

# Macrophyllum

March 2006



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

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Paul Wilson- Webmaster (541) 902-9780

**UPCOMING MEETING--- March 21, 2006 Social Time 6:30 PM--Meeting at 7 PM**

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

**This Month's Program – Dr. Benjamin Hall- R. macrophyllum DNA Study**

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

**Pre-meeting Dinner 5 PM at Aztlan Mexican Restaurant, 1015 Hwy 101, Florence**

**Call Eileen McKenney (541) 997-2222 or email: [egmc@charter.net](mailto:egmc@charter.net) for reservations.**

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT By Everett Hall**

Our "before Chapter meeting" dinner this month will be at the Aztlan Restaurant located on Highway 101. Call Eileen McKenney at (541) 997-2222 for reservations. Please have your reservation requests in to her no later than Friday, March 17<sup>th</sup>, so she can tell the restaurant how many of us to expect.

After dinner we will meet at our Chapter meeting location, The Presbyterian Church of the Siuslaw, to enjoy coffee and cookies while we visit with friends until 7:00 P.M., when our meeting will begin.

Our native rhododendron, R. macrophyllum, grows along the Pacific coast and in the Cascade Mountains from north of Prince Rupert, British Columbia south into Northern California. I'm not sure how far south into California it can be found. For many years we have observed these plants growing in many different locations and have come to believe that the best forms of this species can be found here in the central Oregon coast region.

Our featured speaker this month will be Dr. Benjamin Hall -- no relation to your illustrious President. Dr. Hall is a professor in the Department of Botany at the University of Washington. He and several of his students have been taking DNA samples of R. macrophyllum from several different populations of the species located from British Columbia to northern California including some from the Florence and Bandon areas. He had an article about his studies printed in the last issue of the ARS Journal. You might want to review that article and map showing the locations where they took the specimens prior to coming to the meeting. He will be speaking to us about the information they are obtaining from this study. Because of our Chapter's interest in R .macrophyllum, this presentation should provide us with valuable information we can use for our own Chapter project of locating, preserving and re-establishing the finest plants of the species.

The Gallagher Park committee will soon be making a work plan for the park that will include a schedule for identifying inferior plants that need to be removed and replacing them with species and hybrids that will enhance the beauty of the park. The Board of Directors has determined that if you attend one of our work sessions at the park you will be eligible to receive five (free) plant raffle tickets in appreciation of your participation.

Our tour coordinators, Tony and Rosemary Rebello, have made plans for us to visit several gardens and nurseries this year. It is fun to visit these places, and even more enjoyable when we do it as a group.

The Chapter Store has a great selection of articles of clothing in stock, and the Store Manager, Cheryl Prchal, will have some of these available at our meetings. Bring your checkbook, as we operate on a cash and carry basis.

Marianne Horney, our great Book Chairperson, has been re-stocking our supply of garden books and will have some of these books available at the meetings for your review. Remember these books are available from the Chapter at a great discount over retail price. If you are thinking about giving a book as a gift for Mothers Day, beat the rush and make that purchase now.

Hopefully, the February deep freeze didn't damage your plants or flower buds. Our early show time is almost here- it will be April 1<sup>st</sup>. We will be setting up the show racks and tables on March 30<sup>th</sup> in the Florence Events Center. Please mark these dates on your calendar!

## PLANT OF THE MONTH

This month's Plant of the Month is one of my favorite species. I simply can't pass up an opportunity to purchase a plant of **R. augustinii** that I do not already have in our collection. **R. augustinii** was first reported growing in Hupeh, China in 1886. It was later found by other plant hunters in Yunnan, China and SE Tibet in woodlands and forests where it has steep slopes and cliffs with rocky soil in which to grow.

The first seed of **R. augustinii** was reportedly sent to France by plant explorer Ernest Wilson in 1900, where it undoubtedly caused some excitement when it first came into bloom.

Here in the central Oregon coast region, **R. augustinii** enjoys growing in full sun in a location with good sharp drainage. It will grow to become a three to ten foot tall shrub, depending on the variety. In its native home it can become a plant twenty-five feet tall and, probably, nearly that wide. This species has long, narrow dark green leaves that are very scaly on the underside. The trusses are composed of two to six flowers that have a wide range of color, white to dark blue and dark purple and everything in between. Some plants have yellowish or brown spots in the flowers.

It is interesting that this is one of the few rhododendrons I know where the flower color can vary in intensity from year to year. I don't know if variation in color is caused by weather, fertilizer or some other phenomenon.

Some of the best clones of this species have actually been produced in cultivation. For example, **R. augustinii Exbury** cannot be found in the wild because it is a product of selective crosses of the species made in England. It is, however, one hundred percent **R. augustinii**.

Some authorities say this is a species for the woodland garden. They are correct, but it would be a mistake to limit it to that. It is also a great species for every other garden where you have room for a plant that will eventually become eight to ten feet tall and about that wide.

If you are looking for a rhododendron that will enliven your spring blooming garden with a riot of color, you should consider this one! It is easy to grow and requires practically no care in our area after it is established. As usual, I recommend you purchase named clones for your collection, unless you actually see an unnamed plant in flower.

***R. augustinii***



By Everett Hall-Chapter President

## Secretary's Report

The board has been pleased with the volunteers that have been coming forward to help the Chapter in any way they can! Tony and Rosemary Rebello brought some wonderful ideas on ways to encourage everyone to come out for the Gallagher Park work parties (which I'll tell you about later). Tony also volunteered to be the Chapter's Tour Guide for this year. Yvonne Moore has volunteered to be Ziggy Ziegelmaier's back up for picture taking with her digital camera. Look out! Volunteering is contagious!!

Gene Cockeram has been reappointed as a Florence Park Commissioner.

33 people responded to the survey taken last month at the general meeting. If you haven't had that chance, see Jeannie Shields or Cheryl Prchal and they will get you one. Let your opinions be known!

A pre-show meeting for the flower shows in April and May will be held at Mike & Kathy Bones', Monday, March 13, at 7:00 PM.

Fertilizer has gone up to \$15.00 a bag. This is still a bargain!

Take a look at the Chapter Scrapbook when you can. It has a wealth of history about our Chapter and is fun to look at, too. There may be pictures of people you know in the book that are not identified. Let Yvonne Moore know who they are so she can add their name to the book.

It was decided to implement the following suggestions for tempting people out to Gallagher Park work parties:

1. 5 free raffle tickets will be given at the next general meeting following the work party to every person participating.
2. It will be announced in advanced what scheduled activity will be going on.
3. It will be announced at the next general meeting who worked.
4. Workers will be publicly thanked at the next general meeting for their participation.

The board got a sneak peek at the proposed tours for the spring that Tony is working on. Be excited!! We are! Information about these opportunities will be coming soon.

**I goofed!!!!** The Christmas Pot Luck will be Tuesday, December 5<sup>th</sup>. Not what I told you before! Be sure to change that!!! It's still at the Odd Fellows Campground with arrival time 5:00 PM. That's it for now!

Kathy Bones, Secretary

**Dear Dr. Rhody,**

In a previous article you indicated I should mix bark with my soil (sand) when I plant my new Rhododendron. I have bark covering my whole yard. Is this the proper bark to use?

Paul

**Dear Paul,**

The very best bark to use is medium fir bark that has had a chance to decompose for a year. This seems to work very well because it mixes easily and has already undergone part of the decomposing process. Therefore it won't rob as much fertilizer from your plant as the fresh bark will.

This material should be mixed with equal amounts of your "soil". Plant your plants high in the ground making sure you have a well-drained area. Your finishing touch should be the addition of a layer of bark mulch. Do not make this layer very deep and don't cover the plant stem. If you live in the wind belt in Florence, your top mulch may have to be the larger size fir bark to keep it from blowing away.

If your plant will be in an area where the wind will hit it, you should consider stakes and rope or wires to help hold it in place your first year.

Please remember to remove the tie downs later to avoid plant damage.

**Dr. Rhody**

**GARDEN TOUR**  
Wednesday, March 22, 2006, 9:00am

**Don't miss the first GARDEN TOUR of the Season!**

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**TOUR #1 –**

**Wild Goose Nursery -27812 Clear Lake Road, Eugene**

Jack & Seny turned their love for native plants and ornamentals into a nursery of perennials and annuals. They import lots of seeds from England and Germany resulting in their unusual selection of perennials and annuals. As you walk through the nursery you will find a varieties of Lilacs, Native Trees, Cannas, Asters, Asiatic and Oriental Lilies, Hydrangeas, and Daylilies. Can be muddy if the ground is wet, so be prepared.

**TOUR # 2 –**

**Decker Nursery -9080 Eight Street, Alvadore**

Huge Nursery - If it grows, they have it! The nursery prides itself on having a large selection of plants for spring and summer color. This family run 10-acre nursery has it all – Impatiens, Geraniums, Heirloom Roses, Camellias, Evergreen, Lots of Trees, Flowering Shrubs, Ornamental Grasses, and more. There is something for everyone.

Lunch - Location to be determined, also optional.

**MEET AT: 9:00 AM AT TRUE VALUE HARDWARE, HWY. 126 Florence**

**WE WILL RECONVENE AT BI-MART IN VENETA, THEN ON TO THE NURSERIES.**

**THE RHODY STORE**

Just a reminder, that your Rhody Store has a lot of products for sale at great prices. We offer you Siuslaw Chapter t-shirts, long and short sleeved, starting at \$8 for members, \$11 for non-members; sweatshirts starting at \$20 for members and \$25 for non-members. Baseball hats are \$10 for members, \$12 for non-members. We sell 50 lb bags of rhody fertilizer to our members for just \$15, yard signs for \$9, and the biggest bargain of all is in our bookstore, where we offer Chapter members 25% off list price. We can also special order chapter jackets for you. Any questions, please contact the Storekeeper, Cheryl Prchal @ 541-902-7637 or email to [rhodyholic@msn.com](mailto:rhodyholic@msn.com)

**COOKIE BAKERS:**

Freda Zeigelmaier, Jan Shephard, Helen Baxter, & Stephanie Nordin

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

**Gallagher Park** could use a few more hands on Thursdays after each 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, any member is welcome to attend.

**Siuslaw Chapter ARS Mission Statement**

The Mission of the Siuslaw Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society is to promote the genus Rhododendron by:

- Creating enthusiasm for the genus Rhododendron through meetings, shows, publications, and social activities that provide the opportunities for members to share experiences and build friendships.
- Providing educational opportunities to successfully grow and enjoy these wonderful plants.
- Encouraging propagation and hybridizing of species and hybrid rhododendrons.
- Furthering the planting and use of rhododendrons and azaleas in home, business, and public landscapes.
- Advocating the conservation and preservation of superior plants of our native Rhododendrons and their habitat along the Oregon Coast.
- Advancing and supporting the mission of the American Rhododendron Society.