David, author of two books, The Layered Garden and his latest A Year At Brandywine Cottage, met us to share his meadow garden clothed in shades of russet and maroon. *Sumac*, *Amsonia*, *Aster oblongifolius* 'Bluebird' and a purple *Penstemon* made up some of the composition. David, winner of many horticultural awards, has thousands of *hellebores* and a collection of 200 cultivars of snowdrops. The garden situated in a bowl shape, surrounds the lovingly maintained historic home of David, his partner Michael Alderfer and their English bulldog. Every view in the garden is choreographed with plant textures and forms arranged in interesting arrangements with found objects. It is a treat for the senses. David does a monthly webinar on his garden available through Garden Design magazine.

At Donald Pell's garden, "nature is bigger than I am". A native to the area of Pennsylvania we visited, the garden surrounds his landscape design office and acts as his platform for experimentation and testing of various grasses and forbs. He also grows plants for his installations that are not readily available in the trade. Donald, a true plantsman, carefully studies and applies the concept 'right plant, plant place'. Tall plants located near the grass paths include *Miscanthus giganteas*. Donald pays close attention to what plants are sterile cultivars versus those that spread through seed. Walking along the paths we saw *Pycnanthemum muticum*, *Allium* 'Purple Sensation' in blocks, *Allium* 'Millennium', 'Summer Beauty' and 'Pink Planet', various



Naturalistic planting beds in random arrangements flanked by mown paths at Donald Pell's office and show gardens.



Tour participants from left to right: Helen Sharpe, Tara Ralph, Jim Sharpe, Jane Plant, Kelly Grant, Nancy Wood (in back), Ruth Jackson, Peggy Wright, Marion Bryson (in back), Anita Jackson, Jane Rostek and Ellen Ruddick.

Vernonias, *Sesleria autumnalis*, *Molina* 'Transparent', *Salix alba* 'Britzensis' and more. Earlier plantings were in a blocked pattern; later plantings were arranged in a random style. He commented that, "the gardener needs to be the designer over time". He uses no fertilizer in herbaceous plantings, in order to keep the soil lean and reduce weeds. Gardeners cut the plantings down with hedge trimmers with long handles. A long-handled, Dutch, push- pull hoe from Dewit tools was being used by the gardeners while we were touring the beds.

An establishment technique that involved a bottom plow was used to turn a farm field into a naturalistic planting at the depth of 18 inches, which was intended to promote the rot of the existing weed seeds, rhizomes, stolons and roots in the soil. Donald discussed the concept of 'novel plant communities', which are new, ecological communities of plants that are either designed by humans and/or created by human disturbance and climate change. His compost is prepared using the biodynamic method of Rudolf Steiner. ☞

Native Plants and Possible New Source for Perennials

Ruth Jackson

During the Atlantic Association of Landscapers Designers (AALD) tour, we had the pleasure of visiting Mt. Cuba botanic gardens that specializes in native plants for mid-Atlantic region of North America. The gardens are a world leader in native plant research. Mt. Cuba Center has produced a number of research reports on their trials of *asters*, *coreopsis*, *echinacea*, *helenium*, *phlox* and wild *hydrangea* that are available on line and listed below. They can also be located from your browser by typing, for example, Mt. Cuba Center research phlox.

<https://issuu.com/mtcuba/docs/mtcuba-phlox-report>
<https://issuu.com/mtcuba/docs/mtcuba-helenium-report>
<https://issuu.com/mtcuba/docs/mtcuba-echinacea-mid-atlantic-region>
https://issuu.com/mtcuba/docs/mtcuba-coreopsis-report-web_version
https://issuu.com/mtcuba/docs/21050-hydrangea_research_report-final2
https://issuu.com/mtcuba/docs/mtcuba-asters_for_mid-atlantic

A number of the plants Mt. Cuba Center trialed, introduced or has highly recommended, are available from North Creek Nursery. It is a wholesale only company. During our visit to North Creek Nursery they expressed willingness to ship to us. The ARHS plant committee is working with one of their representatives to acquire plants. More information will follow, when the ordering system is resolved.

Their plant material is sold in plugs. The plugs are starter plants in flats with between 32 and 72 items. The number depends on whether the plants have deep or wide roots. Due to the number of plants in a tray, it is necessary to choose a few exceptional plants. This also means individuals will have to order multiple plants, a minimum order of perhaps 5 plants per flower type will be required. Fortunately, the cost of the individual plants will be low.

Near the visitor center at Mt. Cuba, two plants were in bloom that the AALD group was particularly impressed with, an aster and a goldenrod.

Aster ericoides 'Snow Flurry' is described as a new look for asters, and forms a low dense carpeting ground cover.

Solidago sphacelata 'Golden Fleece' is a fantastic introduction from Mt. Cuba. It is also an excellent ground cover and a bee magnet.



Aster ericodes 'Snow Flurry'



Solidago sphacelata 'Golden Fleece'

Phlox paniculata 'Jeana' was the best performer in the phlox trials. You can read about it in the report linked above. It is 5' tall, mildew resistant, flowers from mid July to September in its Delaware home. It attracted more butterflies than any other phlox in the trial.

Amsonia tubernaemontana 'Blue Ice' is a compact plant with long blooming dark blue flowers and bright yellow fall foliage. *Amsonia* was a showy component of the sunny garden beds we saw during the AALD tour.

Viola waiteri 'Silver Gem' is new from Mt. Cuba and is the longest blooming perennial at North Creek Nursery. It is a tough native ground cover with a tidy mat of silver foliage.



Phlox paniculata 'Jeana'



Amsonia tubernaemontana 'Blue Ice'



Viola waiteri 'Silver Gem'

Iris versicolor 'Purple Flame' is new from Mt Cuba and described as a 'showstopper'. The aubergine coloured leaves emerge in early spring and gradually turn green. It also produced abundant flowers.



Iris versicolor 'Purple Flame'

North Creek Nursery's website with detailed descriptions of the plants is located at: www.northcreeknursey.com. [↗](#)

Joe's Jottings #18

***Lapageria*, Chilean Bellflower – Definitely Hardy in Victoria, BC, Canada**

Joe Harvey

(Photo credits- Sue Lee)

Only a couple of years ago I wrote about *Lapageria*, the beautiful national flower of Chile, where it is an evergreen vine in the rainforest zone. Since then the brutal frost in Victoria in 2021-22 severely tested my optimism, so here is an update plus a fleshing-out of Eva's story, the woman who appears to have planted the first successful *Lapageria* outdoors in Victoria. Eva's story is extra-ordinary.

Lapageria – Hardiness

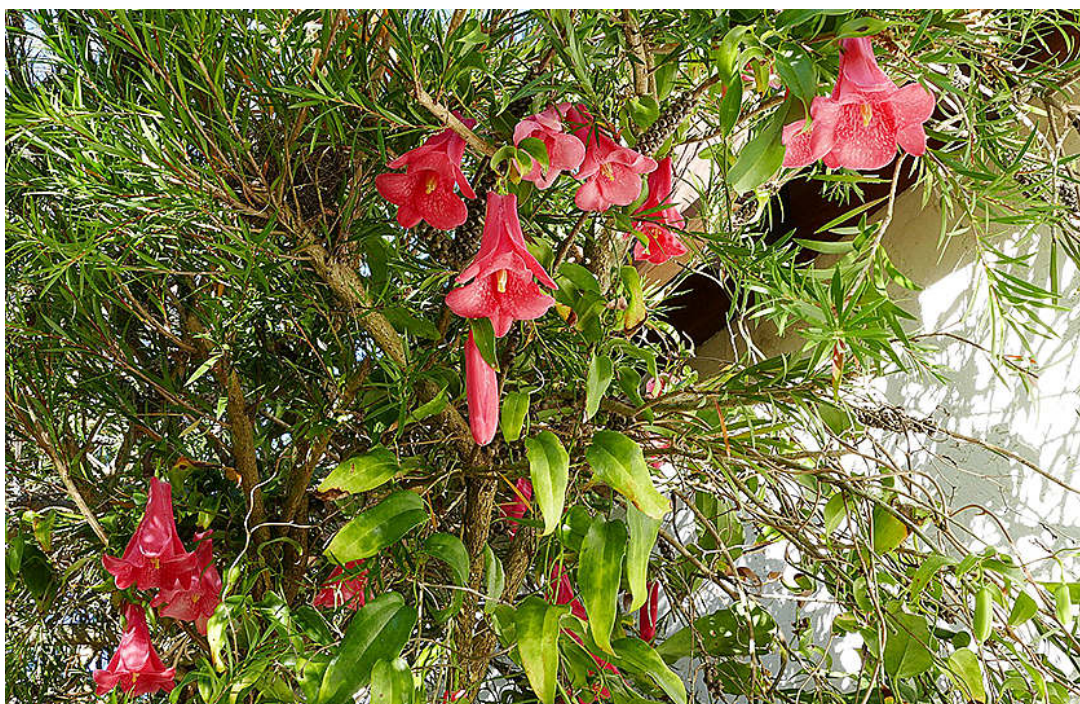
By late 2021 there were a number of enthusiasts growing and blooming *Lapageria* outdoors in Victoria. Specimens survived the occasional frost that Victoria's weather threw at them. Many plants start blooming in the fall and continue through the winter, an occasional frost browning open flowers with developing ones replacing them a few weeks later. All was well.

Winter 2021-22

But the winter of 2021-22 was different. I live in the mild suburb of Oak Bay a few blocks from the coast and my (unofficial) thermometer recorded continuous frost from Boxing Day, 26 December 2021, to New Year's Day, 1 January 2022 including one night that reached at least -9C, and this in a garden with a dense cover of oak trees.

The length and depth of this frost was felt across the region and by spring the above ground *Lapageria* vines were lifeless. There was one exception to this: a garden on an elevated rocky outcrop (hence no cold air to drain into it), with a dense tree cover and a solid wooden deer fence. The plants against the fence survived.

Relief for the rest of us came May to July when most of the 'dead' plants put out shoots from the base. This emphasises the importance of the dense root-mass that acts as the food storage organ and from which fresh shoots sprout. The planting hole should be deep with added humus such as peat, leaf mould or mulch. Do not add lime, they like a neutral to slightly acidic soil. I like to plant specimens not only deeply but also in a hollow in the soil and then scatter on a handful of peat or leaf mould every year to mimic the accumulation in its native rainforest.



The site in your garden where you plant your specimen is equally important. In the wild, seeds germinate in shade then the vine grows into light, where it flowers. Mimic this by planting against a north or east-facing fence or wall. The shade allows the leaves to develop from their thin and delicate beginning into their thick mature state in which they can last ten years or more. Hot sun exposure shrivels the young leaves so avoid southern exposures.

The West Coast of Vancouver Island

Victoria on southeast Vancouver Island is in a rain shadow with a temperate summer-dry climate so keeping your *Lapageria* watered is important and helps match the rainforest zone of Chile. Contrasting with Victoria is the West Coast, which is an actual temperate rainforest. In fact we jokingly (I think) call it the 'Wet Coast'. Hence the likelihood is that *Lapageria* will thrive in locations from Port Renfrew to Uclulet, Tofino, and beyond. It will still need to be planted in the shade and to grow into sun but should be fine with no watering in all but the initial planting and the rare dry period.

By good fortune Tofino has a small plant nursery and shop run by Trina who has agreed to trial *Lapageria* outdoors. If you are in Tofino visit her at OCN Garden Centre, Tibbs Place, tell her Joe sent you, she is very friendly.

Eva's Story

I owe the following information to Carol and her husband who bought a bungalow in Saanich in 1998. At the front of the house, in dry soil under the eaves was a small, neglected, evergreen that Carol had a suspicion about, so she kept watering it until it flowered at which point I got a phone call. My reply has gone into local legend.

The conversation went something like, "Joe, I have this climbing plant with evergreen leaves and a long, hanging white flower. Could it be a *Lapageria*?"

Now, I am an authority who really knows what is what, so I had no hesitation in replying, "It could not possibly be a *Lapageria* for two reasons: first they have pink flowers, not white, and second they are not hardy outdoors". Ever polite, Carol thanked me and phoned Cookie in Vancouver who not only confirmed that she had a *Lapageria* but the rare white form.

I have never lived down that event but it has resulted in over 25 years of fascinating gardening. Carol's plant appears to be the first recorded outdoor *Lapageria* on Vancouver Island; I call it the index plant. The flowers are pure white with no trace of pink, which would make it the cultivar 'Ligromu' ('White Cloud') originally from the collection at El Vergel, the Agricultural Methodist Mission School in Chile that has a collection of wild forms. Eva would have got the plant from the Berkeley Botanic Garden collection, which has the best growing conditions and most cultivars in the USA. But who was Eva?



Bo and Eva Nyquist were the previous owners and had moved from the Stanford University region of San Francisco where Eva had been a translator, being fluent in several European languages. Now, even in the 1980's, retirement costs near Stanford were ferocious and apparently several Stanford retirees had discovered Victoria, B.C. as a pleasant and less costly location, so the Nyquists moved apparently around 1988, bringing with them a *Lapageria*.

Eva was born in Poland to a Jewish family. During the 1930's Hitler in adjacent Germany discovered that blaming Jews was the ideal tool to gain power and this attitude washed over into adjacent Poland. Things got so bad that young Eva decided to flee and discovered that Sweden for a short time permitted refugees with the proviso that they had a Swedish relative. Eva knew nobody in Sweden, but there was a way out - marry someone. Such marriages of convenience were usually short-lived but Eva's marriage to Bo lasted until Bo died in Victoria in the 1990's.

When World War 2 ended, Europe was in a state of devastation and Bo decided to emigrate to Brazil to run a factory to produce furniture for export to Europe (why Brazil? - Brazil has wood). The factory was successful so the Brazilian government decided to nationalise it, so the Nyquists moved to the USA where, as mentioned Eva worked as a translator.

What happened to the Index plant?

From the small initial plant there eventually developed a large rootstock with several ¾ inch (2cm) diameter stems supporting a massive tangle reaching to the eaves and flowering spectacularly in winters when the weather was propitious. But by 2020 it was pruning time! Carol drastically cut the plant back to a neat framework of branches attached to the wall.

The pruning alone seems to have been a setback and the plant was slow to regenerate, so the frost of 2021-22 seems to have hit it particularly hard; a few basal shoot emerged but dried off. There is still hope it will revive but at least a couple of rooted cuttings have been established in other gardens including at the Thomas Hobbs Nursery in Vancouver where the roots are planted in a greenhouse but the stems are outside.

And finally, what do we know about Eva herself? Very little, she seems to have been not very sociable, standoffish, and from evidence of blacked out windows at the side of the bungalow, possibly paranoid. Given her history I tend to forgive that and concentrate on the pleasure she has unknowingly given to many people. She deserves a place as one of Victoria's gardening pioneers. ♪

Interested in Writing for AtlanticRhodo? Here's a guide to help you prepare your article.

Dennis L. Stuebing, Editor

Are you new to the Atlantic Rhododendron and Horticultural Society (ARHS) and interested in writing an article for the AtlanticRhodo? Or, perhaps you've been a member for many years and interested in sharing your insight on a specific plant, family of plants, or experience you've had in your garden. We welcome your contribution and have created this brief guide to assist you in your efforts. If you forget any of the points listed below, don't worry we'll put things in order before publishing. Please contact dennis.stuebing@hotmail.com if you have any questions, or to submit your article.

TOPIC: You are welcome to write about Rhododendrons, companion plants or gardening more generally.

TITLE: Please use **bold** to indicate the title of your article and include the names of any authors below it.

LENGTH: You have freedom to write as much or as little as you like, however on average, articles are usually 1 – 2 pages of text (250 – 500 words).

FONT: We welcome the use of Times New Roman, size 12.

SPACING: We welcome single spacing without indentation. A single line can be used between new paragraphs.

PHOTOS: You are welcome to submit as many photos as you like but we recommend a limit of six per article (depending on the topic). We publish in colour and try to balance the number of photos in each issue so that it is visually appealing.

Please label each photo sequentially in reference to where they belong in the article and with a brief description, for example: "4 *Rhododendron auriculatum* covered in snow". If you have a specific place in the article where the photo should be located, please indicate that in parenthesis i.e. (PHOTO 4 of *Rhododendron auriculatum* covered in snow HERE). Please don't embed your photos within the text of your article. Attach your photos to your email when you submit your article. Alternatively, you can send your photos by webtransfer, dropbox, or other app. Please let the editor know which you use and label the transfer with your name.

OTHER: We endeavour to reflect Latin plant names in italics, with the first word capitalized and the second word in lower case for example: *Rhododendron auriculatum*. Named varieties are labeled with inverted quotation marks, such as *Echinacea purpurea* 'White Swan'.

EDITS: We want our readers to enjoy your style of writing. We will make changes for correct grammar, syntax, and spelling, as well as consistency in terms used throughout the article and as explained above. There may be a need to reduce the length of your article but effort will be made to ensure the main points are not affected in any editing. If any significant change is required to the content of the article, the editor will contact you.

If you have any questions, please contact dennis.stuebing@hotmail.com. Have fun and get writing!✉



R. 'Scotian Breeze' Autumn colour. [Photo Bob Howard]

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Photo Album - A selection of photos from our archives.



Corydalis 'George Baker'. [Photo Chris Helleiner]



Corydalis allenii. [Photo Chris Helleiner]



Helleborus 'Pink Frost'. [Photo Chris Helleiner]



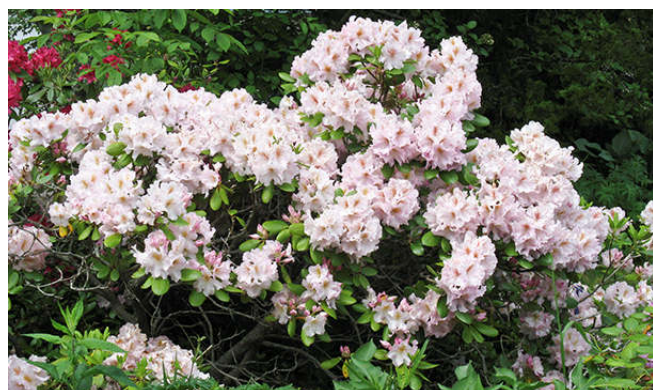
Rhododendron 'Ramapo'. [Photo Bob Howard]



Rhododendron praevenum. [Photo Anitra Laycock]



Rhododendron 'Wagtail'. [Photo Bob Howard]



R. 'Janet Blair'. [Photo Sterling Levy]



R. 'Blue Peter'. [Photo Sterling Levy]