



Macrophyllum

April 2005

Newsletter of the
Siuslaw Chapter
American Rhododendron Society
Post Office Box 1701
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Presidents Report

This year spring arrived early following a very mild dry winter. All of this adds up to our plants blooming earlier than usual and, most likely, a dry summer.

We can expect our shows to reflect this unusual weather with entries of varieties in our early show we usually do not have in bloom at this time and it's anyone's guess what will be in flower for our May show. Of one thing I am certain, there will be plants in bloom and, with the enthusiasm in our chapter, we will have another out-standing show. Hopefully, each of you will bring entries because we will need them. Also remember we are trying to identify any problem areas connected with the show so we can have them smoothed out before our May 2007 show when we will be hosting what we expect to be the biggest and most spectacular rhododendron show ever held in North America. That event is only a short two years and five shows away.

There were 85 people who attended our first presentation of Rhododendron 202. We need your feedback [good or bad] on that presentation so we can refine it before we do it again. You can give your comments to any of the three of us who made the presentation or to any board member who will pass it on to us.

Those of you going to the Victoria convention need to take proof of U.S. residency with you. Authorities on both sides of the border are becoming strict. So take either a valid passport or a certified copy of your birth certificate to show the officials when you cross the border. If you want to stop by the Rhododendron Species Foundation garden in Federal Way [between Olympia and Tacoma] either going to or returning from the convention, get your free passes from our treasurer, Cheryl Prchal before you leave. There are good signs on I-5 indicating the proper off-ramps to take to go to the garden.

Also remember there is no vehicle ferry service between Seattle and Vancouver Island, only passenger service. If you are planning to ferry from Anacortes it is probably a good idea to get reservations, as there is only one ferry daily at this time. Between Port Angeles and Victoria there are two ferries daily. We like to get into the line about two hours before the ferry leaves.

In spite of a rainy day, those of us who went on the tour Debbie Peterson arranged for us to Laura's Heather Oak Rhododendron nursery and the Log Cabin nursery in the Eugene / Springfield area had a good time. It really is fun to go on these tours together. Thank's Debbie.

Our native rhododendron- R.macrophyllum is coming into bloom. We are continuing our search for the better plants - those with darker pink flowers, large trusses with 20 or more flowers, white flowering plants, plants with exceptional foliage, etc. If you find one of these plants please call me at

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CALENDAR

APRIL

Chapter Meeting

When: Tues., April 19, 7PM.

What: Dick "Red" Cavender

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

Pre-meeting Dinner:

5 p.m. at the Hickory BBQ
Restaurant, 9th near Hwy 101.

Choices are: ribs, steak, salmon
and chicken,

Call Eileen McKenney, NLT
April 14, at (541) 997-2222, or

<mailto:egmc@charter.net>,

Reservations are needed.

Cookie bakers:

1. Joan Hayes

2. Sylvia Smith

3. Marjene MacIntyre

MAY

When: Tues, May 17, 7PM.

What: Plant auction

997-3605, Gene Cockeram at 997- 2377, Marianne Horney at 997 6236 or Bob Macintyre at 347 7269 so we can take pictures, mark the location of the plant and gather seeds and cuttings. This is a major chapter project. We've already identified several out-standing specimens but we know our search has just begun. Somewhere out there the most beautiful *R. macrophyllum* in the world is waiting expectantly to be discovered. We sure wouldn't want to disappoint a plant like that.

Our chapter meeting program will be presented by Dick [Red] Cavender, of the Portland Chapter. For many years Dick and his wife, Karen, have made trips into S.W Oregon and Northern California searching for the better forms of *R. Occidentale* taking pictures and gathering seeds and cuttings. Dick will be showing us some of his pictures of these native azaleas and offering a few of his plants for sale. I've seen some of Dick's presentations before and thoroughly enjoyed them. See you there.

Everett Hall, President

Secretary's Report

Your board is excited about the macrophyllum note cards that are available for you to buy. Fred Hilden made a presentation to the board displaying his catalogue and proofs. We can expand to other rhododendrons later but for now, we are concentrating on the native rhody. The cards may be purchased at the regular meeting or at either show.

Fertilizer should be available soon! There's been some trouble with the machine that bags it up and the company we deal with has been unable to fill our order. We hope by the time you are reading this, Mike & Kathy Bones will have all you would want in their garage. Checks this time will be made out to "Siuslaw Chapter ARS".

Work parties at Gallagher Park are becoming a spectacular place to meet now. Things are blooming everywhere and are a must to go see. Work parties are the Thursday after the regular Tuesday meeting from 10 to noon. I suspect a few even go out to lunch afterward. The work party on March 17 even had a mini "how to select a truss for the show" class. If you missed it, see a board member and ask for another class on April 21st work party. Ziggy Ziegelmaier has arranged for the radio, KCST, to interview Everett Hall, Jim Smith and Mike Bones about Gallagher Park on April 21st. Come and support them as our chapter gets some notice by the town of Florence.

If you are interested in Grants, (researching, writing, finding a need), see a board member about a meeting for you can attend with others that have the same interest.

Forest green jackets with dark blue linings are available with our chapter name and your own name on them. See Cheryl Prchal to sign up for one. We can order matching caps, too.

Jim, Everett and Mike will be making a list of rhodies that grow well in our area to give to ROY, (Rhododendrons Of the Year). To help them along, you are encouraged to give them suggestions of rhodies that do best for you. The float for Rhody Days will be tabled for this year due to the lack of available time of the workers to put it together.

Eleven people went on Debbie Peterson's last tour and had a great time. Keep watching for the next one. You won't want to miss it!

Kathy Bones, Secretary

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: 25th Western Regional, Newport, OR

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

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

Plant of the Month

Several of our early blooming rhododendrons we enjoy in our gardens here in the central Oregon coast area are hybrids of *R. arboreum*. Plants like 'Cornubia' with its bright red flowers and the dark red waxy flowers of 'Bibiani' have *R. arboreum* as one of their parents. "Dame Nellie Melba" with early blooming bright pink trusses is an *R. arboreum* hybrid that, although it's been around a long time, is still one of the best.

R. arboreum was introduced about two hundred years ago in 1800, and has been used in hybridization since the seed was first sent to England. The old British Empire encompassed much of the part of the world where *R. arboreum* is native, the India sub-continent, and the Sino-himalaya region. In places like Kashmir, Nepal, Ceylon, and part of Tibet and Burma, *R. arboreum* and its sub-species thrive. So it is not surprising that seeds of these plants made their way to Britain soon after the Brits took possession of this region. It is now one of the most widespread species in cultivation.

When we toured the Gerdermann garden last year we enjoyed seeing three different *R. arboreum* plants blooming there. One of these plants was a lovely dark red that originated in the old Phetteplace garden in Leaburg, on the McKenzie river east of Eugene, There was also a white form of *R. arboreum* with beautiful rusty-brown colored indumentum flowering - *R. cinnamomeum* - and a lighter flowered plant Jim had raised from seed he obtained from New Zealand.

Several of our chapter members have a plant of 'Sir Charles Lemon', which may or may not be *R. cinnamomeum* itself. If 'Sir Charles' is planted where the underside of the foliage can be seen it can become a focal point of the garden.

In our coastal climate *R. arboreum* and it's sub-species like to be grown in full sun, with good drainage. In it's native habitat it receives lots of summer rain, so these plants are happiest with some summer watering. The plants in the arborea sub-section are mostly tree-like and many of its hybrids can become small trees. For those of you who would like to include some *R. arboreum* hybrids in your gardens but who really don't want a tree, consider some of the *R. arboreum* x *R. yakushimanum* hybrids i.e. 'Estacada' or 'King's Ride', both of which bloom with lovely pink trusses and will remain low growing plants. There are several other of these hybrids available so check with one of our member nurseries to see what they are offering, and don't forget your discount - just another members only benefit.

Shown below, in order are: *R. phetteplace*, *R. New Zealand* and *R. cinnamomeum*.

Everett Hall



