

Portland Chapter, American Rhododendron Society

Calendar

February 15, 2018
Regular meeting
Social time 7:00 PM
Meeting 7:30 PM
Speaker: Loren Russell
**Topic: " *Kalmiopsis* -
Lilla Leach's
'Azalea'"**
Followed by our
Companion Plant
Auction

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 Meeting

Caroline Enns and Steve Hall

The Portland Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society will hold its February meeting on Thursday, February 15, 2018 from 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm.

On the occasion of our annual Companion Plant Auction, Loren Russell will discuss Lilla Leach's 'Azalea', *Kalmiopsis leachiana*. Most of us know well the Leach Botanical Garden in Southeast Portland, the former home of Lilla and her husband John. Not all of us know the story of their annual summer trips to the Siskiyou Mountains, where Lilla pursued her botanical passion, and John managed their team of mules. There should be no doubt about which Leach discovered *Kalmiopsis*. On that day in 1930, Lilla commented that "I was in the lead where I usually walk."

Loren Russell is a Northwesterner, born, bred, educated, employed, and now happily retired in these parts. His doctorate in entomology is from OSU, after which he worked for the EPA in Corvallis. He has a long-standing interest in gardening that has only recently been surpassed by his passion for bicycling. He is an experienced presenter, having served as National Speaker for the North American Rock Garden Society in 2000, and given presentations at numerous of NARGS' chapters throughout the West. His talk will emphasize *Kalmiopsis* in the wild, its status as the only genus of higher plants that is restricted to Oregon, and its connection with Oregon's geological history.

Following Loren Russell's presentation, we will hold our annual Companion Plant Auction, which always promises to be interesting and unpredictable. And, in honor of St. Valentine's Day, our 'Treats for the Sweet' candy and desserts potluck as well. That's at least two opportunities to get in trouble, candy *and* plants.

Free! Sponsored by the Portland Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society. Location: All Saints Episcopal Church, 4033 SE Woodstock Blvd., Portland, Oregon.

Please bring a friend; guests and nonmembers are welcome to attend.

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.

Chapter Calendar through March, 2018:

February 7, 2018

**First Garden work day at Crystal Springs Rhododendron Garden
Weather permitting!**

February 15, 2018

Regular meeting and Companion Plant Auction

Social time 7:00 pm

Meeting 7:30 pm

Speaker: Loren Russell

Topic: “*Kalmiopsis* - Lilla Leach’s ‘Azalea’ “

Following the Speaker, we will hold our annual Companion Plant Auction and, in honor of Valentine’s Day, our ‘Treats for the Sweet’ Potluck as well

February 21-26, 2018

**Spring Home & Garden Show
Portland Expo Center
Volunteers needed!**

March 15, 2018

Regular meeting

Social time 7:00 pm

Meeting: 7:30 pm

Speaker: John Weagle, Atlantic Rhododendron and Horticultural Society / Atlantic Chapter, ARS

Topic: “175 years of Rhododendrons in Nova Scotia”

Haiku

In total silence
the way of the frost as it
outlines the tree

Stillness of the tree
neither adding to nor shedding
its ice

With each branch from
ice to liquid in the space
of a falling drop

Melting of the ice
Measuring the shadows at
intervals

The crow overhead
Calling out through the fog—Just
where is the sun?

Peter Kendall

Calendar:

March 24, 2018

Smith Garden Spring Work Party

Start 8:00 - 9:00 am

Finish mid-afternoon

Lunch will be served!

President's Message for February:

This month's President's Message must be mercifully short. First, because our February meeting is early in the month and the newsletter needs to go out pronto. Second, because for the last week or more I have been moving my office to a new location from the prior building where I have been for almost 20 years. That translates into moving more than 125 boxes of closed file records and about 100 more of current materials. I finished that task last night at 9:00 pm and have now embarked on the unpacking.

Accordingly, I would simply call your attention to the upcoming program described elsewhere by Caroline Enns and Steve Hall of our Speakers Committee (which will be accompanied by a companion plant auction) and to the materials on our participation in the Home & Garden Show, which is being spearheaded by Dick Cavender.

By February 15th, we should have some blooming things to look at and talk about. I look forward to getting some sleep before then and seeing you all there.

Dennis O'Malley

Coming Events: Help Wanted!

February 21-26, 2018

Spring Home & Garden Show, Portland Expo Center, Marine Drive, Portland

The Society will have a booth and garden at the Spring Home and Garden Show. We need people to set up the garden, staff the booth, and take down the garden. Garden setup will be on Wednesday, 2/21/2018 and take down on Monday, 2/26/2018. Bring your truck or trailer on Monday and take home a free load of mulch. We will need several willing workers to stack the wall, move bark and install plants. Booth shifts will be 3 or 4 hours and I hope to have 2 people in the booth per shift. This will allow you to take turns looking at the show during your shift. Dick Cavender will have a sign-up sheet at the January and February meetings. Our staff will receive free admission: just go to the 'will call' desk and get your hand stamped. General admission to the show is \$10.00, so this will be a bargain. On site parking is \$8.00. Sorry I can't do anything about that, however, MAX does run out to the Expo Center.

This is a great opportunity to meet new people, hand out information and sign up new members. No experience necessary!

Hours are 11:00 AM - 8:00PM Thursday - Saturday and 11:00 AM - 6:00 PM Sunday.

For the best selection of time and day, call Dick Cavender at 503-625-6331 or email him at: red@redsrhodies.com

January Meeting Report:

“What’s the name of that plant right in front of me?” “Where in the world did I plant that rare rhody?” These are a few of the questions that we often ask ourselves as we are wandering through our gardens. Wally Reed had the answers. Map your garden so that you can find your precious darlings, or at least where they should have been before the marauding deer, rodents, bugs and slugs finished them off. Wally’s talk was full of helpful advice on how to map a garden. His comments ranged from traditional methods such as triangulation, to the high-tech future possibilities when high resolution GPS becomes available within the next few years on cell phones. Wally handed out an extremely useful list of internet sites, “Resources and Suggestions for Mapping Your Yard” where you can obtain site maps of your property for mapping your house and its surroundings. Wally also provided wonderful glimpses of his own garden and the Rhododendron Hillside in Bush’s Pasture Park across the street from his property. He did not, however, tell us how to eliminate the marauders.

Smith Garden Spring Work Day: Volunteers Needed!

It is getting to be that time of year when we start thinking about work days and open garden days at Smith Garden.

This year’s Smith Garden Spring Work Day is March 24, 2018. We will start around 8:00 am or 9:00 am, or whenever you can manage, and work as long as you want. Bring gloves and your favorite hand tools. There are chores for all skill levels. Lunch will be served. We would really appreciate all the help we can get. I will be doing my sun dance but this will be a rain or shine event, so come prepared. It is also a good opportunity to visit the garden. If anyone would like more information, give me a call at 503-625-6331. Directions to the Smith Garden can be found at www.rhodies.org.

Dick Cavender

More Opportunities to Volunteer:

Crystal Springs Rhododendron Garden work days will start February 7, 2018, weather permitting. We meet in the Cool House, near the service yard, south end of the garden, between 8:30 am and 9:00 am and work until noon every Wednesday until mid-November. For more information about volunteering at Crystal Springs, please email csrgvol@gmail.com. Directions to the garden: www.rhodies.org. The #19 Woodstock/Glisan TriMet bus has stops close to the garden. Garden address: 5801 SE 28th Ave, Portland, OR 97202.

2018 ARS Seed Exchange is opening soon.

Do you get into the ARS website once in a while? If not, you should! There is a lot of rhododendron information available to you there. One of the neatest resources to make use of is the ARS Seed Exchange.

Seed exchange? ARS members and simply rhododendron enthusiasts from around the world gather seed and send it to the exchange. The exchange then offers those seeds to us and the world. Where else would you have the opportunity to grow seed from Japan, Europe and China? Who would you communicate with in those other countries to acquire seed of rare and unique plants? Even just sharing seed with someone from the eastern U.S. would take some time. That leg work is done for you through the Seed Exchange.

Why would someone share their seed? We have lots of folks in the ARS that make crosses to create new hybrids. They may want to grow on only a portion of the seed created by that cross, and they share the rest with us. Some folks trek into the wilds to collect seed so they can share the bounty. A fortunate few go to far off lands looking for the rare or previously unknown varieties to collect and then share. **Some do it for notoriety I suppose, but even those folks have a love for our favorite plants. Isn't all this energy really being spent to discover something new and wonderful? I'm thankful we all have that curious bone and an appreciation for beauty!**

So, this years' ARS seed exchange is now open, and you should take a look at all the cool stuff that is available. You could soon be growing "the" next "gotta have it" plant in the rhododendron world.

The seed packets sold by the exchange are very affordable, and the materials to get the seed growing can be very cheap too! A clear plastic drink cup, a little potting soil & peat, a plastic sandwich bag and a rubber band will get you started. I use a warm window sill inside the house to get the little guys started.

My recent experience with one seed packet in particular has been a lot of fun. In 2013 a new introduction was offered from a collection made by Jens Nielsen of Scotland while he was collecting seed in China. The write-up mentioned that this group of plants was being destroyed by new farming and he encouraged folks to grow and share plants. My seed packet created about 50 plus plants that are now barely gallon size. (my slow growing techniques are a topic for another day:) I have shared a few with some members, and just noticed the RSBG is offering the same new plant introduction in their spring catalog. If you are interest in one of these plants of *r. polytrichum* talk to me.

That is one of the fun parts of growing seed, creating plants to donate, sell, or gift. Another obvious reason is to add new varieties to your garden. Maybe the best reason goes back to the excitement of **watching that brand new rhododendron bloom for the very first time! It's worth the investment!!**

See you soon,

Ray Clack

From the Cold, Harsh Northern Latitudes: *R. camtschaticum*

By Maria Stewart

During the winter months, those who see *R. camtschaticum* may think it is dead. First, it is deciduous and second, it gives no indication that it is going to leaf out in the spring. However, this amazing species dramatically comes to life with new leaves in the very early spring. Then unlike nearly every other rhododendron, the flowers also burst into bloom on leaf-like bracts! It seems to know that there is a very short growing season ahead to grow, to flower and to set seed.

Growing *R. camtschaticum* in your garden requires rocky soil, cool summers and some sun. In the wild, it grows in full sun, in gravelly loam and crevices and on the tops of mountains. Maybe, on hot summer days, you could put ice cubes around it.

A smaller version of this species is *R. redowskianum*. It has smaller flowers and a shorter calyx. Its distribution in the wild is E. Siberia, Manchuria and Korea. This species is difficult to keep alive in cultivation.

Here is more about *R. camtschaticum*:

Classification: *Subgenus*: Therorhodion *Species*: *R. camtschaticum* *Subspecies*: *R. camtschaticum*

Distribution in the wild: The Kamchatka Peninsula, N. Japan, Alaska, the Aleutian Chain, the Bering Strait, the Sakhalin through Kurile Islands and the shores of the Okhotsk Sea.

About the name: named after the Kamchatka Peninsula.

Flowers: rosy-purple usually, but can be red, pink and rarely white. About 1 1/2 inches wide with hairs on the outside and some on the inside.

Leaves: obovate and deciduous; the margins are hairy; quite thin; good fall color.

Structure: Either prostrate or bushy; roots as it spreads; can reach a height of 1 foot.

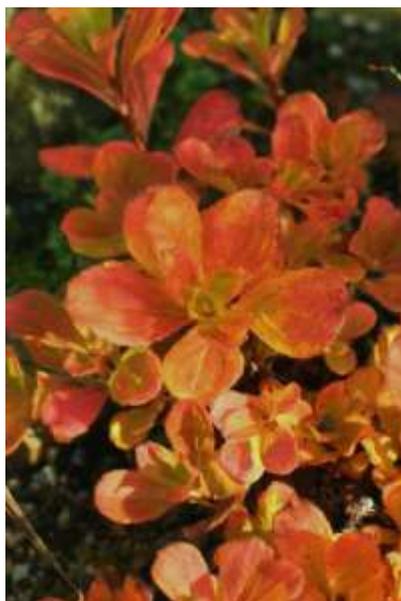
Hardiness: -25 degrees F.

Siting in your garden: needs very fast drainage and cool conditions but needs good light, also.

R. camtschaticum:



Photographer: unknown Location: possibly Kamchatka, Russia.



Autumn foliage color.

Photographer: David Ledsham

Portland Chapter of
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Rhododendron
Society

PO Box 86424,
Portland, OR 97286-0424
ADDRESS SERVICE
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CHAPTER OFFICERS

President: *Dennis O'Malley*
Vice President: *Caroline Enns*
Past President: *Brenda Ziegler*
Secretary: *Steve Hopkins*
Treasurer: *Dick Cavender*

BOARD MEMBERS

(Through June 30, 2018), **Ann Clack,**
Ray Clack, Betsy Soifer, Mike Stew-
art, Joanne Turner
(Through June 30, 2019) **Steve Hall,**
Steve McCormick, John Stephens,
Maria Stewart, (Open)

GARDEN INFO:

Crystal Springs Rhodo. Garden

Chair:

Dan McLaughlin,
dvmclau@comcast.net
Tours/Volunteering:
csrgvol@gmail.com
Gatehouse:

Rose Kress, 971-239-9016
Friends of Crystal Springs:

Dan McLaughlin,
dvmclau@comcast.net

Events:

Rachael Moloney, 503-975-6743

Cecil & Molly Smith Garden

Chair: Open

Newsletter, membership, and
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tor, at: **tjhoffman56@yahoo.com**, or
via mail to: 4765 SW 38th Place,
Portland, OR 97221

Delivery: Questions should be di-
rected to: **Maria Stewart** at 503-668-
7565.

Website: **www.rhodies.org**; web
masters: **Steve Hall and Caroline
Enns**

Membershi p Updates: John
Stephens & Stephen McCor-
mi ck, Membershi p Co-Chai rs, e-
-mai l :
j.d.stephens@outlook.com
ssmccormick@outlook.com