

AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

Eureka Chapter

The next meeting

Thursday October 24, 7:00 p.m.
Woman's Club
1531 J Street
Eureka, California

Pre-Meeting No Host Dinner 5:15

Kyoto, 320 F Street
Eureka, **Call Nelda, 707-443-8049**
For a reservation so there will be enough
seating



October 2013

Wonder of Tropical Vireya Rhododendrons



The Eureka Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society will meet **October 24th at 7:00 PM at the Woman's Club, 1531 J Street in Eureka.** The pre-meeting meal will be at Kyoto where Jeni and Eric Masaki will prepare a special family meal for us at a very reasonable rate, be sure to call **Nelda 707-443-8049 for a reservation so there are enough seats and food.**

I will let Sherla speak for herself; "Who am I? I am a local island girl, wife of Richard Marques, mother of 3 sons, and grandmother of 9. I'm also the owner of **Pacific Island Nursery** in Kea'au, HI, (on the Big Island) specializing in Vireya Rhododendron for 14 years and an active member of the Hawaii Chapter of ARS for 17 years. My educational background is a BA in Sociology... but my love of growing plants started when I was very little while planting 'Forget-me-nots' with my grandmother. Today, my husband, Richard, and I operate a "mom & pop" Vireya nursery. We moved over from Maui to the Big Island knowing we wanted to go into agriculture. We started with trees and quickly learned growing trees in pots is for younger people. Then came cattleya orchids. We were renting and had no greenhouse for them. Our neighbor was not using his and gave us



the go-ahead. We would trek through the guava forest to go to work on the orchids...and back again through the forest in the evening. Then one day we got invited to a Vireya meeting. When we saw the Vireya trusses, our lives were changed. Richard found he had a knack for growing them and we both knew it was what we wanted to grow. Why? **Because Vireya are "The flowers that make you smile"**.

Photo above submitted by Sherla of Sherla, Photo below of Bruce Palmer with Sherla's Vireyas, and photo above right, submitted by Bruce Palmer

Photos are those of the Newsletter editor, June Walsh, unless otherwise noted. Permission is granted to reprint any portion of this publication provided credit to the author and Chapter is given.



It is Membership Renewal time!
What a great time to bring a new friend or family member to a meeting and YOU will get a free plant. If your friend or family becomes a member, they too will get a free plant! All new members get a free plant.

WORD OF THE MONTH: EPIPHYTE

By Bruce Palmer

The word for the month is **EPIPHYTE** (Greek: *epi*, on or above and *phyton*, plant). It's appropriate this time because the program Sherla Bertelmann will be giving is about Vireya rhododendrons. Sherla has a Vireya nursery on the Big Island Hawaii but Vireyas are not native to Hawaii. Nealy all of the Vireyas we grow are epiphytes or are hybridized from epiphytic Vireyas. In their native habitats, mostly on the islands of south Asia, the ancestors of most of the ones we cultivate grow on mountain rain forest trees at altitudes between 3,000 and 8,000 feet. Their habitat is constantly bombarded by rain, making it hard for roots to grow in the saturated ground. Being an epiphyte solves three problems at once. The epiphytic plant has a place to live where it can get water but not be drowned. In addition, there is more light above the ground than on it. Finally, constant rain leaches nutrients out of the soil, so epiphytes can extract some of what they need from the dead plant material accumulated around them on their host trees. Not all Vireyas are epiphytes, but those that aren't grow mostly above 8,000 feet in the tropics and are very difficult to grow elsewhere. The program should be very interesting. If you're interested in learning more about Vireyas after the program, I can recommend George Argent's section on Vireyas in the Royal Horticulture Society's *The Rhododendron Handbook*, pages 205 to 246. Dr. Argent is at the Royal Botanical Garden in Edinburgh. He visited our chapter once a number of years ago. One of the perks of belonging to the Eureka Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society is that we get good speakers from various locations around the world, thanks in large part to Don Wallace. Sherla's talk should be great; Vireyas are spectacular and we can grow them here. You'll want to try it after her talk if you don't already have some.



Bruce Palmer's photo of one of Sherla's Vireya Rhododendrons



R. 'Black Eye'

Plant of the Month

Rhododendron 'Black Eye'

By Don Wallace

Hybridized by Harold Greer of Greer Gardens, this is a cross of Rhododendron 'Anah Kruschke' x Rhododendron 'Purple Splendor'. Harold's goal with this cross, I believe, would be to bring more purple color into the flower R. 'Anah Kruschke', while retaining its high quality foliage. The results were successful. R. 'Black Eye' has excellent dark-green shiny foliage that can take full sun even in hotter climates. The plant

stays full and lush, holding its foliage for at least 2 years or more. The flowers have more purple color than R. 'Anah Kruschke' with a strong black flare in the upper petal of each flower, making the overall effect even more purple. R. 'Black Eye' could be a great candidate for screening as well. Plant R. 'Black Eye' in full sun or part shade here in Humboldt County. It blooms in May. This plant has been used in creating other successful hybrids like R. 'True Blue' and R. 'Tall Timber'.



The Eureka Chapter's **Rhododendrons in the Redwoods** long and short sleeved tee shirts and the sweat shirts will be available at the October 24th meeting. They are being priced so that you can stock up now for the holidays.

Short sleeve Tee shirts \$15

Long sleeve tee shirts \$16

Sweat shirts \$20.

If you are not able to attend the meeting you may call Ellie at 707-443-1291 for personal assistance. Medium to XX Large sizes available. *Tim Walsh is modeling the long sleeve tee shirt.*

When the Julian calendar bumped October (from the Latin octo, for eight) from eighth to tenth in the month order, numerous attempts were made to rename the month after various Romans, but "October" stuck.

*Fall, leaves, fall; die, flowers, away;
Lengthen night and shorten day;
Every leaf speaks bliss to me,
Fluttering from the autumn tree.*





Eureka Chapter is published monthly except during July and August. Submissions from members are encouraged and should be mailed to June Walsh, Bulletin Editor, 2050 Irving Drive, Eureka, CA 95503-7022. Membership information and applications are also available from June Walsh. Eureka Chapter is a member of the Humboldt Botanical Gardens Foundation, Eureka, Calif, and The Rhododendron Species Foundation, Federal Way, Wash. Eureka Chapter is a chapter of the American Rhododendron Society.

Eureka Chapter

Eureka Chapter/American Rhododendron Society
2050 Irving Drive
Eureka, CA 95503-7022

Future Programs

October 24, 2013

November, No Meeting

December 5, 2013

January 23, 2014

February 21 to 22, 2013

February 27, 2014

March 27, 2014

April 24, 2014

April 25 to 27, 2014

May 16 to 18, 2014

May 22, 2014

June 8, 2014

Sherla Bertelmann, Hawaii Chapter and Vireyas

Enjoy Thanksgiving with Family and Friends

Don Wallace, Fancy Rhodos and Holiday Potluck

Elaine Sedlack, Sorting Out the Genus Rhododendron

International Vireya Conference, Hilo Hawaii

Gisele Schoniger, Organics for Ericaceous Plants

Dennis McKiver, Mendo Coast BG Rhodos

Jack Olsen, Companion Plants for Rhodos

Rhodo Show and Sale

ARS Spring Convention, Cleveland, Ohio

Mini Show and Potluck

Member Garden Tour and Potluck Picnic

Programs and Program dates are subject to change.



Eureka Chapter Officers and Board Members

June 2012 to June 2014

President, Bruce Palmer

Vice President, Jerry Reynolds

Secretary, Gail Ledbetter

Treasurer, Tim Walsh

Director at Large, Nelda Palmer

Newsletter Editor, June Walsh

Publicity, Ellie Gayner

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Programs, Don Wallace

Membership, Max Abrahamsen

Show Committee, Tom and Mary Marking

For board member contact information or if you are interested in attending a board meeting, call or email June Walsh 707-443-0604