



February 2012 Newsletter

*American Rhododendron Society
Eugene Chapter*

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.



Our February 9 meeting!

Mike Stewart will take us trekking through Yunnan and Sichuan provinces in southern China. For many of us, this is the only way that we will ever get to see where so many of the species rhododendrons that we grow in our gardens live in the wild. As many of you know, Mike is an excellent speaker, a knowledgeable plantsman, and a long time ARS member. Often there are articles about plant exploration trips in the ARS Journal or in the Rhododendron Species Botanic Garden annual yearbook, but it is always special to see photos taken by our speakers with their stories about the trip so that the programs become a way for us to learn about the species rhododendrons and where they grow. Join us at Celeste Campbell Community Center, 155 High Street in Eugene, at 7:00 p.m. for cookies, coffee, and conversation before Mike's talk at 7:30.

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OFFICERS & BOARD

President:	Ted Hewitt
Vice President:	Vacant
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Secretary:	JoAnn Napier
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Honors Rich Aaring	541-485-6013

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WEBMASTER

Ted Hewitt	541-687-8119
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Catawbiense album hybrid



R catawbiense album var.
'Powell Glass' X 'Ditto's Mom'

Hybridized by Ralph Burns,
late of Eugene Chapter.

Photos by Frances Burns unless otherwise noted.

Editor's Byte

Frances Burns

At hand, I have a list of appropriately touching excuses, available on request, to cover my copious solecistical blunders. However, an egregious situation arose recently concerning the phone in the dining room, rated superb a decade ago by Consumers Report, priced way beyond budgetary restraint, and where I expected phone messages to be stored, *digitally*, of course. The following excuse requires no formal request, so it's on the house!

Not a phone person by nature (restless leg syndrome, perhaps), I listened as a well modulated male voice announced after two short rings: "*Sorry, no one is available to answer your call,*" just as I ran from the kitchen to clutch the handset. It was a definite no-brainer that even wearing my sporty New Balance shoes I could not get to the phone in two "ringy dings dings". Furthermore, no one been able to leave a message; the phone was programmed to record after six (6) rings, not two (2).

Hmmm...with Bogey at my heels, I tripped to my office muttering tidbits of dagnabits' a further depletion jof the aforementioned excuses. The office phone, with a jarring ring that lifts me off my chair (not an easy task), and a pad with a jumble of buttons' covered with small print and obscure symbols that instill a vague sense of inadequacy.

Upon pressing, by trial and error, the right button to receive messages, a cacophony of reminders poured forth: physician, dentist and hair dresser appointments no longer of consequence, a cheery message from a dear cousin who passed on months ago, and another from a long lost second cousin inviting me to visit her in Seattle. I trust that, at 94, she is still awaiting a return call...

So if any of my rhododendron friends received a 2-ring generic message "*Sorry, no one is available to receive your call,*" my apologies! A brand new dining room phone—minus the blessings of Consumers Report—rings appropriately and accepts messages after 6 rings. So, whether in running shoes, slippers, gumboots or barefoot, I will traverse vast distances to catch your calls. STILL BETTER, YOU CAN LEAVE ME A MESSAGE!

President's Message Ted Hewitt

As some of you already know, Paula and I became grandparents for the first time in early January when our oldest daughter and her husband brought Abigail Madelyn Herrett into the world. It was a pleasure to get to meet Abby within just a few hours of her birth. Since I tend to forget how small even average sized babies are at birth, I enjoyed getting to see and hold Abby and look forward to more frequent trips to Portland in the coming months.

At the January meeting, I learned more about the insects that we frequently see in the garden but also was introduced to some of the beneficial critters that are there but that I haven't seen. Thank you to Pat Patterson for the program. Also at the meeting, Sylvia Giustina brought several small seedlings of *R. ferrugineum* that she had grown from wild-collected seed that she had gathered in the Dolomites of northern Italy. She generously offered them to our members and will be bringing more to share with us at the February meeting. This is quite a treat for us to be offered something special that we can grow on. At the February meeting, I look forward to trekking in China with Mike Stewart searching for new plants in this wonderfully bio-diverse region and think all of you will enjoy this program.

In the January newsletter of the ARS Willamette Chapter, I noticed that several of our chapter members have been involved with the creation of the new rhody garden in Bush's Pasture Park in Salem. Our associate members, Wally & Cathy Reed have been instrumental in coordinating the project between the Compton Family Foundation and the city of Salem while Eugene member, Tom Beatty, as a Salem Parks staff member, has been bringing the project to fruition. Another of our members, Roger Gossler, graciously donated nearly 200 companion plants for the garden. A trip to see the new garden in the spring is something to put on our list of things to do. Thanks go to them for doing good things in the rhododendron world.

Recently, I received a request from Marc Colombel to place a link to his rhododendron website in France on the Eugene chapter website and he indicated that he has placed a link to our website on his. As the founder and past president of the Société Bretonne du Rhododendron, he has created an interesting website with a lot of good information. You might want to explore www.rhododendron.fr but be sure to click the English button unless your French is good. Note the photo of a 100-year-old Rhododendron 'Broughtonii' against Marc's house in France. Marc plans to visit Washington and Oregon after the ARS Convention in Asheville so you might get to meet him at our plant sale at the fairgrounds on May 12. The planning for the 2012 Spring Rhododendron Show is underway and will follow a similar format to last year. Mark the date of Saturday, April 21, on your calendar for this enjoyable afternoon and evening. As always this event requires quite a number of volunteers to make it a success so I hope you will step forward to help. This show marks the beginning of a very busy time in the rhododendron world with flower shows, conferences, field trips, and time in our gardens to enjoy the beauty of gardens. Ted

Places to Go, and Very New People To See

WILLAMETTE VALLEY HARDY PLANT GROUP will meet On February 14, 7:00 p.m. at Campbell Center, 155 High Street, Eugene.

Jack Olson will be speaking on the subject, "Rhododendrons as Perennials". You are welcome join members of the WVHPG for Jack's colorful slides. Door prizes will be up for lucky winners, and refreshments will be provided after the meeting.

Doors open at 6:30 for book sales and viewing botanical samples. Admission is \$5 for non-members and free for members. Membership in the Hardy Plant Group is \$20 annually. There is ample parking in the parking lot at the corner of 2nd Ave. and High Street. For more information about the group or this event, visit the website at www.thehardyplantgroup.org or call 541-344-0896.



Rare indeed is it that chapter members announce the birth of a child. **Sherlyn and Cameron Hilton** have a new son, **Elliot John Hilton**, born December 29 (just in time for his parents to claim him as 2011 income tax deduction!) They are also "adapting to a new sleep (or lack thereof) schedule."

Weighing in at 7.5 pounds and 19 inches, Elliot joins 2 brothers, **Andrew and Isaac**, who have already participated in a chapter outing to Hinsdale Garden. Congratulations to the Hiltons, and many happy days ahead.



Congratulations also to Ted and Paula Hewitt who were delighted when their oldest daughter **Rachel and her husband Tron** made them grandparents for the very first time on Saturday January 7. **Abby Madelyn Herritt**, the new addition is a delight to her grandparents who will be making many visits to visit the happy family.

Our February 9 Meeting! Continued from Page 1

With his wife, Maria, Mike owns and operates Dover Nursery in Sandy where each year they grow about 40,000 rhododendrons and azaleas that are sold to retail garden centers all over Canada and the U.S. They have over 1000 varieties of rhododendrons that are field-grown on 30 acres of the 80 acre farm or pot grown in 2 acres of greenhouses. The nursery is located in a picturesque area on the forested lower slopes leading to Mt. Hood and their house is surrounded by a lovely garden that includes a number of big-leaf rhododendrons and many companion plants. Perhaps you did not know that prior to being a nurseryman, Mike was a high school music teacher.

During his 30-some years as a nurseryman, Mike has also been active with the ARS in many ways from being a strong leader of the Portland Chapter to being ARS President and participating on many committees. Currently he is a Vice-President of the Rhododendron Species Foundation and was a co-chair of the 2011 ARS Convention.

As a speaker, he is generous with his time traveling to many ARS chapters to present programs.

Somehow Mike and Maria find time to be grandparents, to go on hikes, to ski, and to travel. One of their special trips was a plant exploration trip to Yunnan and Sichuan in May of 2006 with other members of the RSBG including Eugene chapter member Dean Stout, Steve Hootman, and Keith White. No trip to China is without a fair number of adventures and Mike will have many fine photos to show us about these adventures and the wonderful plants they saw.

Prior to the meeting you are invited to join us and Mike and Maria Stewart for a no-host dinner at 5:30 p.m. at the Oregon Electric Station on the corner of 5th and Willamette in Eugene. There is plenty of parking in the large lot on 5th. Please RSVP to Ted Hewitt at 541-687-8119 or ted.hewitt@comcast.net by Tuesday, February 7, so that he may notify the restaurant as to how many to expect.

LOOKING FOR A RARE SPECIES?

TO SATISY THAT SPECIES ITCH?

How about *RHODODENDRON PUDOROSUM* ?

Thanks to Australian friend, Ian Wallace, Co-Leader of the Rhododendron Study Group, Ferny Creek Horticultural Society in Australia, I became aware of a species rarely grown and possibly only in the Royal Botanic Garden in Edinburgh, where it first bloomed in 1972, and where a few of the original seedlings remain. So out with Davidian, Cox and Cullen for a look-see.

Placed in In the Subgenus Hymenanthes, Section Pontica, Subsection Grandia, along with *R. montroseanum*, *R. protistum* and others, *R. pudorosum* is an attractive slow growing plant, located and collected in 1936 by Ludlow and Sheriff in south Tibet. They and Taylor* located it again in south-east Tibet in "mixed fir and rhododendron forest...usually in shade", and treelike, commonly 20 to 25 feet and on occasion, up to 40 feet tall. For a good picture showing its large rose pink bloom and unique foliage, see Plate 66 in H. H. Davidian's book *The Rhododendron Species, Vol. 2, Elepidotes*.

R. pudorosum foliage is cited as "dark green...shining....deeply impressed...the undersurface with a thin plastered, shining silvery-white or fawn" indumentum. The unique persistent long leaf bud scales are the defining feature that distinguish it from other species in the Subsection.

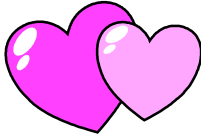
Some think it resembles *R. magnificum* in the same Subsection others that it resembles *R. hodgsonii* in the Falconera Subsection. The flowers may be similar, but "the foliage is quite different".

So for the young who have more time left than most rhododendron aficionados, may I just say, "Go for it!" FB

**In seeking the first name of Taylor
I herewith admit I was a failure.*

But wait, John Hammond to the rescue: "The name you are seeking is George Taylor, later Sir George Taylor, who was Asst. Keeper in the Natural History Section of the British Museum when he went plant hunting with Ludlow & Sheriff in 1938. He later became Director of R.B.G., Kew and turned the organisation around, including arranging the lease and rehabilitation of Wakehurst Place, which became an outstation of Kew. He was knighted for his efforts."

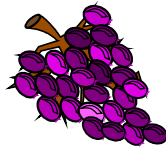
Thank you, John!



Kudos to Refreshment Volunteers

Many thanks to Sandi Olson and Barbara and Steve Wallace for the so-o-o good refreshments at the January meeting. Would that we had the recipe for those sumptuous bar cookies, Sandi! And thanks, too, JoAnn for making coffee, the perfect and *essential* accompaniment.

Treats in February will be in the capable hands of Doug and Mary Furr. A great surprise coming up . . .



The life so short, the craft so long to learn. This was said about literature, but it really fits gardening better. Poetry, after all, is learned extremely early as a rule, if it is learned at all, but gardening is the province of old crocks past the age of twenty-eight.

Henry Mitchell

COLORFUL PLANT COMPANIONS HAPPY IN MOIST, WELL-DRAINED ACID SOIL

Forsythia, Rhododendron PJM and snowdrops (*Galanthus nivalis*) with *Crocus tommasinianus* dappled in.

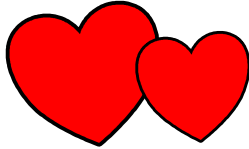
Flowering jasmine (*Jasminum nudiflorum*) with *Iris histrioides*, *Crocus flavus* and *Cyclamine coum* plus a glittering of white snowdrops.

Rhododendron mucronulatum with *cyclamineus narcissus* 'February Gold', plus *Chionodoxa luciliae* scattered throughout the narcissus.

Japanese iris (*Iris Kaempferi*) among astilbe that reflect the iris colors, Companion with rhododendron, especially those with silvery indumentum.

Eugene Chapter
American
Rhododendron Society
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R. decorum 'Cox's Uranium Green'
Origin unknown, presumably from seed
collected by Kingdom-Ward in 1921.



2012 CHAPTER CALENDAR

- Feb 9 Mike Stewart - *Plant Hunting in China*
- Mar 8 Panel Discussion - *Hybridizing Rhododendrons*, Annual Meeting &
Election
- Apr 21 Rhododendron Show & Awards Banquet - Speaker to be announced
- May 4-7 2012 ARS Convention, jointly with Azalea Society, Asheville, NC
- May 12 WHPG Plant Sale, Fairgrounds
- June Picnic - Date to be arranged
- Sep 21-23 ARS Western Regional Conference, "Rhodos in Paradise", Nanaimo BC

VISIT OUR EUGENE WEBSITE <http://www.eugene-chapter-ars.org>