



Macrophyllum

MARCH 2011

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

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UPCOMING Chapter Events

Meeting Topic- Preparing for the Early Flower Show

Chapter Meeting – This month's meeting will be on Tuesday, March 15 at 7:00 pm. Meet at the Presbyterian Church, 3996 Hwy 101 N in Florence. Dinner before the meeting this month will be at Bliss Restaurant. Contact Rosemary Rebello for reservations (541) 997-6167 or tonyroosemary@charter.net

Gallagher Park Work Party – Wednesday March 16 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. The park is at the corner of Spruce and Hwy 126. Gene Cockeram- City Park Commissioner. flowerman@g.com

Cookie Team- Freda Zeigelmaier, Deb Drefchinski, Nancy Fulmer, Connie Rosenbalm

ARS Spring 2011 Convention- the District 4 chapters invite you to attend the ARS's annual spring convention, scheduled for May 11 - 15, 2011. Distinguished speakers invited from around the world will provide valuable and interesting information. Tours of outstanding public and private gardens and nurseries are planned, including Portland's Japanese and Classical Chinese Gardens, the Bishop's Close Garden and the well-known Dover Nursery. Meeting talks and banquet events will be held in Vancouver WA at the Heathman Lodge. Non-members are welcome to attend.

Early Flower Show - 2011 Siuslaw Chapter flower show is scheduled for **April 9-10**. Your assistance is needed to put on this show. Please contact a board member to volunteer, even if it is just for a couple of hours!

June/August Picnics- Be sure to mark your calendar for the two Sunday summer picnics: June 5 picnic/annual meeting; August 7 picnic. More information will be in future issues of this newsletter.

Dan's Delight for March - - McNabii

This is the perfect choice to welcome in the month of spring equinox in coastal Florence, Oregon.

McNabii (ciliatum x edgeworthii) Maddeni group. This rhododendron is hardy to +15°F... perfect for this area. The growth habit is 5' in a ten year period. Blooming time is Early-Mid April. McNabii has fragrant, blush-white, funnel-shaped flowers. The leaves are medium-sized, soft green.

This is possibly the most **FRAGRANT** rhododendron there is. It has been reported by some to be fragrant to 100 feet away from the plant; that is FRAGRANT! The fuzzy indumented leaves look great all year. This plant responds well to pinching/pruning, resulting in a tight mound of flowers in spring. Blooms are mostly white with pink stripes radiating from the center.



Photo online at Singing Tree Gardens

Read about the McNab family history on pages 3-4.

Flower Show Awards Supporter Form
Siuslaw Chapter ARS
2011 Early Show

One of the best ways to encourage community participation in the early flower show is to present awards in as many categories as possible. Through your generous support, those lucky award winners would really appreciate the recognition, as we see on their smiling faces each year.

Would you like to be a supporter for the awards categories at the early flower show? The chapter would really appreciate your donation toward the purchase of awards. Please fill out this form and send it with your check to the Siuslaw Chapter ARS, PO Box 1701, Florence, OR 97439.

Yes, sign me up as a flower show **supporter for a \$15 donation**. Please indicate whether you would like your name listed as the award donor. You are welcome to contribute more if you choose.

Name _____ (please print)

Yes, please list my name as the award donor.

Thank you!

THE RHODY STORE

is having an

**INVENTORY REDUCTION
SALE**

March 1-17

Save 30% on chapter short-
and long-sleeved tees and
sweatshirts
Limited to in-stock items only

Get yours at the March
chapter meeting
or call Cheryl Prchal at
902-7637 to reserve your
shirt.

Snips & Snail & Sluggie Tales!

Now is the time to start dealing with slugs and snails in your garden. Here are some tips from website www.daviswiki.org -A good snail and slug management program relies on a combination of methods: eliminating shelters, creating unfavorable conditions, destroying existing colonies. Since slugs/snails, like earwigs, seek out shaded moist environments, you can pretty easily start eliminating these habitats by clearing boards, stones, debris, weedy areas around tree trunks, low growing leafy branches, and dense ground covers. Exuberant beer drinkers, snails and slugs will congregate around a saucer of beer like an Irishman, and those drunken souls that don't drown in the drink can easily be picked off and tossed into your neighbor's yard; bury the saucers at ground level and keep the beer level deep enough to drown the mollusks. This type of trap is a good excuse to open a bottle of beer, but inverted melon rinds also make good traps. Scrape off the accumulated snails and slugs daily and destroy/relocate them. Do not use salt to destroy snails and slugs; it will increase soil salinity.



Irrigate less overall, and what irrigation you do should use longer intervals between waterings (using a bit more water per irrigation to keep plants happy, if needed). Less frequent, deep watering is generally better for the lawn and garden.

Next, make like the U.S. and embargo their food supplies while blocking transportation routes. Choose snail-proof plants for areas where snails and slugs are dense, locate vegetables and susceptible plants as far away as possible from remaining snail habitats and switch from sprinkler irrigation to drip irrigation to reduce humidity and moist surfaces. Snails and slugs favor seedlings and plants with succulent foliage and these plants must be vigilantly protected. A copper band can be wrapped around planting boxes, headers, and the base of susceptible plants such as citrus trees — these barriers last for several years as the mucous required for snails and slugs to travel carries an electrical charge as they pass over the copper barrier. The bands need to be cleaned occasionally with a vinegar solution.

Though baits can be part of a management program for snails and slugs, by themselves they don't provide adequate control in gardens that contain plenty of shelter, food, and moisture, and can be harmful to humans,

pets, wildlife and beneficial insects. One bait that is safe for use around children, pets and other wildlife, however, is the iron phosphate-based Sluggo. Iron phosphate is a good choice for backyard integrated pest management programs; ingestion of the bait, even in small amounts, will cause snails and slugs to cease feeding, although it may take several days for the snails to die and this type of bait may be more effective against snails than slugs. Humans and pets would have to ingest an extremely large amount of iron phosphate before reaching toxic level... in fact, caffeine has a higher toxicity. Metaldehyde baits are particularly poisonous to pets, and some are formulated with carbaryl which is toxic to soil-inhabiting beneficials like ground beetles and earthworms. Metaldehyde does not kill snails and slugs directly unless they eat a substantial amount; rather, it stimulates their mucous-producing cells to overproduce in an attempt to detoxify, the cells eventually fail and the snail dies. When it is sunny or hot, they die from desiccation following poisoning... if baiting is followed by cool and wet weather, they may recover if they ingest a sub-lethal dose. Placing baits repeatedly in the same areas maximizes control because mollusks tend to return to food source sites. Never pile bait in mounds or clumps, especially those baits that are hazardous, because piling makes bait attractive to pets and children. Irrigate before applying a bait to promote activity and apply the bait in the late afternoon or evening.

Choice of plants can greatly affect how difficult your battle with snails and slugs will be. Some plants that are seriously damaged include basil, beans, cabbage, dahlia, delphinium, hosta, lettuce, marigolds, strawberries, and many vegetable plants. On the other hand, many plants resist damage from snails and slugs including begonias, California Golden Poppy, fuchsias, geraniums, impatiens, lantana, nasturtiums, and purple robe cup flower, and many plants with stiff leaves and highly scented foliage like lavender, rosemary, and sage. Most ornamental woody plants and ornamental grasses are also not seriously affected. If you design your landscape using plants like these, you are likely to have very limited damage from snails and slugs.

BITS & PIECES

ARS Journals- Are you wondering what to do with your old issues of the ARS Journal? Bring them to a chapter meeting and we'll give them away to the public at our flower shows. People love to take one to learn more about rhododendrons!

New Member Mugs- When you became a new member, did you receive one of our mugs? Member chair, Sandi Hennig, will have some at the meetings to give to those who never received one.

History of the McNabs

Through the assistance of ARS Journal editor Glen Jamison, and his suggestion that I contact John Hammond of the ARS Editorial Committee, this story from John has made its way to me from my initial inquiry... for whom was the McNabii plant named. John says he will be attending the ARS Convention this spring. Enjoy... from your editor, Merilee.

William McNab (1780-1848) was a Scot and was born into a farming family at Knockcavish in Ayrshire. At the age of 16 he went as an apprentice gardener to the garden of Mr. Kennedy of Dunure in Carrick, Ireland. His expertise led to a position with the Earl of Haddington in East Lothian, Scotland and 14 months later he was appointed to a post at R.B.G., Kew where he became a foreman in 1803 at the age of 22. He was recommended to the R.B.G., Edinburgh in 1810 to take charge of the Edinburgh Garden, then at Leith Walk. In the passage of time he transformed the R.B.G., Edinburgh when it moved to its present location. He was responsible for moving a vast range of plants and mature trees, some over 100 years old, around a mile to their new location - an immense task that he achieved with great professionalism. He died as Curator at the R.B.G.E. in 1848.



McNabii

James McNab (1810-1878), son of William McNab, was English and was born at Richmond, Surrey, close to R.B.G., Kew. Shortly after his birth the family moved to Edinburgh and at the age of 12 he

started work with his father in their garden at R.B.G., Edinburgh. Initially, he was an apprentice then a journeyman gardener, and later a foreman. He was a bright, clever young man who progressed to the preparation of garden plans and plans for greenhouses including the heating of them by both steam and water.



James McNab, circa 1850

In 1834 James was invited by Robert Brown (c.1767-1845), a retired nurseryman from Perth, to accompany him on a plant-hunting expedition to Canada and Oregon, as Brown was interested to see the trees and shrubs in the wild. Here were two early explorers and McNab kept a journal of their difficulties travelling by sea, land and river in the pioneering era. In 1835 McNab was appointed Curator of the Caledonian Horticultural Society's experimental garden at Inverleith, Edinburgh where he remained until 1849 when he succeeded his father as Curator at R.B.G., Edinburgh. He was a prolific writer and contributed to a wide range of literature and corresponded with many societies at both home and overseas. He died as Curator at the R.B.G.E. in 1878.

William Ramsay McNab (1844-1889), son of James McNab, was a Scot and was born in Edinburgh where he was educated at the Edinburgh Academy and afterwards at the University of Edinburgh where he became a Doctor of Medicine at the age of 22 and became an assistant to John Hutton Balfour of the R.B.G.E. He was appointed Professor of Natural History at the Royal Agricultural College in Cirencester. In 1872 William McNab

took up the Chair of Botany in the Royal College of Science in Dublin as successor to William Thiselton Dyer who left to become Regius Keeper at R.B.G., Kew. He was an abrasive person and this seems to have prevented his progression to several posts, including the Chair of Botany at Glasgow University and Director of Glasnevin Botanic Gardens. He was appointed as Scientific Superintendent at Glasnevin and died of a heart attack in 1889.

Louis Benoit van Houtte (1810-1876) was born in Ypres and was a Belgian horticulturalist who founded 'The Belgian Horticulturalist' monthly magazine in 1832 and worked at the Jardin Botanique de Brussels from 1836 to 1838. Following the death of his wife in 1833 he was invited to go plant-hunting in Brazil to collect orchids being sought by the King of Belgium, and cactus. He returned to Belgium in late-1836 with many botanical specimens. In 1839 he set up his nurseries in Ghent, initially with camellias, geraniums and azaleas which were aimed at the European conservatory market.

In 1840 Louis was raising 400 different varieties of azaleas and then added a considerable number of rhododendrons from England. As was common with many Belgian & Dutch nurserymen, van Houtte's staff acquired good performing hybrids, many of which came from England. They marketed these in vast numbers in the wholesale market whilst they also used the same hybrids in their own propagation programs. Many of their own crosses were given names of prominent British estate owners or gardens and by the 1870's he had a huge establishment supplying the European trade.

So, where does this take us with R.'McNabii' ? My research suggests that it would appear that there is no definite accreditation of the name to a particular individual; however, of the above three McNabs it is James McNab who is the most widely known as a result of his plant-hunting expedition, his prolific writing and overseas correspondence. He was instrumental in the founding of 'The Oregon Association' in 1849 to fund plant-hunting expeditions to the Pacific Northwest which included collections around Mount Baker, the Willamette Valley, the Siskiyou Mountains and around Mount Shasta.

You will note that the R.'McNabii' was 'introduced' by van Houtte prior to 1860 and it is more than likely that this cross originated in England. Both R.ciliatum and R.edgeworthii were introduced by Joseph Hooker and much of the seed was distributed to private gardens in Britain & Ireland in c1850. R.edgeworthii first flowered in Scotland in the open air on the Isle of Bute in 1863, so we can assume that the species used for the cross of R.'McNabii' were raised under glass, possibly at R.B.G., Kew or Edinburgh. Edinburgh supplied plant material all over the world and if the cross was raised there then the timing fits in well with the reign of James McNab. All this is supposition, of course, and provides plenty of food for thought. Nevertheless, it has taken us on a fascinating journey involving people, places and plants at the time when Joseph Hooker's ground-breaking 1848-51 expedition provided gentlemen gardeners and nurserymen with the means of creating a vast range of rhododendron crosses, which is still a major hobby in the Pacific Northwest.

Link to James McNab's *phrenology* - *daily project* at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh:
<http://plantnetwork.org/proceeds/westonbrt2008/posters/rbgedaily.pdf>

The Secret To Great Garden Design...

I read an interesting article this week in my favorite magazine, *Fine Gardening*. The author talked about some important keys garden designers use to create an interesting informal garden. We can certainly use these tips when working with Rhododendrons and Azaleas in a blended coastal garden.

Making a garden look informal is quite an art; you would think it just takes a random direction of plantings here and there. Well, we would be wrong to assume it is that easy. Garden designers strive to create a fluid, natural look with layers of plantings and a myriad of plants. Their job actually takes quite a bit of organization. Here are some tips from the pros...

Create four "stories" to your garden layering; the ground, the mid-story, the secondary upper story and the upper story.

In the upper story you will link the sky to the landscape with tall trees as background; a good way to create shade in your garden.

In the secondary upper story you will tie the landscape to the house by selecting trees and shrubs that will mature at 8-15 feet tall for single story homes and 25-30 feet tall for two-story homes.

In the Mid-story level you will marry the house to the garden by planting eye-level perennials and shrubs. It is also the level where you can show off your signature plants that are unique... just a few, though.

And finally, the ground story where you add ornaments to the beds. This level is for low growing plants of one foot or less such as delicately textured and vibrant colored plants that will accessorize borders, paths, and entryways.

Now that you have the basic tools for designing your garden (or re-designing it), there is no excuse not to get out there and create a masterpiece! We can't wait to see it when it's done.

Enjoy....

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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.