

Eureka Chapter

The next meeting
Thursday, March 27— 7:30
p.m.
Christ Episcopal Church
15th and H Streets

Pre-Meeting No Host Dinner
Thai Cuisine, 615 F Street, Eureka
5:15 p.m., *Special Menu planned by*
Paula to suit all tastes
Call Nelda 443-8049 to RSVP



March 2008

Western Natives for your Rhododendron Garden

Wilbur Bluhm from Salem Oregon will be the Eureka Chapter's March 27th featured speaker. His talk is titled "***Western Natives for Your Rhododendron Garden***", it will feature California, Oregon, and Washington native plants that are attractive and potentially useful in the garden. There are many and you'll see a number of them in their full glory on the screen. The meeting will begin at 7:30 p.m. at the Christ Episcopal Church at 15th and H Streets in Eureka.

Wilbur grew up on a Nebraska farm. He and his wife, Mary, came to Oregon in 1957 to start their family. Wilbur was the Oregon State University Extension Horticulture Agent in Salem, Oregon for 27 years. Wilbur's avocations include Oregon's native flora, including Rhododendron species & other Ericaceae, "slopping over" into the flora of California and Washington states. He is the State Coordinator for the Oregon Flora Project at Oregon State University. He has also had great interest in plant phenology (study of recurring biological phenomena) on which he spends a day or more each week.

Wilbur is the recipient of the Willamette Chapter's Bronze Medal, among other professional and volunteer honors.

Tim and I had the great good fortune of taking one of Wilbur's Memorial Day weekend guided walks in southern Oregon and coastal northern California. The brain can be like sandy soil and leak all its new words away, however, I will remember *Dichelostemma congestum* and *Triteleia bridgesii* (Brodiaeas, shown below at left) as being glorious to behold. With Wilbur's guidance I can now tell the difference between Smilacina and Disporum.

Photo below right, Wilbur Bluhm (center) has successfully guided June Walsh, and Past ARS President Gordon Wylie to Buzzards' Roost overlooking the Illinois River in Oregon.



Ah, April

By, Bruce and Nelda Palmer, Show Chairmen

It is that time of year when we watch the skies for rain clouds, get that compost and mulch down to assure that the moisture that's in the ground stays there and comparisons with your neighbor/friend/relative to see which rhododendrons will be ready for the show the last weekend of the April.

The use of Miles Hall is on the calendar at St. Bernard's Catholic School at Henderson and C Streets in Eureka and our own as well. The trophies are being readied for display of last year's winners while banners, table covers and risers are being cleaned and readied.

Now, what are you planning? Please get that adrenaline going and see how many of the trusses you can present for competition or just the fun of showing on April 26th and 27th. We have 2 days to show off these fantastic blooms to the public. The parade is going to pass right in front of Miles Hall on Henderson Street. Be sure you are represented. Think how lovely that silver trophy will look in your house for birthdays, anniversaries, Christmas and other special days.

If you have a trophy at home bring it to the March meeting for cleaning before display at the show. Nelda will collect it/them and get them to Bill Troiano for that final polish. We look forward to seeing you and many trusses to be shown this year..

Remember the dates: bring in trusses, photographs and flower arrangements on



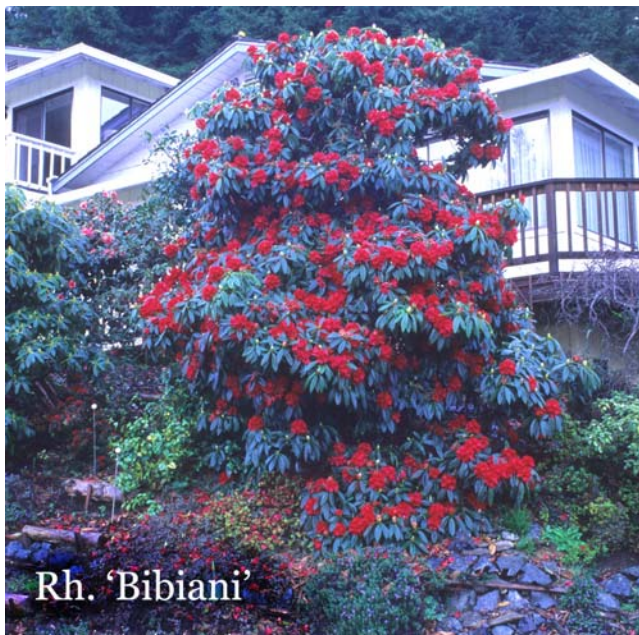
Friday evening until 9:30 or 10 while set up is being done or Saturday morning 7 until 9:30 (judging begins at 10). Clean up will begin at 4 PM Sunday until it is done. We hope to see you at the show!

Ann Wieland gets trusses ready to show.

From President Tim Walsh's Desk

For all of you who've been able to attend the past couple of meetings, congratulations! We've been most fortunate to have a couple of really great programs and this month we'll do it again. June and I have been fortunate to accompany Wilbur Bluhm on one of his "wild weed walks" in the past couple of years and were absolutely amazed at what lies just over the ridge to our east! Orchids! We have Orchids that are endemic to our neck of the woods. Lilies! We have Lilies that grow here and they're not only beautiful to see but the scent from some of them rivals our most fragrant Rhododendrons.

And speaking of Rhododendrons, they (*R. macrophyllum* & *R. occidentale*) make up one of the major under story plants growing in the highly infertile and alkali Franciscan soils of the north fork of the Smith River drainage. The Biscuit fire did a vast amount of damage several years ago but our Rhodies were almost unaffected so the region looks like a park! I hope you can attend this program; I guarantee you a good time!



Plant of the Month: *Rhododendron 'Bibiani'*

By, Don Wallace

Most people notice the red flowering rhododendron '*Cornubia*' blooming in the early spring around Humboldt county, and granted it is a lovely plant. However, there is another plant that blooms at the same time that we feel is a superior plant in many ways. This plant is rhododendron '*Bibiani*'. Not only does it bloom as a much younger plant (4 years old vs. Rh. '*Cornubia*' taking 8-9 yrs.), but it holds its foliage much longer making a much fuller plant. It is one of the most heat and sun tolerant rhododendrons for exposed sites, and the foliage is very shiny and dark green, result-

ing in a superior landscape plant overall. Rh. '*Bibiani*' was hybridized and registered by Lionel de Rothschild in the early 1900's, and received an Award of Merit in 1934. Our plant opened at the end of February, and is in full bloom now in Mid-March. *Photo by Don*

WORD OF THE MONTH

By, Bruce Palmer

The Rhododendron blooming season is nearly here, so this month's word is **TRUSS**. I used that word three years ago, but it bears repeating, given that our flower show is next month and we should all be thinking about what trusses we will bring. Besides, this is the word for the next *Journal of the American Rhododendron Society* and I thought a preview for our chapter members might be in order. The word is from the Old French *trousser*, to pack into a bundle. In botany it does not mean something that holds up a bridge or a hernia, nor is it related to trousers, which comes from the same root. Botanists use a variety of terms to describe how flowers are held in groups, including spikes (as in foxglove), umbels (as in fennel and dill), panicles (as in Delphinium), catkins (as in willow), and heads (as in sunflowers). If a plant bears its flowers in a truss, there is a group of fairly large flowers whose buds are packed in a bundle at the end of a branch, referred to as a terminal inflorescence rather than a truss in the current RHS Rhododendron Handbook. The truss is classed technically as a raceme (Latin for a bunch of grapes). An open truss doesn't look like a bunch of grapes, but when you deadhead the spent stem, the rachis (Greek for spine), looks like what is left over after you ate the grapes. Despite the resemblance, grapes don't bear their flowers in racemes. Grape inflorescences are called cymes (Greek, cyma, a cabbage sprout). Flowering plants are divided into two great groups depending on whether they flower as racemes or cymes. We don't need to belabor the difference here. Not all members of the genus Rhododendron bear their flowers in trusses, but almost all of the rhodies we have in our yards are in the subgenus Hymenanthes (Greek: hymen, a membrane and anthos, a flower), all of whose members bear trusses. Because of that, most of the rhodies in our annual show are in trusses. We've gotten away from calling our show a truss show, possibly for public relations reasons. Flower show is probably better given that the viewing public isn't familiar with the term in its botanical context and not all of the displays are trusses. With or without trusses, the season is fast approaching when we can go out every day to enjoy the many members of the genus Rhododendron showing off in our gardens.



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

Eureka Chapter

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.

Future Programs		
March 27, 2008	Wilbur Bluhm,	Western Natives for your Rhodo Garden Rhodo 101, Molly Eggel—Preparing Photos for Rhodo Flower Show
April 24, 2008	Dennis Bottemiller	Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden Rhodo 101, Jill Mefford—Pruning, Nelda Palmer Flower Show Review
May 3 and 4 May 22, 2008	Noyo Chapter Show and Sale Mini-Show and Pizza night	Call Nanette Giomi for more info 964-4435 Rhodo 101, Deer Abatement, Tim Walsh
June 15, 2008	Annual Summer Potluck	Kane Road Azaleas and tour of Members' Gardens

Diane Weissman, De Anza Chapter, is organizing a trip to New Zealand this fall to attend the New Zealand Rhododendron convention in Geraldine and then tour both public and private Gardens of the South Island of New Zealand. Dates are 24th October - 10th November, 2008.

Here's your opportunity to visit an area which has been called "garden heaven" on a fully escorted tour with a group of fellow rhodie members. Contact Diane at diane1030@gmail.com or 650-964-1003. Diane is a licensed travel professional. She and her husband Bob Weissman, ARS webmaster, have been members of the American Rhododendron Society for over 20 years. Diane has previously lead rhodo tours to Hawaii and Tasmania.

Eureka Chapter Officers and Board Members		
September 2007 to June 2008		
Tim Walsh, President	707-443-0604	timwalsh1@suddenlink.net
Paula Trinoskey, Past President	707-442-6404	
Betty Bottemiller, Vice President	707-822-4935	
Bill Furst, Secretary	707-443-2679	
June Walsh, Treasurer, Membership, Newsletter	707-443-0604	RhodyHostel@suddenlink.net
Don Wallace, Programs	707-839-8777	donw@singtree.com
Bruce and Nelda Palmer, Show Co-Chairs	707-443-8049	bnpalmer@northcoast.com
Ellie Gayner, Publicity	707-443-1291	jlgayner@yahoo.com
Jerry Reynolds, Director	707-822-6580	

Nominations will be open at the March meeting. All members are eligible to nominate and to hold offices. June is looking for a person interested in being the Membership Chair, she promises to be a committee member.