

# 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

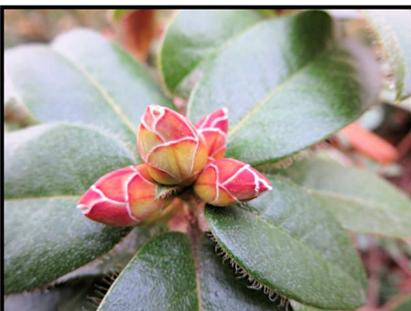
- **Show:** Helen Baxter, Sherlyn Hilton, Terry Henderson, Nancy Burns
- **Nominating:**
- **Welfare:** Nancy & Harold Greer
- **Hospitality:**
- **Programs:** Board of Directors

## Newsletter

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Bud scales of R. 'Cilpinense'

## *A Tibetan Odyssey* *Plant Hunting on the Roof of the World*

presented by Bob Zimmerman

*6:30 p.m., Thursday, February 12*  
*at the Campbell Community Center*  
*155 High Street in Eugene*

After traveling to Bhutan with Wally and Kathy Reed in January, this month we will go plant hunting in Tibet with Bob Zimmerman. His presentation is based on a trip that he made to southeast Tibet with Ken Cox in 1997 that established *Rhododendron lanatoides* as a true species. As Bob indicates, the presentation will be part botanical, cultural, political, and spiritual with plenty to interest non-rhodoholics as well aficionados and will include many of the companion plants that grow with the rhododendrons. Since 1997 Bob has also made four plant hunting trips to China as well as seed-collecting trips to Japan, Switzerland, and eastern United States.

At their Chimacum Woods Nursery overlooking the Hood Canal on the Olympic Peninsula in Washington, Bob and his wife Beth are dedicated to preserving as much of the wild gene pool as possible in species rhododendrons by using plants that have been grown from wild-collected seed. As indicated on the nursery website, "Given the constant threat to rhododendron habitats in China, it may well be that we in the West will be able to return offspring of these plants to China in future generations." To visit the website go to [www.chimacumwoods.com](http://www.chimacumwoods.com).

In the Winter 2015 ARS Journal, Bob has an interesting article about his philosophy of rhododendron cultivation, his nursery, and his plant exploration trips that is timely for this program in Eugene.

Join us for cookies, coffee, and conversation at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, February 12, at the Campbell Center with the program at 7:00.

## Pre-Meeting Dinner

Prior to the meeting you are invited to join us for a no-host dinner at 5:00 at El Torito located at 1003 Valley River Way in Eugene. There is plenty of parking. For a look at their menu go to [www.allmenus.com/or/eugene-springfield/19965-el-torito/menu/](http://www.allmenus.com/or/eugene-springfield/19965-el-torito/menu/). This is a good time to visit with Bob Zimmerman as well as with other friends. Please RSVP to Helen Baxter at 541-461-6082 or by e-mail at [galen.baxter@comcast.net](mailto:galen.baxter@comcast.net) by Tuesday, February 10.

## Cookie Team News

Special thanks go to Linda Wylie and Paula Hewitt for the delicious goodies provided for the January meeting.

*Nancy Burns and Gary Parent have volunteered to bring treats for the February 12 meeting. Thank you.*



## *Are you interested in becoming more active with planning chapter events?*

*Each year we seek new people to help with the leadership of the chapter. If it has been a while since you have served in a leadership capacity, we would appreciate you joining the board of directors.*

- This year there will be three Board of Director seats available.
- Also, the offices of Treasurer and Secretary will be on the ballot in March.

*Let Ali know if you are interested in being nominated for these positions.*



**Old ARS Bulletins and Journals (1947-1998) are available on line at:**

**<http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ejournals/JARS/>**

These old issues are filled with interesting and relevant articles on rhododendrons as well as the history of the ARS. Page 209 of the Fall 2013 issue of the Journal explains how you can obtain the current issue of the Journal on line.

## ***From the President***

### **Flora and Fauna of the Kingdom of Bhutan**

Let me start by thanking our January speakers, Wally and Kathy Reed, who put a great spotlight on the wonderful nation of Bhutan, a place of beauty in the eyes of every human being, especially if you love rhododendrons and the culture which still preserves the past and enjoys the present.

The kingdom of Bhutan is a small country on its own which is hidden in the eastern Himalaya Mountains, between China in the North and India to the South and the capital is Thimphu. Their language is a Tibetan dialect and their religion is Buddhism. Bhutan, the 'land of the peaceful dragon', is the only country in the world which practices the religion of Tantra which is a form of Buddhism.

The elevation starts from a little above sea level and rises up to 24,000 feet in the Himalaya Mountains. In Bhutan, there are various climate zones - the Subtropical Zone 150-1000m (500-3300 feet), the Warm Temperate Zone 1000-2000m (3300-6600 feet), the Cool Temperate Zone 2000-3,500m (6600-11,500 feet), and the Alpine Zone above 3,500m (11,000 feet).

There are vast amounts of flora and fauna in Bhutan with 450 species of rhododendrons, 770 species of birds, 221 endemic birds, 600 orchids, and 300 species of medicinal plants. Tropical plants like grasses are used for the manufacturing paper. There is a mixture of many trees such as : pine, oak, walnut, rhododendron, ash, poplar, willow, aspen, and the most beautiful magnolia varieties are growing in the higher elevations. The most valuable trees commercially such as cypress

and spruce grow in the higher elevation 9000 feet.

The same goes for exotic animals in Bhutan: blue

sheep, musk deer, red panda, snow leopard, black bear, golden langur and the unique takin. (ed. note: a takin is a large member of the sheep family but looks similar to a muskox)

The climate also varies: The south is hot and humid in contrast with the north which has heavy snow in most parts of the year. There are four seasons in Bhutan and the best time for viewing the rhododendrons in bloom is the end of March to the end of May. The months of July and August are the rainy season and September is the end of rain.

The national flower of Bhutan was the rhododendron but recently changed to the blue poppy, *Meconopsis grandis*. It has been said by visitors to Bhutan that the sighting of rhododendrons in blooms is very magical. Aside from rhododendrons, there are other trees, flowering magnolias, orchids, poppies, primulas and many more.

There is a well-known national park in Bhutan that is called Thrumshingla National Park that was created in 1998. In the park, there is a rhododendron garden and it is called In-situ Rhododendron Garden with 22 species of Rhodes in it. There are 622 Species of plants in the park.

In conclusion, no wonder Bhutan is considered to be the most secret, peaceful, tranquil place on the earth for viewing flora, fauna and human spirituality.



*Ali Sarlak*

**Places to Go and Things to Do:**

- 6:30 p.m., February 10 *Hellebores and Companion Plants for a Woodland Garden* with Marietta O'Byrne  
Hardy Plant Group Meeting at Campbell Community Center, 155 High St in Eugene
- 7:00 p.m., February 11 *Azalea Lace Bug - Control and New Research* with Robin Rosetta  
Willamette Chapter ARS, First United Methodist Church at Church and State Streets in Salem
- February 11, *The Siren Song of the rhododendron Species* with Bob Zimmerman  
Tualatin Valley Chapter ARS, 31370 NW Commercial St. in North Plains
- 6:30 p.m., February 12 *A Tibetan Odyssey - Plant Hunting on the Roof of the World* with Bob Zimmerman  
Eugene Chapter ARS, Campbell Community Center, 155 High Street in Eugene
- 6:30 p.m., February 17 Speaker: Dave Eckerdt  
Siuslaw Chapter ARS, Presbyterian Church of the Siuslaw, 3669 Highway 101 in Florence
- 7:00 p.m., February 19 *Touting Trillium - A Skeptic's View* with Russell Graham  
Portland Chapter ARS, All Saints Episcopal Church, 4033 S.E. Woodstock Blvd. in Portland

***Rhododendron campylocarpum*** is a mid-size shrub with rounded, elliptic, dark green leaves that are pale glaucous green on the undersides. The pale yellow blossoms, sometimes with a reddish basal blotch, make a beautiful sight in the spring. In the wild, *campylocarpum* grows at elevations of 10,000 to 14,000 feet in the Himalayan Mountains of Sikkim, Nepal, Bhutan, Assam, and Tibet. It is classified in the large Subgenus Hymenanthes, Section Ponticum, and Sub-Section Campylocarpa. It is fairly hardy to 0° F. and grows to about 4' in 10 years but, of course, larger after that.



*R. campylocarpum* at UBC Botanic Garden

Welcome to our **new chapter member** - the organization Friends of Hendricks Park that does many good things for the rhododendron garden in the Hendricks Park as well as the Native Plant Garden and the Forest.

## The ARS Eugene Chapter Mission Statement.

**E**ncourage the culture and interest of rhododendrons.

**U**se our meetings for educational opportunities and building friendships.

**G**row both species and hybrid rhododendrons in our gardens.

**E**ducate ourselves and the community about the world of rhododendrons.

**N**urture the idea of garden design with rhododendrons.

**E**xhibit our knowledge and the beauty of rhododendrons to the community.

## Ted's Notes

- Thanks to Wally and Kathy Reed who presented the fine program on the *Rhododendrons and Culture of Bhutan* at the January chapter meeting, we now have a copy of Rebecca Pradhan's PowerPoint presentation of her book *Wild Rhododendrons of Bhutan* on our chapter website for you to browse. The photography is exceptional and the rhododendrons are organized by climate zone. It is on the "Special Interest" page of our chapter website at [www.eugene-chapter-ars.org](http://www.eugene-chapter-ars.org). This will download a copy of the PowerPoint presentation to your computer for which you will need a program such as PowerPoint or Keynote to open.
- Each year in January I feel a bit of a lift from the cold and gray months of November and December. Particularly on the days that are rather mild with a higher degree of lightness, I enjoy seeing many plants in the garden that show the garden is alive and well and soon to return to its glory. With a rather dry January, the *Helleborus niger* or Christmas Rose has had wonderful pure white blossoms. The more conventional *Helleborus x hybridus* are sending up their blossom stalks so they will open fully in February. When one considers plants that are showy in several seasons, Rhododendron 'Cilpinense' must be on the list with its intriguing, intricately patterned bud scales and bright, dark green leaves fringed with minute hairs. Now, at the end of January, our four Rhododendron 'Christmas Cheer' are finally showing good pink bud color with a few florets opening on these mild days - nearly a month later than they often do. In February, these plants will offer beautiful, frilly pink blossoms (at least until we get a sharp frost). As we clean the leaves off the beds, it is nice to see the bulbs coming up, soon to be bright crocuses and miniature daffodils, and the early snow drops are already opening. We have a small patch of winter aconite (*Eranthus hyemalis*) that is in full bloom with its bright yellow, small goblet-shaped blossoms that is spreading ever so slowly from year to year. By summer this little gem will be dormant and gone until next January. In the rock garden, there is a dwarf American cranberry (*Vaccinium macrocarpon*) whose somewhat shiny leaves have their winter color of bronzy purple that looks good against the dark gray rocks. At this time of year, most of the perennials are dormant, so one tends to notice what is at its height now and we are lucky, in our climate, to have so much of interest in the garden.
- In Hendricks Park, one can smell the fragrant winter-flowering viburnums and the sarcococca before one notices the minute blossoms. Perhaps the first blooming rhododendron is *R. riviei*, located at the far west end of the main rhododendron garden, where I first noticed the vibrant pink bud color on January 6. Now at the end of January, many buds are showing pink and a few of the florets are opening. However, the *R. riviei* that is located in the southeast part of the rhododendron garden and lower down the hill is just showing its lovely darker purple-pink blossom buds. This plant is not looking as healthy as the first one but Terry Henderson has taken cuttings to propagate it for future replanting in the park. Even without flowers, many of the old rhododendrons in the park have wonderful, twisting branch structure that is especially visible in the winter. Look for a 10' R. 'Bow Bells' along the main lawn path. For the next four months, those who walk through this special rhododendron garden every couple of weeks will notice changes each time.

## Winter Blooming Viburnums

by Ted Hewitt

It always intrigues me how a piece of a conversation can trigger new thoughts or make connections between ideas. Such was the case recently when Ali e-mailed me a photo of a viburnum blooming in his garden which he thought is either 'Dawn' or 'Charles Lamont'. Just prior to this, on a walk in Hendricks Park, I had photographed *Viburnum farreri* with its clusters of beautiful tiny pink blossoms, fragrant enough to perfume a large part of the garden. To learn a bit more about Viburnum 'Dawn', I quickly found that the more correct name is *Viburnum x bodnantense* 'Dawn' and that it is a hybrid made from a cross of *Viburnum farreri* and *Viburnum grandiflorum* at Bodnant Garden in Wales around 1935.

Of course this makes the connection to the many rhododendrons that have come from Bodnant Garden, some grown from wild-collected seed from plant hunters such as Ernest Wilson, George Forrest, and Frank Kingdon-Ward in the early 1900's who were funded by then owner Henry MacLaren (Lord Aberconway). And then there are the many hybrids that have been developed there over the years, such as 'Seta', 'Elizabeth', 'Fabia' and 'Cilpinense'.

The other parent of the *Viburnum x bodnantense* group is *Viburnum grandiflorum* which Paula and I have grown in our garden for about 12 years. Now over 10' tall, it has outgrown its space and, even though it is a consistent winter bloomer, will be removed in favor of the preferred shrubs growing on each side of it. Life is always filled with choices.

Several cultivars of the *Viburnum x bodnantense* group were named and are still in the garden trade - 'Dawn' has the darkest pink flowers before fading to white, 'Charles Lamont' has medium pink flowers which also fade to white, and 'Deben' has white flowers. These are all large shrubs becoming 8'-10' or taller and 6'-8' wide, but if you have the space for them to arch out into the typical vase shape they are wonderful winter blooming shrubs that go well with rhododendrons. They prefer full sun to part shade and will have good fall color in more sun. *Viburnum x bodnantense* 'Dawn' has been named as a Great Plants Pick selection.

And now the web has been completed from Viburnum 'Dawn' to *Viburnum x bodnantense* to Bodnant Garden to rhododendrons to *Viburnum farreri* to Hendricks Park to *Viburnum grandiflorum* to the idea of a grex or the *Viburnum bodnantense* group and it's time for me to go out in the garden.



*Viburnum* 'Dawn' or 'Charles Lamont' photo by Ali



*Viburnum farreri*

photo by Ted



*Viburnum x bodnantense* 'Dawn'  
photo from gopixpic.com

Newsletter photos are by the editor unless credited otherwise.



*R. riviei* in Hendricks Park on January 6



*R. riviei* in Hendricks Park on January 18



When you walk in Hendricks Park look for the wonderful path plaques - Del James Walk and James Barto Walk.



*R. riviei* in Hendricks Park on January 22



Satyr tragopan in Bhutan  
photo from [www.en.wikipedia.org](http://www.en.wikipedia.org)



Pre-meeting dinner at Tasty Thai Kitchen

photo by Ali Sarlac

2014

**EVENT CALENDAR**

2015

**CHAPTER EVENTS:**

- February 12 Chapter Meeting - *A Tibetan Odyssey: Plant Hunting on the Roof of the World*  
Speaker: Bob Zimmerman from Chimacum Woods Rhododendron Nursery
- March 12 Chapter Meeting - *Companion Plantings at the RSBG*  
Speaker: Dennis Bottemiller, Propagator and Nursery Manager at RSBG
- Annual Meeting with officer elections**
- April 25 Spring Rhododendron Show and Banquet, Hilton Garden Inn, 3:00 - 9:00 p.m.  
Program: *History of the Rhododendron Species Foundation - the First 50 Years*  
Speaker: Harold Greer  
Plant Auction ~ Raffle ~ Silent Auction ~ Dinner
- May 6-10 ARS Convention, Sydney-by-the-Sea, B.C.
- May 9 Chapter Plant Sale, Lane County Fairgrounds, 9:00 - 2:00  
(set up on Friday, May 8) **Please plan to volunteer on either Friday or Saturday. Contact Helen.**
- June ?? June Picnic, details TBA

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*February 2015  
Newsletter*

**2015 ARS Convention**

Sydney-by-the-Sea, British Columbia

♦ May 6-10, 2015