



# Macrophyllum

March 2003

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

## From the VP

The genus rhododendron is such a diverse group of plants that there are rhododendrons that will fill practically every need in your garden. There are literally thousands of species and hybrids from which to choose. They range in size from tree rhododendrons to rhododendrons that can be used as ground cover. And the colors – everything but a genuine blue, and hybridizers are coming close to that. Leaves range from gigantic to minute and they also have a wide range of colors textures and shapes. Some rhododendrons can provide you with gorgeous fall colors and there are many varieties that have beautiful new growth. Some plants have fragrant flowers, others fragrant foliage. Plant structure and bark texture and color are also factors to consider in when you are seeking plants for that 'special' effect you may be trying to create in your garden. The possibilities for using rhododendrons in your garden are limited only by your imagination and knowledge, which is one reason we belong to the American Rhododendron Society, Siuslaw Chapter.

Our speaker for our next meeting will be Don Wallace. Don lives in McKinleyville, California, which is just north of Eureka. He, and his partner, own the Singing Tree Rhododendron Garden. When the Western Regional meeting was hosted by the Eureka Chapter a couple of years ago we were able to go on a tour that included Don's home garden where we enjoyed seeing how a real 'pro' creates a truly lovely landscape using primarily rhododendrons and azaleas.

Don and his partner grow a wide variety of rhododendrons and companion plants but his specialty is with fragrant rhododendrons. Don has another passion he probably won't tell us about, because it is totally unrelated to rhododendrons, but I'll tell you about it. Don is a skilled wood-worker who creates bars – the kind you 'belly-up' to that are works of art and are in demand worldwide by expensive hotels and restaurants. I have had the pleasure of attending some of Don's presentations and I know you will enjoy this one.

*Everett Hall, Vice President*

Recent issues of the ARS Siuslaw Chapter newsletter *Macrophyllum* may be accessed at:

<http://www.oregonfast.net/~jpwilson/SiuslawARS>

Other interesting information on rhododendrons is to be found at these net sites!

American Rhododendron Society:

<http://www.rhododendron.org>

Eugene Chapter, ARS:

<http://www.eugene-chapter-ars.org>

Rhododendron Species Foundation:

<http://www.rhodygarden.org/index.html>

Oregon State University:

<http://www.osu.orst.edu/dept/hort/dpd/index.htm>

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## MARCH CALENDAR

### March Board Meeting

(2<sup>nd</sup>) Tuesday, March 11

7 PM at Eileen McKenney's

### Early Show Organization Mtg.

(3<sup>rd</sup>) Monday, March 17

7 PM at Mike Bones

90379 Oregon Coast Hwy

### March General Meeting

(3<sup>rd</sup>) Tuesday, March 18

7 PM at NACO West

Campground, So. Jetty Road

### Program

*Fragrant Rhododendrons*

Don Wallace

### Pre-Meeting Dinner

Lovejoy's Restaurant at 5 PM

**Important for reservations!**

Contact Eileen McKenney at

(541) 997-2222, or

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

### Cookies

Ann Drake

Betty King

Jan Shepherd

### Gallagher Park Work Parties

(Last) Saturday, March 29

10 AM



*R. sargentianum* (Photo courtesy of Everett Hall)

### Plant of the Month

I've chosen a dwarf rhododendron for the plant of the month. *R. sargentianum* was first introduced in 1903 by plant explorer Ernest Wilson who found it when he was hunting for plants in the mountains of western Szechwan, China. He found it a few other times growing in the same locality, in exposed areas, at elevations of nine to eleven thousand feet.

*R. sargentianum* is an ideal plant for a rock garden or tucked into a little niche in your garden because at maturity the plant is such a little gem. Plants grow to about 18 inches tall and about that wide; there may be some larger than that, but I've never seen one. They grow slowly but start blooming as small plants. Sometimes plants grown from cuttings will start blooming within two years. It is a twiggly compact plant with small aromatic leaves that are shiny green on top and densely covered with tiny rust colored or dark brown scales.

This species will bloom here in the central Oregon coast area in April or early May. The flowers are small, narrowly tubular with spreading lobes that are held in little trusses of five to seven flowers. The flowers are either white, pale yellow or lemon yellow. The yellow forms are in greatest demand, but I really prefer the clones with white flowers.

This is an alpine rhododendron and, like most alpine rhododendrons, it is absolutely essential that it has good sharp drainage and an open location. However, try to provide it with afternoon shade as it doesn't seem to like the hot sun.

*R. sargentianum* is one of the finest dwarf rhododendrons you can have in your collection. In the spring it will cover itself with a profusion of color and when it is not in flower it is still an attractive little shrub. Don't forget that fragrant foliage! *R. sargentianum* does not look like a 'typical' rhododendron and will be certain to add more interest and variety to your garden.

**Everett Hall, Vice President**

### The Siuslaw Chapter Extends a Warm Welcome to New Members:

Linda & Ken Barton  
Florence, OR

Peggy & Bill Erickson  
Waldport, OR

Nelda & Bruce Palmer  
Cutten, CA

### Tee & Sweat Shirts

See Dave Shepherd for shirts with the Chapter logo.

### Fertilizer

Those who signed up for fertilizer will be contacted when it arrives.



### Upcoming Rhododendron Events

#### April 5 - 6, 2003

Early Rhododendron Show  
Siuslaw Chapter ARS  
Florence, Oregon

#### April 12, 2003

Early Rhododendron Show  
Eugene Chapter ARS  
Eugene, Oregon

#### April 12 - 13, 2003

Rhododendron Show  
Southwestern Chapter ARS  
Pony Village Mall  
North Bend, Oregon

#### May 1 - 4, 2003

ARS Annual Convention  
Olympia, Washington

#### May 17 - 18, 2003

Siuslaw Chapter Rhododendron Show  
Rhododendron Festival  
Florence, Oregon

#### October 2 - 5, 2003

ARS Western Regional Conference  
Seaside, Oregon



**Rhododendrons  
Currently in Bloom**

Left:

R. "Pres.Roosevelt"

Right:

R. "Seta"



**Siuslaw Chapter ARS Board Meeting: February 10, 2003**

- Jeannie Shields reviewed the survey on the Development Fund taken at the last general meeting. The 37 positive, 1 neutral and 7 negative responses prompted the board to initiate such an activity. Donors will be asked to include a name and address of donor and recipient for mailing notification purposes. Jeannie volunteered to write the receipts for the donors and acknowledgements for those in whose names the funds have been donated. The Fund will be a separate item in our budget for tracking purposes and in an account separate from our existing account at Oregon Pacific Bank. Sandi Huffman will maintain the financial records. The fund will be activated and available for deposits by the next board meeting.
- Gene Cockeram has been re-appointed as Gallagher Park Commissioner. Gene said it would be nice if more people helped at Gallagher Park on workdays. It was suggested that the sloping area by Munsel Creek be cleared by next fall to make a spot for the selected macrophyllum specimens.
- Sandi Huffman announced the plant chance drawings are doing wonderfully! Dave Shepherd was thanked for pushing sales and all who donate the plants.
- Charles King addressed the question of whether we should develop a web site for the Chapter. Given the size and characteristics of the Chapter, it would be more cost effective to develop a web site for our newsletter than to mail a paper copy to each member. From a procedural perspective, a web site should facilitate member access and also retain the ability to present the rhododendron information in color. The board voted to develop such a site.
- Jim Smith will have an organizational meeting for the Early Show at Mike & Kathy Bones's on March 17 at 7:00 PM. This will be instead of the Monday night study group. Jim will work with Jeannie Shields to have flyers advertising the early show ready for distribution by the March 18 meeting.
- Jeannie Shields asked everyone to be thinking of a theme for the use of Rhodies in the Landscape Contest this year. It is requested that suggestions be ready for the next board meeting. She also asked about the note card idea suggested earlier. The Monday night study group has not yet been able to study the concept. Jeannie also recommended that, if they did not intend to keep them, members might make their ARS journals available to new members at our meetings.

**Kathy Bones, Secretary**

**Dear Dr. Rhody,**

Last year I purchased several plants from a local nursery. I followed planting instructions and watered carefully. They bloomed well and were very attractive.

This year one of my plants has no bloom buds on it.

Have I done something wrong?

What should I do to help it bloom next year?

**"Unadorned"**

**Dear "Unadorned",**

A plant may not set flower buds for a variety of reasons.

**Fertilizer** Application of nitrogen rich fertilizer can cause general plant vigor but simultaneously suppress flower bud formation.

**Pruning** Plants pruned in the fall will not bloom because of the removal of flower buds.

**Weather** Sudden cold weather can kill flower buds as we have discussed in recent newsletters.

**Set Back** Though set back is not a technical term, it is used to describe a years delay in producing flower buds when planted after having been extremely well cared for and fertilized heavily in the nursery environment. The plant seems to need to "catch up" after transplanting.

**Variety** Some hybrids do not bloom every year.

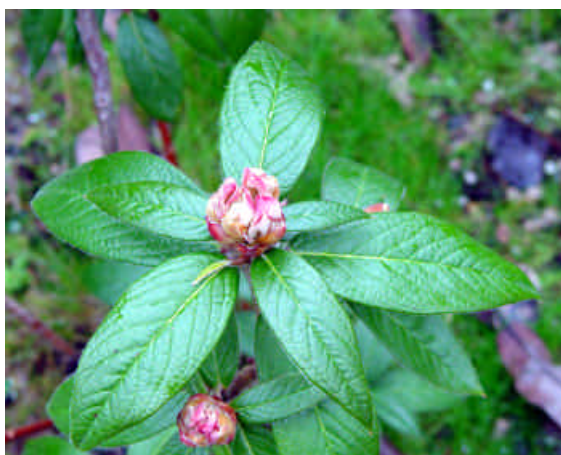
**Surroundings** Some rhododendrons need full sun to bloom, while others require partial to dense shade.

The reason your plant failed to set bud could be any one of the above or a combination of factors.

Experiment, try different locations, change fertilizer etc.

Ask your local nursery personnel, they should be able to give you some helpful hints.

**Dr. Rhody**



### Our Early Rhododendron Show is to be Held April 5 - 6

Twice each spring our Chapter sponsors rhododendron shows that enable us to see the best trusses of the hundreds of varieties that are grown in the region. At each of these shows the community, not just Chapter members, bring examples of their best rhododendron and azalea blooms for display on a Saturday and Sunday at the Florence Event Center.

There are two shows each year because it permits us to better appreciate the blossoms of both early and later blooming varieties. The "Early Rhododendron" show is held the first weekend in April, the 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> in 2003; the "Rhododendron Show" is held in conjunction with the Rhododendron Festival on the third weekend in May, the 17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> this year.

Plan on entering trusses in both of these shows. The process is not complicated. Select trusses that exhibit the best flowers and leaves. Clip your truss, retaining the stem from last year's growth and include the leaves that were produced last year. Your preparation of smaller rhododendrons and azaleas may require somewhat different treatment; you may want to contact Jim Smith as described below, or another member for advice. Place the stem in water in a 12-oz. soft drink container to avoid dehydration and bring it to the Florence Event Center on Saturday, April 5 between 7 and 9 am. Chapter members will be there to assist you in labeling the truss and ensuring that the truss will have sufficient water to help maintain its appearance during the show.

For those of you who may be hesitant to offer up your trusses, don't despair. Jim Smith is our Show Chairman. Jim, Past President of the Chapter who is sometimes known as Dr. Rhody, will be describing and demonstrating what you need to do to enter trusses at the March 18 Chapter meeting. Should you have questions, please give Jim a call at (541) 268-6821.

### Development Fund

The minutes of the last board meeting reflect the enthusiasm of the membership in welcoming the idea of establishing a development fund by the Chapter. This fund would be used to support special activities of the Chapter that would not be possible within the normally tight budgetary restraints.

Examples of activities that might benefit include increased support in the celebration of the centennial of the Rhododendron Festival, Chapter participation in American Rhododendron Society events, preservation of special rhododendron specimens, increased communication potential with the development of a Chapter web site and assistance in the increased use of rhododendrons in our communities.

It is envisioned that support for the Development Fund will come from two sources, those that wish to enhance the presence of rhododendrons in our communities and others that wish to make donations in the names of individuals who have these interests. Contributions will be acknowledged to both the donor and the one in whose name the contribution has been made.

The tax-deductible nature of contributions to the Development Fund should serve to make it an efficient mechanism to help us accomplish our common goals.

Contributions to the Development Fund can be sent to the Siuslaw Chapter ARS, P.O. Box 1701, Florence, OR 97439.

### Will they be ready for the Early Show?

The above photos (from top to bottom, taken on February 14, 22 and 28) show the emergence of *R. "Cowbell"* flower buds.

*R. "Cowbell"* (*ciliatum* x *bullatum*) is fragrant, tender and produces large white flowers. Given that the photos exhibit 2 weeks of development, will the trusses be open by the Early Show - or will they only be memories?

CMK