

Portland Chapter, American Rhododendron Society

## Calendar

December 21, 2017  
Portland Chapter  
Winter Holiday Party  
Potluck Dinner and  
Gift Exchange  
Set-Up 6:30 PM  
Dinner 7:00 PM  
Program: Slides and  
Digital Images  
shown by Members  
and/or their Guests

## 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 40<sup>th</sup> and Woodstock, Portland, Oregon



## Please Join the Portland ARS Chapter for Our *Holiday Party and Potluck Supper* *Thursday, December 21, 2017*

**Location: All Saints Episcopal Church**  
**SE 40<sup>th</sup> and SE Woodstock, Portland OR**

**6:30 PM: Social Hour, Set-up/Decorate the Tables**

**7:00 PM: Dinner**

**It is time for our traditional fun and fabulous Holiday Party and Potluck! YOU ARE ALL INVITED!**

Bring your favorite dish to share AND Invite a friend or two!

Guests are always welcome.

Plates, plasticware, and napkins will be provided.

Also, please bring one or more gifts (inexpensive) to share.

It is more fun when they are wrapped.

**This is our biggest door prize festivity of the year! Our goal is that everyone receives a gift.**

Thank you to our Table Decorators. It is always fun to see your creations.

**OUR TRADITIONAL PROGRAM** is slides and digital images shown by our members and/or their guests. We recommend no more than 12 slides per person. These slides can be of plants, gardens, travels, and memories you would like to share. We will have a laptop with a digital projector. If you need a slide projector, please bring your own, or let us know what you need and we will do our best to get it for you!

## 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 February, 2018:

**December 21, 2017**

**Holiday Party and Potluck Supper  
with Decorated Tables and Gift  
Exchange**

**Social time, set-up, decorate tables  
6:30 pm**

**Dinner 7:00 pm**

**Program: Slides and Digital Images  
shown by members and/or their  
guests**

**January 18, 2018**

**Regular meeting**

**Social time 7:00 pm**

**Meeting 7:30 pm**

**Speaker: Wally Reed, Salem  
Chapter, ARS**

**Program: "Mapping the Garden"**

**February 15, 2018**

**Regular meeting and Companion  
Plant Auction**

**Social time 7:00 pm**

**Meeting 7:30 pm**

**Speaker: Loren Russell, OSU**

**Topic: "Kalmiopsis - Lilla Leach's  
'Azalea' "**

**Following the Speaker, we will  
hold our annual Companion Plant  
Auction and, in honor of Valen-  
tine's Day, 'Treats for the Sweet'  
Potluck as well**

## Haiku

Atop the broken snag  
Afternoon's junco, still  
as still can be

Damp autumn chill  
Mistaking the fluttering leaf  
for a butterfly

In the roadside pool  
each raindrop, a camouflage  
to noiselessness

Those mindless leaves - what  
next is on the agenda  
in aimlessness

A night's pounding rain  
So little left to escape  
its consequence

Peter Kendall

## President's Message for December:

Last winter's unusually difficult winter weather deprived us of our traditional Holiday Party and Potluck. It is an event that I personally look forward to very much, and the decision to cancel it was a difficult one. Ultimately, the safety of people traveling significant distances and reports from outlying areas that many members would be unable to attend made the cancellation decision unavoidable. But, selfishly, I wasn't happy about it.

And it turns out that neither were you. There was a spontaneous outpouring of high regard for the event, regret for its postponement, and numerous suggestions for attempts to salvage it. I received emails suggesting it be rescheduled for New Year's week, or for the January meeting, or numerous other options. Our members were passionate about this event. All of their comments and suggestions were rooted in the recognition that the Solstice or Holiday Party and Potluck is a unique and special event, primarily a social gathering of our members (and guests) that focuses on the community that brings us together rather than on any particular outside speaker or program.

The program that follows the potluck meal emphasizes that community. When our members and guests share their favorite photographs and memories of the past year, we don't just see their prized gardens and flower displays, much as we enjoy those. We meet their families on a favorite vacation trip or their pets and companions. (You may recall that in my case, you met the digging machine dog who roams my garden and presents many of its challenges.) In short, we get to know each other better and often from a different perspective.

So now (weather permitting), we have a chance to return to that warm and giving event that we missed so much last December. Don't miss it again. (And don't forget your welcome friends and guests or your wrapped door prize gifts for all). Hope to see you there.

Best wishes to you and your families for the holidays!

Dennis O'Malley

## November Meeting Report:

**The main event:** James Cassidy - "Soil, what it is and how it works".

James' informative and thoroughly engaging presentation varied in scale from global geopolitics to the atomic structure of clay. What do plants need? Water, oxygen, carbon dioxide and nutrients, What does soil provide? A place, between the particulates of soil, for roots to drink water, breathe oxygen, and absorb nutrients. A long but highly educational and enjoyable evening.

Sites pertinent to his presentation:

Soil Analysis: A&L Western Laboratories, [http://www.al-labs-west.com/services.php?section=Soil Analysis](http://www.al-labs-west.com/services.php?section=Soil%20Analysis)

Map of soil conditions: <http://casoilresource.lawr.ucdavis.edu/gmap/>

His slides: [https://wmswcd.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Soil is a living thing 1 James Cassidy ss.2014.pdf](https://wmswcd.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Soil%20is%20a%20living%20thing%201%20James%20Cassidy%20ss.2014.pdf) .

**Veterans' Day:** In honor of Veterans' Day, Brenda Ziegler provided a Veterans' Reward Card from Starbucks to all members who have served in the military. She thereby provided a new twist on that old saying: "That and a few years in the military will get you a cup of coffee". Many thanks to Brenda from the recipients, and from those of us who join her in appreciation.

**Hospitality:** Treats for the November meeting included: Steve Kaminski's delicious home-made brownies, rumored to come from a Wisconsin recipe passed down through the generations as an insert in the family Bible; Brenda Ziegler's wafers and cookies, following the instructions that her mother provided during Brenda's recent visit back to the heartland; Barbara MacArthur's coffee, which, as usual, ensured that we all made it through the meeting.

**Door-prizes:** Please remember the rules: attendance gets you one raffle ticket; attendance wearing a name tag gets you two raffle tickets, and attendance wearing a costume at Halloween, with a name tag, gets you three raffle tickets. The number and quality of our door-prizes has become so impressive and desirable that some of our more enterprising members have worn two name tags. Nice try, still two tickets, not four.

November's entries and donors included:

Joanne Turner, continuing to lead the way: Multiple examples of *Sisyrinchium bellum* 'Nanum', a long-blooming, large-flowered, grass-like ground cover (shorter and larger-flowered than the native blue-eyed grass).

*Achillea* 'Moonshine' - bright yellow yarrow; 2' tall, easily dried.

*Salvia guaranitica* 'Joseph' - cobalt blue flowers with black calyces - hummingbirds love it; 5'-6' tall, making a large clump.



Mike Domaschofsky and his table decoration, from our Holiday Party a few years ago.



Happy Solstice!



The *analemma* shows the sun's position as we see it through the year, with June's Summer Solstice at the top, and December's Winter Solstice at the bottom.



## Exploring the Complexity of Subsection Neriiflora: With a Focus on *R. chamaethomsonii*

By Maria Stewart

The organizational divisions that you find in Subsection Neriiflora serve to group species into five alliances: Haematodes, Mallotum, Sanguineum, Forrestii and Neriiflorum. The species in each alliance share characteristics such as leaf size, corolla color, truss shape and whether there are hairs or not on stems and leaves. Sounds very organized, right? Not so fast! Because the plants in this subsection grow together in the wild and they hybridize readily with each other, their classification is often confusing. Let's take *R. chamaethomsonii*, for example. "Chamae" means dwarf, low, or on the ground, so that translates into "low-growing thomsonii". However, *R. chamaethomsonii* is most accurately placed in the Forrestii Alliance where it shares *R. forrestii* traits. The plants growing nearby can be considered to be natural hybrids of *R. forrestii* crossed with *R. sanguineum*, *R. parmulatum*, *R. eclecticum*, *R. selense*, *R. aganniphum* and others. It can be said that *most* of the plants named *R. chamaethomsonii* are natural hybrids of *R. forrestii*. Furthermore, *R. thomsonii* is not even in Subsection Neriiflora, it is classified in Subsection Thomsonia. Thank you to Peter and Ken Cox for writing in [The Encyclopedia of Rhododendron Species](#) about the need for a further "sorting out" of Subsection Neriiflora.

Here is more about *R. chamaethomsonii*:

Classification: Subgenus *Hymenanthes*; Section *Hymenanthes*; Subsection *Neriiflora*; Alliance *Forrestii*

Distribution in the wild: East and SE Tibet, NW Yunnan, North Burma ( Myanmar); 11,000 to 15,000 feet; often growing with *R. forrestii* on steep slopes.

About the name: translates into "low-growing *R. thomsonii*"

Flowers: Crimson to pink, 1 to 5 corollas; blooms March to May.

Leaves: broadly obovate to elliptic; upper surface glabrous, lower surface glabrous or with a sparse, white, plastered indumentum.

Varieties of this species: *R. chamaethomsonii* var. *chamaethomsonii*: deep crimson or crimson corollas, 1-5 per truss; blooms March to May; leaves are oblong, upper surface is dark green and glabrous, lower surface is usually glabrous or with thin, discontinuous indumentum

*R. chamaethomsonii* var *chamaethauma*: color of corollas is very variable, from deep crimson to pale pink, the only stable population has pale to deep pink corollas; blooms March to May; has smaller leaves than var. *chamaethomsonii*.

*R. chamaethomsonii* var *chamaedoron*: color of corollas is variable; mature leaves have thin, discontinuous indumentum on lower surface; most likely a natural hybrid.

Structure: more upright than *R. forrestii*; can be very compact and dense; sometimes rangy.

( Continued on next page )

*R. chamaethomsonii* ( Continued from previous page )

Hardiness: 0 degrees F.

Siting in your garden: needs very well-drained soil and the most cool part of your garden; does not like hot summers.



*R. chamaethomsonii* var. *chamaethomsonii*  
Photographer Coen Zonneveld, courtesy hirsutum



*R. chamaethomsonii* var. *chamaethauma*  
Photographer Rinus Manders, courtesy hirsutum



*R. chamaethomsonii* 'Little Vixen'  
Photograph courtesy RSBG

Portland Chapter of  
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Rhododendron  
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(Through June 30, 2019) **Steve Hall,**  
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Cecil & Molly Smith Garden  
Chair: Open

Newsletter, membership, and  
ownership: The Portland Chapter is  
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dues to both the national society and  
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