

Eureka Chapter

The next meeting
Thursday, March 22 — 7:30
p.m.
Christ Episcopal Church
15th and H Streets
Eureka, California

Pre-Meeting No Host Dinner
5:15 PM
Roy's Club, 218 D Street Eureka
To be sure we have enough
seats call Nelda for a reserva-
tion 443-8049



March 2007

Tim Walsh Tours ARS Gardens

The **March 22nd** meeting will feature a tour through American Rhododendron Society members' gardens from around the country lead by Tim Walsh, Eureka Chapter Vice President, Treasurer and national ARS District 5 alternate and past treasurer. As long term members of the ARS Tim and June Walsh have had the opportunity to attend many ARS annual and regional conferences. In addition to the opportunity to meet old friends and make new friends from around the world they have had the joy of visiting many public and private gardens. These garden visits are among the highlights of attending a conference.

If you have been considering attending the Convention coming up April 12-15 in South San Francisco and you have not yet registered, this program may help you come to the correct decision. And for those who can not attend the convention you will see some wonderful gardens visited at past conventions. You may even see some people in the gardens who you recognize! *Below right, Tim is pictured in an ARS member garden in Maryland in May 2006 . The left photo is another member's garden.*



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. The above photo is R. burmanicum KW X R. Mi Amor by John Koelsch.

WORD OF THE MONTH

By Bruce Palmer

Don Wallace suggested "**polyploid**" for this month's word, so here goes. The meaning of the first part of the word is clear to all of us. It means many, much or numerous, from the Greek *πολυ*. The second half of the word, **ploid**, is not so obvious. It means something like "of the self". *Id*, the operative part, was derived from the Greek *idios* for individual, private or peculiar (the original meaning of idiot was a private person). In the late nineteenth century a German geneticist used the same term as Freud used in psychology to denote what was then known as the germplasm and what we now know as the number of sets of chromosomes. The number of sets of chromosomes is important because it controls the outcomes of sexual reproduction. Most of the organisms we are familiar with have two complete sets of chromosomes. One set is inherited from each parent. Each set has all the genes for everything that makes up the organism and its life functions. That means that each characteristic is controlled by two genes, each on a separate chromosome. Multi-celled animals and higher plants are typically like this in the form in which we see them. They are said to be "**diploid**". Diploid cells must produce offspring cells with only one set of chromosomes to be passed on in sexual reproduction. These cells are called "**haploid**" and are known to us as gametes or eggs and sperm. When a cell duplicates its chromosomes to produce two new cells the division is not always complete, leaving a cell with more or fewer sets of chromosomes than normal. The result of two gametes combining to produce a cell with more than two sets of chromosomes is uniformly fatal in higher animals, but not in plants. For example, if a normal (**haploid**) gamete combines with one that didn't divide properly and is still **diploid**, a **triploid** is produced. *Rhododendron diaprepes*, var. "*Gargantua*" is a **triploid**. Its leaves and the plant in general are larger than specimens of the species itself with **diploid** cells.



The general term for organisms possessing more than the usual numbers of sets of chromosomes is **polyploid**. **Triploid** plants will typically not reproduce successfully but, if the numbers of sets are even, sexual reproduction in higher plants can result in large numbers of sets of chromosomes. The resulting **polyploids** will have larger and larger body parts as the chromosome sets increase. Farmers, before we knew about **polyploidy**, took advantage of the phenomenon to produce bigger and bigger tomatoes and other crops. So the next time you are buying or growing a beefsteak tomato thank the process that produces errors in cell division to give us **polyploids**.

Photo left is Rhododendron diaprepes, can you smell it?

Plant of the Month - Rhododendron Montroseanum

A member of the Grandia subsection of rhododendrons, *R. montroseanum* was originally classified as a form of *R. sinogrande*, but was later made a unique species. The plant was first named *R. mollyanum* in 1954, but because the name was so close to another rhododendron *R. mollianum*, it was changed to *R. montroseanum* by Davidian in 1979. It is a very fine species that has foliage smaller than *R. sinogrande* but larger than *R. grande*. There is a white to silvery white indumentum on the undersides of the leaves. The flowers on the best forms have a most beautiful pink color, but all forms fade to white. This species has been found growing to 40-50 ft. tall in the wild, but only up to 30 ft. in cultivation. Described by Kingdon Ward when he found it growing in abundance at elevations of 8,000-9,000 ft. in the Tsangpo Gorge, south-east Tibet. The plant in the photo was grown from seed by Dr. Hal Braffladt of Eureka, California. This terrific specimen is 60 years old, is 30 ft. tall and 50 ft wide.



At the request of the editor, Don Wallace, owner of Singing Tree Gardens Nursery, has agreed to write this column each issue. The Cascade Chapter's newsletter has a similar article which made us think the Eureka Chapter members might enjoy the same. The Photos are Don's.

To Show or Not to Show? That is the question!

By Don Wallace

Every year the Eureka Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society puts on a flower show where the members bring in trusses to be displayed and judged. The winners receive ribbons or the honor of having their name engraved onto a silver trophy. I think that as the years go along, maybe the reason that we do this becomes less clear in our minds. If you go to the ARS website (www.rhododendron.org), the American Rhododendron Society has a mission statement expressing its purpose: “to encourage interest in and to disseminate information about the genus Rhododendron.” A great way to encourage interest is by a display of rhododendron flowers from all of our gardens.

The flowers displayed at our Flower Show may encourage someone previously unaware of rhododendrons to plant this variety in their garden instead of the ubiquitous “freeway” plants pittasporum and escalonia. The Eureka Chapter show, with all of the diversity of flowers, brings a new awareness that rhododendrons come in more colors than red, purple, pink and white and may even smell a bit like heaven!

The Eureka Chapter Flower Show is open to all members **and** the general public to enter trusses. Since all of our flowers are grown outside it is not possible to have “perfect” flowers. Everyone should bring in as many flowers as you have blooming at show time. Filling the show bench gives the public a spectacular show and informs them about these beautiful plants.

Our show is judged by our neighbors from the Noyo Chapter in Fort Bragg. The judges are not professional, they are people who grow flowers just like you do. The Eureka Chapter sends judges to the Noyo Show to judge. It is a great way for all of us to learn about what grows best in our area and to be introduced to new plants as well. The Noyo chapter is the same size as the Eureka Chapter and typically has two to three times as many entries as our show.

One year Gary Agajanian’s young granddaughter saw Gary getting flowers ready for the show and asked if she could enter too. She and Gary went back to the garden and she chose a flower to enter. You can believe that she was thrilled to win a blue ribbon! You will be thrilled to see your flowers displayed and the public “ooh-ing” and “ahh-ing” over them; you may even win a ribbon!

Let’s show the general public how many colors and shapes and sizes this diverse genus offers. Let’s not worry about the “competition”...let’s focus on the joy we might bring to all of those people who walk into our room full of beauty and fragrance.

And Speaking of Winners!

If you had a lucky bloom in the show last year and have been polishing silver it is time to return the trophies. Bring the trophies to the meeting March 22nd or call Nelda, 443-8049, to arrange to have them picked up. Bill Troiano will polish the trophies again this year. It is always beautiful to see the winning trusses on the trophy table!

Paul Anderson, M.D. Awarded Bronze Medal

At the February 22nd meeting of the Eureka Chapter Jerry Reynolds had the great privilege of awarding the Bronze Medal to Dr. Paul Anderson. Paul was one of the founding members of the Eureka Chapter and has served as the chapter's President.

Jerry read the proclamation:

“Since you joined the American Rhododendron Society in 1964, you have been active in spreading the word about rhododendrons and you continue to do that today with your many activities on behalf of the ARS.

You have encouraged many people to join the Society over the years. Among them is Eureka Chapter’s own Dee Daneri, who ably led the ARS as Executive Director for several years.

Many of our members began their association with ARS when you presented them with gift memberships, or when you encouraged them to take an interest in horticulture in general and rhododendrons in particular.

You have traveled the world in search of rhododendrons and returned to share what you have found with many ARS chapters, Rotary clubs, churches and others who share your interest in nature.

You have shared your garden here in Eureka with the members of our Chapter on numerous garden tours and other programs over the years.

Today, you are member of six ARS chapters and serve the Society as a District Director.

For 43 years of dedicated and untiring service to the American Rhododendron Society and to our Chapter in particular, the Eureka Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society is honored to award this Bronze Medal to Paul W. Anderson, M.D. this 22nd day of February 2007.”

Pictured at left is Jerry Reynolds who made the presentation of the Bronze medal to Dr. Paul Anderson, at the right.



Rhodo 101, At the March 22nd meeting **Jill Mefford**, from Singing Tree Garden Nursery, will give a rhododendron pruning tutorial. Bring all your pruning questions in for this informative Rhodo 101 session.



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.

Please Welcome New Members
Marcia Marling of Eureka
Trish and Joe Ortiz of Eureka

Future Programs

April 12-15, 2007

American Rhododendron Convention, San Francisco, www.ars2007conf.org

April 16-18

Post Convention tour of Quarryhill, wine country and Mendocino gardens

April 26, 2007

Don Wallace: Rhodo The King of Shrubs, Rhodo 101: Carol Dunning, Arrangers' Guild

April 28, 2007

Flower Show and Plant Sale, St Bernard's School

April 29, 2007

Eureka Chapter Garden Tour and Plant Sale

May 5, 2007

Noyo Chapter Show, Fort Bragg

May 5, 2007

Humboldt Botanical Garden Plant Sale @ HBG Sun Valley greenhouse, take the College of the Redwoods exit off of Highway 101, south of Eureka, to donate plants call Tennie Brooks 725-2430

May 19, 2007

Siuslaw Chapter Show, Celebration Florence Oregon's 100 years of Rhodo Festivals

May 24, 2007

Member and guest Mini-Flower show. Participants will be judging entries. Rhodo 101, how to judge a show, Jerry Reynolds

June

Date to be determined, Potluck at Tom and Aileen Martin's ! Tufa Reprise (new recipe)

June 24, 2007

Humboldt Botanical Gardens Foundation garden tour

Meetings will take place at the Christ Church Episcopal at 15th and H Streets in Eureka at 7:30 p.m. unless otherwise announced. Programs may change as speakers' schedules may change.