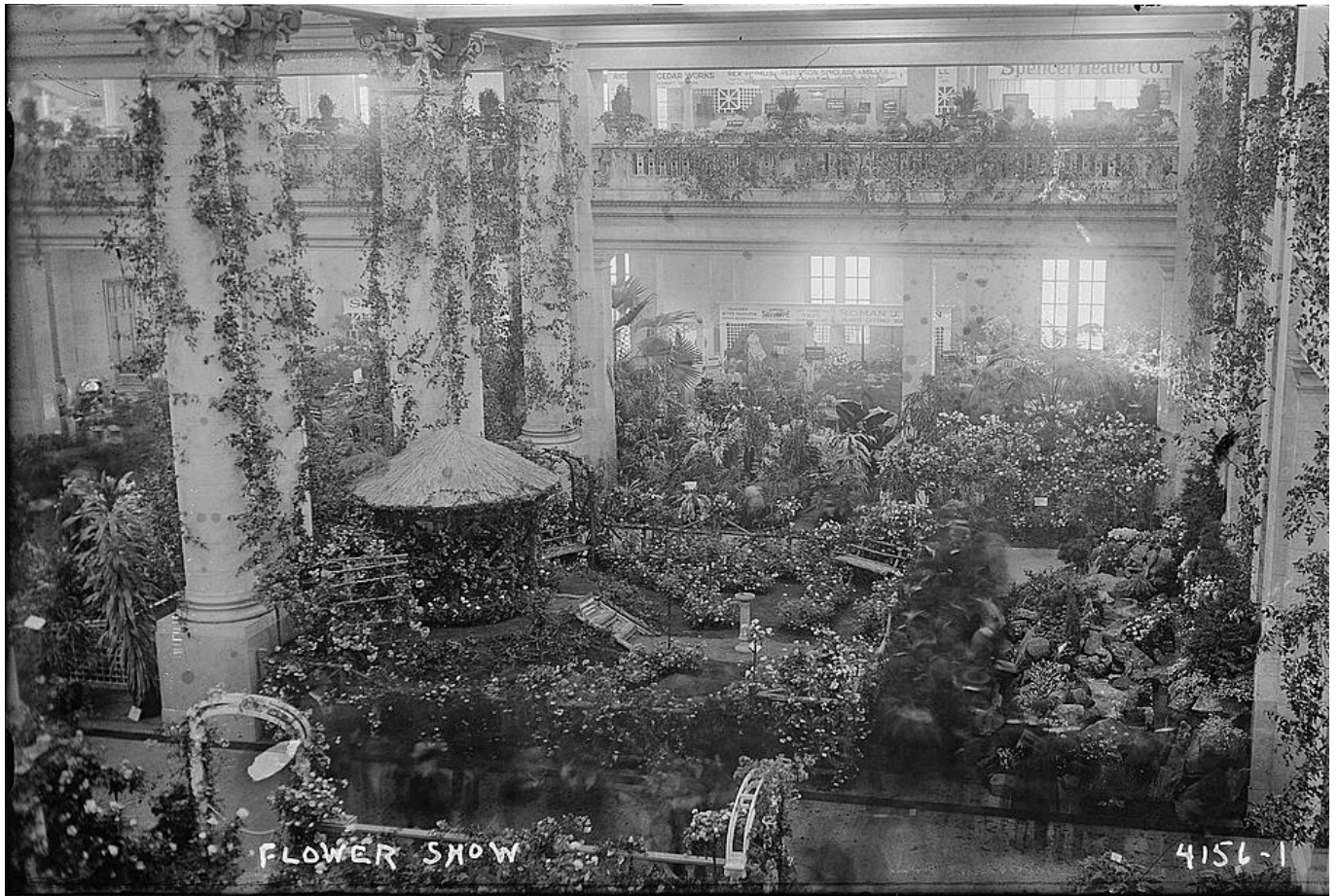


Indumentum

The Monthly Newsletter of the Vancouver Rhododendron Society

Re-Est. 2018

No. 004 April



<https://modernfarmer.com/2014/02/photos-garden-parties-flower-shows/>

We can do it!

This newsletter is brought to you by the Vancouver Rhododendron Society, purveyors of fine rhododendrons and florid news.

Presented for your delectation, an assortment of current and historical items gleaned from divers sources, scientific to leisurely, all with a smattering of Ericaceae.



www.rhodovanbc.org

The next meeting of the Vancouver Rhododendron Society is Thursday, April 19, 2018 at VanDusen Gardens - Floral Hall, 5251 Oak Street (37th and Oak) Vancouver, BC. The doors are open by 7:00 pm and the meeting starts at 7:30.

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

We're definitely into spring, and the garden is starting to look once more like, well, a well-cared for garden should. Our *R. calophytum* (from Lilli Ann Hemminger) is full out, as are our *R. sutchuenense* & *ciliatum* (Harold Fearing), *leucaspis* & *fulgens* (Ken Webb), *strigillosum*, (Joan Bengoff), below, and hybrids *Snow Lady*, *Checkmate*, and *PJM*. Our *R. Avalanche* (Mike Bale) has buds the size of tennis balls. On the produce side of the garden our rhubarb patch, where each fall I spread a heavy layer of leaves, is starting to look like an active volcanic field, with underlying forces pushing up the earth into huge magmatic cumuli before bursting forth as red hot lava.

R. strigillosum



A big thanks to Philip MacDougall for filling in as March speaker on short notice. Philip gave us a most entertaining talk on exotic Asian epimediums, podophyllums and their kin that he propagates and hybridizes on his Maple Ridge property. He will be selling some of his desirable specimens at our upcoming April meeting and later on at our May sale.

The abundance of plants donated at last month's raffle was much appreciated and hopefully can be replicated this month. But I did feel the cookie supply was still short of a banquet. Bakers, please step up!

Our speaker this month is Judith Walker from Qualicum. Judy was born in Vancouver and educated at UBC and the University of Washington. She currently works as a landscape architect and planner in both private and public practice. Through her gardening experiences, she befriended Mary and Ted Greig and wrote their story, *A Garden for Life: Mary Greig & the Royston*

Rhododendrons, edited by our own Dr. Clive Justice and published in 2015. Judy's talk will focus on the Royston rhodos and particularly the broad

interconnection of knowledgeable enthusiasts working with the Greigs to disseminate their plants. It's a local Canadian success story.

As a related bonus, Greig rhodos will be featured in this year's **Walk in the Park** at Stanley Park on the evening of May 18. Details to follow.

Show and Sale on May 5. I mentioned last month that we're changing the format of the event to bring our truss show closer to our devoted plant shoppers. Please bring your best trusses for setup at Park & Tilford before 3pm on Friday, May 4th. For our home growers' contribution to the plant sale, if you have not already potted up your ferns, hostas, exotic ground covers and shrubs (no rhodos!), this is your last chance. Named plants are what our buyers pay extra for. And if you can't make it to our plant setup on May 4, please note that board members will happily receive your offerings at our April 19 meeting for delivery to the sale.

We'll be looking for volunteers to assist in the setup for the Show and Sale on May 4, and the sale itself on May 5. Please step up to volunteer as this sale is our main fund raiser for the year and we depend on your efforts to pull it off. A signup sheet will be passed around at the upcoming meeting on April 19, or you can contact Chris Hodgson, Karen Shuster or Kirsten Martin directly by e-mail or phone. Thanks so very much".

Chris Hodgson: 604 541 2382
Karen Shuster: 604 732 9565
Kirsten Martin: 778 846 6732

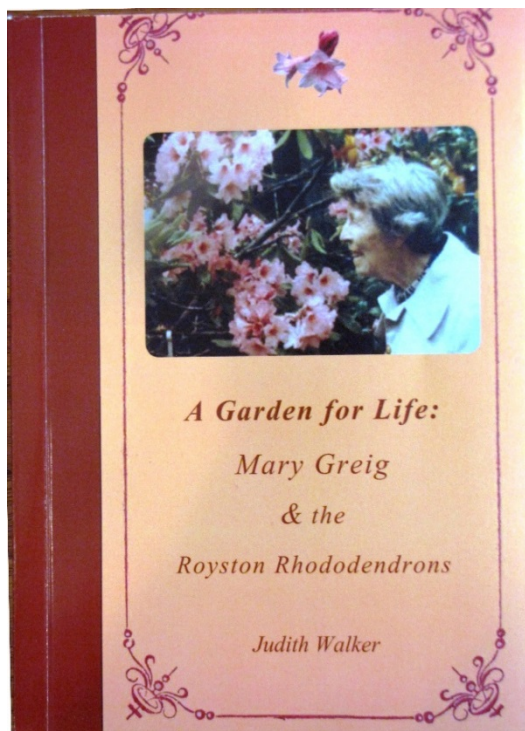
Chris Hodgson

LOCAL UPCOMING EVENTS & NOTICES

19th April

VRS General meeting. Judy Walker, author of “*A Garden for Life: Mary Greig & the Royston Rhododendrons*” will speak on the Royston garden, its many sources and contributors and its connection with Alleyne Cook, Clive Justice and the Stanley Park rhododendron collection.

Book Reviews (Margaret Hodgson)
A Garden for Life: Mary Greig & the Royston Rhododendrons by Judith Walker, MBCSLA, RPP. Edited by Clive L. Justice, PhD (SFU) FCSLA Gold Medal ARS. 164 pages, 103 photographs and documents, nineteen chapters, plus Editor’s Preface, Acknowledgements and Index. Softcover. Copyright 2015 by Judith Walker, and BC Bigleaf Maple Books, Vancouver, BC. ISBN 978-0-9920461-3-2 \$30.00 CDN



Judith Walker, MBCSLA, RPP, as noted on the inside front cover, was born in Vancouver, BC, and educated at the University of British Columbia and the University of Washington. She works as a landscape architect and planner in both private and public practice. Through her gardening experiences, she met Mary Greig, the main focus of this book and has skilfully captured the story of Marg Greig and her husband, Ted. With the assistance of many people, she has compiled an enjoyable story of their life together, their experiences of moving to Canada, their venturing into the nursery business (Royston Nursery), their family, their wide circle of friends, and Mary’s dedicated labour involved in the successful propagation of the Royston Rhododendrons. The editor, Dr. Clive Justice, mentioned at the beginning of the book that the Rhododendron Species Foundation had published excerpts from the manuscript, starting in 2015 under the title of **Mary Greig and the Royston Rhododendrons** by Judith Walker, p. 123 of Rhododendron Species, Vol 10, 2015. The Cowichan Valley Rhododendron Newsletter

of April, 2006, also included a very interesting article titled **Dracula and Rhododendrons** in which Alan Campbell described the Greek and Roman Legends related to “luteum honey-induced stupor” which afflicted both armies. The article continues to relate some local “urban legends” of people in the area which were directly connected to the author of Dracula. More facts are supplied about well-known rhodoholics – the Stokers, the Buchan Simpsons, and finishes the article with a short paragraph about Ted and Mary Greig. The book includes nineteen chapters in which the author describes the first meeting with Mary Greig and how she began working with Mary in her gardening tasks. The writing style is relaxed and the author had added much interest by including direct

quotes from Mary Greig which are all in bold type. An entire lifetime is described chronologically with Mary, her mother and siblings arriving from England in 1911. Her father had arrived in Canada some months ahead of the family. The story continues – Ted’s arrival in 1919, meeting the Simpsons, starting the Royston Nursery, the years of work there, Ted’s failing health and the closing of the nursery and the connection with Alleyne Cook to start the transfer of the rhododendrons to Vancouver. The very useful Index is arranged in two major sections by **People** and **Plants**, the latter of which includes all the names of various plants mentioned in the book, but even more to the heart of the matter, a very good list of all the rhododendrons mentioned in this very readable book.

NOTICES

It is with profound sadness that I announce the passing of Lilli Ann Hemminger on March 12th. Well known to members of the VRS, she was a most enthusiastic gardener and contributed frequently to our events, winning many trophies and ribbons. Many of the rhodos she propagated are in gardens all over the lower mainland.

EVENTS

4th - 5th May (Friday, Saturday)

VRS Annual Sale

Setup and sale of our annual “Show and Sale” at Park and Tilford Gardens, North Vancouver. All hands on board, please, for this event. Bring plants and willing hands. **Free Admission** www.rhodovanbc.org



ANNUAL Rhododendron and Companion Plants Sale

Saturday May 5th 2018

10:00am – 2:00pm

- Huge Range of Species and Hybrid Rhododendrons
- Large Collection of Japanese Maples
- Rare Asiatic Podophyllums and Epimediums
- Companion Plants
- Master Gardeners to answer your questions
- **FREE ADMISSION**

Location: PARK and TILFORD Gardens
333 Brooksbank Ave., North Vancouver

www.rhodovanbc.org



This year we are expanding our sale with increased species, more maples and from Philip MacDougall, new items, podophyllums and epimediums. Both form part of the family Berberidaceae, and are admired for their foliage as much as their blooms, with spring-summer-fall leaf colour reversals. Many are native to Asia, (Epimedium specifically to China, and the Mediterranean), some growing with rhododendrons, and are commonly found in partly shaded woodland settings to elevations up to 3,000 metres.

Examples below, *Podophyllum* 'Red Panda', a hybrid of *P. delavayi* and *P. pleianthum* recently introduced from Northwest Garden Nursery, is notable for its foot-wide, glossy, rusty-red leaves (upper left); others are Terra Nova hybrids, from:

<http://www.pacifichorticulture.org/articles/podophyllums-the-mayapples-of-asia-and-america-2/>



Below, an Epimedium; others include 'Bishop's Hat' and 'Fairy Wings'. A more common name is barrenwort.

Image c. of Elfenblume (*Epimedium x versicolor*) Botanischer Garten TU Dresden, April 2009 Creative Commons Licence by 2.0 Quellenangabe Credit: Photo by Maja Dumat - flickr.com



Other Events

7th April, Saturday, 12 - 4 pm

Alpine Garden Club of BC

2018 Spring Plant Show and Plant Sale Free Admission

The Juried Show features exhibits in dozens of categories – many alpine, woodland and other rare species, as well as unique trough presentations and Bonsai.

The Sale includes not only alpiners and woodland plants, but many more from members' gardens and from some small BC nurseries – rhodos, trees, ground covers, perennials, and of course a great collection of seeds from their members around the world. (Cash and cheques only please)

13th - 15th April

RHS Cardiff Flower Show, UK. Regional nurseries. 10am-5.30pm. From £11. Bute Park, Cardiff Castle, Cardiff CF10 1BJ. Tel 0844 995 9664, rhs.org.uk.

15th April

Darts Hill Garden Park Plant Sale

Perennials, ferns, ground covers, shrubs and trees for sale.

11 am - 3 pm

16th Ave. at 170th Street

Regular public openings of the Garden commence on the 6th April, every Friday, Saturday and Sunday, from 11 am to 3 pm. There are several open houses, including one on the 28th of April. Go to www.dartshill.ca for more details.

10th - 18th April

The Rhododendron, Camellia & Magnolia Group (UK)

Tour of Northern Ireland gardens: <http://www.rhodogroup-rhs.org/>

22nd to 29th April

Scottish Rhododendron Society

Spring tour of Welsh gardens

<http://ars2018.org/wales/index.html>.

27th April – 28th October

Radicepura Garden Festival, Sicily.

Biennial, international event dedicated to garden design. Botanica Srl, Strada 17, N.19, Franzione di San Leonardello 95014 Giarre, Catania.

Tel +39 095964154. radicepurafestival.com.

26th - 29th April

Harrogate Spring Flower Show, UK. Celebrating spring planting.

9.30am-5.30pm. From £18.50. Regional Agricultural Centre, Great Yorkshire Showground, Harrogate, North Yorkshire HG2 8NZ. Tel 01423546157

flowershow.org.uk. Just don't park in my mother's driveway!

29th April

Scottish Rhododendron Festival

At Glenwhan Gardens, Dunragit, by Stranraer. Wigtownshire, DG98PH

12 acres of garden situated at 100 metres, overlooking Luce Bay and the Mull of Galloway. One of Scotland's finest gardens.

<http://www.glenwhangardens.co.uk/>

5th - 6th May

The 41st Annual John Druecker Memorial Rhododendron Show

California's largest rhododendron event, to be held at the Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens

<https://www.gardenbythesea.org/calendar/rhododendron-show-2018/>

6th May

Giant Annual Plant Sale 10 am - 1 pm.

Sunshine Coast Botanical Garden, 5941 Mason Rd., West Sechelt.

10th – 13th May

RHS Malvern Spring Festival, UK.

Show gardens and plants. 9am-6pm. From £18. Three Counties Showground, Malvern, Worcestershire WR13 6NW. Tel 0844 995 9664. rhs.org.uk.

12th May (Saturday), 10 am – 1 pm

Lynn Valley Garden Club – Plant Sale

St. Clements Anglican Church, 3400 Institute Road, North Vancouver

Wide variety of perennials, shrubs, trees, vines and groundcovers.

Hundreds of veggie plants grown by our members.

17th May (Thursday)

VRS evening visit to the Royston collection at Stanley Park.

18th – 20th May

Les Journées des Plantes, France

France's premier garden event. Domain de Chantilly, 7 Rue du Connétable, 60500 Chantilly.

www.domainedechantilly.com

19th – 20th May

Châteauneuf-sur-Loire Festival of Rhododendrons

A grand event, with artists, music, wine, and even a plant sale.

Châteauneuf-sur-Loire Castle Park, 1 Place Aristide Briand, Châteauneuf-sur-Loire, Loiret, France. It is located approximately 20 km East of Orléans.

22nd – 26th May

Chelsea Flower Show, UK

The Annual event where gardening plays second fiddle to brutalist landscape architecture.

www.rhs.org.uk

9th - 10th June (Saturday-Sunday)

West Coast Bonsai Society Show & Sale

10 – 4 pm - Free Admission

Harry Jerome Rec. Centre, 123 – 23rd Street, North Vancouver

One of the finest collections of Bonsai in the Pacific Northwest cultivated by our Bonsai Artists, many of whom have studied under Bonsai Masters in California and Japan. Hands on demonstrations of training/pruning trees.

Plants, pots, books and soil for sale.

16th June (Saturday)

VRS Spring picnic, destination to be decided.

15th July (Saturday)

Jennifer Urquhart of the **Point Roberts (WA) Garden Club** is holding its acclaimed biennial garden tour on July 15, 10 am to 4 pm.

This self-guided tour of eight gardens includes a map and a stop for afternoon tea with music. The cost is \$20 Cdn. Remember to bring enhanced driver's license or passport to cross the border. More information at info@pointrobertsgardenclub.org.

Check out the BC Council of Garden Clubs for more garden events:

<https://bcgardenclubs.com/wp/events>

Submissions, be they articles, images or events, are most welcome, as are comments and suggestions.

SAIL AWAY

This month typically is the start of the major show and sale events, and I'm looking forward to spreading our particular gospel, rhodo's at the Annual Sale. Lend a hand, bring plants and help maintain a vibrant event.

Back in Victorian times, arguably the greatest period for horticulture, these were sizeable events, attracting thousands of all stripes who would gaze at the spectacular and the extraordinary. For many it was a chance to see flora only recently introduced and to feast their eyes on cultivars grown by hundreds of horticulturalists. A golden time it was; in 1866, you could avail yourself of:

<http://bogront.se/produkt/rhododendron-prince-camille-de-rohan/>



Prince Camille de Rohan, bred by Waelbrouck, probably a maximum x caucasicum or arboreum hybrid.

De Rohan, aka Duke de Montbazou, was an amateur botanist and arts patron, is notable for his family's world-famous garden and castle, Sychrov near

Český Dub, Czech Republic, and for commissioning of the Blaschka glass orchid collection.

On the 'regal' theme, perhaps Countess of Haddington, a *ciliatum* x *dalhousiae* cross, would tempt you:

<https://www.rhododirect.co.nz/shop/Shop+by+Colour/Pink/Countess+of+Haddington-3.html>

Likely named after Helen Catherine Warrander wife of the 11th Earl of Haddington, aka Lord Binning.

If like these Hamilton's you had the pennies, you could avail yourself of quite recently introduced species, like *R. nuttallii*, first described by T.J. Booth, ten years earlier during his expedition to Bhutan, India, Tibet and China:



<http://www.hirsutum.info/rhododendron/species/detail.php?id=682> (Garth Wedemire, 2006)



And in April of that year, for the first time in the UK, *R. thomsonii* flowered in the American Garden, Lower Combe Royal, South Devon (left).

Sadly, the garden has few remaining species, though the latest owners have hired a gardener to re-establish portions of the grounds famed for its citrus wall, long since abandoned, where oranges, lemons, limes and shaddocks were cultivated. Queen Victoria took great interest in the orange cultivation. Much of the property is given over to rug rat friendly holidays, doubtless consigning the remaining flora to thrashing,

trampling and eradication. Image above, from Hooker's book *Rhododendrons of the Sikkim-Himalayas*. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rhododendron_thomsonii,

'Shaddock' has quite the history, not least the eponymous Captain who brought seeds of *Citrus Grandis*, (the Sarawak or Tahitian pomelo), to Barbados, was non-existent, rather it was a Cpt. Philip Chaddock. In Britain, shaddocks are sometimes associated with the pomelo, and the fruit many people know as the pomelo sold in stores would be a cross between the species and another citrus, the so-called 'sweet orange', *Citrus sinensis*. In a 'reverse' hybridisation, the grapefruit is a cross between *sinensis* and the shaddock, *C. maxima* aka *C. Grandis*, and originates from Barbados. For more on the so-called Myth of Captain Shaddock, see:

<http://www.shaddock.ca/famous/captain-chaddock-and-forbidden-fruit>.

Successful importation of any flora was fraught with obvious problems, and oftentimes plant survival was due more to luck than skill. Loaded onto ships, thousands of plants perished, but the invention of the Wardian Case by Dr. Nathaniel Bagshaw Ward in 1829 was a simple but very effective construction, with plant survival rates increasing by 90%. Below, early and late designs, from:

http://www.bbc.co.uk/ahistoryoftheworld/objects/kWjE0_iAS4ecAk3-7PGLAQ
<https://www.kew.org/blogs/library-art-and-archives/wardian-case-history-plant-transportation-0>



Various designs were used well into the last century. Kew received many plants in this fashion, with the last in 1962, to importing plants from Fiji.

Monthly Bloom

Speaking of in the pink, *R. davidii*, Sec. Pontica, subsec. Fortunea:



http://www.rhododendron-azalee.fr/classification_gb/fiches/davidii.shtml
(Marc Colombel, taken at Glendoick)

First described by Adrien René Franchet in 1886, and native to central and South Sichuan and north-east Yunnan, at elevations of 1800 to 4000 metres, it can reach a height of 6-7 metres (hirsutum.info). He was more of a stay-at-home botanist, who worked on collections by, amongst others, French catholic missionaries in China. At 23 years, he became curator of archaeological and geological collections at the Marquis de Vibraye's Chateau de Cheverny, and upon his death, worked at the Jardin des Plantes, the Botanical Gardens of Paris where he specialized in Chinese, Japanese and Loire et Cher flora, developing a keen interest in alpine species and their relationship to European alpine plants.

President of the Botanical Society of France in 1898, he passed away in 1900. Noteworthy publications include 'Plantae Delavayanae, Plants collected from Yunnan by Father Delavay and described', 'Contributions to the flora of the French Congo', 'Plants of Eastern Tibet', and the Latin text 'Enumeratio plantarum in Japonia'. His name is associated with the identification of 172 rhododendrons, including *R. franchetianum* subsequently re-named as *R. decorum*, various primula and meconopsis. Marc Colombel named a hybrid rhododendron, 'Adrien Franchet' after him.

This just in:

Greig Rhododendron Species Foundation, Milner Gardens and Woodland at Qualicum

Opening Date, Sunday, 22nd April 1pm

After several years of planning, design and preliminary construction, the MARS (Mt. Arrowsmith Rhododendron Society) Chapter has announced the official opening of a species garden on Vancouver Island.

Vancouver Island University's Milner Gardens & Woodland along with the five District 1 Island Chapters of the American Rhododendron Society will be officially opening the new Greig Rhododendron Species Garden.

Ultimately, the garden will showcase 250 specimens plus companion plants. Such a collection would rank as one of the world's largest. Click on the following link to make a donation in support of the Greig Rhododendron Species Garden today. Identify Milner Gardens in the drop down list under Designation, and type Greig Rhododendron Species Garden in the comment section: giving.viu.ca

With global destruction of nearly all ecosystems, it's vital to support such endeavours. Rhododendron habitat is particularly vulnerable, with a number of ex-situ conservation sites developed or planned, many botanical gardens.

The following is a link to a 2012 survey of such collections:

https://www.bgci.org/files/Worldwide/Conservation/global_survey_of_ex_situ_rhododendron_collections.pdf

I'd be curious to know why the Federal Way Species Foundation is not mentioned. The article also contains a link to The Red List of Rhododendrons published in 2011. The above link states that only 2% of the 12,000 plus records represent the most threatened taxa. If you grow and propagate species, then the list will certainly be of interest to you.

Despite the relatively late snow and frost, this winter was not unkind to my modest collection: *R. fletcherianum* & *R. dekatanum*



Yes, I have a penchant for yellow blooms.



R. megeratum

R. lutescens & *R. luteiflorum*



And for those with an incarnadine disposition:

Kalmiopsis leachiana

