



# Macrophyllum

January 2003

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

**Dear Dr. Rhody,**

This summer I purchased several rhododendrons from a local nursery to place around our brand new home in Willow Creek Estates.

I followed instructions carefully, mixed in bark with the sand, set the plants so that they were above the ground slightly and fertilized and watered thoroughly.

The plants were doing very well until mid December when the rains began. Now that it is raining I find some of my plants are in areas of standing water.

Is this a problem? What do you suggest I do?

**Soggy**

**Dear Soggy,**

Yes! You have a problem! Rhododendrons almost without exception do not like to have "wet feet". Good drainage is essential for the health of your plants.

A possible solution, one I have used myself, is to do a little landscaping. Bring in more sand, mix it with bark, make piles or mounds where you want your plants and replant so they are above the water.

If this does not appeal to you, move the plants to another area that is higher and plant something in the area that can handle the water during this part of the year. Some Azaleas such as Occidentale seem to do very well in an area that is damp during the winter. There are some other choices too. Check with your local nurseries. They will be happy to assist you.

Do make sure you move those plants. They will be much better off during the winter sitting in your driveway than planted in standing water.

**Dr. Rhody**

## Siuslaw Chapter ARS, Christmas Potluck: December 8

- 79 people attended the annual Christmas potluck at the Odd Fellow's Campground.
- After a wonderful dinner, a short meeting was held. Mike Bones had everyone introduce themselves, family and guests.
- Dave Shepherd had t-shirts and sweatshirts for anyone that had ordered them.
- Jim Smith explained the proposed changes to the by-laws. Three changes, described in detail in the December issue of the *Macrophyllum*, were adopted.
- Everett offered seed from the "looking for the best macrophyllum" program to anyone wanting to help grow them.
- The Bronze Medal was awarded to Kathy Bones and Jim Smith.
- A gift exchange concluded the meeting.

*Kathy Bones, Secretary*

**President:** Mike Bones

(541) 997-3082  
mailto:[rhodies@harborside.com](mailto:rhodies@harborside.com)

**Vice President:** Everett Hall

(541) 997-3605  
mailto:[evhall@msn.com](mailto:evhall@msn.com)

**Secretary:** Kathy Bones

(541) 997-3082  
mailto:[rhodies@harborside.com](mailto:rhodies@harborside.com)

**Treasurer:** Sandi Huffman

(541) 997-3082  
mailto:[sandi@cardinal-services.com](mailto:sandi@cardinal-services.com)

**Board Members:**

Jim Smith, Past President

(541) 268-6821  
mailto:[Rhody1@presys.com](mailto:Rhody1@presys.com)

Eileen McKenney (03)

(541) 997-2222  
mailto:[egmc@oregonfast.net](mailto:egmc@oregonfast.net)

Dave Shepherd (04)

(541) 997-2283  
mailto:[drshepherd@oregonfast.net](mailto:drshepherd@oregonfast.net)

Jeannie Shields (05)

(541) 902-8358

**Newsletter:**

Charles M. King

(541) 902-0469  
mailto:[kingcm@presys.com](mailto:kingcm@presys.com)

Paul M. Wilson

(541) 902-9780  
mailto:[jpwilson@oregonfast.net](mailto:jpwilson@oregonfast.net)

**Book Chairperson:**

Marianne Horney

(541) 997-6626  
mailto:[maribob@oregonfast.net](mailto:maribob@oregonfast.net)

## JANUARY CALENDAR

### January Board Meeting

(2<sup>nd</sup>) Tuesday, January 14  
7 PM at Eileen McKenney's

### January Study Group

(3<sup>rd</sup>) Monday, January 20  
7 PM at Mike Bones  
90379 Oregon Coast Hwy

### January General Meeting

(3<sup>rd</sup>) Tuesday, January 21

#### **NOTE THE NEW TIME**

➔ **7 PM** at NACCO West ←  
Campground, So. Jetty Road

#### **Program**

"Celtic Rhododendrons"

Clint Smith

Sumner, Washington

#### **Pre-Meeting Dinner**

Firehouse Restaurant at 5 PM

**Important-for reservations!**

Contact Eileen McKenney at

(541) 997-2222, or

mailto:[egmc@oregonfast.net](mailto:egmc@oregonfast.net)

#### **Cookies**

Bones

Huffmans

Jean McPhillips

### **Gallagher Park Work Parties**

(Last) Saturday, January 25

10 AM

### From the VP

I think we can all agree- it was a great Christmas party. There were 79 people there including guests, kids, relatives and exchange students. The Bronze medal, the highest award an A.R.S. chapter can give, went to Kathy Bones and Jim Smith for their services to the chapter. It was a fun time.

Once in a while when I'm wearing my badge at a convention someone will ask how to pronounce 'Siuslaw' and they come up with some of the strangest attempts. 'Soos law', 'See use ah law', etc. So I slowly say 'Sigh oos law'. The name 'Siuslaw' comes from a Yakonan Indian word meaning 'far away waters'. But you probably already knew that.

One nice thing about living on the central Oregon coast is that we can still work in our gardens between the storms that occasionally happen this time of the year. But it's also a good time to plan for the coming season. Send for rhododendron catalogs and/or read books about our favorite genus. Remember, you can get books at the club discount from our book chairperson, Marianne Horney. Then you can start your 'get' list. 'Get' lists are wonderful. You can put an unlimited number of plants on it and it doesn't cost you anything at all. If you want to plant a new tree, now is the perfect time to do it, while the plants are still in a somewhat dormant state. This is also a good time to take a critical look at your garden and see if there are any changes you would like to make. If you are running out of space and have a nice larger plant you would like to replace with a newer variety, think about calling Gene Cockeram and see if there is room for it in Gallagher park. Our blooming season has already started. In fact, 'Lee's Scarlet' has already gone out of bloom in many of our gardens. 'Christmas Cheer' lived up to it's name and was in glorious full bloom on Christmas day. Other plants blooming now include 'Olive' and 'Praecox'.

Our featured speaker at our coming meeting will be Clint Smith, owner of Benjamin's Rhododendron Nursery in Sumner, Washington. Clint frequently takes groups abroad to tour rhododendron gardens and he will speak to us about what he calls the 'Celtic' rhododendrons observed growing in Ireland and Scotland. Some of our chapter members have gone with Clint on these trips and have returned pretty excited about their experiences. I can't think of a better way to spend what will probably be a cold wet January evening than having dinner with friends and then enjoying a presentation about far away gardens while I'm having my cookies and coffee. Can you? See you there!

Everett Hall, Vice President



**Bronze Medal Awardees Kathy Bones and Jim Smith**

Their citations are shown to the right

*"Jim's organizational skills and leadership ability have been invaluable. He has served with distinction as Board Member, President, Past-President and Show Chairman. He has been a teacher, counselor and mentor. Under his direction the Siuslaw Chapter's Rhododendron Shows have become among the best in the American Rhododendron Society. As "Dr. Rhody" his advice and guidance have helped us all. His propagation successes have enriched our gardens and the genus rhododendron."*

*"Kathy has served as Chapter secretary for many years. She exemplifies the patience and responsibility the job requires. She has brought willingness and enthusiasm to the position while sharing her advice, ideas and diplomacy for the benefit of the Chapter. We thank Kathy for opening her home to Chapter parties, picnics, committee meetings and study group sessions. Her good sense of humor has enlivened our meetings and made them even more enjoyable."*

**Plant of the Month**

The plant of the month is *R. arboreum*. The name refers to the plants tree-like growth, although not all forms of the *R. arboreum* group will become rhododendron trees. There are several sub-species in the *R. arboreum* family and I won't attempt to discuss them all right now, as many of these sub-species are worthy of being featured by themselves. All of the *R. arboreum* varieties make first-rate garden plants, especially here in the central Oregon coast area. However, some of the sub-species are quite tender and will not survive one of our rare cold winters.

*R. arboreum*, including the sub-species, is possibly the most widespread and common rhododendron in the world. They are widely distributed in south-east Asia, where it grows in a great swinging arc on the southern slopes of the Himalaya mountains from Kashmir (if they haven't all been shot down) through Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan and Manipur, a distance of about 1500 miles. Since the old British Empire included much of this range, and much of the early rhododendron hybridizing occurred in the British Isles, *R. arboreum* has been widely used to generate hybrids. The first seed of *R. arboreum* was sent back to Britain from Nepal almost 200 years ago.

Many of the hybrids we enjoy in our gardens have some *R. arboreum* in their background. For example, 'Cornubia', one of the more popular early blooming rhododendrons here in the central coast region, is half *R. arboreum*. Other *R. arboreum* group hybrids seen frequently in chapter member's gardens include 'Helene Schiffner', 'President Roosevelt' and 'Noyo Chief'. 'Sir Charles Lemon' with its beautiful rust colored indumentum is either a form of *R. arboreum*, sub-species cinnamomeum or a hybrid, but it doesn't really matter to most of us.

In its native habitat some forms of the plant can grow to eventually become about 60 or more feet tall, but in cultivation it rarely grows over 40 to 45 feet tall. Most authorities say it will grow to be about 6 feet tall in 10 years, so don't let its possible height keep you from planting one. The leaves of *R. arboreum* are longer than they are wide - 4 to 8 inches long and up to 2 inches or more wide. These leaves are tough, thick and leathery - and pretty. They are a rich glossy green on top and the underside can have a thin plastered or woolly indumentum that can vary in color.

The color of the flowers also varies considerably, from white to shades of pink and red. Some of the white and pink forms sometimes have deeper colored spots that add to their interest and beauty. They all have nectar pouches at the base of the flower. The flowers are cup shaped and are held in trusses of 15 – 30 flowers. The blood-red forms are generally considered to be the most tender. *R. arboreum* will come into bloom early here along the Oregon coast, frequently in February or March. Several of our chapter members include some of the *R. arboreum* group in their collections. Look for it. It's a magnificent species that is worthy of a featured place in your garden.

Everett Hall, Vice President



**Rhododendron arboreum Truss**

**New Members**

The Chapter welcomes new members, all of whom are from Florence:

- Vicki & Irish Caldwell
- Fran Darrah
- Joseph & Joan Sassone



**ARS Annual Convention  
Olympia, Washington  
May 1 - 4, 2003**

