

Portland Chapter, American Rhododendron Society

Calendar

- **January 17, 2013**
Regular Meeting
7:00 PM social time
7:30 PM meeting
Program: Steve Hootman, RSF, speaking on his 2012 trip to China
- **January 22, 2013**
Board meeting
7:30 PM
Van Veen Nursery
- **February 21, 2013**
Regular Meeting
7:00 PM social time
7:30 PM meeting
Program: TBA
- **February 26, 2013**
Board meeting
7:30 PM
Van Veen Nursery

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



Plant Collectors in China, The 2012 RSBG Expedition

By Tom Hoffman

We are fortunate to have Steve Hootman, the Executive Director and Curator of the Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden in Federal Way, Washington as our speaker for our January 17th meeting. Steve and his colleagues have recently returned from another collecting trip to China, exploring several mountains in Sichuan, Guizhou and Guangxi Provinces and Taiwan. The trip was outlined in the Fall, 2012 Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden newsletter. The plan was to go to China in October in the company of Peter Cox, Glendoick Gardens, Scotland; Kelly Dodson and Sue Milliken of Far Reaches Farm, Port Townsend, WA; and Tom Hudson of Tregrehan, Cornwall, all seasoned collectors.

If you remember Steve Hootman's presentation at our March, 2012 meeting, you won't want to miss this meeting!

Bring a friend to hear Steve's program! This is a great opportunity to show the joys of attending Portland Chapter meetings and learning about rhododendrons from presenters who enjoy sharing their love of the genus.

To view descriptions of Steve's previous expeditions online, go to: rhodygarden.org, or just search for Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden online.

Sellwood Bridge Closure January 17th Through January 24th, 2013

The Sellwood bridge will be closed to traffic January 17th through January 24th, 2013 to allow the bridge span to be moved to its temporary supports just north of its present position. Please allow extra time for your travel to the January meeting if you will be driving from the west side of the Willamette River. The Hawthorne, Ross Island, Morrison and Burnside bridges will be open but may be more crowded and slower than usual due to the increase in traffic expected from the Sellwood bridge closure.

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 March, 2013:

January 17, 2013
Regular meeting
7:00 PM social time
7:30 PM meeting
Program: Steve Hootman, RSF, speaking on his 2012 trip to China

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

February 13, 2013
Crystal Springs Work Party
9:00 AM to 3:00 PM, weather permitting

February 21, 2013
Regular meeting
7:00 PM social time
7:30 PM meeting
Program: TBA

February 26, 2013
Board Meeting
7:30 PM
Van Veen Nursery

March 21, 2013
Regular meeting
7:00 PM social time
7:30 PM meeting
Program: TBA

March 23, 2013
Smith Garden Work Party
9:00 AM - 2:00 PM, weather permitting.

March 26, 2013
Board meeting
7:30 PM
Van Veen Nursery

Haiku

Peaking autumn leaves
 Classical guitar -- weaving
 a rebirth from decay

Again and again
 into oblivion -- those
 leaves of many hues

Sodden leaves, the chill
 The autumn of days just past
 a scant remembrance

This naked autumn
 The prospect, a conjecture
 The past, so fleeting

The old cedar grove
 -- beyond each rain textured trunk
 the russets of fall

By Peter Kendall

Show and Tell

Please remember to bring a show and tell item from your garden to the meeting. We are establishing a new tradition, sharing information about our rhododendron companion plants with our fellow members. What's in your garden? Or greenhouse, for that matter, sharing space with vireyas and other tender rhododendrons, perhaps ?

From the President's Corner

By Maria Stewart

Tonight, I am reading through the Portland Chapter's 1981-1982 membership roster just because I have been thinking about the wonderful people who have helped to make this chapter so successful, so fulfilling and so inviting throughout the thirty years that Mike and I have been members. Thirty years! It seems like yesterday when we attended our first meeting at the Portland Garden Club. Guess who the officers were that year. They were Lansing Bulgin as President, Herb Spady as Vice-President, Merilee Mannen as Secretary, and Dick Cavender as Treasurer. *Three of the members of that executive group continue to be active members of our chapter to this day.*

Thinking about that fact brings me back to this year of 2012-2013 and the members who give of themselves currently, so that our meetings and activities go smoothly. Barb MacArthur has organized and contributed to the refreshments at our meetings for many years. She has faithfully done this for so long that we just expect the goodies and coffee to be ready for us when we walk into the meeting. You are truly appreciated, Barb!

E. White Smith can be counted on to get us excited about the door prizes he brings to our meetings. There are always treasures from Bovees Nursery and most times, there is an eclectic selection of hard goods to entice us. "Remember to bring your own name tag and you get two tickets!" says E. White. Trying to win a door prize is lots of fun because he makes it fun.

We are glad that Tom Hoffman is the Editor of the "Rhododendron News". Organizing, designing, writing and formatting our newsletter is a big job. I thoroughly enjoy reading the articles that Tom contributes. When he describes the wildlife and the surroundings at Crystal Springs, you feel like you are there.

John Welsh works behind the scenes, but without him, we would be lost. He keeps our membership records up-to-date and accurate. He sends the dues in to the ARS and communicates regularly with the Executive Director. When we accumulate lists of e-mail addresses from interested people at our plant sales and at our display at the EXPO, John patiently enters those into his e-mail lists. By doing that, he can send out notices about future sales and events to those people and they may keep coming back. Thank you, John, for all that you do!

Here's hoping that your Christmas and New Year holidays were all that you wished. See you on January 17th at the meeting!

Transplantation of Young Seedling Rhododendrons

By Dr. David Goheen

(Editor's note: This is the third article in a series about growing rhododendrons from seed and the fourth article this fall re-printed from Dave Goheen's "*Rhododendron ABC's*". They were published originally from 1992 to 1997 in the Portland Chapter newsletter. Thanks to Polly Mendlin, long-time member, we now have copies of all 26 articles. Please see the November, and December 2012 newsletters for the first and second articles preceding this one.)

As we continue our discussion on growing new rhododendrons from seed, we come to the third part of the process. This critical period occurs when the seedlings are two to three months past germination and have developed several sets of leaves. Until this time, they have been grown in a crowded, but still very protective situation. Now, they must be weaned and allowed to grow in a less protective environment to the point where they can be set out and, more or less, fend for themselves. The analogy to the weaning and development of children from early childhood through their teenage years is striking.

The new and tender seedlings need to be transplanted into bands or pots and given enough room to expand into sturdy individuals. Several things must be considered for this all-important event. Choosing the right growing medium is crucial. I do not recommend the use of prepared commercial potting mixtures, as these may contain enough alkalinity to stunt or even kill the seedlings. I rather prefer to use the two layers previously described for making the seed bed. (Make a damp mixture of 40% peat, 40% agricultural perlite and 20% sharp sand (Mason's sand) for the bottom layer and make a top layer of about an inch of "no-damp-off" sphagnum. See the November, 2012 article about constructing a seed bed.) This allows formation of vigorous roots with little danger of losses due to damp-off and other fungal diseases.

The next important procedure is to "tease" individual seedlings from the germination mixture. This must be done very carefully as the rootlets are extremely fragile and it is very easy to break and destroy them. I have found it helpful to use a pointed object, such as a sharpened pencil, to loosen the seedlings from the medium. Care should be taken to try to retain some of the medium on the rootlets, if at all possible. Also, remember to block off a selection of the seedlings and transplant from the block without any regard for selection. Don't just take the largest. Remember, you are playing a lottery and chance is all-important! At this point, there is no way to tell which seedlings contain the best traits.

After the seedlings are imbedded in the sphagnum, they should be lightly pressed in and watered to settle the new growing medium around the roots. From this point, the seedlings can be treated as new plants. Flats containing the individual containers should be kept warm and provided with good illumination. Don't let the temperature rise too high (70 degrees F. is about optimum) and never let the medium dry out. Weekly or bi-weekly waterings with dilute soluble fertilizers work very well. I prefer to use about 20% of the strength recommended on the fertilizer contain for mature plants. Try to keep a balance between over-watering and letting the mixture dry out.

If everything goes well, one should have sturdy plants several inches high within five or six months after removal from the germination mixture. At this point, the plants can be either transplanted to gallon or larger containers or can even be set out to selected spots in the garden. They are now on their own and one can sit back and, using usual maintenance, watch them grow and hope that some of them may prove worthy of the care that has been lavished on them. Be patient! It may take 2, 5 or even more years for them to bloom, but the satisfaction of seeing something brand-new is worth the wait. You may even be luck and grow a winner!

Highlights of the December 20, 2012 Meeting

By Tom Hoffman

We arrived early Thursday evening to set up our dinner tables, organize our potluck and pile high a table of gifts for everyone attending. We enjoyed good food, good companionship, entertaining slides and digital images and a fun gift exchange, with E. White Smith presiding as Santa's helper. Were you naughty or nice? We must have been nice - there were no lumps of coal to be seen!

One nice coincidence: Dick and Karen Cavender were celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary and 70th birthdays and shared slides of those events with us.

Herb Spady showed slides of several of the rare rhododendrons in the Smith Garden in St. Paul and spoke again of the need to care for the Smith Garden. Bob MacArthur showed images of Crystal Springs, with interesting digital camera work. Peter Kendall showed some additional slides from his trip to Colorado and described the geology and plant life in those scenes. Kathy Van Veen gave a slide presentation of a friend's house in NW Germany, dating from the 1600's, in the heart of serious rhododendron country and also the famous 4 Bremen town musicians statue in the Bremen central square. The statue, of a rooster standing on top of a cat, standing on top of a dog, standing on top of a donkey, commemorates the Grimm's fairy tale, in which the animals save a home from robbers. E. White Smith shared slides of his Chrysler PT Cruiser 'runs' with fellow PT Cruiser owners around the Northwest. Interesting, entertaining, educational, fun!

It is also the season for signing up to work on our many projects. First up is the Expo Show, with volunteers needed to help set up beginning February 16th and 17th, just a month away, and manning our display at the Expo, and then taking it all down on February 24th. Sign-up sheets were passed around at the meeting and will be available again at our January meeting.

The retaining wall repair in the Jane Martin Garden at Crystal Springs Rhododendron Garden has been completed. Now we need to re-plant the wall. The first work day at Crystal Springs is February 13th, weather permitting. If the current weather is any indication of what to expect, we will need to plan on cold and wet and windy conditions - not a problem for Ducks and Beavers, of course.

Mike Domaschofsky recognized Linda Rungay for her many years of service organizing our spring shows at Crystal Springs Rhododendron Garden. Linda of course swears she has only a small part and all the others do most of the work. We know that Linda does far more than she admits, keeping all things going smoothly. Thank you, Linda!

Volunteer Opportunities At The Smith Garden

By Dorothy Patrick

Hello everyone!

Now is the time of year that I start recruiting volunteers to work at the Smith Garden open garden days, selling plants and/or taking admissions. Shifts are 5 hours, from 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM on a Saturday or a Sunday in April or May, beginning Saturday, April 6th and running through Sunday, May 19th, 2013. The garden is only open a total of 14 days out of the year. We need only 2 people per day, minimum, although Don and I prefer 4 people, as we really enjoy visiting with another person or couple. The sign-up sheet will be at the January meeting, but you can call me, e-mail me or snail-mail me: 'phone: 503-625-6584; e-mail: dpscoty@starband.net; mail: 24031 S.W. Morgan Lane, Sherwood, OR 97140

...and don't forget to save Saturday, March 23, 2013 for the Smith Garden Work Day!

Many thanks!

A Foliage Star That Glows All Year Long: R. 'Chemainus'

By Maria Stewart

When the enticing blooms of our rhododendrons are only a fleeting memory of spring's palette, it's the foliage of certain plants that draws us near in winter for a second look. Such is the case with R. 'Chemainus'. When Frank Fujioka planned this cross, he chose good foliage plants for three of the four parents. The result is a gorgeous rhododendron displaying very dark green and glossy leaves with thick indumentum underneath. If R. 'Chemainus' never bloomed, it would still be a star in your garden.

More information about R. 'Chemainus':

The cross: Noyo Brave X ((CIS x rex) x Hansel)

Flower : medium pink with darker pink in the throat

Truss: 19 flowers per truss

Foliage: dark green and glossy with thick, medium brown indumentum underneath

Plant habit: upright with good branching.

Height: 4 to 5 feet in 10 years

Hardiness: probably +5 degrees F.

Placement in garden: a little shade would be of benefit

Hybridizer: Frank Fujioka

Photograph courtesy Mike Stewart.





Mt. Nishibetsu: very cold and windy



Rhododendron brachycarpum var. *roseum*



Rhododendron brachycarpum var. *roseum*



Rhododendron brachycarpum var. *roseum* on Cape Erimo, Japan

Photographs courtesy of Mr. Yasuyuki Doi, who has been a life member of the ARS and the Portland Chapter since 1986. Mr. Doi has collected many forms of *R. brachycarpum* var. *roseum* in Japan and made many hybrids with *R. brachycarpum* var. *roseum* over the past 20-plus years, sending the resulting seed to the ARS Seed Exchange. Mr. Doi is photographed in Hokkaido, Japan, showing the environments in which *Rhododendron brachycarpum* var. *roseum* is found.

Portland Chapter of
the American
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Society

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GARDEN INFO:
Crystal Springs Rhodo. Garden

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Rose Kress, 503-654-4318
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Events:
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