



Macrophyllum

December 2004

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

Secretary's Report

Your board met and did chapter business. Paul Wilson gave a report about our Web Site. It is coming along nicely and should be available for your viewing soon. Articles and information for the site is requested from anyone. If you have something to add, see Paul.

The study group is cancelled until further notice. The night was not compatible with the Eugene Chapter's meeting. Discussions about the study group will resume after the first of the year.

Freda Zieglemair is the primary contact for our new telephone tree. She has formed a committee consisting of Cheryl Prchal, Marianne Horney, Barbara Egerman, Linda Lanning, Karen Timmons, Joy Burkey, Nancy Hawley and Doris Cockeram. This committee will pass along any news that needs to get out to the chapter in a hurry.

If you're up in the Federal Way, Washington area and have time, visit the Species Botanical Gardens. The garden is well worth it! Tickets are needed and Cheryl Prchal has a limited amount of them. See her for yours.

Watch for an article by Jeannie Shields in the Oregon Coast Magazine!

The Christmas Party will be held Sunday, December 12, at the Odd Fellows Camp Ground Hall. Gather at 12:00, noon, eat at 1:00 PM. A gift exchange will be included. Any plant related item may be brought.

Kathy Bones, Secretary

Gallagher Park

We had another successful work party on Thursday, November 18. We have the lower section of the garden looking better than it has ever been. There will be no scheduled work party in December as there is too much other activity going on, but anyone who would like to spend some time weeding is more than welcome to do so.

Gene

New Web Site

The new Siuslaw ARS web site is nearly complete. Please visit it at its **temporary** location: <http://www.oregonfast.net/~pmwilson/>. I'd appreciate your thoughts/comments.

Paul Wilson

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CALENDAR

DECEMBER

Chapter Meeting

When: Sunday, December 12, 12PM.

What: Christmas Potluck

Bring: If you signed up for a dish, bring it. If not signed up yet, call Mike/Kathy Bones to see what is needed.

If you wish to exchange gifts, bring a plant or a plant related item.

Where: Odd Fellows Campground, South Jetty road (see map on page 4)

JANUARY

When: Tues., January 18, 7PM.

What: Charles & Betty King to share their discovery of Ireland's rhodies.

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

Dear Dr. Rhody,

I have been very successful raising Rhododendrons. My garden is over 30 years old. I have many excellent specimen plants. The one goal I have failed to achieve is to grow a yellow Rhododendron that is long lived, has good flowers, and has a good plant habit. I have, throughout the years grown some nice yellows, but they seem to die at a young age. Other yellows may live quite awhile, but have sparse foliage, small blooms, or don't flower regularly. Do you have any recommendations? Why do the nice yellows seem to die easier than other plants?

Gene

Gene,

Thanks for the very difficult question. Your success raising Rhodies is well known. Unfortunately I'm afraid your experience raising yellow Rhododendrons is shared by others. I am a novice compared to you, but I have also experienced a similar difficulty raising yellow Rhododendrons. I continually stress good drainage for our plants. I believe, I have no scientific evidence, but a firm belief that yellows need even better drainage than other colors. Yellow's seem to get root rot, Phytophthora, and other diseases more easily. The yellow Rhododendrons also seem to be susceptible to over fertilizing, resulting in fertilizer burn and leaf damage or actual leaf loss.

Yellows are generally very hard to raise. We have no yellows that perform as well as the excellent red-Jean Marie.

A few years ago I thought more highly of the varieties of yellow Rhododendrons available. Early fall and winter frosts, bark split, and some very hot days really damaged many of my yellow varieties. A favorite of the past seemed to become infected with something that destroyed field plants and potted plants. This disaster occurred at many locations, not just here.

There are two yellows that seem to always do well at my location. They have never been returned by an unhappy grower. Horizon Monarch and Horizon Lakeside always seem to thrive. Horizon Monarch has a superb plant habit, is very vigorous and has huge flowers. Unfortunately it is a pale yellow not a bright intense yellow. Horizon Lakeside is a bright yellow with a red blotch, it grows well in many locations but the size of the bloom and the plant habit are not as outstanding as Horizon Monarch.

Hybridizers in the Northwest are continuing to try to improve the varieties available. There is a general aim to improve the hardiness of yellows by crossing with very hardy Eastern varieties. One variety that is somewhat new to me - Capistrano - seems to perform well.

The miniatures, Patty Bee and Wren do very well at my location.

Keep trying. Plant those varieties you like. If they die in a few years plant some others. Remember--they cost less than the poinsettia you buy for Christmas and then throw away.

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: 25th Western Regional, Newport, OR

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

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

Chapter Dues

We have pretty well wrapped up the 2004-2005 membership renewals. Those few who have not renewed yet may do so by mailing a check to the chapter post office box or by giving it to a board member at the Christmas potluck. Thank you for helping me complete the renewal process on time.

As a member of the Siuslaw Chapter, you are also a member of the Rhododendron Species Foundation in Federal Way Washington. I have free passes available for anyone who is interested in visiting the gardens.

Cheryl Prchal, Treasurer

President's Report

We had a tremendous turn out at last months meeting – forty-nine of us had dinner together before the meeting and many more members joined us at the meeting. It was a fun time. Our auctions are always one of our most popular activities. The next one—THE REALLY BIG ONE—will be held as the topic of our May chapter meeting, so be sure it's on your 2005 calendar.

As you all know, we will have our annual Christmas potluck on Sunday, December 12th, in the meeting hall at the Odd Fellows campground on South Jetty Road. We will start gathering and arranging tables and visiting about noon and plan to have dinner about 1:00 p.m. Bring a main dish large enough to serve six or eight people or a smaller main dish and a dessert / appetizer / salad, etc; your own table service and beverage of your choice—unless you want coffee which will be provided by the chapter. Also, bring an exchange gift from each of you –garden related and not expensive. This is always a great party and a really nice way to celebrate the season.

As you do your Christmas shopping remember that gift memberships, rhododendrons and garden books are wonderful gifts. Our book chairperson, Marianne Horney, has a beautiful supply of books available for your selection at prices you can't find any place else. If you are searching for a particular garden book, check with Marianne, she might be able to help you find it. And don't forget our member rhododendron nurseries that offer chapter discounts have a plentiful supply of gorgeous plants from which to choose. Other options are gift certificates for development fund donations and gift memberships. If interested, contact our treasurer, Cheryl Prchal, and she will be glad to handle that for you.

If the long-range weather forecast is correct, this winter should be warmer and drier than normal. That's good news for those of us who raise tender rhododendrons in our gardens. We dread the arrival of a Siberian blast of cold weather. However, if one of those cold air masses does head in our direction there are several ways you can protect your plants. Some members move their tender babies into a protected building knowing cold spells on the Central Oregon Coast rarely last more than a few days. Other members cover their plants or build shelters around them, and for larger plants this is easier than moving them. I grow a very tender form of *R. arboreum* var. *albotmentosum*—so every year when I'm putting up my Christmas lights I put one string on this plant and leave it lighted until I am certain the danger of a possible cold spell is past. The theory is that the warmth of the light bulbs will prevent the plant from freezing. I don't know if it will work or not—we've never had one of those really cold spells since I started doing it. But it sounds like it might work.

Planting and transplanting are still top priorities for garden work, as is garden clean up and label checking. Unlabeled plants really frustrate me. But one nice thing about this time of the year, you don't have to water the garden.

Most of the plants that were showing some fall blossoms are slowing down now but the early blooming varieties should begin their show later this month if the weather stays mild. Remember last year, it was mild early in the year and the plants started to come into bloom, then the weather turned cold and wet and the poor confused things went back into dormancy again for a few more weeks.

Even though it's the Holiday Season and we don't normally have a Board meeting in December, this month the Board has such a full agenda it will meet on December 7th. Any member who would like to attend is always welcome.

See you at the potluck party. I'll be the bald-headed guy carving the turkey.

Everett Hall, President

Garden Tours

The only garden tour scheduled at this time is the December 4th tour to Shore Acres to see the Holiday Lights. We're meeting at the Sears parking lot in Florence at 3:30 p.m. on that Saturday.

Debbie Peterson

New Members

The Siuslaw Chapter of ARS welcomes new members: Harold & Nancy Greer of Eugene, OR

Picture from Gene Cockeram's garden tour last spring.



Map to Christmas Potluck – Odd Fellows Campground

