



Friends of Dominion Brook Park Society

Rhodos Remembered

Rhododendrons have bloomed alongside mankind since ancient times. The name 'rhododendron' comes from the greek Rhodo, rose, and Dendron, tree.

The first records of the then wild rhododendron was not a happy one. In about 400 B.C. and again in 327 B.C. and 66 B.C. invading armies devoured honey made from the poisonous nectar, and while it did not kill them, they probably wished it had.

By the 17th century the first species in cultivation was *R. hirsutum* or 'Alpine Rose'. introduced to Britain.

During the next two centuries that followed collectors traveled to China, India and Tibet resulting in over 6,000 specimens. New species are still being discovered, the latest in New Guinea growing epiphytically in the tall trees of the forest. According to the American Rhododendron Society (ARS), the concentration of rhododendron species in Asia came about because elsewhere their habitat was being destroyed.

However, in 1792 Archibald Menzies proved that rhodos were almost ubiquitous when he discovered *R. macrophyllum* growing from Northern California to British Columbia. In 1892, before they had the right to vote, Washington State women selected this coastal rhododendron as the state flower. It became the official flower of the state at the 1893 World's Fair in Chicago. There are now known to be about 28 species in North America alone. According to the US Department of Agriculture there are only nine states and no provinces of Canada without



rhododendrons or azaleas in native stands.

A few of the rhodos in our Dominion Brook Park were grown from seeds collected in Western China by Ernest Henry Wilson (1876-1930). So successful was this initial three year journey that 400 new plants including rhodos, roses, primula and Meconopsis were discovered. Hired by the Arnold Arboretum in Boston, Mass., Wilson was sent all over the world in search of new species for the Arboretum. He was estimated to have introduced 2000 new species in a four month period, most of which can still be seen at the Arnold Arboretum.

1912	03	650	<i>Rhododendron fortunei</i>	A.A. 1195	Wilson
					Wilson
		651	<i>Rhododendron</i>	A.A. 1125	Wilson
			<i>Thamnosma</i>		Wilson
1912	03	656	<i>Rhododendron ambiguum</i>	A.A. 1137	Wilson
					Wilson
1912	03	657	<i>Rhododendron polypetalum</i>	A.A. 1122	Wilson
					Wilson
1912	03	658	<i>Rhododendron indicum</i>	A.A. 1149	Wilson
			<i>variegatum</i>		Wilson
1912	03	659	<i>Rhododendron argenteum</i>	A.A. 1123	Wilson
					Wilson
1912	03	660	<i>Rhododendron longyunnanense</i>	A.A. 1124	Wilson
					Wilson
1912	03	661	<i>Rhododendron parviflorum</i>	A.A. 1126	Wilson
					Wilson
1912	03	662	<i>Rhododendron lutescens</i>	A.A. 1195	Wilson
					Wilson

Since ancient times more than 900 rhododendron species have been discovered and cultivated.

Rhodos are being honoured this year as the national ARS convention is coming to Sidney B.C. for their 70th anniversary May 6-10. www.rhododendron.org for more information.

CURRENT PROJECTS

RHODO RAVINE RESTORATION



Phase 1 of the Rhodo Ravine Restoration Project is complete. We have a Concept Plan, bought and paid for, through the generosity of our 'Friends' members, a grant of \$2,000 from the Real Estate Foundation of BC and a sizable contribution from the District of North Saanich along with our own monies earmarked for this essential project.



Phase 2 of the Rhodo Ravine Restoration Project is complete. We have detailed design specifications and tender document preparation for the reconstruction of the ravine and updated cost estimates. A more detailed topographic survey to improve the base plan has been completed. We had a qualified biologist to complete screening level habitat assessment. A geotechnical engineer has completed an assessment to review stability of ravine slopes. This work has been supported by our 'Friends' contributions.

IN PROGRESS

Phase 3 with detailed planning complete we can now begin the restoration of the lower reaches of the streambed in the ravine. In the coming months we will obtain the necessary permits and permissions required to proceed with work in August and September when the streambed is at its lowest.

With the help of Kerr Wood Leidal and the District of North Saanich we have developed a cost effective approach for relining the brook and retaining the ravine banks. Much of this work can be accomplished by volunteers.

Members of the Board of the Friends of Dominion Brook Park Society are excited and enthusiastic about the progress being made in the restoration and rehabilitation of the ravine, the Jewel of Dominion Brook Park.

This is your chance to learn first-hand the current state and future plans for the park in the 21st century.

The Annual General Meeting of the Friends of Dominion Brook Park Society will be held on April 22nd, 2015, 7pm, at the Pavilion, Centre for Plant Health, 8801 East Saanich Road.

Join us to hear about

our progress on the Rhodo Ravine Restoration Project. We

will have speakers and demonstrations

about the streambed rehabilitation and how and when it will be accomplished.

And you get to vote on constitutional stuff like on the opposite page! Entertainment and refreshment - all in one place! Be there or be.....

AGM!



WANTED!!!

VOLUNTEERS FOR DOMINION BROOK PARK WEDNESDAY MORNING WORK PARTIES 9AM - 11AM

Join our team of enthusiastic supporters to continue the restoration of the Jewel of the Peninsula. Experience not necessary and work levels for everyone.



2015 Work Season

The start of our 2015 Wednesday Work season will begin on March 11 at 9am. It will be a game changing year with the special project work in the Ravine. However, our team will continue to keep the Park in tip top shape with the regular clean ups, weeding, mulching, pruning and all the jobs so necessary to the Park's welfare.

Contact Joan Gibb for more information: 250 656 4185, or gibbjb@shaw.ca

Your vote is needed for these constitutional changes!

5. Newsletter

Existing

A comprehensive newsletter shall be published for the general membership *at least quarterly* or more frequently as deemed appropriate by the Board of Directors to include announcements, planned programs, volunteer work party information, member's submissions and other relevant information.

Proposed

A comprehensive newsletter shall be published for the general membership *at least three times per year* or more frequently as deemed appropriate by the Board of Directors to include announcements, planned programs, volunteer work party information, member's submissions and other relevant information.

6. Disposition of Society Funds

Existing

(a) Disposition of the Society's funds for other than routine operating expenses in excess of *\$1000 such as for special projects, donations, capital expenditures, bursaries, etc. shall be ratified by a 75% majority at an Annual General Meeting or at an extraordinary meeting of the general membership.*

Proposed

(a) Disposition of the Society's funds for other than routine operating expenses in excess of *\$2000 such as for special projects, capital expenditures etc. shall be approved by a majority of the Board of Directors.*



A very special thank you to **Jeff Lambert** for doing bag duty over the winter months. It's the little things that make a big difference to the Park. We appreciate the efforts of other dog walkers who may have contributed to this chore. Well done!

Coming Soon
Watch your inbox for our new website announcement!

Featured Plant

Abies nordmanniana
Nordmann Fir

A magnificent Fir. At its best, this species forms a dense, uniform pyramid of luxuriant, glossy green needles marked beneath by two bright silvery bands; the winter buds are an attractive reddish-brown.

Native to the mountains south and east of the Black Sea, Turkey, Georgia, Russian Caucasus, Azerbaijan and North Armenia. They form an extensive forest in north western Turkey. A large fir, with great ornamental value and importance in gardens and parks. May grow to 10-15m. Our donated Fir is located on the south side at the bottom of the pond.



Staff this issue:

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For more information on Dominion Brook Park, please visit <http://www.dominionbrookpark.ca/>
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