



Macrophyllum

February 2007

Newsletter of the
Siuslaw Chapter
American Rhododendron Society
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Dear Members,

We would like to thank everyone for their support during Rosemary's recent medical issues. Your prayers, thoughts, and cards were very much appreciated. They did work; Rosemary is walking! Thank you so much. Hope to see you soon. Tony & Rosemary Rebello

UPCOMING Chapter Events

Meeting Topic- Rhodies 202

Chapter Meeting – the February meeting is on the 20th at 7PM at the Presbyterian Church on Hwy 101. Dinner this month will be at Aztlan at 5:00 pm. Contact Eileen McKinney for reservations (541) 997-2222 or egmc@charter.net. Don't forget that if you won a door prize at the last chapter meeting, get your definition for the word you received done and ready for the February meeting. You can use pictures, drawings or whatever helps you get the point across! See page 2 for words.

Gallagher Park Work Party – Winter season; no work party this month.

Cookie Team- Carol Vetter, Barbara Chase, Toni Balenco, Yvonne Moore

The Rhody Store- Don't forget to order your chapter jacket now!! We will be taking orders for chapter jackets at the February 20th meeting and they will be ready for pickup at the March meeting. There are two styles available. This will be your last chance to order one until September.

We also have some great buys on chapter hats, t-shirts, sweatshirts and yard signs. If you have any questions, please call Sandi Hennig @ 997-2489 or Cheryl Prchal @ 902-7637.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT By: Mike Bones

My Lees Scarlet were in full bloom when the freeze hit. I already have them dead-headed with hopes of keeping up this year. What is next to bloom? PJM should be starting to show color. A planting of yellow daffodils helps to show off PJM. But that's just when it is blooming, those bronze/purple leaves sure set it off with the other rhododendrons during the winter.

Winter is passing and spring will soon be upon us. Sunny days, a little frost in the early mornings, weeds starting to grow, bugs on the move; Do I go out and pull a few weeds now or wait until I have to mow them? Do I want to try a little Round Up or some other chemical means of weed control? If I find signs of weevils, what do I do? These are things that YOU are going to have to decide what is best for you.

Have you taken your spring walk around your garden to see what damage occurred during the freezing weather? On those long winter nights did you read about the early Rhododendron explorers? Have you found something interesting enough to write a little paragraph or two for our Newsletter? Do I want to have a garden tour of my place this year? Let's go find the largest R.macrophyllum. Gallagher Park sure needs an extra hand. Do I have to wait for a work party before going in and doing some work? Does the Chapter's Board need some extra help on a project? I have the questions, do You have the answer? See you at Rhodys 202 . Have some questions ready.

SECRETARY'S REPORT By: Kathy Bones

The Board was startled to have Rosemary Rebello's (our Treasurer) illness hit her so hard. We are all relieved and happy to announce how much better she is doing now! Look out! She'll be back at the meetings before you know it!! You keep going, Girl!! The Board also thanks Cheryl Prchal for stepping up to the plate to take over the Treasurer's job until Nancy Fullmer was available to fill in! "Thank you to you, too," Nancy! Nancy has been officially appointed Treasurer.

If you want a rhody jacket, Sandy Hennig and Cheryl will be taking orders for them in January and February. The jackets should be back in March. If you haven't seen the quilt Sylvia Smith made to be raffled at the May show, you are missing something!! It's gorgeous! Mike will go poor buying chances for it! Tickets are \$5.00 each or 5 tickets for \$20.00.

Gallagher's Park needs the small "stuff" (that's what Gene Cockeram called it) raked up. Let a board member know if you go and do some raking so we can get the piles picked up before the vandals find them. There is no scheduled work party for the Park during the winter, but we did have an opportunity to be of help to our community! By the time you read this, our Chapter will have helped Habitat for Humanity by planting some donated rhodies at 4 of their homes. Honeyman State Park donated about a dozen rhodies to Habitat that we could plant.

Plans for the 100th anniversary of the Rhody Festival are going strong. There are some new plans for our show in set up and times. Be watching to see how you can get involved in hospitality, selling plant raffle tickets, building the float, selling books, selling quilt tickets and anything else Jim Smith, Show Chairman, comes up with. He even tells us it's possible that we may have an international judge from Australia come!



R. luteiflorum

Photo courtesy of the Rhododendron Species Foundation.

Website: www.rhodygarden.org/pictures.html

Height in ten years- 2 ft
Bloom time: early – mid season
Plant habitat- compact to stiff & erect shrub
Geog. Origin- northeast Burma

Our words for the February meeting are:

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|-----------------------|-----------------|
| WIDELY FUNNEL SHAPED | Sandy Hennig |
| FLAT SAUCER SHAPED | Yvonne Moore |
| TUBULAR | Debbie Peterson |
| TUBULAR FUNNEL SHAPED | Gene Cockeram |
| ROTATE | Sandy Hennig |

January's Words

January definitions covered various Flower Shapes. We learned:

CAMPANULATE shape indicates a bell-shaped or cup-shaped flower.

A flower that is VENTRICOSE CAMPANULATE resembles the campanulate flower but the swelling begins at the beginning of the flower.

An OPENLY CAMPANULATE flower appears more open.

A FUNNEL SHAPED flower resembles a kitchen flower. One that is OPENLY FUNNEL SHAPED almost begins to turn inside-out.



'Grace Seabrook' or 'Taurus'

We have long been counseled that some hybrid rhododendrons exhibit only minor differences. The elders of our rhododendron community have used 'Taurus' and 'Grace Seabrook' as examples that have few characteristics by which they can be distinguished. This is perhaps not surprising since they have the same parents, 'Jean Marie de Montague' x *strigillosum*, and their beautiful red trusses most likely figured importantly in their reprieve as compared to the fate of their less attractive siblings. Apart from the reported slightly lower growth potential for 'Grace Seabrook', the primary way that they can be told apart is that 'Taurus' buds are reddish and those of 'Grace Seabrook' are green.

Recently, while enjoying a spicy Thai tofu wrap at Benny's Café on U.S. Highway 101, I asked one of the staff the name of the beautiful rhododendrons planted between the road and the building. They said that they were 'Taurus' that had been planted some five years before. Novice that I am, this perplexed me since I remembered that 'Taurus' buds are red, not red or green as on these plants. Immediately, the previous admonishments passed from on high during our Chapter meetings kicked in and with great satisfaction I realized that, somehow, an approximately equal number of 'Taurus' and 'Grace Seabrook' produced this sea of red each spring. Subsequently, Dr. Rhody confirmed that this was the case, which provided me with greater confidence that my supposition was correct.

Now, as their trusses open once again, can you identify which is 'Taurus' and which is 'Grace Seabrook' even after the buds have opened? This represents an unusual opportunity to observe firsthand, subtle expressions of genetic diversity in our beautiful hybrids.

Editor's Note: Thanks to Charles King for this wonderful page layout of article and photos!

Dear Dr. Rhody

This year I have noticed that a number of our rhodies have what appears to be split bark. Most exhibit satisfactory growth despite the appearance of the bark. However, one, a President Roosevelt, rather suddenly exhibited signs of leaf and truss stress and was soon about as moribund as a plant gets. During the ceremonial removal of the plant a post mortem examination showed that the split bark actually exposed dead wood, in contrast to other healthy plants with bark disruption exposed stems that were clearly viable in that the underlying stem was green when scratched. Why does bark split? Apparently some hybrids are more susceptible than others to these phenomena. For example, I have been told by a respected student of Rhodys that Naselle is frequently lost because of bark split. How can we identify which plants are likely to suffer a similar fate? How can we establish the difference between benign splits and those that sentence the plant to the great beyond?

(a really long winded) youth wants to know

Dear youth,

Bark split usually occurs when a plant has high water content and suddenly experiences a drastic drop in temperature to well below the freezing point of water. Water does a very unusual thing when it freezes, it expands. The sudden expansion can cause cell destruction and damage to the surrounding wood. If it is severe enough, the cells that move the water are ruptured and may cause the bark to actually split or break loose from the woody part of the stem. When all of the transporting cells on a stem rupture life above that point will cease.

Partial bark split can occur and the upper portion of a plant may continue to thrive. If the damage goes all the way around the stem it will die. We usually don't notice bark damage until after the temperatures begin to increase and the plant needs water from the root system. In the western Oregon climate, plants can live quite well with water supplied to the leaves from the moisture in the air. When it warms up we notice the leaf stress.

If you really want to save your plant and you notice the problem soon enough, prune the limbs below all visible bark split. You may have to wait to have a beautiful plant again, but it can survive. One way to help prevent bark split is to reduce any artificial watering as fall progresses. Of course if it rains hard and then freezes quickly you have no control of what happens.

In reference to your President Roosevelt, damage is frequently caused by stems having too much weight – flowers – or by wind blowing on the very, very brittle stems and causing the actual stem to break or split.

I have raised hundreds of plants of Naselle and have never had a plant die due to bark split. The one plant that I lost many, many of due to bark split was Crater Lake, one of my favorites. I pruned some back drastically and they eventually survived.

We all experience different weather, different plant locations, and different results, so, don't give up. Good Growing, Dr. Rhody

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Siuslaw Chapter ARS Mission Statement

The Mission of the Siuslaw Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society is to promote the genus Rhododendron by:

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- Creating enthusiasm for the genus Rhododendron through meetings, shows, publications, and social activities that provide the opportunities for members to share experiences and build friendships.
- Providing educational opportunities to successfully grow and enjoy these wonderful plants.
- Encouraging propagation and hybridizing of species and hybrid rhododendrons.
- Furthering the planting and use of rhododendrons and azaleas in home, business, and public landscapes.
- Advocating the conservation and preservation of superior plants of our native Rhododendrons and their habitat along the Oregon Coast.
- Advancing and supporting the mission of the American Rhododendron Society.