AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

Eureka Chapter

The next meeting
Thursday February 24th
7:00 p.m.
Woman's Club
1531 J Street, Eureka, California

Pre-Meeting No Host Dinner 5:15
Panda Café, *1010 Broadway*
Eureka, ***Call Nelda, 707-443-8049***
For directions and reservations so there will be enough seating

Magnolia "Caerhay's Belle", photo by Tim Walsh

February 2011

Don Wallace and Hybridizing for Beginners

The Eureka Chapter will welcome member Don Wallace for the February 24th meeting to be held at the Woman's Club beginning at 7:00 p.m. Don is the owner of Singing Tree Gardens, a small retail nursery, located in McKinleyville, California. Over the past 20 years Don has planted, propagated, hybridized, and grown many Rhododendrons from seed. He is the past president of the Eureka Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society, and participated as one of the Show Chairmen at the Western Regional Conference in Eureka back in 1999. Don has been involved in photography for 25 years and travels each year to photograph many gardens up and down the Pacific coast. Currently Don is active in hybridizing Rhododendrons for fragrance, as well as new and exciting colors of flowers. Don's program will take you through the various stages of hybridizing Rhododendrons so that hybridizing will be "easy" to understand for anyone just beginning. Answers to questions such as "How do I pick good parents for my crosses?", or "How do I save pollen?", or even "What is pollen and why should I care?" will be answered. Don has been actively hybridizing Rhododendrons for over 20 years, and has learned many tips and techniques from other hybridizers that he will share.

Don is shown with his April 2010 show silver.

Even if you do not want to become a hybridizer you will be fascinated by how it is done and why.

Don will be bringing a selection of Rhododendron hybrids and species from his nursery to sell at the meeting.

Editor's note; Don has contributed the Plant of the Month and has been Program Chair for many years, Thank you, Don.

Plant of the Month
Rhododendron 'Naselle'
By Don Wallace

This 'Lem's Cameo' hybrid by the late Jim Elliott of Astoria, Washington covers itself with large blooms that are a combination of pink with yellow and orange tones throughout. The stunning combination of colors makes quite a statement when the whole bush is in bloom, creating many photo opportunities. The foliage on this plant is shiny dark-green with rounded edges, making it one of the most attractive Rhododendrons available. It is a strong grower that makes a large, full shrub 6 feet tall and 8 feet wide in 10 years. Rhododendron 'Naselle' can take full sun or partial shade, but will have more flowers in full sun. Many hybridizers have used this plant as a parent for their new hybrids as it produces excellent offspring that bloom young with 'peachy' flowers. A big thanks goes to Jim Elliott for this award winning hybrid. Photo Don Wallace

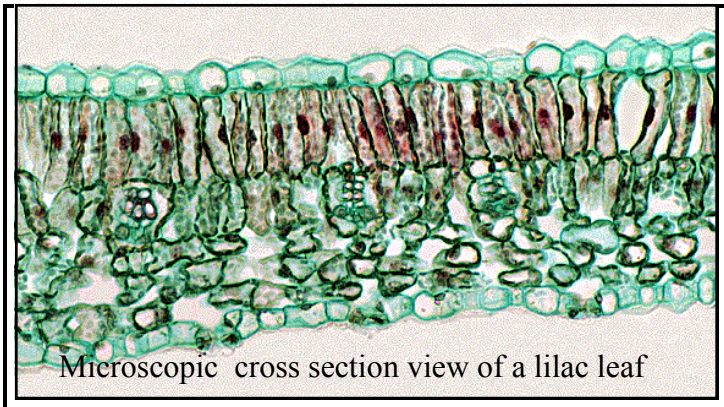

R. "Loderi Venus"

Word of the Month
Leaf
By Bruce Palmer

This month's word is **LEAF**. "**Leaf"** derives from the Middle English *lefe*, which in turn descends from the German *laub*, to peel off. One reason for choosing leaf this month is because I wrote about petioles last time. Don Wallace suggested petiole and Joel Zeigler brought "Petiole Pie" (rhubarb pie) to the December potluck. Joel's pie illustrates how rarely we use petioles as food. That's partly because petioles don't stand on their own; they're parts of leaves, which we eat regularly (think of lettuce and spinach). The second reason for choosing **leaf** is because of the primary importance of leaves to plants. I was reminded of this recently when I received a copy of a reprint of the English translation of *Goethe's Botanical Writings* from a publisher friend in New Haven. We think of Goethe as the great German poet, but he was much more than that. Goethe had a wide variety of interests; he was what we call a Renaissance Man. On a trip to Italy in 1788 he observed many plants that were new to him and concluded that in plants "Everything is leaf , and through this simplicity, the greatest diversity becomes possible". Goethe is generally credited with being the first to discover that flowers and fruits are derived from modified leaves.

When our rhodies set leaf and flower buds in the late summer and early fall it is clear at first that the parts form from leaves. The photo of R. "Loderi Venus" shows clearly the protective leaf scales around the buds. By early fall we can usually tell what the type of bud will be: leaf or flower.

Continued next page



Microscopic cross section view of a lilac leaf

Leaf, *continued…*

We can be fooled, though, because the plant "changes its mind". Weather and other conditions can cause what appears to be a flower bud to become a leaf bud instead. We have R. "Vulcan" outside our kitchen door right now that had what appeared to be flower buds in September, but they are coming out as leaves instead.

Sometimes one or more flower parts will develop as leaves or parts of leaves as the flower opens. We don't need to follow this reasoning as far as Goethe did, but the study of developing flower petals, sepals and all of the reproductive parts show that they start out as leaves.

The primary function of a leaf, of course, is photosynthesis, the process of converting light energy into chemical energy, allowing for the existence of all plants as well as all animals. Broad-leaved higher plants have evolved a leaf system that is ideal for the maximum capture of light. The cross-section of a lilac leaf (above) shows us all about it. The thickness is ideal for capturing about 90% of the visible light used in photosynthesis. The top of the leaf is protected by a waxy coating covering a single layer of cells, the epidermis. Under the epidermis is a layer or two of cells, the palisade cells, arranged vertically to capture the maximum amount of sunlight. Beneath the palisade layer is a lot of open space with rounded cells. The space allows for storage of the water and carbon dioxide required in photosynthesis. On the underside the lower epidermis is pierced by holes with controllable openings that allow the passage of carbon dioxide and water in and oxygen out. The structure of the broad leaf in higher plants is ideal for photosynthesis when the light and temperature are optimal. As the temperature begins to lower and the day length shortens the conditions aren't so great. Many higher plants with broad leaves address this problem by dropping their leaves when the days get too short for efficient photosynthesis. It is more efficient for them to drop leaves and start over when conditions improve than to retain them. These are the deciduous plants. Most of our rhodies are not deciduous. They keep their leaves, giving us the great variety of shapes and accessories such as indumentum that we enjoy when they aren't in bloom. *Photo and slide provided by Bruce Palmer*

Remembering Loie Cabeceira 1911 to 2011

By Tim Walsh

Eureka Chapter member Loie Cabeceira passed away at home in early February. Her daughter, member Dee Spencer, says Loie was always interested in gardening. She was captivated by both vegetable gardening and gardening just for the beauty of plants. She leaves her only child, Eureka Chapter member, Dee Spencer, as well as 4 living grandchildren (one predeceased her), 12 great-grandchildren and 3 great-great-grandchildren, and her cousin, member Nova Cramer. She spent 99 years on this planet and simply loved gardening, a trait that she passed along to her daughter, Dee. We will miss her cheery smile, her care, concern and interest in her family and friends and the fact that she was one of the oldest ARS members in the world! We will miss Loie and hold Dee in our thoughts.

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.

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

Future Programs

February 24, 2011	Don Wallace, "Hybridizing for Beginners"
March 24, 2011	Keith White, MD, "China Expeditions"
April 21, 2011 (this is a date change)	***Bill Hicks, "Lepidote Rhododendrons"***
April 29, 30 and May 1	Rhododendron Show and Sale
May 11 –15, 2011	ARS Annual Convention, Vancouver WA
May 26, 2011	Mini - Show and Pizza
June 5, 2011	Member Garden Tour and Potluck Picnic

Programs are subject to change.

On the wind in February
Snowflakes float still,
Half-inclined to turn to rain,
Nipping, dripping, chill.
–Christina Rossetti (1830–94)

The truth is that the Humboldt County members of the Eureka Chapter have enjoyed several weeks of nearly-summer, soft breezes, brilliant sun and geese calling over head as they go about their winter resort stay. Rhododendrons, Camellias and Magnolias in bloom.

The Nitobe Japanese Garden at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver is shown at right with a cloak of February snow.

Eureka Chapter Officers and Board Members
September 2010 to June 2011

Betty Bottemiller, President	707-822-4935	bbbettybotts@gmail.com
Tim Walsh, Vice President	707-443-0604	timwalsh1@suddenlink.net
Trish Ortiz, Secretary	707-822-3330	tgiddingortiz@gmail.com
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	egayner@hotmail.com
Jerry Reynolds, Director	707-269-9533	jerry_reynolds@suddenlink.net
Doug Batt, Director	707-444-2702	dbattspot@sbcglobal.net