

MID-ATLANTIC RHODODENDRON NEWS AND NOTES

A Publication of the Middle Atlantic Chapter of the American
Rhododendron Society

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December 2005

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING MAC MEETINGS

May 12-15, 2006

Joint National Meeting of ARS & ASA
Rockville, MD (District 9 is sponsor.)

Rhododendron Web Site Addresses:

American Rhododendron Society

<http://www.rhododendron.org/>

MAC Website

<http://www.macars.org/>

U VA Science & Engineering Libraries

<http://www.lib.virginia.edu/science/guides/s-rhodo.htm>

UVA Special Collections

<http://www.lib.virginia.edu/small/>

Henry Skinner Website (*NEW*)

<http://http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/collections/projects/rhodo/skinner/>

MAC FALL MEETING RECAP

Sixty-nine MAC members enjoyed a great get-away in Raphine for the Fall Meeting on October 14–16. The autumn weather was outstanding and leaf color was good.



Bill Bedwell giving his presentation at Fall Meeting. Photo by Walt Przypek.

Mike Andruczyk gave a presentation on Sudden Oak Death that many members had been wondering about, listing plants that are susceptible to the disease and describing and showing symptoms.

Bill Bedwell showed many of his beautiful slides of Butchart and other gardens from his trip last spring to the ARS National Meeting in Victoria, B.C.

On Saturday night, dinner speaker Karel Bernady showed slides of plants from Frank Fujioka and others which he saw at the ARS National Meeting.

Saturday's tour was exceptional. Four vans were



Glen Falls at Helen Chew's garden. Photo by W. Przypek.

used for transporting our group to the various gardens and businesses. Helen Chew's garden was a delight with many little surprises and lots of different kinds of plants as well as a natural waterfall. Pete and Sephanie Loquet had an interesting herb garden as well as a sales area. Next door was an estate with landscaped garden which we were allowed to see.

Members enjoyed a wine tasting and box lunch at Rockbridge Vineyard where we also had a tour of some



Merle and Maggie Aitken on tour. Photo by W. Przypek.



Sybil Przypek, Sandra and Ken McDonald, and Jim Brant unloading for P4M sale. Photo by W. Przypek.



Mike Andruczyk, Ken McDonald, and Dave Banks on tour. Photo by W. Przypek.

of the vines and the wine-making facility including the "cellar" with barrels of wine.

After lunch we visited Buffalo Springs Herb Farm which had a shop as well as outside gardens of interest. Next door was Wade's Mill, a working water powered grist mill on the National Register of Historic Places. A

fair also seemed to be going on there so we had lots to see. To round off our day, we visited Springdale Water Gardens, a large retail supplier of water and bog plants and statuary, ceramics, and so on.

Members purchased many plants at the P4M sale and at our small auction. In addition to this, the aerial photo of Gregory Bald, the result of the Species Study Groups project was available for purchase. It will be available for sale at the 2006 Joint National Meeting of ARS & ASA in Rockville, Maryland next spring.

NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to:

Karel Bernady, Chester Springs, PA
19425-3126

Dr. & Mrs. Robert Porter, Burke,
VA 22015

FROM THE MIDDLE OF MAC by Jane McKay

Thanksgiving is drawing to a close, the family has gone back to New York, and our house is beginning to look normal again. It's time to look over the garden and finish putting it to bed. The lilies and peonies along with a few other perennials need to be cut back and at least one more removal of leaves from the lawn. We no longer rake leaves but pick them up with the lawn mower. The leaves from the lawn and driveway go into the compost pile. We run the mower over the garden paths but leave the chopped leaves where they fall. We never remove the leaves from the garden itself except to pull the leaves from the center of the azaleas.

Fall this year, up until the end of the third week of November, was spectacular. The fall color was late but worth waiting for. Coleus, impatiens, lantanas and petunias were still blooming along with the changing of the leaves.

Our camellias were the best ever and still with a few good buds left after a low temperature of 27 degrees. We grow *C. 'Winter Star'* and *C. 'Snow Flurry'*. For those of us who have trouble blooming *C. japonica* and *C. sasanqua* these hybrids from the USDA bred by Dr. William Ackerman using *C. oleifera* are the way to go. These camellias handled the drought this summer exceptionally well, never showing any sign of stress.



A new for us plant this year was *Leonotis leonurus*, a perennial in mild climates but an annual for us. 'Lion Head' has a lovely bright orange flower that blooms in the fall right up to a heavy frost. I've stuck a few cuttings in my basement under lights in potting soil and have roots in a week. Hopefully I'll have some to share.

The bud set on our rhododendrons is not as good as last year but I'm sure the high temperatures and 50 straight days without rain had something to do with it. We had lots of dieback on our rhododendrons and some borer damage but overall the azaleas and rhododendrons fared well. A few things we did notice was that some



Jim Brant telling about the MAC Species Study Group project's aerial photograph of Gregory Bald at the Fall Meeting. Photo by W. Przypek.



Dr. Gillenwater at the Loquet's garden. Photo by W. Przypek.

azaleas dropped their leaves exceptionally early, I first noticed this on 'Betty Ann Voss'. The first rhododendrons here that let us know they were thirsty were *R. fortunei*. I know I promised to begin propagating rhododendrons again but I usually do this in late September or early October and we were again going through a drought period and in my experience rooting does not take place unless plants are in a turgid condition, maybe next year.

Happy Holidays to all.

FALL FOLIAGE SHOW

Best in Show at the Fall Foliage show was taken by Paul James for his *Rhododendron maximum* × *R.*



The Bowyers and other MAC members listening to guide during lunch at Rockbridge Vineyard. Photo by W. Przypek.



MAC members listening to program at the Fall Meeting. Photo by W. Przypek.

calophytum. The complete results are not available to your editor yet.

A MAC WINNER AT EASTERN REGIONAL

Doug Jolley attended the Eastern Regional Meeting in Princeton, New Jersey, to see how a photo contest is coordinated since he will have that



Elmer Lapsley, up from S.C. for the MAC meeting. Photo by W. Przypek.

task in the Spring of 2006. He entered the photo contest and won first place in the full plant category with *R. maximum* in full anthesis along a nearby stream. He also won second place in the close up category



Paul James' winning entry *R. maximum* × *R. calophytum*. Photo by W. Przypek.



Walt Przypek & Harry Wise on tour. Photo by S. Przypek

Doug has been busy, also presenting a show to Maxon-Dixon recently dealing with the other members of the Ericaceae, not rhododendrons and azaleas, although he did have a few local swarms and some *R. chapmani* photographed in the wild.



MAC members browsing the book sale with TheresaBrents in charge. Photo by W. Przypek.



Meeting organizer Sharon Collins and Helen Chew. Photo by W. Przypek.

with 'Kennell's Gold', and third place in the species look category with a macro shot of *R. maximum* he calls 'Maximum Chiffon', which is a very bright white flower with an emerald green spot and each floret outlined in deep pink as if done with a sharpie marker.



Checking out the vineyard's wine barrels.



Helen Chew, Barbara Hall, Jean Beaudry and Frits Morsink in Helen's garden. Photo by S. McDonald.



Helen Chew, Pete Loquet and Sybil Przypek at the Loquet garden after Sybil presented the MAC garden plaque. Photo by S. McDonald.



MAC members at the Stephenie and Pete Loquet garden. Photo by S. McDonald.



MAC members at shop at Buffalo Springs Herb Farm. Photo by S. McDonald.



Sharon Collins Horn and Mike Andruczyk at "chapel" garden at Buffalo Springs Herb Farm. Photo by S. McDonald.



MAC members at SpringDale Water Garden. Photo by S. McDonald.

DISTRICT 9 DIRECTOR'S REPORT ON THE ARS BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING, 4 NOVEMBER 2005

Donald H. Voss, Vienna, VA

The Board meeting at East Windsor, NJ, was conducted by our president, Dr. Leonard Miller.

A Rhododendron Database Committee was established, to be chaired by Dr. Forrest Bump. The plan is to develop and maintain an electronic database containing detailed information on all Rhododendron species and cultivars. The data on plant characteristics and lineage will be of particular interest to hybridizers.

The Board approved the Ozark Chapter's offer to host the Spring 2008 ARS convention in Tulsa, OK. Mike Stewart had visited Tulsa, and he gave a glowing description of the interest and quality found in gardens there. Len Miller's Lendonwood, of course, will demonstrate to us that rhododendrons can be grown in an area with climate and soils markedly different from those preferred by these plants.

Laura Grant requests that all chapters obtain from the Executive Director and distribute to garden centers, botanical gardens, and plant-related events the Society's publication, "A Guide to Planting and Care." The only cost will be for shipping: \$7.70 will be billed to the chapter for a "Flat Rate" USPS box containing as many pamphlets as it will hold. A similar offer is made for chapters' obtaining copies of "Fundamentals of Rhododendron Culture." The Membership Brochure is being reprinted and will again be made available.

Please emphasize to your members that to receive the Winter issue of the Journal ARS, renewals must be received by the Executive Director by December 1. Chapters should make sure that they have payments in hand before they report a membership as renewed. For new members using credit cards, exercise great care in recording card numbers and other data. A number of incorrect entries have caused hours of lost time and extra bank charges to the Society.

Chapter insurance obtained through the Society covers up to 300 attendees at any single event; extra insurance can be obtained for larger numbers—but remember that about 4 weeks' lead time is required. Contact Laura for details. For visits to private gardens, the chapter should in advance furnish the Executive Director with a list including the name of the owner, the address (including ZIP code).

Chapter treasurers and membership chairmen need to check the financial and membership data for their chapters on the OARS website frequently. Discrepancies should be reported promptly (i.e., within 3 months) to the Executive Director. Delayed reports require searching of archives—a time-consuming process.

Eastern Vice President Ted Stecki noted that in some chapter meetings little attention is paid to new members or walk-ins (who should be considered potential new members!). If you see an unfamiliar face, engage the person in conversation. Presiding officers should make a practice of

asking if new members or guests are present. Don't give people a reason not to come back. And Plants for Members are a good way to encourage membership.

Our Journal editor asks that chapters obtain high-quality slides or digital images of plants that may be nominated for the Rhododendron of the Year program. Finding photos for some of the current selections has been a challenge!

Chapter interest in purchasing a digital projector at a discounted group price is being queried. It sounds as if the price might be about 25 percent below list price. Interested chapters should contact Western Vice President Fred Whitney for details (see OARS website for his address, phone number, e-mail address). (Keep in mind that for warranty or service problems a local source is sometimes an advantage.)

Reporting on the budget, Ted Stecki emphasized that membership! Membership!! MEMBERSHIP!!! is essential to our continued financial health. Although membership fell by 101 this past fiscal year, careful management of budgeted expenses resulted in a surplus. But this could readily turn into a deficit should we experience further declines in membership.

Membership Chairman Mike Bones stressed the importance of publicity and incentives to join the Society. He provided a list of membership benefits claimed by the Siuslaw Chapter. Many of these would not apply in District 9, but we do need to be creative and find some more effective carrots—we can't use a stick, and throwing a net over a hapless recruit usually results in his defection when renewal time rolls around.

Jerry Reynolds, Publicity and Public Relations Chairman, again pleads for chapters to send him clippings of stories from local media relating to rhododendrons, azaleas, and chapter activities. He states: "It is very helpful to know when and where press releases are used. Hopefully, more chapters will designate someone to forward clippings to me during the coming year." Jerry's address, etc., are on the list of committee chairmen on the OARS website. CHAPTER OFFICERS PLEASE NOTE: This request has been forwarded to you or your predecessors in prior years, but nothing happened! Please cooperate!

Jay Murray showed me a "Mini Colour Chart" offered by the Royal Horticultural Society. This abridged chart comprises 60 leaves, 240 color chips, selected to match flower colors most often found in the florist trade. This compares with the 219 leaves, 876 colors (if I remember correctly) in the 2001 edition of the full version. The Mini is priced at 29.95 pounds sterling (about \$54), about one-fifth the cost of the full version of the RHS chart. Jay states that even if an exact match is not present, reference to the "Mini" is always acceptable for purposes of registration. One may state that a flower color is close to, lighter than, darker than a given chip. Or it may be stated to fall between two chips. It is suggested that the Mini chart is affordable enough for each chapter to obtain and make available for use by its members.