

Portland Chapter, American Rhododendron Society

Calendar

- **November 15, 2012**
Regular Meeting
7:00 PM social time
7:30 PM meeting
Speaker will be
Peter Kendall
Topic: " A Colorado fall
in top form "
- **November 20, 2012**
Board Meeting
7:30 PM
Van Veen Nursery
- **December 20, 2012**
Regular Meeting
7:00 PM social time
7:30 PM meeting
Program: Traditional
holiday showing of
slides by members

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



To Whet the Appetite: A Colorado fall in Top Form

Our November speaker will be Peter Kendall. Peter has recently returned from a 10-day trip to Colorado and already has his slides developed and ready to show us.

Peter will be describing the evolution of Colorado's magnificent geography in the western part of the state, against the backdrop of quaking Aspens at the height of their fall colors. Peter's enthusiasm is contagious! Join us at the November meeting for a fall fabulous show.

Incidentally, Peter also has an article in the Fall, 2012 issue of the A.R.S. *Journal*, entitled: " A Rhododendron Untamed: *R. albiflorum*" pages 198 to 200, accompanied by his photographs. As Peter states in his article, "... (*R. albiflorum*) occurs principally in concentrated thickets in the highest reaches of the Cascade Mountains, and, while not altogether eye-catching, its subtle presence and ability to thrive offer an understated elegance. This is especially appreciated given its reluctance to perform outside its native haunts in cultivated settings."

Our December program will be our traditional showing of our members' slides. Any member who wishes to share a few slides with us at the meeting is welcome and guaranteed an appreciative audience of fellow rhododendron enthusiasts. Please consider sharing your slides with us!

A.R.S. Dues are Due! Dues must be Postmarked No Later Than December 1st, 2012.

Please mail your dues to: ARS Treasurer

Dick Cavender

15920 SW Oberst Lane

Sherwood, OR 97140-5020

If you have not received your dues reminder in the mail or at a meeting, please contact: ARS Membership

John Welsh

37106 SE Lusted Rd

Boring, OR 97009-9706

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 January, 2013:

November 7, 2012
Dormancy Luncheon

Noon
Crystal Springs Rhododendron Garden

November 15, 2012

Regular meeting
7:00 PM social time
7:30 PM meeting

Program: "A Colorado fall in Top Form"

Speaker: Peter Kendall

November 20, 2012

Board Meeting
7:30 PM
Van Veen Nursery

December 20, 2012

Regular meeting
7:00 PM social time
7:30 PM meeting
Program: Traditional showing of members' slides

**No December Board Meeting-
Happy Holidays!**

January 17, 2013
Regular meeting
7:00 PM social time
7:30 PM meeting
Program: TBA

January 22, 2013
Board Meeting
7:30 PM
Van Veen Nursery

Haiku

Yesterday's flower
-- fallen remnant of
yesterday's world

A breaking fall sun
Brilliant crescent moon; the stars
obliterated

Into the tree line nook
fall breaking forth, in the flare
of a sinking sun

Through obscuring mists --
autumn's crescent moon, alone
in a starless sky

The stir of fall winds
Shadows, except for my own,
moving ceaselessly

By Peter Kendall

Raffle News

At our last meeting, E. White Smith, our Master of Raffles, reminded us that we are all invited to bring plants and other rhody-related items for our meeting raffles. Remember, too, that if you wear a name tag, you are entitled to 2 raffle tickets!

From the President's Corner

By Maria Stewart

At the October Chapter meeting, I showed and talked about a favorite plant from our garden. It is *Ilex verticillata* 'Winter Red', a deciduous holly which is sometimes called Winterberry or Black Alder. In our garden, the berries never last until winter, as its varietal name suggests, because the birds eat them before winter arrives. But for a couple of weeks, it is enjoyable to see the bright red berries displayed on leafless branches.

In bringing the holly to share, I am trying to start a tradition for our Chapter that we have experienced while attending other Chapters' meetings. At the North Island Chapter's meeting on Vancouver Island, we heard 3 members talking about and showing plants from their gardens, which they appreciated for their positive attributes. Whether it was for color, form, fragrance, berries, bark or foliage that these plants were chosen for sharing at their meeting, the idea was that these plants were decorations in the members' gardens. This part of the meeting was thoroughly enjoyable and a wonderful way to learn more about plants to explore for our own gardens.

For every Chapter meeting, September through May, please think about the decorations in your garden that you might want to share with your fellow members. Just think how intriguing it will be to take a mini tour of each other's gardens throughout the year. I invite you to join me in our 'show and tell' part of our meetings, and I can hardly wait to see what you bring for November's meeting!

October Meeting: Past, Present and Future at Crystal Springs

Rhododendron Garden

By Tom Hoffman

We enjoyed a very interesting and educational presentation at our October meeting by Ernie Metcalfe, on the history and development of Crystal Springs Rhododendron Garden, illustrated with then-and-now slides taken by Ernie over the many years he has volunteered at Crystal Springs. Ernie's talk showed a long history of applied ingenuity on the part of the Garden volunteers, and gave a good sense of just how much work has gone into the Garden we see today.

Rachael Moloney, our Garden Events Coordinator, gave us a fun presentation on weddings held at Crystal Springs; last year, the Garden hosted 34 weddings, with a total of 4,200 visitors just for those weddings. Rachael believes the Garden has the capacity for more weddings and other events and is actively working toward that goal.

Following those presentations, we held our traditional rhododendron species auction. Plants were donated by Crystal Springs Rhododendron Garden and several members, with Dick Cavender's "cleaning-out-the-polyhouse" and Jay Lunn's donation of several plants suitable for rock gardens, noteworthy. In all, dozens of plants were on offer, and bidding was lively. Dick Cavender served as auctioneer.

Our meeting place, All Saints Episcopal Church on SE Woodstock, has a new Rector. She is Rev. Laura Truby and is new to the Portland area. She introduced herself in the course of our meeting and made us feel welcome.

Collecting Rhododendron Seeds And Germinating Them

By Dr. David Goheen

Gradually, I have improved my ways of collecting and germinating seeds in order to grow new plants and try to find the elusive winners of the genetic lotteries. The first step is to harvest the seed capsules after sufficient time has elapsed after fertilization for the seeds to contain complete embryos that can develop into new plants, given the right cultural conditions. Generally, I have found that at least four months are required and I prefer to allow about six months. *As a target date, I aim for October 15th harvest in my Pacific Northwest garden.* It may go without saying, but it is very important to record and tag each seed capsule with the names of the female and the male parents. By custom, the female (or seed parent) is always listed first.

The seed capsules are stored at room temperature for one to two weeks to allow them to dry. During drying, the capsules will generally split open and release the seeds. Some capsules may have to be mechanically split. Plant rhododendron seeds soon after harvesting as these seeds are small and tend to lose their ability to sprout fairly rapidly, especially if they are kept in very dry and warm conditions. Vireya (tropical) rhododendrons are especially liable to lose their ability to sprout and should be planted as soon after harvest as possible. Seeds should be separated from bits of chaff and inert material, as these latter items tend to carry harmful spores of molds and fungi.

I have found that, in preparing a seed bed for rhododendrons, one seems to get the best results by using two different layers of seed-growing materials. I use two-inch plastic bands (4 square inches of growing surface)* and loosely pack the bottom half of the bands with a damp mixture of the following (percentages are by volume):

40% peat moss

40% agricultural perlite

20% sharp sand (mason's sand)

On top of this sub-layer, I add a moist layer of about 1/4 inch thickness of milled sphagnum, 'No-Damp-Off' seed starter. This material can be purchased at most garden shops and contains its own antibiotic properties. By its use, I rarely, if ever, have any trouble with fungal diseases and the antibiotic properties obviate the necessity for sterilization of the seed-growing mixtures. It will be noted that the bottom layer contains sand. Some growers don't like sand, but it is my belief that it gives some weight and solidity that the seedlings like. Perhaps it helps to more nearly simulate natural growing conditions in the wild.

Following the seed bed preparation, the seeds are sprinkled on the moist sphagnum surface. I find that a convenient way to obtain a proper spacing of the seedlings is to place the seed clumps on a sheet of white paper and gently tap the paper to separate the individual seeds. Then it is possible to estimate their number. After considerable trial and error, I have come to believe that the best spacing is obtained by using 100 seeds per band (4 square inches). The object is to scatter the seeds as uniformly as possible over the sphagnum surface.

After this step, place the bands in a larger plastic box covered with a transparent glass or plastic. The covered bands are held at about 70 degrees Fahrenheit. Although I do not know why, germination of the seeds appears to take place better in the dark. I use a paper or wood barrier to exclude light during the germination period which takes about 12-14 days. By keeping the plastic box covered with glass or plastic, no additional moisture needs to be added. The light barrier is removed after germination. Keep the box covered with the glass or plastic transparent material to conserve moisture. In the next article, I will discuss the steps of growing germinated seeds to produce the new plants.

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Collecting Rhododendron Seeds And Germinating Them

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* Comment: There are other containers that will work for seed beds. The Andersons from New Jersey use plastic deli containers with the lids folded back and they cover the openings with sandwich bags. Margaret Stewart used covered plastic containers that you put leftovers in and set the containers on a south-facing window sill for warmth.

The Marvelous R. 'Mango Tango'

By Maria Stewart

What a perfect name for an outstanding rhododendron! Think about large golden yellow blooms with peachy margins that sit atop dark green leaves on a well-clothed plant. If you like the combination of yellow and light orange in your flowers, this is a rhododendron to consider. We thank the Thompson Nursery in Waldport, Oregon for hybridizing this special plant.

More information about 'Mango Tango':

Parents: R. 'Nancy Evans' X (R. 'Mrs. Lammot Copeland X R. 'Tweedy Bird')

Size: About 4 feet in 10 years, depending on where you place it.

Bloom Time: May

Hardiness: 0 degrees F.

Photograph of R. 'Mango Tango' courtesy of Mike Stewart.



Board Meeting Highlights

October 23, 2012

By Maria Stewart

It was good to hear from Dick Cavender that 14 volunteers worked at the Smith Garden in St. Paul on October 20th and that the chipping task was completed.

We discussed and considered a proposal by Events Coordinator Rachael Maloney to run an advertisement in "Bride and Groom" magazine for the purpose of increasing the number of events at Crystal Springs Rhododendron Garden. More information is needed before we vote on the ad.

We further discussed some changes to the Gatehouse Coordinator's position description, which is in its third review. The vote on this will take place at the November 20th Board meeting. Also at the November meeting, we will continue discussion about the safety of the gatehouse at Crystal Springs Rhododendron Garden.

We are very pleased that Steve Hall and Caroline Enns have agreed to become our new webmasters. Steve Kaminski will be their mentor. We thank Steve for all the work that he has done and will continue to do, for a while, on our website.

We are applying for insurance for our Chapter officers and Board members.

Show and Tell:

Ilex verticillata 'Winter Red'.

Photograph courtesy of Mike Stewart.

Please remember to bring a sample or two of your favorite decorative plants from your garden to our November meeting!



World-famous Wood Ducks at Crystal Springs Rhododendron Garden, one of the many delights of the Garden. Now is a good time to visit Crystal Springs, for fall color and the new arrivals in the over-wintering waterfowl which call the Garden home. Photograph courtesy of Donna Giguere.



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the American
Rhododendron
Society

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CHAPTER OFFICERS

President: *Maria Stewart*
Vice President: *Brenda Ziegler*
Past President: *Mike Domaschofsky*
Secretary: *Carol McCarthy*
Treasurer: *Dick Cavender*

BOARD MEMBERS

(Through June 30, 2014) **Ann Clack,**
Ray Clack, Bud Bowen, Kathy Van
Veen, , and Betsy Soifer
(Through June 30, 2013) **Caroline**
Enns, Steve Hall, Steve Hopkins,
Mike Stewart, Dave Collier

GARDEN INFO:
Crystal Springs Rhodo. Garden

Chair:
Bob MacArthur, 360-256-2522
Tours/Volunteering:
csrgvol@me.com
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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