

Portland Chapter, American Rhododendron Society

Calendar

February 21, 2019
Regular meeting plus
Companion Plant
Auction
Social time 7:00 PM
Meeting 7:30 PM
Speaker: Steve Krebs,
David G. Leach Re-
search Station

March 21, 2019
Regular meeting
Social time 7:00 PM
Meeting 7:30 PM
Speaker: Steve Hoot-
man, RSBG

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 2019 PROGRAM

By Steve McCormick

Hot on the heels of a strong kick-off meeting in January, we follow with a visit from the ARS Eastern VP, Steve Krebs. Steve is the director of the David G. Leach Research Station, a 30-acre satellite facility of the Holden Arboretum, in Madison, Ohio. Steve's talk:

"Form Plus Function: Building Better Adapted Rhododendrons"

Steve points out that breeding rhododendrons has traditionally emphasized attributes like flowers and foliage, without as much concern for consumer or commercial success. Steve's focus in hybridizing at Leach has emphasized resistance to disease and pests, tolerance to heat and drought, and adaptability to alkaline pH. Steve will update us on his evaluations of experimental and commercially available rootstocks that can protect against root-rot (e.g. *Phytophthora cinnamomi*), while offering a broader array of ornamental traits.

Steve Krebs is one of the most prominent and accessible, currently active investigators of rhododendrons. Steve joined the Holden after completing his Ph.D. in Plant Breeding and Genetics/Horticulture at Michigan State University. Well into his third decade at the Leach Station, his research currently focuses on stress adaptations, both to continue David Leach's commitment to breeding rhododendrons for continental climates, and because of anticipated environmental changes. The Leach Station is staffed and equipped to support extensive and diverse display gardens, in addition to large breeding populations and research plots. The Station continues its founder's commitment to breeding superior rhododendrons and azaleas for continental climates (i.e. cold winters and hot summers).

The meeting will take place on Thursday, the 21st, from 7-9pm, at All Saints Episcopal Church, 4033 SE Woodstock Blvd, in Portland. The February event always features a Valentine's "Sweets for the Sweet" potluck theme, so please bring something for all to enjoy. And February also brings the annual Companion Plant Auction, so don't leave home without your checkbook! This will be a great meeting to share with a fellow plant-enthusiast, and we always welcome guests. You can get a head start on the socializing by joining members who assemble, starting at 5pm, at the Woodstock Wine & Deli, across the street from All Saints. We encourage you to take this opportunity to get to know other members better, share stories, satisfy your sweet tooth, and go home being better informed plant people.

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, 2019:

**February, 2019, Wednesdays:
Crystal Springs Rhododendron
Garden work days begin, weather
permitting, 9:00AM to noon.**

**February 21 - 24, 2019
Spring Home & Garden Show
Portland Expo Center
Set-up Wednesday 2/20/19, 10:00
AM,**

**Take-down Monday 2/25/2019,
10:00 AM**

February 21, 2019

**Regular meeting
Social time 7:00 PM**

Meeting 7:30 PM

**Program: "Form Plus Function;
Building Better Adapted Rhodo-
dendrons"**

**Speaker: Steve Krebs, Director,
David G. Leach Research Station
*****And*******

Our Companion Plant Auction

March 21, 2019

**Regular meeting
Social time 7:00 PM**

Meeting 7:30 PM

**Program: "Rhododendrons on the
Edges"**

Speaker: Steve Hootman, RSBG

March 23, 2019

**Smith Garden Spring Work Day
Start: 8 or 9 AM, work as long as
you want. Lunch will be served.**

Haiku

Into and out of
sight in a matter of seconds
a skein of winter geese

The sun this morning
seems earlier than usual
and earlier it is

One crow following
another in circles
Where are they going?

The flag in the wind
The stillness of the tree trunk
— one against the other

The white picket fence
standing its ground against
assaults of the wind

Peter Kendall



Steve Krebs, Director of the David G. Leach Research Station, our February speaker.

February President's Letter

By Caroline Enns

In the greater scheme of things, the last may be first. But with the rhododendrons, the first may be the best.

For all the glory of the rhododendron blossoms, some of us feel that they do have a weakness. They tend to be short-lived. Florists turn to alstromeria, which may be weeds in our gardens, but which last seemingly forever in their displays. Not so the rhododendrons. Perhaps a light burning so spectacularly really must burn out quickly.

There are two circumstances in which the flowers of rhododendrons are a bit more prolonged. Sally and John Perkins, the masters of ploidy, point out that the flowers of polyploid hybrids tend to last longer than those of their diploid parents. The other prolonging factor is the weather. Later in the season, when the temperature suddenly bolts, our Cynthias can reach their peak and decline in a day. Or at least it seems that way. But in February, those stalwarts that show their colors early can last for weeks – or at least until the weekend when we can get out during daylight to enjoy them. The Southwestern Oregon Chapter tells us that their Christmas Cheer did indeed begin blooming in the week of Christmas, and has continued for a month. The buds on ours haven't opened yet, but they will soon, along with moupinense and pemakoense and Seta and dauricum and mucronulatum and strigillosum. Put on an extra layer, and don't forget your rain gear, but February can be a glorious time to be out in the garden.

And when you are there, remember the Chapter's auction of companion plants at our meeting in February. Take a look at what interesting plants you can contribute, and what spots in your garden would benefit from a purchase at the auction. Bring your plants and your checkbooks to the auction, and check your inhibitions at the door. Other than fees for membership, these auctions are the Chapter's only source of income. Our bidding wars are entertaining and heart-warming for our Treasurer, but bear in mind that our prices are generally ridiculously low. Last year's showdown between Dick Cavender and Sam Hopkins (who has generously agreed to do his part in getting the Chapter down to its quota of Steve's) was exciting and impressively prolonged. But in the end, Sam walked away with an absolute steal.

Reminders

Registration is now open for *The Philadelphia Story*
ARS 2019 International Convention
May 15-19, 2019
Register at: ars2019.org

Registration is now open for the
RBSG Symposium
April 26-27
Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden
Federal Way, WA
See "Upcoming Events" at rhodygarden.org

R. 'HEATHERSIDE BEAUTY'

If you are looking for an early blooming rhody, 'Heatherside Beauty' may be for you. I got mine about 25 years ago from Clint Smith. It has usually bloomed in February. Last year it bloomed in January. This winter it bloomed in December. The photo was taken 12/1/18. It had been flowering for at least a week. Sorry, climate change deniers.

The flowers are not spectacular, but so early in the year, who cares. Pink buds open to small white flowers. There is some red spotting on the dorsal lobe and the throat is red. An attractive feature year round is the plastered tan indumentum on the underside of the leaf. Height in 10 years is said to be 4-5 feet. Parentage is uncertain. It is said to be a cross of R. caucasicum by ?, possibly something in the arboreum family. Hardiness: - 10 degrees F.

Anne Gross



R. 'Heatherside Beauty'. Photograph courtesy of Anne Gross

American Rhododendron Society

75th Anniversary

20/20
VISION



Looking forward, reflecting back

Portland-Vancouver, April 29-May 3, 2020

Smith Garden 2019 Schedule

Spring Work Party: March 23, 2019

Garden Opens: April 6, 2019

Garden Closes: May 19, 2019

Summer Soiree: August 15, 2019

Fall Work Party: October 12, 2019

JANUARY MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

By Steve McCormick

As the song says (Franki Valli and The Four Seasons, December 1963), “Oh, what a night!” The first meeting of the new year was as memorable as any in the past. The attendance counted as another in a season of full houses at All Saints. Rough count: 60 members and guests. Our speaker, Jason Martinez, from the **Strybing Arboretum at the S.F. Botanical Garden**, gave a wonderful talk which encompassed everyone’s favorite passions of plant collecting and rhododendrons. He pinpointed the species under his purview at the park, noting their unique characteristics of form, flower, and fragrance, including some excellent close-ups of scales and hairs, a favorite aspect of Jason’s. He acknowledged the contributions of corporate sponsors and (newly) paying members, which have helped revenues grow from \$10,000 annually to \$1 million, just in the last few years. He described, and showed photos, of creations in the garden like their “Flower Piano” event, featuring 12 pianos over 12 days, played by both professionals and visitors. He shared with us the gamut of the garden’s maturity, from tree-size *R. arboreum* specimens to miniature varieties in a newly conceived alpine themed area. And he took us to the exotic destinations of rhododendron collecting, like Sikkim, where he accompanied Steve Hootman on one of his plant-hunting expeditions. It was well-rounded, well-delivered, and well-appreciated by all in the room.

Starting the evening, Paul Rogers and Joanne Turner offered a breath of Spring with their contributed pots of sprouting bulbs on the raffle table. Mike Stewart introduced a special guest, Kathy Sorenson, whose mother, Lucie Sorenson, has just donated the vireya collection from Bovee’s Nursery to the Chapter’s new Van Veen Heritage Garden. And Dick Cavender secured additional volunteers for shifts at the Chapter’s display garden at the upcoming Home & Garden Show (Portland Expo Center, Feb 21-24). Prior to the 7pm meeting start, The Woodstock Wine & Deli overflowed with ARS members, enjoying each other’s company, getting to know our guest speaker and his engaging wife, Kristi, and fueling up with a light dinner before the event – all-in-all a great start for 2019.



1st : *R. barbatum* hairs



2nd: Jason Martinez with *R. macabea-*
num



3rd: Flower Piano event

All photos by Jason Martinez.

A Favorite in Subsection Saluenensia: *R. calostrotum* ssp. *calostrotum* 'Gigha'

By Maria Stewart

Imagine your rock garden providing a beautiful structure for your compact-growing dwarf rhododendrons. One of your choices to plant there may be *R. calostrotum* ssp. *calostrotum* 'Gigha'. Its gray green leaves and pedicels covered with attractive scales contrast nicely with its bright rosy red flowers. And those flowers cover the plant! With enough sun, this dwarf is quite dense.

Here is more about *R. calostrotum* ssp. *calostrotum* 'Gigha':

Classification: *Subgenus*: Rhododendron *Section*: Rhododendron *Subsection*: Saluenensia

Species: *calostrotum* *Subspecies*: *calostrotum* *Selected clone*: 'Gigha'

About the name: "with a beautiful covering"

Gigha is an island west of Scotland for which this clone was named.

Distribution in the wild: Northern Burma, Western Yunnan at 10,000 to 14,000 feet in elevation.

Flowers: large, rosy red and saucer-shaped corollas held by pedicels heavily covered with light colored scales. This clone is free-flowering and makes a bright spot in your garden.

Leaves: less than an inch long and about a half inch wide; gray green or glaucous with light colored scales on top; densely covered with cinnamon colored scales on the undersides.

Structure: 1 foot in height and wider than tall; grows compactly.

Hardiness: -5 degrees F.

Siting in your garden: provide good drainage in adequate sun to grow a compact plant.



R. calostrotum ssp. *calostrotum* 'Gigha' Photographer: Mike Stewart

Smith Garden Open Days & Work Party

By Anne Gross and Dick Cavender

We are amazed at how quickly the open garden season is approaching for Smith Garden. We have only a couple of meetings before our first open weekend on April 6th and 7th. So, this is the time of year that we start begging for volunteers to work at the Smith Garden on open garden days selling plants and/or taking admissions. It is only for 5 hours, from 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM on a Saturday or Sunday in April or May. It is easy. The plants usually sell themselves. And there is a copy of Greer's Guide for back-up. We are open to the public only 14 days out of 365. Please help us out and volunteer.

We only need 2 people a day minimum, but 4 people is nice as it is a good time to enjoy visiting with another person or couple. Sometimes it is so busy you hardly have time to visit, but visiting with customers is fun also and you might talk them into joining the rhododendron society. Again, it is only for 5 hours, not including travel time. Bring a sack lunch or cookies to munch on and enjoy the day. The garden is gorgeous in the spring.

Please email Anne Gross agross@teleport.com or Dick Cavender red@redsrhodies.com, 'phone 503-625-6331.

Our Spring Work Day is March 23, 2019. Start around 8 or 9 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. We will be doing our traditional 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, please give Dick Cavender a call at 503-625-6331. Directions can be found at www.rhodies.org.

Thank you!

Willamette Chapter, ARS, Presents: Steve Hootman, RSBG Executive Director & Curator

When: February 13th, 2019, Wednesday, 7:00 PM

Where: Carrier Room, First United Methodist Church, 600 State Street, Salem, OR 97301

Steve Hootman will talk about his most interesting expeditions to date in the far reaches of China, the Himalayas and surrounding areas. Steve is an expert hunter of new and rare species, both rhododendrons and companion plants; his presentation will be a visual treat!

Visiting Hinsdale Garden

As most readers know, the O. Howard Hinsdale Garden is located on Oregon Highway 38 about five miles east of Reedsport. It's an easy day trip from anywhere in western Oregon, with good scenery to enjoy on the way there and back home. If home base is in the Willamette Valley, a 'loop' drive utilizing different routes going over and along Highway 101 is fun. Blooming season for the rhododendrons, magnolias and camellias is going well by March, and continues through April, May and into June.

There are several ways to enjoy strolling through Hinsdale Garden. One is to choose an open garden day hosted by the Friends of Hinsdale Garden. This option provides parking at the Elk View Kiosk about a mile west of the garden, with shuttle transportation to a central point in the main garden. Garden maps are available, interpretive signs are posted and you might also purchase a plant propagated from a Hinsdale cultivar. Due in part to the government 'shut-down', dates this year are not yet firm. But, one is almost certain, that is May 11, the Saturday of Mother's Day weekend. Once established the dates will likely be posted on the Friends of Hinsdale Garden website, and perhaps the BLM, Coos Bay District website as well.

A second option is a self-guided tour. You can choose this on any day you wish throughout the year. Some cautionary remarks about this alternative: There is no public parking in the garden. Both the main entrance and an eastern entrance have locked gates, and you must walk in to the garden after parking across the highway. Be cautious of traffic in crossing, and of course respectful of any persons or crews that might be working in the garden.

Another possibility is for groups of perhaps a dozen or more, travelling by van or bus. Please contact me at 541-895-2864 or lgwone@gmail.com. We'll put something together to unlock one of those gates...and maybe even offer a guide for your tour.

Gordon Wylie



Photograph of Hinsdale Garden
courtesy Joanne Turner.

SALEM HARDY PLANT SOCIETY IS PLEASED TO
PRESENT JOHN ANDERSON, THE QUEENS
GARDENER PRESENTING "PLANT HUNTING IN
CULTIVATION"

TUESDAY, MARCH 5TH, 7PM
SPINNING ROOM AT MISSION MILL MUSEUM

SALEM HARDY PLANT IS PLEASED TO PRESENT THIS
LECTURE TO THE PUBLIC FREE OF CHARGE
WE HOPE YOU WILL COME ENJOY THIS UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY
SEATING IS LIMITED TO 400

JOHN ANDERSON TRAINED AT THE NATIONAL BOTANIC
GARDENS, DUBLIN AND THE ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS,
KEW. HIS FIRST HEAD GARDENER POSITION WAS AT THE
FAMOUS MOUNT USHER GARDEN, WICKLOW. HE WENT
ON TO BE HEAD GARDENER FOR THE ROTHSCHILD
FAMILY ON 200 ACRES OF WOODLAND GARDENS AT
EXBURY GARDENS. AFTER 10 YEARS MANAGING THE
GARDENS HE UNDERTOOK A NEW CHALLENGE IN 2016 AS
HEAD GARDENER AT WINDSOR GREAT PARK AND THE
PRIVATE GARDEN AT WINDSOR CASTLE FROGMORE. HE IS
VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE RHS WOODY PLANT COMMITTEE.
HE WAS AWARDED THE AJ WALEY MEDAL FOR
RHODODENDRONS IN 2014.



Portland Chapter of
the American
Rhododendron
Society

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Vice President: **Steve McCormick**
Past President: **Dennis O'Malley**
Secretary: **Steve Hopkins**
Treasurer: **Dick Cavender**

BOARD MEMBERS

(Through June 30, 2019) :
Steve Hall, Betsy Soifer, John Ste-
phens, Maria Stewart, Mike Stewart
(Through June 30, 2020):
David Anderson Ann Clack, Ray Clack,
Joanne Turner, Brenda Ziegler

GARDEN INFO:

Crystal Springs Rhodo. Garden
Chair:
Dan McLaughlin,
dvmclau@comcast.net
Volunteering:

csrgvol@gmail.com

Gatehouse: Tours, Photoshoots:

gatehousecsrg@gmail.com

Stephanie Kress, 503-267-7509

Friends of Crystal Springs:

Dan McLaughlin,

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Events:

Rachael Moloney, 503-975-6743

Cecil & Molly Smith Garden
Chair: Open

Newsletter, membership, and
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Delivery: Questions should be di-

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