



Macrophyllum

February 06

WEB SITE: <http://www.siuslawars.org>

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UPCOMING MEETING---February 21, 2006 *Social Time 6:30 PM, Starts at 7 PM*

Where---Presbyterian Church 3996 Hwy 101 Florence, Oregon 97439

This Month's Program- Rhododendron 202

*******Rhododendron Door Prizes*******

****Pre-meeting dinner 5 PM at Bliss' Route 101 Restaurant -1179 Hwy 101, Florence.**

Call Eileen McKenney 541-997-2222 or egmc@charter.net for reservations.

President's Report

Spring arrives here on the Central Oregon coast this month. The buds on the Alder trees turn a pretty shade of lavender, the early blooming narcissus come into bloom, and best of all, the rhododendron blooming season begins in earnest.

Our January weather this year was unusually wet, but mild, and some rhododendrons gave us enough color to brighten our gardens, even on those stormy days. It's interesting that some varieties were blooming in some gardens but not in others. Probably this happened because of different plant exposures. One of our members reported their plant of *R.strigillosum* was in bloom most of the month of January while our plant was still in tight bud. On the other hand, we had an *R.maddenii* hybrid start blooming before Christmas and it is still flowering now. I guess you have to be a rhododendron to understand it.

But now that spring is here, there is plenty of work to do in the garden. Be sure to check your plants to see if they were damaged by the winter storms. We did have damage to some plants caused by broken tree limbs falling on them and I also noticed some wind damage to a few of the plants that have large leaves. A little pruning to repair the damage and they will all recover nicely.

This is also the time to give your plants some fertilizer, especially since the abundant rains we had washed nutrients away from their root zones. Remember that rhododendrons are shallow rooted plants and nutrients get washed past their root zones after a couple of feet of water is poured on them from the sky. However, be careful not to over fertilize and cause damage to the plants roots and leaves. Several light applications are better than one big feeding. If you need fertilizer, remember we have it available for Chapter member personal use. We buy it by the ton at the lowest possible negotiated price and store it in Mike and Kathy Bones' garage. Please call them before you go out there to buy some to be sure someone is home to open the garage. Their phone number is 997-3082.

Our pre-meeting dinner this month will at the Bliss Highway 101 Restaurant... Please call Eileen McKenny at 997-2222 no later than Friday February 17th to make your reservations. After dinner we will all go to our regular meeting place, The Presbyterian Church of the Siuslaw located just south of the Bi-mart store on Highway 101 for the big three "C's-" coffee, cookies and conversation. This will be followed by this month's talk on "Rhododendron 202." Last year was our first presentation of this program and you all seemed to enjoy it. In "Rhododendron 202" we try to take you beyond the beginning level of "Rhododendron 101" to give you information that will assist you in growing and taking care of your plants. I think you are going to enjoy this presentation. In these sessions I always learn something new or remember something I knew and forgot and I hope you will also.

Enjoy February. It's usually one of the finest months of the year here on the central Oregon coast.

I'll see you at dinner!

EVERETT HALL- PRESIDENT

PLANT OF THE MONTH

R.lacteum



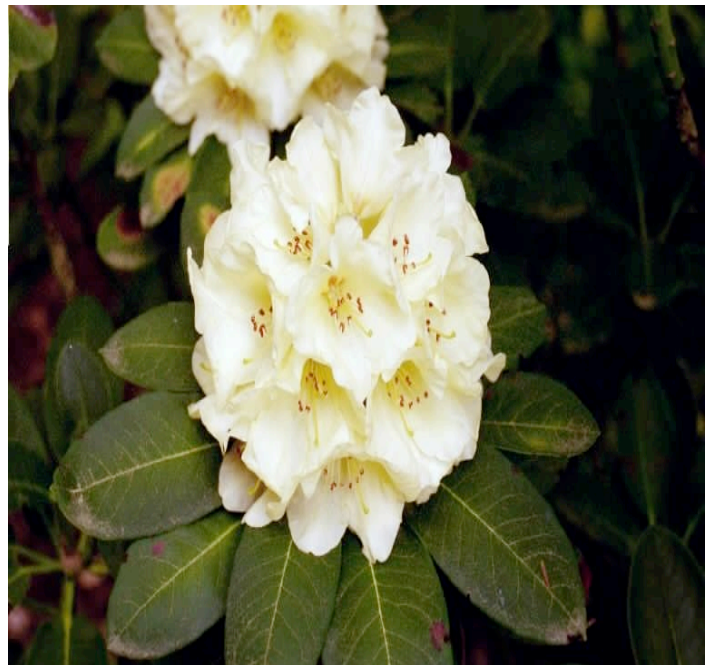
The featured rhododendron of the month is *R.lacteum*. It was first described by Abbe Delavey in 1884 when he was in the Chinese province of Yunnan. It was later found by other plant collectors in the Province of Schezwan and in Burma. It was introduced into cultivation in 1910. *R.lacteum* has been described as being one of the most beautiful flowering rhododendrons in the genus, but it is not found in many gardens.

In its native habitat this plant can reach heights of thirty feet, but in cultivation it will not grow nearly that tall. In ten years it should be about five or six feet tall, if it grows at all. The four to eight inch oval or oblong shaped leaves have a lot of substance, are dark green on the topside and have a fawn or brown colored indumentum on the underside making them very attractive.

The large compact trusses are composed of twelve to thirty, two-inch long bell shaped flowers. The plants that I've seen all have golden yellow flowers, but paler yellow and pink forms are also described by the experts. Some plants produce flowers with a striking crimson blotch.

Some authorities report that the depth of color of the flowers can vary from year to year, but I have no idea why that happens. This is not an easy plant to grow on its own roots; so many of the plants, including mine, are grafted to make them more vigorous. In addition, this plant does not like to be moved (rather a grumpy plant) so be careful where you plant it and then leave it alone if it likes it there.

If you want to grow a plant that is sure to attract attention, try this one. Plant it out of the wind in a shady location and give it good drainage. It really is worth the effort.



SECRETARY'S REPORT

Your Rhody Board met and welcomed Tony and Rosemary Rebello to the meeting. Tony brought a proposal about ways to encourage the Chapter to come out for Gallagher Park work parties. The board is reviewing these great suggestions, so be watching for some fun and exciting things to happen when you join others at Gallagher Park!

A questionnaire was handed out at the last general meeting covering your ideas about what you would like from your Chapter. If you didn't get one, see Cheryl Prchal or Jeannie Shields. We need your input to keep our Chapter providing what everyone wants.

Pull out those calendars and mark your December (yes, December) Christmas party for Tuesday, December 12, 2006 from 5:00 PM to 9:00 PM. It was decided to move the party from Sunday afternoon to Tuesday night. We have plenty of time to work it into our schedules now!

There is now a gorgeous "Rhody Box" on the hospitality table that Freda Ziegelmaier made for you to put any ideas, questions or suggestions into.

Watch for membership cards to be developed that you can carry in your wallet or purse. Family membership cards will say "Mr. & Mrs." on them so you both may carry and use one. They are in the planning stage so keep asking a board member about them to hurry them along!

The Rhody Elves will be presenting "Rhodies 202" at the February meeting so plan to be there. They are always entertaining while educational!

You can see and order from the Rhody Species Foundation catalog early at www.rhodygarden.org by downloading the order form. You must be a member of the Siuslaw Chapter and get the membership number from a board member. The shipping date is February 13. The actual catalog will be sent out in February.

Passports are now needed to travel between the countries on the North American Continent. If you plan to attend the fall convention in Canada, you need to get a passport soon to have on hand! Applications are available at City Hall or the Post Office.

Be sure to go outside in between showers and check your garden. Things are beginning to show all over the place! Is Spring almost here?

BY KATHY BONES, SECRETARY

Dear Dr. Rhody,

Last spring I bought several nice Rhododendrons. I planted them in my yard and have really enjoyed their beauty. Early in January we had lots of rain. Three of my plants are in an area that had standing water for two weeks. Is this a problem? Should I move the plants??

Signed, Gayle

Dear Gayle,

In a word, yes, you have a problem. Rhododendrons do not like to be in soil saturated with water.

The greatest cause of Rhododendrons dying is probably associated with being planted in soil that stays wet. If you enjoy the plants in the present location you need to take steps to remedy the standing water problem.

One possible course is to bring in some good porous, easily drainable soil. Make mounds and replant your treasures at a higher elevation so they don't stand in saturated soil.

Another possible cure, one I had to use in my yard, is to provide drainage for the area. You could rent a ditch trenching device, place plastic drain tile in the ditch and fill up the ditch with large size gravel that contains no fines. This has worked very well for me. Four years ago I had 12" to 18" of water in an area. After ditching and graveling the area has been free of standing water. This year during our worst rains there was about 2 inches of water, but that disappeared in about three hours after the hardest rains stopped.

Remember, Rhododendrons do not like soggy areas. If you don't remedy the situation you may end up with dead plants.

Dr. Rhody

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We will be taking orders for chapter jackets at the February meeting. We have two styles available...baseball type and parka type. If you haven't seen them yet, come to the meeting and talk to Phil Lanning or Cheryl Prchal. They have pictures, samples, and order forms available

We are happy to announce our new Historian is Yvonne Moore and the new Tour Directors are Tony and Rosemary Rebello. Barbara Chase has agreed to take the Publicity Chair position. We thank them for volunteering to fill these important positions!

NEW MEMBERS: Monte and Elizabeth Kennedy
Peter and Sandra Brown

COOKIE BAKERS:

FEBRUARY: Ginny Chehak, Ann Drake, Betty King, and Marianne Horney

Note: If you are unable to bring cookies, please contact Jenny Velinty at (541) 997-7573 or jenvel@harborside.com

Gallagher Park could use a few more hands on Thursdays after monthly meeting. Come out about 10am until noon. Gloves are a must for this.

Come on out and see what we are doing to make a real show place of Florence! The park is at the corner of Spruce Street and Hwy 126.

Gene Cockeram -City of Florence Park & Recreation Committee

Board Meetings are the Tuesday before our Monthly meeting at the Bones' Residence at 7 PM, all members are welcome to attend.

Siuslaw Chapter
American Rhododendron Society
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Place address label here