



Macrophyllum

April 2004

Newsletter of the
Siuslaw Chapter
American Rhododendron Society
Post Office Box 1701
Florence, OR 97439-0111

Secretary's Report

At the monthly board meeting, the resignation due to health problems from Karen Timmons, board member at large, was heard. The board asked Paul Ziegelmaier to finish out her term of 2 years and 3 months and he agreed to that.

The board recognizes Charles King and Paul Wilson for their faithfulness in getting our newsletter together and out, and their work in setting up the user friendly system for handing on to a new editor. Also recognized is Debbie Peterson for her work organizing our local garden tours. The first one was attended by many and enjoyed by all!

Gene Cockeram was pleased with the accomplishments made at Gallagher Park during the recent work party. The park is a place we all want to visit and enjoy. The next work party date has been moved to the first Thursday, April 8, because the regular day conflicts with the setting up of the early rhody show.

Everett Hall reminded everyone of the "How to pick a truss for the show's demonstration at Gene Cockeram's on March 24. Plant name tags will be available to purchase soon.

Jim Smith is busy getting everyone ready for the two rhody shows coming up. The early one is April 3 & 4 and volunteers are needed to pull it off. Watch for explanations about the jobs and lists to sign up on to help. Eugene has an early show on April 10. See a board member, if you are interested in details.

Your board selected plants to be submitted for the ROY (Rhododendron of the Year) awards. They are as follows: lepadote - Weebee, elepadote - Nasalle, evergreen azalea - Pearl Bradford Sport, and deciduous azalea - Arsen'sGem.

Kathy Bones, Secretary

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APRIL CALENDAR

Chapter Meeting

Program: Steve Hootman of the Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden
"Rhody's of the Himalayas"

When: 3rd Tuesday, April 20

Where: Florence Middle School

Cookie bakers:

Cheryl Prchal
Linda Lanning
Nancy Hawley

Pre-meeting Dinner:

5 p.m. at Firehouse Restaurant.
Call Eileen McKenney at
(541) 997-2222, or

<mailto:egmc@oregonfast.net>

Reservations are needed

Picture on left: Early Flower Show, April 3-4. Pictured are (L) Dave Braley, city councilman and (R) Gene Cockeram. Gene took first overall.



ARS Events

April 24-25, 2004: Southwestern Oregon Chapter Rhody Flower Show, North Bend, OR

May 12-16, 2004: ARS Annual Convention, King of Prussia, PA

May 22-23, 2004: Annual Rhododendron Festival Flower Show, Florence Events Center

September 21-26, 2004: ARS Western Regional Conference, Hilo, HI

November 2-4, 2004: New Zealand Rhododendron Association 60th Anniversary Conference, Gore, Southland, New Zealand. For information contact Kathy Falconer, <mailto:falconer.dj@clear.net.nz>

PLANT OF THE MONTH

The featured plant of the month is *R. hanceanum*. Ernest Faber first collected *R. hanceanum* in 1886 on Mt. Omei in S.W. Szechuan, China. This is the same mountain where several other wonderful rhododendrons have been discovered. Ernest Wilson also found it growing there in 1910 and introduced it into cultivation.

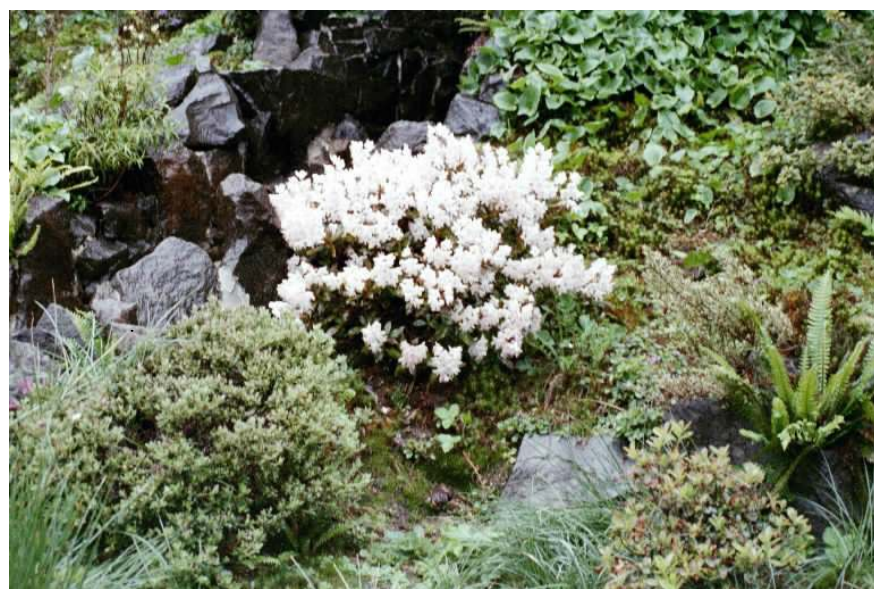
As with most rhododendron species, there are several forms of this species. The larger forms grow to be up to five feet tall and tend to sprawl a bit, but are also very attractive. They have rather thick rigid dark green leaves that are covered on both sides with tiny scales. The funnel shaped flowers are usually cream to light yellow held in trusses composed of four to seven flowers.

But it is the dwarf forms that really delight me. These lower growing forms were first found growing from seed sent back by Wilson in 1909 and 1910. These dwarfs are small compact dome-shaped spreading plants up to two feet high and two feet across. The leaves are smaller than those on the larger forms. Young growth is a bronzy brown, which is a good way to identify the plant, and the flowers, which cover the plant, are the same cream to yellow color as the larger growing forms.

There is also a very dwarf form called "*R. hanceanum nanum*" Several dwarfs that are being grown are incorrectly referred to as '*nanum*' but the "real thing" is a plant that only grows to be 3 to 6 inches high and about 10 inches across. This plant flowers later than most of the other forms. It has yellow flowers. It is an excellent rock garden plant.

Ernest 'Chinese' Wilson found *R. hanceanum* growing on cliffs and in other rocky places. This tells us to try to duplicate, as much as we can, the native habitat by planting it here in the Central Oregon coast area in full sun and sharp drainage

This is a great plant for our gardens and if properly planted and cared for will add interest and beauty to your garden.



Left: example of *R. hanceanum*

RHODY FERTILIZER

Kathy Bones has rhody fertilizer available to ARS members at \$13 per 40 lb bag. If interested, call Kathy to arrange a pick-up date/time

Tom Drake, long time chapter member passed away April 9, 2004 after a short illness. Services will be held at St. James Episcopal Church, Coquille, 1PM, Wednesday, April 14.

Dr. Rhody,

Being a member going on three years, we have seldom ever talked about soil pH, at any of the meetings. Other than "rhody's like acid soil" that's about all that I know.

1. Is there a range of soil pH that rhody's like? if so what is that range.

2. If pH is too high or too low is there a procedure(s) to correct same??

3. Are there any tools we amateur's could obtain that would help us determine soil pH?? Suggestions please. Will appreciate any help you can offer.

Thanks, Ziggy

Dear Ziggy,

Good questions. I will attempt to answer them for you.

First I would like to discuss pH. The pH of a liquid or a soil is a measurement of how acidic or basic the material is. Low pH (1-7) is acidic and high pH (7-14) is basic. I will omit technical definitions in this response.

#1. There is definitely a pH range most suitable to Rhododendrons. Scientists at Oregon State University have determined that the ideal pH for soil mixes for Rhododendrons is between 4.5 and 5.5.

If the pH is much higher it becomes difficult for the plants to take in zinc, iron, magnesium, and boron. These elements are necessary for the plant to produce new materials during the process of photosynthesis.

If the pH is too high diseases can attack the plant more easily. A high pH usually results in more severe and more frequent phytophthora infections.

Fortunately areas that have heavy rainfall, sandy soil, and lots of organic materials have acid soil naturally. We are indeed lucky.

#2. If the soil has a pH that is too low it can be adjusted by adding limestone or dolomitic lime.

If the soil pH is too high it can be adjusted by adding sulfur or iron sulfate.

#3. Fortunately with advancing technology the homeowner can now obtain a reasonable pH meter for about \$20-\$25. There are some that are cheaper, but they generally are ineffective.

You can obtain a pH meter through catalog stores, nursery supplies, and even garden sections of some large department stores.

Happy monitoring,
Dr. Rhody

Gallagher Park Beautification

Gallagher's Park at Spruce and Hwy 126 was given to the City of Florence by the Gallagher family for use as a community rhododendron garden. It is refurbished and maintained jointly by the Siuslaw ARS Chapter, the Florence Garden Club and the City of Florence. Gene Cockeram is a Parks Commissioner for the City.

In a call for volunteers to spend a few hours to remove dead rhodies, trim back brush, mow, prune, deadhead, weed, rake up and spread mulch and fertilizer, the following members volunteered at the October Chapter meeting.

We need you; call Jenny Velinty at 997-7573 or Gene Cockeram at 997-2377 if you can help. Times and dates can be altered to accommodate your schedules.

May 6: B. & M. Horney, J. Velinty

Jun. 3: G. Cockeram, J. Velinty & anyone else

Sept. 2: All members & friends work party & lunch

GARDEN TOUR SCHEDULE

We have two upcoming garden tours:

APRIL 17, 1:00 PM

Meeting Place : Dr. Devern and Joyce Pinnock's garden, 997-2696

Address: No physical address; however, directions are: Exactly seven (7) miles north on Highway 101 from the intersection of Highway 101 and Highway 26. Just past the Alder Dune sign, there is a slow lane turn out and you need to get in the far right lane. The Pinnock's driveway, on the right side of the highway, is just passed the "Slow to 35" sign. The Pinnocks are one mile from the Sutton Lake store.

MAY 4, 10:00 AM

Meeting Place: Jim and Sylvia Smith's garden and nursery, 268-6821

Address: Roadside Nursery, Highway 126, Mapleton

Following this tour, there will be a second tour at the Prchal's garden. Start time for the tour will depend on when the Smith tour finishes and whether or not the group stops for lunch at a Florence restaurant.

Meeting Place: Ron and Cheryl Prchal's garden, 902-7637

Address: 5043 South Jetty Road, Florence

See you there,
Debbie Peterson

From the VP

Spring arrived here in the Central Oregon coast area about the first week of March. There were some rhododendrons in bloom before that, but it was easy to tell the difference between late winter and 'spring'. Our chapter celebrated the arrival of spring with a highly productive work party at Gallagher Park. Gene Cockeram was our work leader and made an agreement with the Parks department to have a few of the smaller trees in the park removed to allow more light into the park, especially in the new area of the park, that we are getting ready to develop. As we all know, rhododendrons will not set buds very well when planted in too much shade. The parks department had a brush-grinding machine – a chipper-operating and as we cut the small limbs and brush from the trees, we would drag it to the chipper, where it was ground into chips. We want to thank all of the members who came out and worked so hard that day.

Debbie and Pete Petersen scheduled our first tour of the season for March 6th. We met at Thompson's Nursery Garden in Waldport and broke into three groups to tour their garden. Then we all had lunch together in Yachats, before going to Jim and Janice Gerdemann's garden and then on to the Sheridan garden. Twenty Chapter members enjoyed spending the day together at these beautiful gardens. Our next garden tour was to Gene and Doris Cockeram's garden, and on to Eileen McKenney's garden. Again, a good time was had by all. On April 17th we have a tour planned to visit the garden of Devern and Joyce Pinnocks. Devern was our first Chapter President and their garden is one of the most interesting in our area. You won't want to miss this one. Plans include meeting for lunch before going to the garden and then car-pooling on to the Pinnock's. Plans are also being made, for tours in May and June. Debbie and Pete are doing a wonderful job of arranging these tours for us.

We want to thank Karen Timmons for serving on the Board of Directors. Unfortunately her health problems forced her to submit her resignation and the Board replaced her with Paul 'Ziggy' Ziegelmier, who graciously agreed to serve for the remainder of her term.

While we are thanking people, let's give a big 'thank you' to Charles King who served as our newsletter editor until he was injured this past winter. Charles was a great editor. We also want to thank Chris and Ellen Akin who volunteered to take Charles place when Charles was no longer able to continue. If their first issue was an indication of what's to come, we have replaced a great editor with more great editors.

At our last Chapter meeting, forty-five of us had dinner together before going on to our meeting place at Middle school, where we enjoyed a presentation by Diane Thompson from the Seattle chapter. Diane showed us slide pictures of rhododendrons and companion plants that provide color and interest throughout the year, something we always try to achieve. We really appreciate Diane and her husband, Paul, for coming so far to give us this program. At our meeting we also had a quick demonstration on what the judges look for when they judge show entries. That bite on the leaf of the one truss the two judges showed us wasn't done by a bug or a slug, another varmint- our President- bit that one.

The Eugene Chapter early show and dinner will be held on April 10th at the Electric Station restaurant at 5th and Willamette in Eugene. We are all invited to participate and join in the fun. The next show to follow –on April 24th will be the Southwest Oregon chapter show at Pony Village in North Bend. Following that one, the Eugene Chapter will have their main show on May First in the Oakway Mall on Coburg Road in Eugene We are invited to enter trusses and enjoy these shows. We will finish the show season with our main show –the BIG one- on May 22nd. Our chapter and the S.W.Oregon and Eugene chapters have worked together to schedule these shows so they will enhance each other by spacing them out over a two month period. This way the public, and all of us, can see and enjoy a wide variety of rhododendrons that grow here in our part of the state. We want to thank our sister chapters for working so closely with us. It is this spirit of cooperation that helps make all three of the chapters so enjoyable.

Everette Hall, Vice President

NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to the Siuslaw Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society.

Darlene Markee, Florence, OR

Susan Gallagher, Florence, OR

John & Toni Balanco, Westlake, OR

Bill & Della Robinson, Florence, OR

Jerry & Darlene Christean, Florence, OR

Mike & Sally Noack, Seal Rock, OR

Jennifer French, Florence, OR

Mike Bones