



Macrophyllum

January 2005

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

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

Secretary's Report

Your board met and discussed Chapter business. The Web Site study group gave recommendations to the board for getting this project up and running. We will be joining the internet "Webbers" soon! Watch for the information explaining how to access this opportunity.

Cheryl Prchal will have membership lists available at the January meeting. Members get one copy per year with updated pages as needed.

Board members will be discussing the bi-laws at the January board meeting. Any suggestions about revisions will be welcomed before that time.

Wendy Grant has agreed to fill the position of Historian for our Chapter. Thank you, Wendy!

Ziggy and Freda Ziegelmaier have the telephone tree committee all in place and ready to go when the need for immediate communication to members is necessary.

Gene Cockeram announced that Gallagher Park looks great and compliments from the City for the hard work are coming in!

Fourteen people enjoyed the trip to Shore Acres to view the lights before Christmas. Thanks to Debbie Peterson for setting this up! Watch for her next trip opportunity.

Kathy Bones, Secretary

New Web Site (<http://www.oregonfast.net/~siuslawars/>)

Our new website is a chapter team effort. All chapter members can be involved by making suggestions and coming up with new ideas as to what content we would like to see covered. We would also like to have pictures - could be of rhododendrons/azaleas, chapter activities, etc. We would prefer pictures in digital JPEG format, but will take printed pictures, which can be digitally scanned.

Also would like to know if there are sections of the chapter web site that you have having trouble with.

Members can also help by looking at other web sites for ideas as to how our web site should look and what material it might contain. We are open to all suggestions.

At our Christmas Potluck, 3 x 5 cards were passed out for members to come up with questions that could be placed in our web site's "Frequently Asked Questions" (FAQ) section. Dr. Rhody could use some of your questions. All questions of this type should be sent or given to our President, Everett Hall. He is the chapter member putting together the FAQ section. He could sure use your help! You can email him your questions or just give them to him at our January chapter meeting.

Paul Wilson

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CALENDAR

JANUARY Chapter Meeting

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

Pre-meeting Dinner:

5 p.m. at Bliss' Route 101 Restaurant, 1179 Hwy 101.

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

<mailto:egmc@charter.net>

Reservations are needed

Cookie bakers:

Shirley Hall

Jeannie Shields

Karen Timmons

FEBRUARY

When: Tues, February 15, 7PM.

What: Rhodies 202

Dear Dr. Rhody,

Two years ago I ordered some very special seed from the Rhododendron Species Foundation. I planted part of the seed as soon as I received it. My friends suggested I plant part of the seed and then make another planting later. My life became very busy and I forgot to plant the rest of the seed. While going through some containers, I found the remainder of the seed. Is the seed still good? Should I go ahead and plant it?

Bob

Dear Bob,

Your story is a common one. Fortunately it is quite probable that some of your prized seed is still viable. Many people store their seed in a refrigerator. This seems to prolong the length of the time you can have the seed and still expect to get some germination.

The Royal Horticultural Society keeps their seed up to five years. I have ordered seed 3 to 4 years old and have been somewhat successful with germination.

The rate of germination seems to decrease each year but some seedlings are better than none.

I suggest you plant your seed and hope for the best. The expense and effort are minimal so - go for it!

I do recommend that you start your seed in coconut coir fiber. I have had the best success with this medium.

A somewhat related topic is pollen storage. I have found that pollen stored in a pill capsules or glass vials and placed in a refrigerator can remain viable up to five years. If you have pollen from a favorite plant don't be afraid to use it even if it has been stored for a while.

Good Growing!

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

Treasurer's Notes

Once again, the Siuslaw Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society has reached a new milestone. Our chapter membership now has over 100 members. We stand at 104 memberships today. At the January meeting, the Siuslaw Chapter 2004-2005 membership roster will be handed out. Be sure you pick one up.

If you want passes to the Rhododendron Species Garden in Federal Way, WA, please let me know. I always have them available at the meetings.

Cheryl Prchal, Treasurer

President's Report

Our Christmas potluck was well attended and everyone seemed to have a good time. It's always a success when you can combine great food with wonderful friends. I want to thank the Chapter for awarding me the Bronze medal. To say I was surprised would be putting it mildly. It is a great honor to receive it and it is with pride that I join those other dedicated members who have received this award in prior years.

Several other members received certificates of appreciation for their valuable involvement in Chapter activities. Paul Wilson was recognized for several reasons: the assistance he provides in putting on our shows; his technical knowledge that enabled our newsletter to be e-mailed to our members that not only is a convenience to our members but saved the chapter the money that was being spent on postage; and the tremendous amount of work he has done, and is still doing, in developing our web-site.

Charles King received a certificate of appreciation for taking our 'ordinary' newsletter and turning it into one of the best newsletters in the Society; he also created and has made available to our members our unique and beautiful nametags.

Dave Shepherd, a long time member, past-president and Bronze medal recipient was recognized for his continuing contribution to the Chapter. Dave is the person who obtains the many outstanding trophies that are awarded at our shows; he supports the show plant sales and keeps an excellent inventory of plants there so the public can choose good varieties that will thrive here in the central coast area; he can be seen at our monthly meetings cheerfully selling door prize tickets so we can raise the money to pay the rent on our meeting place; he also serves as chairperson of our clothing committee making our chapter tee shirts and sweat shirts available to our members at discount prices, and soon he will be offering our new chapter jacket .

There is one other member who was to be recognized but they didn't make it to the party, so we hope he or she is present at our next chapter meeting so we can make the presentation then.

As we start the new-year there are two more people we want to thank; Jo Ann Wilson, who has served as our chapter historian for several years and Wendy Grant who has agreed to take over that responsibility.

For the second year in a row our chapter has won the ARS membership award for getting the most new members for chapters of our size. However, we are now facing a new challenge if we are going to win this award again next year. Our chapter has grown so much we are now competing with the larger chapters. This competition doesn't worry me much. With our enthusiasm and spirit I'm confident our competitors are headed for 'future shock' when we walk away with the award as we intend to do. So urge your family members and friends to become one of us and share in our good times as we watch our chapter grow.

January on the Oregon coast can be exciting, but mostly for stormy weather and not for flowering rhododendrons. However, between the storms we frequently have a nice day when we can be outside cleaning up the litter deposited by the last storm and doing our regular garden maintenance. Unless we get an unusual cold spell, we can still plant and transplant rhododendrons. Or, drop by one of our rhododendron nurseries and see what plants they have coming into bloom. There are several early blooming varieties that you can obtain that will give you an early start on your blooming season. Collecting both early and late blooming varieties will keep beauty and interest in your garden for at least eight months of the year here along the Central Oregon coast- not counting the plants that 'throw' blooms out of season.

On the stormy days when the wind is blowing the rain side-ways and we are confined to the house there are still many things to do. Reading and dreaming over a good rhododendron catalog is always enjoyable. There are several available in our ARS journal.

Everett Hall, President

Gallagher Park

The Gallagher park workday will be on Thursday, January 20, 9:30 to noon unless the weather is bad. We have had good turnouts lately and I hope it will continue that way.

Gene Cockeram

Plant of the Month

This month's rhododendron is 'The King'. No not Elvis but *R. rex*.

R. rex was first found by a plant hunter in 1911 in northern Yunnan, China and was later introduced into cultivation by Plant hunter George Forrest in 1913. It is one of the 'Big Leaf' rhododendrons, being in sub-section Falconera. Plants that are in sub-sections Falconera and Grandia are frequently referred to as the 'Big Leaf' rhododendrons because some of the species in those sub-sections have huge leaves. But there are other rhododendrons that could be called 'Big Leaves' some having larger leaves than our plant of the month, *R. rex*.

Plants such as *R. calophytum* and *R. sutchense* both in sub-section Fortunea have extremely large leaves. Even our own native species, *R. macrophyllum*, which is in sub-section Pontica has large leaves on certain plants. In fact, the name 'macrophyllum' means 'with big leaves' so when you hear someone referring to a plant as one of the big leaves they are probably referring to plants classified in sub-sections 'falconera and grandia'.

In its native habitat *R. rex* can grow to become a twenty to forty foot tree but it is unlikely to reach that height in cultivation, more like to about fifteen feet. You could expect a ten year-old plant to become about four or five feet tall.

Its lance shaped leaves are about eight inches long and four inches wide [sometimes *R. macrophyllum* has leaves larger than that.] The topside of the leaf is a dark green and the underside is grey or yellow or something in between.

The flower truss is composed of fifteen to twenty four tubular bell shaped flowers and come in colors of rose, pink, white or cream. They may or may not have a crimson or purple blotch.

There are several really nice plants of *R. rex* in the Rhododendron Species Foundation Garden including a named clone 'Quartz' which was found by Joseph Rock on one of his explorations.

R. rex is fairly hardy in our area but like all rhododendrons with large leaves, should be protected from the wind and direct sunlight.

Everett Hall

