



Macrophyllum

June 2005

Newsletter of the
Siuslaw Chapter
American Rhododendron Society
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Presidents Report

The ARS convention in Victoria, BC was a memorable one. Twenty-six of our chapter members enjoyed this beautiful city, truly one of North America's loveliest. We went on several out-standing tours of gardens in the greater Victoria area; we behaved like English gentry and had 'tea' which included a large serving of calories and carbohydrates; we visited the outstanding Provincial museum and many of interesting shops that carried a wide range of merchandise; and we attended the business and social functions of the convention.

Having 'not pleasant' memories of going through United States Customs several times in the past, I did not purchase any plants at the big plant sale held in conjunction with the convention. I was really surprised by the ease of going through customs this time when we returned through Port Angeles. The Customs Agent who met us as we left the ferry asked us where we lived and why we had been in Canada. I told him we went there to attend a rhododendron convention. He told us 'good-bye'. I guess he figured any old guy goofy enough to go to a rhododendron convention probably wasn't a terrorist.

Along with many other folks returning home from the convention, we stopped at Whitney Gardens in Brinnon on the Hood Canal. Whitney's is a very pretty garden and a 'top-notch' nursery. We were able to purchase a few really nice plants but some of the plants I had hoped to buy had already been sold to other returnees before our arrival. All in all, it was a very enjoyable experience.

Our annual plant auction was another huge success. Thanks to all of you who generously donated plants and joined in the spirited bidding, our treasury looks much better. Our Treasurer, Cheryl Prchal, will give us a financial report at our coming business meeting.

All of the chapter members who visited the gardens of Phil and Linda Lanning and Jeff and Wendy Grant spent a very pleasant early summer afternoon together. Although most of the plants had already passed their peak blooming season the gardens were still interesting and lovely. It really is fun to tour gardens together.

Because of the late date of our show and the atrocious weather we had this spring—hard rain, hail and strong winds—we had anticipated our show might be smaller than usual. We were all very pleased when we had more than 750 entries. As in other years, we had people drive hundreds of miles to enter trusses and/or see the show. Thanks to all of you the show ran smoothly. We now have next years show to finish getting us into top shape for the gigantic District Four show we are sponsoring in 2007- the 100th anniversary of the Florence Rhododendron Festival. Hopefully, our weather for that show will be significantly better than it was this year.

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CALENDAR

JUNE

Chapter Meeting

When: Sunday, June 12, Noon.

What: Chapter Potluck Picnic

Where: Honeyman Yurt (see attached map)

Bring: Place setting, beverage, potluck dish/serving utensils and plant for game.

JULY

Summer break, no meeting.

If anyone is interested in purchasing a chapter t-shirt or sweatshirt for the summer, please contact Dave Shepherd @ 997-2283. He'll bring them to the June 12th picnic.

Continued

The Macrophyllum Committee had some successes in finding more superior plants of *R. macrophyllum*. A nice dark pink was located in the Rhododendron Drive area. The very best white form I've ever seen was reported and located in the same general area, and two other white blooming plants were identified. One spotted by Jeannie Shields in the back of the Rite-Aid drugstore parking lot that she named 'Rite-white', and one reported to Wendy Grant was located and named 'Eddie's White'. We were able to get pictures and cutting from an extremely nice dark pink plant we found in the Charleston area a couple of years ago. We will try to collect seed from several of these plants later this summer. I still haven't found a way to reach that white flowering plant on Sutton Beach Road we spotted last year. With binoculars I was able, again, to look at it but the jungle around it is formidable, maybe next year.

The mild rainy stormy weather we had this spring resulted in fantastic new growth of native brush and lots of weeds. So many weeds it seems rather futile to try to get rid of all of them. So I have decided, in my exalted position as your President, to declare weeds to be companion plants to rhododendrons. Now, if you look at them in this new designation you can easily see they are much easier to accept. In addition, if they behave like most of the more expensive companion plants I have attempted to mix in with my rhododendrons, they will, in all likelihood, and for no apparent reason, die.

Our next meeting will be on Sunday, June 12th. It is our first potluck picnic of the summer, the next one is scheduled for August. These picnics are really fun, with lots of good food to share with wonderful friends. We will begin to gather at 12:00 noon, eat dinner about 1:00 p.m., have a short business meeting [required by our by-laws] elect a three-year term Board member and have our plant game. We will hold our picnic in the yurt in Honeyman Park, on the east side of highway 101, about two blocks from the highway. We will have an ARS sign by the driveway. Bring your own table service, a hot dish and a side dish [salad, dessert, appetizer, etc.] and a beverage of your choice if you want to drink something other than water or coffee. If you want to join in the plant game, bring a plant for each player.

See you there.

Everett Hall, President

Secretary's Report

After coffee and cookies were acquired, your board got down to the monthly business at hand. We are sorry to see Chris and Ellen Atkin retiring as the editor of our newsletter but thank them for their hard work and dedication to making our newsletter continue to be considered the best in the world! Charles King gave the board an informative report on the needs of this area. After discussion, it was suggested and agreed that we need to fill this area of service with an editor, responsible for assembling the newsletter and a communication person, responsible for distribution. Distribution will consist of e-mails and hard copies. The communication person needs to have a knowledge and understanding of databases and how they operate. We are looking for someone willing to fill these shoes.

A mission statement for our Chapter is being worked on. It will be completed by the fall season.

The application for use of the Church has been done for the next year. Social time will start at 6:30 PM with the meeting beginning at 7:00.

The Gallagher Park work party for May 14 was cancelled. It was suggested we try to coincide with the Garden Club's workday once a year.

Check out the ad for our Chapter in the newspaper over Rhody weekend! Jeannie Shields works hard on our PR.

On Tuesday, June 14 from 4-6 PM there will be a dead heading and pizza party starting at the Presbyterian Church and ending at Abby's if the church approves this date. We want to thank the church for allowing us to use their wonderful facility so come on out and join the fun!

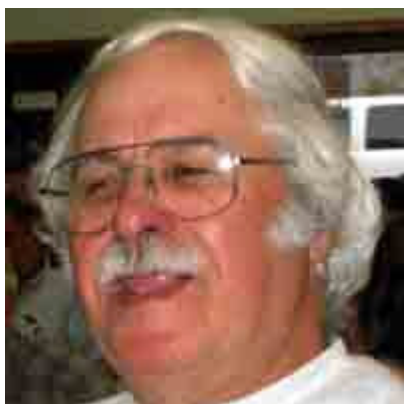
It was suggested we encourage the businesses along Hwy 101 to use more rhodies in their landscapes. A letter to the Editor of the local newspaper and contacting the Chamber of Commerce to speak at their monthly luncheon was suggested. A list of good rhodies to use in planting in this area will be offered.

Paul Wilson will give a report from the nominating committee at the general meeting in May. Be thinking about the candidates and possible nominees done at the June picnic. We vote at the picnic in June. See you then!

Kathy Bones, Secretary

2005 Director Election
Chapter Picnic, Sunday, June 12th, Noon
Honeyman State Park Yurt

We have two chapter members running for the three year Director position which ends in June 2008, Dave Shepherd and Pete Peterson. Remember, you must be present at the Chapter Picnic to vote!



Candidate Comments

I am running for the Director at Large position for the Siuslaw Chapter because I will work to help it continue to grow with educationally fun activities and will add new ideas to accomplish this.

Pete Peterson

I have been a member of Siuslaw Chapter since 1972. During this period I have been show chairman, show trophy chairman, plant sale co-chairman, past president (1980-1982), bronze medal winner (1998), director (1999--), jacket/T-shirts/sweatshirt chairman and have contributed in many other ways. I received a Certificate of Appreciation in 2004 for my chapter contributions. I have a willingness to tackle whatever is needed in our chapter. In this regard, I would be pleased to serve as a board director and believe I can make a difference for the club.

Dave Shepherd

Dear Dr. Rhody,

To begin this installment I need to thank the 75 WONDERFUL Rhody nuts who answered our plea and brought 758 entries to our Rhododendron Festival Flower Show. In a year when many feared we would have a sparse show you came through again. Thank you very much.

Dr. Rhody

I have a very nice plant that I purchased last September. It had what appeared to be very large flower buds. This spring those buds opened and leaves emerged! Is it possible for flower buds to change into leaf buds?? Wondering

Dear Wondering,

The short answer to your query is no, flower buds do not change to leaf buds. They were always leaf buds. Some of the elepidote species and hybrids have very large leaf buds. It is indeed difficult to tell whether the bud is a flower or a leaf. One indication is the shape of the bud. If it is round it is usually a flower bud. If the bud has a sharp point it is usually a leaf. Those in between are often difficult to distinguish the first year you see them. As you see more and more buds it becomes easier to tell the difference.

Dr. Rhody

Dear Dr. Rhody,

I bought a lovely compact plant last fall. It bloomed and was very lovely. Now new growth is coming out and it is very long and flimsy. What can I do to keep the plant from being spindly? Help!

Dear Help!

When commercial growers force plants they fertilize and water frequently. This causes the plant to grow rapidly. At the nursery they frequently pinch (remove) the first new growth. Then the second spurt of growth is more dense and stronger. The first year you own a plant it still has a large residual buildup of fertilizer and the growth may be quite long. To maintain a more compact plant you can pinch the new growth during the spring. One of the best growers I know actually says he pinches new growth up to July 1st. I wouldn't suggest you do that, but you are very safe to pinch growth now and still look forward to nice blooms next year.

Dr. Rhody

Plant of the Month

Those of us who are 'rhodoholics' soon find ourselves including rhododendron species in our collections. Species rhododendrons are not always as spectacular as many of the hybrids that we grow but each different species has something special and individual about it that adds to its appeal.

R. proteoides is one of these species that is quietly appealing with a beauty and charm all its own. It was first reported by plant collector George Forrest when he found it in 1914 growing in the province of Yunnan, China. He found it again a few years later when he was in Tibet.

This is a low growing rhododendron with a dense spreading growth habit, forming a low mound one to three feet tall. The foliage is exceptionally fine being small, re-curved, dark olive green on top with a thick wooly bronze colored indumentum on the underside.

The bell shaped flowers are creamy white, or rose flushed white, with little red spots. It blooms in the early spring, usually late March or early April in our area. In its native habitat it grows in open areas, on cliffs or steep hillsides, so we want to plant it where it gets lots of light in well drained soil. It is an excellent plant for raised beds or rock gardens as it grows slowly. It takes several years before it reaches blooming size.

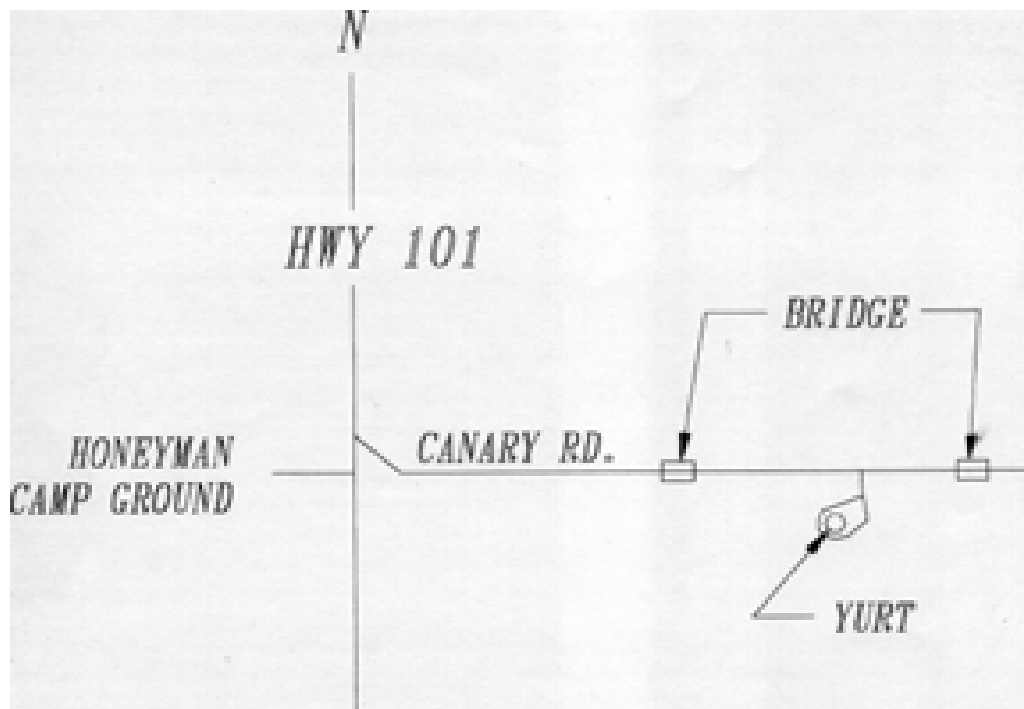
This plant is difficult to propagate and may not be readily available but it can be obtained with a bit of patience. In the past few years I have noticed that several hybridizers are starting to use *R. proteoides* in an effort to create more low growing hybrids with indumented foliage and good growth habits.

This is a wonderful species plant to include in your collection, as it will add beauty, individuality and interest to your garden.

Everett Hall



Summer Picnics



Our two summer picnics in June & August are held at the yurt in Honeyman State Park, east of Highway 101, at the West Woahink Recreation Area.