

# Eugene Chapter

*American Rhododendron Society*

## Officers, Board Members, & Committees

President	Ali Sarlak
Vice-President	Terry Henderson
Treasurer	Nancy Burns
Secretary	Sherlyn Hilton
Past-President	Ted Hewitt
Membership	Nancy Burns

Helen Baxter	2012-2015
Tom Beatty	2012-2015
Jack Olson	2014-2016
Gordon Wylie	2014-2017

## Committees

- **Show:** Helen Baxter, Sherlyn Hilton
- **Nominating:**
- **Welfare:** Nancy & Harold Greer
- **Hospitality:**
- **Programs:** Board of Directors

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*R. ochraceum*

## *Annual Holiday Dinner and Members' Slide Show*

*Thursday, December 11  
at the Campbell Community Center  
155 High Street in Eugene*

Scrumptious Potluck Dinner from the best cooks in town.

- Bring a salad, side dish, or dessert to serve 12 along with a serving utensil.
- Arrive at 6:00 p.m. Dinner will begin at 6:15.
- The chapter will furnish a main entree.

*Be sure to bring your own dishes, napkins, utensils, glasses, and drink of choice.*

*Coffee will be available.*

## *Entertainment*

*Bring garden related digital photos on a disk or flash drive in a JPEG format. About 12 per person is good. (Unless you have traveled to New Zealand this year) Thank you Harold for handling the projection.*

Come at 5:30 if you can help transform the meeting room into a festive hall.

*. . . . and to all a good night.*

It's December, so, if you have not renewed your ARS membership yet, we would appreciate you doing it soon. We do not want to lose you as a member. Write your check to "ARS Eugene Chapter" and either bring it to Nancy Burns at the December 11 Holiday Dinner or mail it to ARS Eugene Chapter, P.O. Box 7704, Springfield, OR 97475. Thanks.

*Special thanks to Leonard and Sherlyn for the delicious treats at the November meeting.*



When the winter rains keep you inside, you might enjoy exploring these websites:

- [www.hirsutum.info/index.html](http://www.hirsutum.info/index.html) (There is a lot of good information on rhododendrons here.)
- [www.rhodophiles.com/indexscape.htm](http://www.rhodophiles.com/indexscape.htm) (This connects you to Marc Columbel, an ARS member in France, who will be a speaker at the 2015 ARS Convention)
- <http://2015rhodo.ca/> (Start planning your trip to the 2015 ARS Convention in Sydney, BC)



**THANK YOU TERRY, EMILY,  
AND GORDON FOR SUPPLYING  
THE CUTTINGS FOR THE  
NOVEMBER PROPAGATION  
WORKSHOP**

- The ARS Siuslaw Chapter is celebrating the season with a gala Christmas Party on Sunday, December 7 from noon to whenever at the Oddfellows Park just south of Florence.
- The ARS Willamette Chapter will feast at a Holiday Potluck also on Sunday, December 7, at 1:00 p.m. at the home of Wally and Kathy Reed in Salem.

## From the President

My writing is going to be on two subjects this month - our November chapter meeting and our beautiful Oregon fall colors.

The Eugene chapter is one of the luckiest chapters in the northwest, as we have so many experts on rhododendrons among our group and Terry Henderson, a nurseryman and a member of our society, is one of them.

At the November 13 chapter meeting, he provided us with a demonstration on how to propagate rhododendrons by way of cuttings and then lead a hands-on workshop for the attendees. He came well prepared with plant materials from Hendricks Park in Eugene and the Hinsdale Garden near Reedsport. I understand that on November 13 at Hendricks Park there was some ice in the parking area and he had to delay his visit until later in the day to meet with park curator Emily Aune to get the cuttings for the propagation. Terry provided each of our three groups with several flats of the right soil mix in small pots in rows of seven, containers of rooting hormone and instructions!!



Propagation Workshop

The cuttings will be stored and taken care

of at his nursery and the plan is to provide Hendricks Park and the Hinsdale garden with some choice plants in the coming future.

I think this was a neat idea for our group to put together and I could see the interest and fun that our members were having doing the cuttings and learning how to propagate. Thanks again Terry for your generous contributions and teachings well done!!

Now some talk about our beautiful fall color starting with my own yard. For example, Azalea 'Hino Crimson' is a beauty year around with lovely fall colors and rhody 'Teddy Bear' also has lovely foliage all year.

Bloodgood Japanese Maple, with its beautiful fall colors, is a specimen tree and Cotoneaster has lovely red berries in the fall. In this shrub there are certain small size birds that have this plant on their annual calendar and show up exactly when the berries are ready. I have another lovely tree in my yard with the most beautiful fall colors and that is *Parrotia persica*, my native homeland tree, or Persian ironwood tree.



Both photos by Ali Sarlak

As a final note, it has been a lovely fall with all sorts of colors and I am sure that each of us, as a garden lover, has some trees and plants on which to admire the colors in the fall. We should be thankful for where we live and have such luxury to enjoy the beauty that nature has to offer.

## HOW TO KILL RHODODENDRONS - LET ME COUNT THE WAYS

*by Rich Aaring*

### *How to Kill Rhododendrons - Lesson #17 Don't water them*

We know that pretty much the whole world gets their rain in the summer while we here in the coastal Pacific Northwest get our rain in those seasons that are not summer. Most rhododendron species (and their many hybrid descendants) come from places other than here and as a result are genetically used to getting watered by rain in the summer. If we do not do this they will die.

So how do we solve this dilemma? Hand watering with a hose and a light spray nozzle every other day or so works best. The gardener has the opportunity to ascertain the health of each individual plant and water and do any other cultural requirements accordingly. And this does not take very long when the plants are small. But as time goes on this gets old.

The next best solution is automated sprinklers. These are the key to happiness and sanity. A system consists usually of a controller that electrically controls valves that send water off in underground pipes to sprinklers carefully located around the yard and garden, first to one zone and after an amount of time that the gardener chooses, on to the next. My own yard has three zones with a small number of sprinklers that shoot the water out a long ways. A more common approach in the local suburbs is four zones: front lawn, front bed, back lawn and back bed, with many smaller spray heads with overlapping spraying. These are expensive with bids often running about a thousand dollars per zone. But they work pretty well until they don't.

A cheaper solution is the inexpensive battery powered timers that screw in between your hose bib and the hose. And you probably already have the hose and sprinkler. This is cheap and easy

and not very complicated to quickly put in some before an oncoming trip or vacation.

A hybrid I have seen is where the sprinkler installer puts in a controller and then runs underground pipes to various spots and then simply installs a hose bib. This is priced somewhat less than the full system and gives the gardener some flexibility over time on sprinkler type and location. And that is nice, as when plants grow they sometimes will block the spray to other plants. And then those die. I lost a couple that way this year.

My system has a hose bib built into the system in each zone. Now a professional installer will probably not do that for you. They will also not usually even install different kinds of sprinklers on the same zone. This is because they are afraid you will then water unevenly and kill plants. But you can change it yourself. And this is desirable because some areas will be just drier than others and this allows you to send a little additional water that direction if needed. I lost a couple that way this year when I didn't notice just how dry and hot a couple of spots had become. Conversely, you can change out to a lower volume sprinkler head if a spot is a little too wet and most of us have a spot or two that are just always wetter than the rest of it.

How much water should you put down? Lots if you have it and can afford it. But this is where you can get sophisticated. The easiest way to measure volume is with a canned tuna can. Place a few around the garden and then run the sprinklers for five minutes and see how full they get. A rough goal might be an inch per week. Our local community water provider will send you an email telling you how much to water that week as the weather changes which is yet another level of sophistication. Can you water too much? Probably not, if the drainage is

(cont on p. 5)

How to Kill Rhododendrons - cont from p. 4

perfect. But if the drainage is not absolutely perfect, you will discover *How to Kill Rhododendrons Lesson #18: Water Too Much*.

***How to Kill Rhododendrons - Lesson 18  
Water too Much***

How often should we water? I water often – several times per week, but not for long. My logic is that rhododendrons are shallow rooted and I only need enough water to get those roots wet. I don't care if the other plants die. And too much water will encourage my Douglas Fir and discourage my Oregon White Oak. Others will tell you to water less often but longer so that the water reaches deeply. They are wiser than I. But I get to spend more money on new plants at the auctions and that is part of the fun of gardening.

I turn my system on at the beginning of summer aiming for the day after the last rain – somewhere around July 4<sup>th</sup>. And this year I turned it off in late September. A more sophisticated gardener would run on a longer season and start with only a little water and increase it as the temperatures increase, maybe

even pausing for a few days while a rain front rolls through.

And note that all of this is moderated by mulch. Mulch will allow you to err on the side of too much or too little water. Mulch is good. And I hope to have some down before the first of February when the erythroniums start coming up. Shade will do the same thing but instant shade is difficult to acquire.

And also note that nurseries water for an additional reason: just to cool the plants down on a hot day. I remember Harold Greer telling me that he was pretty sure that he lost more nursery plants in pots when the temperature of the rootball got above 80 degrees than he did when the rootball got below 20 degrees in the winter. And I too sometimes turn on my sprinklers on a hot afternoon for only that reason. And then I go run through them myself.

Why am I writing this now as our rainy season hits full stride? Well, now is when I am pulling out the dead plants and am reminded of my mistakes.

*A Little of the Red and Green*



*R. thomsonii*



R. 'Maxine Childers

Note: It looks like these got the right amount of water.

## Ted's Notes

- I want to thank those of you who have made contributions for the newsletter over the past year and let you know how much it is appreciated: John Hammond, Sherlyn Hilton, Tom Beatty, Gordon Wylie, Mary Furr, Bob Whitman, Jack Olson, Rich Aaring, and, of course, Ali Sarlak. I always enjoy hearing what our members have to say and I hope that more of you will contribute an article of 1 or 2 paragraphs or 1 or 2 pages, some photographs, a poem, or a drawing on rhododendrons, gardening, or travel that includes gardens. Your knowledge and experience is worth sharing, so here is a thank you in advance.

- Like president Ali, I enjoyed and learned from the propagation workshop at the November 11 meeting and thank Terry for organizing and presenting the workshop as well as Emily and Gordon for helping with the plant material. It was nice to see our

members interacting with each other in an informal activity. As these cuttings



root and mature into new plants, they will be used by the staffs at Hendricks Park Rhododendron Garden and the Hinsdale Garden for use in the gardens or for sales that will help fund work at the gardens. Our chapter board voted to fund one of the flats and individual members will fund a few as well, but it is Terry who will underwrite his costs for this project by our chapter to the community.

Newsletter photos are by Ted Hewitt unless indicated otherwise.

- Fifteen years ago, a group of people met on a cold and rainy April day at Hendricks Park to build a rock garden under the tutelage of Josef Halda, a Czechoslovakian expert on rock gardens. Ali was there to help and Michael Robert, then head gardener at Hendricks Park and president of the ARS Eugene Chapter, coordinated the heavy work with a tractor. Many of the helpers were from the local Emerald Chapter of the North American Rock Garden Society. Over the years the plants have grown, some have died, weeds have crept in and the garden has known various levels of care, but now the rock garden is receiving renewed attention from the Rock Garden Committee of the Friends of Hendricks Park and the staff at Hendricks Park. Some of the overgrown conifers will be removed; some of the overly abundant yak rhododendrons will be transplanted to other parts of the Rhododendron Garden; rhododendrons, conifers, and Japanese maples will be pruned for better shape and structure; a few plants will be transplanted to other parts of the rock garden. Much weeding will be done and finally several new rhododendrons, conifers, and other shrubs will be planted in the open areas. From a number of points both along the main path at the bottom of the rock garden and the path that wanders through the garden, there are wonderful views of a tapestry of color, texture, and shape that has developed with the maturation of the garden and it is this beauty that is the goal of this new project.

- The rock garden has a mostly south and southwest exposure and receives considerable hot sun in the summer, so new plantings will have to be chosen with care. If you have some small rhododendrons to suggest that would be appropriate for the rock garden, please let me know.

Ted



Happy  
Holidays



### Shopping at the ARS Store

At this time of the year, it might be wise to remind you of the ARS Store which is actually an online access to a number of websites from which you can order merchandise and the ARS receives a commission of 4% to 25%. When you go to the store website ([www.ARSSStore.org](http://www.ARSSStore.org)), you will be directed to sites to buy ARS logo clothing or other items but you also will be linked to various websites such as Amazon.com, Pendleton, Harbor Freight, Best Buy, Powell's Books, and several others. Then you can do your shopping just as if you had gone directly to their site but ARS receives a "referral fee". What a great way to shop from home and help the ARS besides.

### Azalea Lace Bugs in Hendricks Park Update

This year the azalea lace bug continued to be a major problem on the rhododendrons in the park but Park Specialist Emily Aune devised a test spray program for learning how to effectively control the pests. A series of three sprays performed by a professional spray company, were applied using three groups - one group was sprayed with Safer brand insecticidal soap, a second group was sprayed with EcoTech, a blend of rosemary and peppermint oils, and a third group was left untreated. In this experiment, it was learned that the Safer insecticidal soap was much superior to EcoTech and the unsprayed group. The cost of the spraying was shared by the City of Eugene and the Friends of Hendricks Park organization. In 2015, the plan being considered is to use an horticultural oil spray in January and then increase the number of sprays of insecticidal soap to five and expand the area that is sprayed. As the growing season winds down, plants that were sprayed with insecticidal soap show much less infestation than untreated plants

If you have visited the park recently, you may have noticed that the large bank of evergreen azaleas on the left side of the path as you enter the rhododendron garden from the parking area was cut to the ground last spring with the idea of

removing a large number of lace bug eggs. Initially the plants responded with a nice new growth of clean foliage but, by fall, there was evidence that the lace bugs had returned. I feel that removing this large wall of azaleas has improved the visitor's initial view of the garden.

In September, a group of city staff and Friends of Hendricks Park board members met in the Rhododendron Garden with Jim LaBonte of the Oregon Department of Agriculture to discuss the lace bug infestation and Jim indicated that he was surprised at the level of damage. The level of destruction in the Pacific Northwest is beginning to make ODA entomologists suspect that this species may be distinct from those on the east coast. It is also becoming evident that the pest does not confine itself to just azaleas and rhododendrons but also damages other plants, particularly in the Ericaceae family such as gaultheria and vaccinium including those that are Pacific Northwest natives.

When Ali and I visited the park recently, we observed several adult form lace bugs that were active even after the sub-freezing weather of early November. Such observations are leading entomologists to conjecture that the pests are active all year. Control in the park will be difficult as the bugs are already established in other nearby gardens.

T.H.

*This article is based on an article in the Fall 2014 NL of FoHp.*

2014

**EVENT CALENDAR**

2015

**CHAPTER EVENTS:**

September 13	Potluck Picnic at home of Sherlyn & Cameron Hilton,	Noon to 3:00 p.m.
October 9	Chapter Meeting - <i>Companion Plantings at the RSBG</i> Speaker: Dennis Bottemiller	6:30 to 8:30 p.m.
November 13	Chapter Meeting - <i>Hands-On Propagation Workshop</i> Facilitator: Terry Henderson	6:30 to 8:30 p.m.
December 11	Holiday Potluck Dinner & Members' Slide Show (See page 1 of this Newsletter for details)	6:00 to 9:00 p.m.
January 14, 2015	Chapter Meeting - program TBA	
February 12	Chapter Meeting - program TBA	
March 12	Chapter Meeting - program TBA	
April 25	Spring Rhododendron Show and Banquet, Hilton Garden Inn,	3:00 - 9:00 p.m.
June ??	June Picnic, details TBA	



American Rhododendron Society  
Eugene Chapter  
PO Box 7704  
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*December 2014  
Newsletter*

**2015 ARS Convention**

Sydney-by-the-Sea, British Columbia  
May 6 - 10, 2015