



# Macrophyllum

May 2006

Newsletter of the  
**Siuslaw Chapter**  
**American Rhododendron Society**  
Post Office Box 1701  
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**UPCOMING Chapter Meeting**----- May 16, 2006 Social Time 6:30 PM, Starts at 7 PM

Where: Presbyterian Church 3996 Hwy 101 Florence, Oregon 97439

This Month's Program- Plant Auction

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

**\*\* Pre-meeting Dinner** 5PM at Hickory's 9<sup>th</sup> Street BBQ- 1565 9<sup>th</sup> Street- Florence, Or  
Contact Eileen McKenney for Reservations: (541) 997-2222 or [egmc@charter.net](mailto:egmc@charter.net)

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

All year long as we care for our gardens we enjoy our rhododendrons for the beautiful plants they are, but it is the month of May when the peak of the blooming season occurs and our gardens explode in a riot of color. What a wonderful time to be a Rhodyholic! Of course, there are still activities that need our attention- removing the spent flower trusses (dead-heading), fertilizing, weeding, spraying, etc. It's pretty easy to find something to do in the garden. *R. macrophyllum*, our native rhododendron, is coming into flower about two weeks later this year than it normally does, probably as a result of the cool weather we have had here in the central Oregon coast area this spring. As a result, we may have more of these plants blooming during our annual show. Remember, you do not have to own the plant of *R. macrophyllum* in order to enter a truss from it in our show. This is the only exception to our rule that requires you to own a plant for at least six months before entering a truss from it. So if you find one with a beautiful truss and nice foliage, enter it, provided of course, it's not in your neighbor's yard. I don't care, but they might! Please keep looking for more superior plants, early blooming, and white flowering plants. We have already identified three new

plants this spring. One of these is in Florentine Estates, one in Greentrees (a nice picotee growing on the far side of a deep jungle-filled ditch), and one North of Florence in a recently cleared area planned for residential development.

The week of Sunday May 14<sup>th</sup> begins with Mother's Day, and gets busier as it progresses. Tuesday is our Chapter meeting. Thursday we set up the show. Friday we select our trusses for the show. Saturday, the 20<sup>th</sup>, the show opens and Sunday, the 21<sup>st</sup>, we take down the show and put everything back in storage again. Then, those of us who feel like celebrating a bit, will go out to dinner together so we can talk about what a wonderful week we had. Submit entries for the show beginning at 7:00 am Saturday morning and closing at 9:00 am. Please bring your trusses in as early as possible to avoid the crowd. If you have your entry tags made out in advance it will help speed things up, but it's not required. All exhibits must go through our entry area, no exceptions! Bring as many trusses as possible.

Our Club has a reputation for putting on one of the largest and best rhododendron shows in North America, and we want to keep that reputation. Hundreds of people will be coming to see our show and we have

yet to disappoint them. This year we also hope to put on a foliage display, so as you pick your trusses, look for interesting and pretty foliage and bring it with you. Be sure you identify it with one of our plant tags.

This month we will have our “before Chapter meeting” dinner at Hickory’s 9<sup>th</sup> Street Barbecue beginning at 5:00 pm. Please remember to call Eileen McKenney, (541) 997-2222 for reservations.

At our Chapter meeting, which begins at 7:00 pm in the Presbyterian Church of the Siuslaw on Highway 101 North, we will hold our annual plant auction. Bring plants you want to donate for the auction. They do not have to be rhododendrons or azaleas. Bring your friends, neighbors and family. Guests are always welcome. Bring your check book- a large portion of our operating revenue for our club is generated at this auction. And bring your expectations of having a good time and you won’t be disappointed. I’ll see you there!  
 Everett Hall-President

**PLANT OF THE MONTH** By Everett Hall



*R. racemosum* has been around since 1884 when it was first reported, and seeds were sent to France. *R. racemosum* is a Chinese rhododendron that is native to the provinces of Szechwan and Yunnan. It is a popular species in cultivation for two very good reasons- it is an attractive plant with lovely flowers, and it is easy to grow.

This is one of those species that has many forms with a wide range of plant heights. Some plants are dwarfs that do not exceed fifteen inches tall, other forms can reach five or six feet in height and forms up to fifteen feet tall have been reported.

This is a rhododendron that likes to be planted in full sun here in the central Oregon coast region. It is also a plant that can be planted to provide winter color, as it has attractive red stems with small dark green leaves that have brown scales on the underside of the leaf.

The flowers of *R. racemosum* will vary in color from pure white to dark rose, depending on the form. The individual flowers are about one inch long and look like little pointed stars. They bloom all along the top ten or twelve inches of the branch and at the end of the stem. This plant is so variable that I recommend you only purchase one from a nursery or the Species Foundation where they can verify the plant’s size and color. The dwarf forms make excellent rock garden and edging plants and the larger forms fit well into your garden planting. But there is a difference! So be sure you acquire the right plant for the right location in your garden. In its native habitat this rhododendron grows where it has good drainage and summer water- so place it in your planting area where it can have those same features.

## Secretary's Report by Kathy Bones

What a fun time your board has at our regular monthly meetings! Of course, we do the business of the chapter, but we have a good time doing it!! June is approaching and with it will be a few positions on the board being vacated. If you are interested in filling one of these positions, see Jeff Grant or Everett Hall.

The Presidential Committee has been working on a committee guideline booklet. This will describe all the different committees available in our chapter and their job descriptions. The booklet has been given to the board members for comments or suggestions and then will be adopted into our policies.

Thanks to Ron and Cheryl Prchal we have new display panels we can use to show off anything to do with our chapter. Watch for them at the May show.

If you have pictures of your garden or are going to take some pictures of your garden, put your name, date and name of the flowers in the picture on the back so we can display them at the May show on one of our new display panels.

After April 20<sup>th</sup>, we should have a list that identifies what needs to be done at Gallagher Park, making work parties more efficient.

A newsletter editor trainee is still needed! If you are interested or want to know more about what this entails, see Linda Lanning or one of the board members.

There is an opportunity to go with Bill Heller to Tasmania and the Pacific International Rhododendron Conference. See Everett for details.

We need to start planning for the May Show 2007 right now! It will be the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Rhododendron Festival and will be a gala affair! A pre-2007 meeting was held on April 24. More will follow. Watch for their times and places and join in on the fun and anticipation!

Summer doesn't stop our Chapter from having fun and educational activities! On June 15, there will be a cutting party at Gallagher Park. You will be taught how to take cuttings and grow them by actually doing it! This is a regular scheduled work party day, too. The public will be invited.

Do you want to learn to make a trough? The board is working on having a training class and hands-on session sometime in July. This will be on two separate days, one for the class and one for the hands-on session. Watch for the dates and times of each and get excited!! This is fun!

Jim Smith reported the good news about the early show! We had 421 entries with 39 different people being awarded ribbons! Lots of Blue, Red and White ribbons were given which made Jim a happy boy!

If you get a chance, thank Everett Hall for fertilizing the rhodies at the Church where we have our regular meetings. The Board decided to fertilize their rhodies as a thank you for letting us use their facility and Everett did the job! Thanks, Everett!



Gallagher Park Tour  
May 1, 2006

### **RHODY CLUB GARDEN TOURS**

Our May 1 tour was fun and educational with beautiful Rhodys at their spectacular best. The Cockeram garden is a living example of what patient propagation can achieve. The vast variety of flower forms and colors attest to Gene's vast knowledge of his prized Rhododendron. Gene is not only a sought after judge for Rhody Shows, but is also considered a storehouse of knowledge on Rhodies.

Thanks to Gene Cockeram for great tips on plant culture and interesting historical information about Gallagher Park. Lunch was an enjoyable break in our tour. At Jeff and Wendy's garden we were treated to a newly planted Rhody garden which when matured will rival any garden of substance. Our group appreciated the hospitality of our hosts that included a wonderful spread of munchies. A great day!

#### **Garden Tour on Wednesday, May 24, 2006- 9:00am**

**Meet at Fred Meyer, Recycle side, at 9:00 to car pool.**

#### **TOUR 1 – 9:15 to 10:30**

**Don & Jeanne Shields-89009 Dahlin Road, Florence**

**Theirs is a Rhody Garden in its teenage years of maturity, where variety of color and shapes are still being developed.**

#### **TOUR 2 – 10:45 to 12:00**

**DeVern Pinnock-Florence**

**This is a garden with spectacular Rhodies that measure up to 20 feet tall along with a variety of foliage and plant form and design.**

**Lunch at 12:30 to be determined. Please call Tony or Rosemary Rebello at (541) 997-6167 to confirm your attendance so we may plan a head count for lunch.**

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### **Hi Dr. Rhody,**

Here is a question for your column and I would like to know the answer.

Is it possible to rescue or save a Rhody with a small root ball and a wobbly stem. Our proteoides is languishing. It has 3 buds and I don't want to give up on it. Thanks, Ann

**Dear Ann,**

It has been my experience that a wobbly stem is a sure sign of a future demise. I would do everything possible to propagate your proteoides. Take cuttings, if possible, graft to good root stock, pray. Occasionally a support stick tied to the plant may help, perhaps allowing the roots to grow and support the plant. I hope you can save your plant, but I fear the odds are against you. Dr. Rhody

**Dr Rhody,**

We have three rhododendrons planted near one another and none of them are blooming well. They will have one or two flower trusses in the spring and that's about it for the year. There are two Hills Bright Red and a Bronze wing. They are clustered under a half grown maple tree. They get 1/2 day of sun and 1/2 day of shade from the maple. We fertilize them on a regular recommended scheduling using the Wilcox Farms brand that we get from Mike Bones. Their leaves are shiny dark green, slightly curled under but look very healthy. Only one of the Hills Bright Red bloomed well and it was only one year.

Do you have any suggestions how to get them to bloom?

Signed-Vicky Osis from Seal Rock, Oregon

**Dear Vicky,**

It's great to have nice looking healthy plants, but we do like to see them bloom.

The plants you listed are usually very good at producing blooms.

One way to encourage plants to bloom is to move them. I would move them to a location that has more sun. In my own garden I am currently removing some shade trees that I planted because I am getting fewer blooms than I did in the past.

Another way to encourage a plant to bloom is to root prune the plant. Take a sharp shovel and cut the roots in a circle 2-3 feet from the stem. Don't pry or loosen the plant from the ground, just cut through the roots with the shovel. Cutting the roots has sometimes been effective in causing blooms to form for the next year.

Good blooming,  
Dr. Rhody

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### From the Rhody Store

The Rhody Store clothing department has been restocked and we now have sweatshirts and long and short sleeve t-shirts available in just about every size. If we didn't have your size before, please check back with us. We also have quite a few hats in stock.

Check out the upcoming tours mentioned in the newsletter!

DON'T FORGET:

**OUR RHODODENDRON SHOW MAY 20<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup>**  
**FLORENCE EVENTS CENTER!!**

Volunteer to help if you can, join in the fun!

**New Members:** Carol Vetter- Mapleton, Valerie Cook & Walter Pleece; Bill & Sandi Hennig-Florence  
Welcome!

**MAY COOKIE BAKERS:** Jan Woodford, Debbie Peterson, and Doris Cockeram, Wendy Grant.

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

**Gallagher Park** could use a few more hands on Thursdays after each meeting. Come out about 10 AM until noon. Bring some gloves. Come out and see what we are doing to make a real show place of Florence! The park is at the corner of Spruce and Hwy 126.  
Gene Cockeram-City of Florence Park & Recreation Committee

### 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.