



# Macrophyllum

February 2005

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

**Web Site:** <http://www.oregonfast.net/~siuslawars/>

## Presidents Report

In many places in North America spring arrives almost over-night. It's winter one day and spring the next. However, here along the central Oregon coast spring arrives softly, with new growth on the alder trees gradually giving them a lavender haze before the new leaves emerge, wild flowers starting to awaken from their winters sleep and, best of all, the rhododendrons start to come into bloom.

At our last Chapter meeting we gave a certificate of appreciation to Marianne Horney for providing us such a great selection of books at our chapter meetings and the outstanding book display for the public at our shows. Chapter book sales under Marianne have soared. Her dedication and enthusiasm are greatly appreciated by all of the other chapter members. When you see Marianne and Bob carrying the books in and out of our meeting place, please give them some help – those books are heavy.

February is the month I start to fertilize my plants. The winter rains have washed away many of the nutrients from the soil that need to be replaced before the bloom/ growth cycle. Remember the chapter purchases fertilizer by the ton at a lower price than can usually be purchased in lesser amounts. We store this fertilizer in Mike and Kathy Bones garage and you can obtain it there. Please call them first before you go to be sure they are home. 997-3082

Last year our tour chairperson, Debbie Petersen, arranged several wonderful garden tours for us and we all had a great time. Going together as a group of friends seems to make the gardens even more enjoyable than by viewing them individually, and it's also more educational. Someone in the group frequently knows more about a particular plant than the rest of us, and sharing that knowledge enhances our appreciation of the plants and the garden. These tours also provide us with an opportunity to see plants we might want to include in our own gardens.

Our member nurseries also have many beautiful specimen plants and you are welcome to visit and admire these plants without being pressured to make a purchase. If you should like to make a purchase, these nurseries give chapter member discounts. These nurseries are listed on our web-site.

There is still plenty of time to move your plants around. Plants are like outdoor furniture and can be rearranged. Remember though, the later in the season that you move or set out new plants, the more care and water you must give them this coming summer.

Our program for our February meeting will be presented by Don Wallace, the owner of Singing Tree Gardens in Arcata, Cal. For more than fifteen years Don has planted, propagated, hybridized and grown from seed many rhododendrons. He is a past- president of the Eureka chapter. He has been taking beautiful pictures for at least twenty years and his programs are always outstanding as he shares his passion for rhododendrons with us.

**Everett Hall, President**

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## CALENDAR

### FEBRUARY Chapter Meeting

*When:* Tues., February 15,  
7PM.

*What:* Don Wallace of Singing  
Tree Gardens, Arcata, CA to  
share his passion.

*Where:* Presbyterian Church,  
3996 Hwy 101, Florence, OR

*Pre-meeting Dinner:*  
5 p.m. at Firehouse Restaurant.

Call Eileen McKenney at  
(541) 997-2222, or  
<mailto:egmc@charter.net>

**Reservations are needed**

*Cookie bakers:*  
Helen Baxter  
Debbie Peterson  
Yvonne Moore

### MARCH

*When:* Tues, March 15, 7PM.  
*What:* Rhodies 202

## Dear Dr. Rhody,

One of the first meetings I attended you discussed the correct procedure for moving Rhododendrons. I was just beginning my collection so I didn't pay strict attention to the discussion. I have become the proud owner of several nice Rhododendrons. Most of them are very nice, healthy, and growing quite well. A couple plants just don't seem to be doing well at all. They have brown burnt edges on the leaves. I think maybe it's too hot for them where they are presently located. Is it easy to move Rhododendrons? Should I try? When is the best time to move them?

Wondering

Dear Wondering,

I'm very pleased you are happy with the majority of your Rhododendrons. Welcome to Rhododendron Addiction! Yes it is generally very easy to move Rhododendrons. They have shallow root systems and you aren't required to have a huge root ball when you move a plant.

Young plants that have been in a location for only a few years are actually very easy to move. Dig around the plant with a sharp shovel. Then, using the shovel, pry gently. The plant will usually come loose easily. Move the plant to the new location you have chosen. Make sure there is excellent drainage in the new location. Dig a shallow hole, mix the soil with bark, set the plant in the hole with the top of the root ball at least 2 inches above the soil contour. Mulch heavily around the sides of the root ball with bark or a bark/soil mixture. Take care not to mulch deeply around the stem. Rhododendrons take in nutrients and water primarily with the roots that are close to the surface and covering the root ball too deeply can cause the plant to suffer. Yes, you should try. I have had to move some plants as many as four times before the plant decided it was where it wanted to be. A happy plant certainly adds to the beauty of the garden.

If your plant is too large to carry, a children's snow disk or a tarp can make movement easier. Place the plant on the tarp or disk and slide it to it's new location - much easier than trying to carry the plant.

The very best time to move a Rhododendron, on the Oregon Coast, is after the fall rains begin - usually late October. Our winters aren't cold enough to damage a newly located plant. The plant actually does some growing, especially the root system, during our mild winters. You're still not too late to move your plants this year. The sooner you do the easier it will be for the plant to adjust to the new location.

Large older Rhododendrons can also be moved with great success. The movement usually requires some equipment and trained equipment operators. A backhoe or excavator is ideal. I have a Kubota tractor with a special forklift design that we use to move large plants. The only difference in moving the large plants is the amount of work being done. The survival rate is excellent for either large or small plants.

Give your plant at least a full year in a new location. It takes a while for a plant to adjust to it's new home. Many plants I have relocated seem to have a little transplant setback before they readjust and begin to thrive.

**Dr. Rhody**

## Rhododendron Events

**April 27-May 1, 2005:** ARS National Convention, Victoria, BC

Hosted in Victoria, BC, by the Victoria Rhododendron Society. It's a great way to celebrate spring - floods of rhododendrons and spring flowers all over town, visits to public and private gardens, interesting lectures by speakers from Australia, New Zealand, Sikkim, Scotland, the U.S. and Canada, reception in the Royal B.C. Museum, sea-side walks, accessibility to all of beautiful Vancouver Island, on and on.

**Sept 9-12, 2005:** 25<sup>th</sup> Western Regional, Newport, OR

**Nov 4-6, 2005:** NE Regional, East Windsor, NJ

**May 12-15, 2006:** ARS National Convention, Washington, DC

The Siuslaw Chapter of ARS welcomes the following new members:

### New members:

William Clark  
Bud and Judy Cook  
Chet and Lillian Hager  
Roy David and Mary Jane Hite

Don and Yvonne Moore  
Roger and Jeanne McNa  
Tony and Rosemary Rebello  
Bill and Della Robinson

### New Associate Members:

Terry Henderson  
Steve Hootman  
Fred Lighter  
Randy and Charlene Jones

## Secretary's Report

"Gardeners work from sun to sun, your board's work is never done!" Your board met and took care of a lot of Chapter business! Information for the web page continues to be gathered and given to Paul Wilson. The January meeting was discussed with anticipation about Charles King's presentation. We look forward to the February meeting with Don Wallace from California who will be talking about his own hybrids.

Everett Hall collected a few questions from the Chapter for the "FAQ" area of the web page. These questions were discussed and some given to Dr. Rhody, Jim Smith, and the rest to be answered and given to the Web Master, Paul Wilson.

Research continues on creating a Chapter jacket for us to buy. Dave Shepherd will head up the committee with Jim Smith and Mike Bones helping him. If you have any suggestions on what it should look like or places to purchase jackets, see one of these fellows.

The board is reviewing the Bylaws to make sure they are up to date and relevant. They should have suggestions for change ready for the Chapter's input and approval by the spring.

Mike showed a copy of a book by Kenneth Cox, Rhododendrons, A Care Manual, with the suggestions we consider giving it to our book chairperson, Marianne Horney, to have available for the Chapter. Watch for this book!! Mike and Everett think it's pretty good.

Our District Director, Mike Bones, has asked all the Chapters to make a list of speakers in their own Chapters willing to travel around the state doing programs for the other Chapters. Think about if this were something you would enjoy and tell a board member! We are also to make a list of hybridizers in our Chapter and the plants they have hybridized, if the plant is registered. Our DD is a busy little guy!!

Ziggy Zieglemair has volunteered to head up the Gallagher Park work parties while Gene Cockeram recuperates from surgery! Come on out to Gallagher Park and have fun with Ziggy!!

It was another productive evening for your board!

Kathy Bones, Secretary

## Notes

Flower show set up Mar 31, 4pm, FEC. Contact Jim Smith  
Gallagher Park work party, Feb 17, 9:30am. Contact Gene Cockeram  
Development Fund donations, Contact Jeannie Shields

## Plant of the Month

The plant of the month is *R.recurvoides*. This species was found by Frank Kingdom-Ward in 1926 while he was exploring in upper Burma. It was found growing in one location on sunny rocky slopes. It has never been collected in the wild again.

*R.recurvoides* is a very compact plant growing to about five feet in height. The stems or branchlets, of new growth are densely covered with orange-brown hairs or bristles.

The new growth of the three inch long pointed leaves is densely covered with beautiful thick white indumentum that matures to a cinnamon color on the underside of the leaf, but wears off on the topside leaving it dark green and shiny. The thickness of the indumentum will vary between individual plants.

The trusses are composed of four to seven white- flushed to rose colored funnel-campanulate flowers that have crimson speckles without a blotch.

*R.recurvoides* is among the finest of the low growing species. It is very distinctive and you may want to include it in your garden. Of course, we should always try to give species plants the same growing conditions they have in their native habitat. But if you don't have a sunny rocky slope where *R.recurvoides* can be planted do the next best thing and provide it with good sharp drainage.

I only know of one named clone of this plant and I seriously doubt if it is available. The unnamed plants I have seen have all been lovely so having a named form of this species is not a problem.

Thompson's Rhododendron nursery has an extremely nice collection of *R.recurvoides* plants that are lovely to look at all year long and particularly striking when in bloom. Look for it the next time you visit their nursery and take time to compare the individual plants and the bristly little stems and the indumentum on the foliage.

Everett Hall

