

Portland Chapter, American Rhododendron Society

Calendar

- **February 16, 2012**
Regular meeting
7:00 PM social time
7:30 PM meeting
Speaker: Diana Reeck
Topic: Companions for
Your Rhododendrons
Plants will be for sale
from Collector's
Nursery
- **February 21, 2012**
Board Meeting, 7:30
PM, Van Veen Nursery
- **February 22-26, 2012**
Home and Garden
Show at the Expo
Center

Meeting Info

Regular chapter meetings are held on the third Thursday of the month (except in June, July, and August which have other events).

Meetings start at 7 pm with a social half-hour preceding the main meeting. We clean up and exit by 9:30 pm.

Location: All Saints Episcopal Church - At the corner of SE 40th and Woodstock, Portland, Oregon



February Fun

By Diana Reeck and Maria Stewart

There is no better month than February to think about companion plants to keep our rhododendrons in good company. On February 16th, Diana Reeck, owner and operator of Collector's Nursery, will tell us about some of the unusual and less common shade plants that she grows. Her specialty nursery, in Battle Ground, Washington, is mostly mail order, but she is very often a vendor at Portland area spring plant sales. In fact, Diana has been a vendor at our Mother's Day Show in past years.

Diana is fascinated by all aspects of plants. She considers herself to be a student of nature and has done quite a bit of studying plants in the wild, both in the local forests of the Pacific Northwest and on 3 botanical trips to China. What she learns on these adventures cannot easily be put onto paper. She says, "It is in seeing the details, in observing firsthand how things interrelate, how the land and the plant associations change, besides giving me time to contemplate and feel the connection with the rest of the natural world. Books, of course, are invaluable, but for me, there is no substitute for the real experience."

Diana has been in business since 1990 and concentrates on growing plants you will not find in other nurseries. Currently, she is focused on plants such as Epimedium, a specialty of hers, Erythronium, or Fawn Lilies, and Polygonatum, or Solomon's Seal. Although her nursery is in Battle Ground, Diana is now in the process of moving her operation to Salem! She will bring plants from her nursery to sell to us at the meeting, so come prepared to buy some choice companions for your rhododendrons.

More fun! It's our 4th annual Sweets for the Sweet meeting. Please bring your favorite sweet to share with the rest of us.

Purpose

To encourage interest in and disseminate information and knowledge about the genus *Rhododendron*.

To provide a medium through which all persons interested in the genus may communicate with others through education, scientific studies, meetings, publications, and other similar activities.

The Portland Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society is registered in Oregon as a 501 (C)(3) non-profit organization. Dues and donations are qualified charitable tax deductions.

Meeting Calendar through April, 2012:

February 16, 2012

Regular meeting

7:00 PM social time

7:30 PM meeting

Speaker: Diana Reeck

Topic: Companions for your Rhododendrons

Plants will be for sale from Collector's Nursery

February 21, 2012

Board meeting

7:30 PM

Van Veen Nursery

February 22-26, 2012

Home and Garden Show at the Expo Center

March 15, 2012

Regular meeting

Speaker: Steve Hootman

Topic: Species Rhododendrons Companion Plant Auction

March 20, 2012

Board Meeting

7:30 PM

Van Veen Nursery

April 14-15, 2012

Early Show and Sale, Crystal Springs Rh. Garden (With the Daffodil Society)

April 19, 2012

Regular Meeting

Speaker: Harold Greer

Annual Meeting / Hybrid Auction

Haiku

With clearing night skies
prisms of frost deflecting
one sun to thousands

Just enough higher
The trees, once naked, donning
a mantle of frost

In a naked world
the fully disclosed jay has
nothing to conceal

Early Christmas day
The rustle of leaves, the sound
of a single crow

Between dark cloud and
distant horizon, the flare
of a winter's sunset

By Peter Kendall



Blockbuster Speakers — 3 more in a row!

Plan ahead, bring a friend, enjoy the presentations of these three fantastic speakers.

Diana Reeck, Collector's Nursery, February 16, 2012

Steve Hootman, Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden, March 15, 2012

Harold Greer, Greer Gardens, April 19, 2012

January Jewels From Robin Rosetta

By Maria Stewart

We were very fortunate to hear Robin Rosetta, OSU Associate Professor at the North Willamette Research and Extension Center, as she gave us pertinent information on the *lace bug* at our January 19th meeting. This pest causes unsightly damage on rhododendron leaves in the Pacific Northwest because it eats the chlorophyll. The resulting white spaces where the green used to be can be so prominent that the leaves become white in appearance. Robin told us to start looking for the first hatching in mid-May if the weather has been warm and from then on through mid-June. This is the best time to kill the lace bug because the newly-hatched bugs are weakest at this time. The time from egg to adult takes 22 to 45 days depending on the temperature. It is not known how many generations occur in the PNW at this time.

Robin went on to say that there are several strategies to manage the lace bug. For one strategy, you would need to consider whether your garden would support a range of predators that feed on the azalea lace bug. If a gardener is careful not to use heavy-duty sprays that kill the beneficial insects, then predators such as tree crickets, earwigs, green lacewings, minute pirate bugs and spiders would be helpful in controlling the lace bug.

There are also chemical products that have less impact on the natural environment and they can be quite effective if used at the right times in the life cycle of the lace bug. Insecticidal soaps and oils must directly contact the insects and are best used on the newly-hatched nymphs. Horticultural oil can also smother the egg stage if it contacts the underside of the leaves where the eggs are embedded in the leaves. There are also neem-based products that act as anti-feedants, insect growth regulators, and repellants. You can use a hose with a strong blast of water to dislodge the nymphs for a mechanical way to control this pest.

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3) **January Jewels**

Other chemical controls such as pyrethroids need to come into contact with the lace bug and may be detrimental to the beneficial insects. Some of the systemic insecticides may be detrimental to the beneficials, also. Another class of insecticide is the neonicotinoid, such as imidacloprid, which can be found in Bayer's Advanced Garden Tree and Shrub Insect Control.

More information can be found on this website:

http://www.oregonstate.edu/dept/nurspest/azalea_lace_bug.htm

(The Portland Chapter will reprint Robin's handout and will have it available at the Early Show and the Mother's Day Show.)

Ultimate Prevention of Powdery Mildew on Rhododendrons

By Doug Blenkarn

(Reprinted from the Summer 2011 *Journal of the American Rhododendron Society*, Vol. 65, Number 3, with the author's permission.)

For 28 years my rhododendrons and I have waged war with powdery mildew (Erysiphaceae). Up until two years ago, approximately 10% of my rhododendrons were vulnerable. The susceptible plants were Rhododendron 'Douglas Stephens', 'Unique', 'Karen Triplet', 'Apricot Fantasy', 'Tequila Sunrise', 'Phyllis Korn', 'Olin Dobbs', 'Purple Lace', 'Purple Splendor', 'Virginia Richards', 'Horizon Monarch', 'C.I.S.', 'Grandma's Hat', 'Trude Webster', 'Elizabeth', 'Cynthia', and 'Blue Boy'.

I followed the usual cultural recommendations such as relocating plants to sunnier and better-ventilated sites, avoiding over-crowding, deadheading and removing all diseased leaves on and below the plants, spraying protectants and eradicants during the late spring and summer. In short, these measures were only partially effective in reducing powdery mildew.

For several years, and on Terry Richmond's recommendation, I have included dolomite lime with the spring fertilization. More recently Terry has begun field trials to assess the effects of various compounds (including magnesium sulfate) on rhododendron health and performance and powdery mildew vulnerability. There are many anecdotal reports on the efficacy of Epsom salts to increase plant growth, stem and root strength and to "green up" leaves. Foliar spraying of magnesium sulfate solution has been recommended for treating chlorosis.

In 2009, I sprayed bimonthly and thoroughly all new growth on vulnerable rhododendrons. I used a solution of magnesium sulfate (Epsom salts) of 20ml/l (2.7 oz./gal.) of water. I was surprised and gratified that this treatment totally prevented powdery mildew. I inadvertently missed spraying 'Elizabeth'. Her foliage showed the usual evidence of powdery mildew and became my control plant.

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Powdery Mildew

(Continued from page 4)

In 2010, initially I held off spraying, but closely monitored the vulnerable rhododendrons. The amount of powdery mildew recurring was variable, but overall was much less than previous years when no protectants and eradicants were used. I sprayed only cultivars that exhibited recurrences.

I plan to continue a strategy of zero tolerance, vigilance, early detection and preventative foliar spraying of magnesium sulfate of the more susceptible cultivars. I sense that a less concentrated solution and less frequent spraying might provide sufficient protection. The plant experts might explain the precise mechanism that appears to halt the powdery mildew invasion. Foliar magnesium seems to be a simple, inexpensive, and safe protectant against powdery mildew. Other protectants and eradicants are costly, inconsistent and have safety and environmental issues.

(In a conversation with Maria Stewart, Doug Blenkarn noted that he is trying increasing the rate to 30 ml/l from 20 ml/l; he is using no other fungicides at present; and yes, you will see a light residue on the foliage.)

Doug Blenkarn gardens in British Columbia.

Western Regional Conference, September 21-23, 2012, Coast Bastion Inn, Nanaimo, B.C. “Rhodos in Paradise - Destination Vancouver Island”

(Excerpted from the *ARS Journal*, Vol. 66, Number 1, Winter 2012, page 29)

“Come, let us welcome you to paradise, Vancouver Island, British Columbia, Canada, style! From September 21-23, 2012, the Nanaimo Chapter of the ARS with the support of many other District 1 chapters will be your host for the 2012 ARS Western Regional Fall Conference.”

“Let us provide you with an extraordinary sensory experience. Stay at our Nanaimo conference hotel, the newly renovated Coast Bastion Hotel with views of the city’s scenic waterfront from every room. Taste some of the best of what west coast cuisine has to offer with the meeting’s specially prepared catered meals and at the many nearby restaurants. Listen to an exciting slate of presenters who will entertain, educate and stimulate you through a wide range of topics...”

“Have a chance to tour some exquisite gardens both local and up island and on the final day of the conference, visit and lunch at the famous Milner Gardens and join Steve Hootman for a guided tour of some of the intriguing plants found there in that beautiful world-class garden and woodland...”

“We are eager to share our gardening paradise with you. Reserve the dates of September 21-23, 2012, for this opportunity to network with other keen gardeners! Watch for registration information on the web and in the 2012 spring and summer JARS issues.”

January 24th Board Meeting Highlights

By Maria Stewart

Crystal Springs Rhododendron Garden rock projects were explained by Donna Giguere. The board gave approval for the work to go ahead on the Jane Martin Garden walls in fall of 2012 and for another project to be completed in February, 2012. The funding of these two projects was approved at a previous board meeting.

The City of Portland is proceeding with their plan to close the restrooms in all parks. Kathy Van Veen will monitor this plan. Steve Hopkins has contacted a City employee and has requested an appointment with him. Bob MacArthur has spoken with City employees, also. Our most immediate concerns are for the Wedding season coming soon and our Early Show and Mother's Day Show.

Brenda Ziegler will look into car decals to be used for reaching out to the public and she will also look into the cost of permanent name tags for our meetings.

We still need a publicity person.

Dick Cavender is the new Finance Chairman. A meeting of the Finance Committee will be held in February. Mike Stewart reported that the books are closed for the 2011 National Convention and that the distribution of the profits will give the Portland Chapter \$4,300.00.

Mike also reported that our chapter needs an interested member to be Vice President for the term of Fall, 2012 through Spring, 2014.

President Mike Domaschofsky reported on the plans for the Home and Garden Show booth in February, the trip to Thompson's Nursery in March, the Chinese Garden Sale and the Japanese Garden Sale.

Dick Cavender explained the need for the Early Show to be held on April 14-15 so that it does not conflict with the HPS sale and Easter weekend.

Home and Garden Show Booth Schedule

Our chapter will create a garden booth full of rhododendrons at the Portland Home and Garden Show at the EXPO Center in February. Call Dick Cavender at 503-625-6331 if you would like to help with giving out information during the show or with setting up or taking down the booth. This show is a great opportunity to talk about rare and unusual rhododendrons with the public and potential members. Here are the dates:

February 18-19 set up

February 22-26 show days

February 26-27 take down

Reminder: Change of Date for the Companion Plant Sale

The Companion Plant Sale will be held during the March 15th meeting. However, bring your urges to buy plants to the February 16th meeting also, because Diana Reek from Collector's Nursery will entice you with her wonderful companion plants then.

A Rhododendron Sweetheart: 'Something Lovely'

Picture a compact grower with handsome foliage and pretty pink flowers. What could be a better choice than 'Something Lovely' to celebrate Valentine's Day? Thank you, Herb Spady, for hybridizing (circa 1980), growing, naming, and registering this beautiful rhododendron.

Here are some more descriptions of 'Something Lovely':

It is an elepidote;

Its origin is from an open-pollinated 'Lori Eichelser' (Smart bees, right?);

Each truss holds about 7 open funnel-shaped corollas. Each corolla has 5 wavy-edged lobes;

The bud is vivid red and opens to moderate pink inside each corolla and deeper vivid purple red on the outside. Bloom time is mid-April;

The leaves are elliptic and rounded at the base. They are moderate green in color;

Depending on the placement, expect it to grow 1 1/2 feet tall and wide in 10 years.

By: Maria Stewart

Smith Garden Work Party Update:

The Smith Garden Spring Work Day is scheduled for Saturday, March 24th, 2012. Lunch will be provided.

Please mark your calendars and plan to attend!

The Smith Garden is open to the public Saturdays and Sundays during the blooming season, April 7th through May 20th, 11:00AM to 4:00PM.

In Memoriam: Carol Barrett

As this goes to press, we have learned of the passing of Carol Barrett.

There will be a tribute to her in the March issue. *Ed.*



Rhododendron 'Something Lovely'

Portland Chapter of
the American
Rhododendron
Society

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CHAPTER OFFICERS

President: *Mike Domaschofsky*
Vice President: *Maria Stewart*
Past President: *Kath Collier*
Secretary: *Carol McCarthy*
Treasurer: *Dick Cavender*

BOARD MEMBERS

(Through June 30, 2012) **Ann Clack,**
Kathy Van Veen, Mike Stewart, and
Steve Kaminski
(Through June 30, 2013) **Caroline**
Enns, Steve Hall, Steve Hopkins,
Brenda Ziegler, Ray Clack and Carol
Barrett

GARDEN INFO:

Crystal Springs Rhodo. Garden

Chairs:

Bob MacArthur, 360-256-2522, and
Donna Giguere, 503-777-1177

Tours:

Barbara Keller, 503-775-5205

Gatehouse:

Rose Kress, 503-654-4318

Friends:

Kathy Van Veen, 503-777-1734

Events:

Rachael Moloney, 503-975-6743

Cecil & Molly Smith Garden
Chair: **Ginny Mapes**, 503-647-2896

Newsletter, membership, and
ownership: The Portland Chapter is
a local Chapter of the American Rho-
dodendron Society. Combined annual
dues to both the national society and
local chapter are \$40. Membership
benefits include nine or more newslet-
ters, discounts, and activities.

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meeting. Send materials to either:
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