

AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

Eureka Chapter

The next meeting
Thursday April 23, 7:00 p.m.
Woman's Club
1531 J Street
Eureka, California

Pre-Meeting No Host Dinner 5:00
Bay Front Restaurant,
1 F Street Eureka,
Call Nelda, 707-443-8049
For a reservation so there will be enough seating



Eureka Chapter
American Rhododendron Society

Rhododendrons
in the Redwoods

April 2015

Species Rhododendrons, and Their Journey to Your Garden



The Eureka Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society will meet on Thursday, April 23, 2015. The meeting and program will be held at the Eureka Woman's Club 1531 J Street in Eureka beginning at 7:00 P.M.

The Eureka Chapter will host the justly world famous rhododendron expert and speaker, **Mike Stewart**. Mike and his wife **Maria** own Dover Nursery in Sandy, Oregon. Mike is an American Rhododendron Society **Past President** and a **Gold Medal** recipient (the highest award from the ARS) and a professional with excellent speaking skills and beautiful photography. Mike is also President of the Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden. Mike and Maria have co-chaired many international conventions and western regional conferences for the ARS.

The title of Mike's program is ***Species Rhododendrons, and Their Journey to Your Garden***. It will cover the great plant explorers through the last 200 years and many of the species that they discovered. Not to worry, Mike won't spend a lot of time on most of them...though, there will be pictures of each plant explorer, the regions where they

traveled, and pictures of many of the species discovered. Mike likes to talk about each explorer, and try to fill in some of the less know attributes and personality traits that they had. The program ends with music and scenes from Asia.

Photo taken by June Walsh of Maria and Mike Stewart among the Big Leaf Rhododendrons at the Royal Botanical Garden Edinburgh.

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.

WORD OF THE MONTH – SANDY

By Bruce Palmer

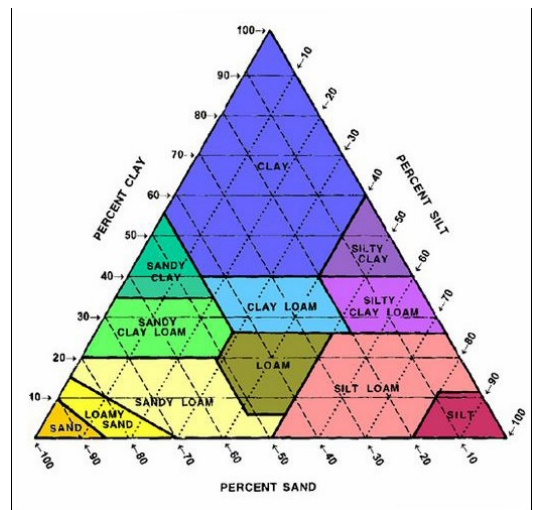
Our program for this month will be presented by Mike Stewart, an excellent speaker and Past President of the American Rhododendron Society. Mike lives in Sandy, Oregon, so that's the word of the month. The word **SAND** has survived intact from old German through Old and Middle English to modern times. Technically it's a verb meaning to rub off or pulverize, as in sanding a piece of wood. As a noun in modern usage it refers to relatively large particles of soil, roughly between two millimeters and 5/100 of a millimeter in diameter, those particles that feel gritty when you rub soil between your fingers and which are generally, if only barely, visible to the unaided eye. One millimeter is roughly 1/25 of an inch. The other two soil particle categories are **SILT** and **CLAY**. Silt particles are not visible to the naked eye, ranging between 5/100 and 2/1000 of a millimeter in size. They do not feel gritty between the fingers. Silt particles tend to settle out in water slightly slower than sand. Particles less than 2/1000 of a millimeter in size are called clay. Clay particles tend to stay suspended in water much longer than silt or sand and feel slimy between the fingers.

Soils are classified by what percentage of each particle they contain. The accompanying soil triangle helps to define the categories. The soil triangle was first used by the U.S. Department of Agriculture in the 1930s and has since been adopted internationally. The defined size of the three particles varies slightly from one country to another, but the basic system is uniform. The names of the twelve categories are self-explanatory. We know that the best soils for agriculture are loams. Loam is the dirt-colored pentagon below the center of the triangle. Note that soils near the center of the loam area have 40% sand, 40% silt and 20% clay. That means that soils need all three categories to support agriculture effectively, but less clay than sand or silt. Sand allows air, water and nutrients to travel freely through soil so plants have access to them. Silt slows the movement so plants can take them up more easily. Clay tends to stop movement of air, water and nutrients and in addition attracts nutrient particles, especially phosphorus, and holds them so tightly that plants can't take them up easily. Excess clay makes soils more acid; excess sand makes it more alkaline. Most plants grow best if the pH is slightly on the acid side, about 6.5 where 7.0 is neutral, higher is alkaline and lower is acidic. Most Rhododendrons like the soil to be a bit more acidic, closer to 5.5.

One of the methods soils professionals use to determine the classification of soils is interesting. In this age of mechanization, soil type determination is often still done by feel. The "feel method", sometimes called the "spit method", is done in the following manner. Dig down no more than a few inches and scoop out approximately a heaping tablespoonful of soil. Roll the soil in your hands into a ball about an inch in diameter. Put a dent in the center and add a few drops of water or spit in the dent. Work the soil, adding more water as needed until it is the consistency of putty. If it won't stick together it is sand. If it sticks together, form it into a ribbon and push it slowly out of your hand. Based on how long the ribbon holds together, it is determined to have increasing amounts of clay. Next, rub the soil sample between your fingers to judge the degree of grittiness. With experience it is possible to determine the category: Sandy Clay Loam, Silty Clay Loam and so forth. Some agronomists then place a very small sample in the mouth and chew on it to get a final estimate of grittiness. Can you imagine what those folks' molars must look like in retirement?

Back to sand. Not all sands are created equal. Sand particles do much more than facilitate drainage. They often contain important plant nutrients. The green sand that we sometimes add to our soils is a good example. It contains significant amounts of potassium, one of the three primary plant nutrients. Most of us think of sand as the stuff from which glass is made. That's accurate for many of the sands on continents that are derived from quartz. If you've been to Hawaii recently and wiggled your toes in the fine, warm sand you realize that most tropical sands are much finer and whiter than sands around here. That's because most sands in the tropics are derived from the shells and skeletons of ocean-dwelling critters. They are organic sands.

Have you noticed that Oregon has more than its share of short, very descriptive place names: Boring, Remote, Bridge, Drain, Bend, Plush, Sisters, Riddle, Sandy? Let's enjoy the talk by the guy from Sandy. Mike always gives a great program.





Plant of the Month:

Rhododendron 'Lavender Haze'

R. 'Lavender Haze' was created by E.G. Hall by crossing *R. degronianum* ssp. *yakushimanum* with R. 'Purple Splendor', this hybrid is one of the best for plant habit. It makes a perfect mound that is 4feet x 4feet in 10 years, never needs pruning, and flowers heavily. The light lavender flowers are pleasing, adding a 'haze' to the garden. The dark green, glossy leaves seem to always look good whether the plant has been fertilized or not. Also, since it has leaves all the way to the ground, it really works to choke out weeds. It blooms in early spring, so goes well with rhodos like

R. 'Rubicon', R. 'Ginny Gee' or R. 'Owen Pierce'. It seems to be happy in full sun or some shade. *By Don Wallace*

*And I think if you listen closely
In the sweet glad days of spring,
With the song of the brook, the breeze, and the birds,
You can hear the flowers sing.*

—Helen Isabel Moorhouse (1876–1933)

MEMBERS-ONLY PRE-PLANT-SALE-SALE

FRIDAY, APRIL 24TH, 5:00 TO 7:00 AT ST. BERNARD'S SCHOOL

MEMBERS-ONLY! MAY PURCHASE PLANTS

AS THEY COME OFF THE TRAILER

SPECIAL MEMBERS-ONLY PRICING

NOT A MEMBER? JOIN AT THE PLANT SALE



Plant Sales!

Eureka Chapter American Rhododendron Society, St. Bernard's School, Members only April 24, 5-7; Public April 25 and 26, 10-3

College of the Redwoods, at the CR Greenhouse, April 24, Noon to 6, April 25, 10-6

Humboldt Botanical Garden, at the HBG Greenhouse, Members Only May 1, 5-7; Public May 2, 9-3

California Native Plant Society, Manila Community Center, May 1, 1-5, May 2, 10-5, May 3, 10-4



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. Rhodyhostel@suddenlink.net Membership information and applications are also available from Trish Ortiz. Aris.trish.ortiz@gmail.com 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

Thursday April 23, 2015; Mike Stewart (ARS Gold Medalist and Past President of ARS) will talk about Plant Explorers and the plants they introduced into our gardens. Mike's programs are always a hot ticket!

Friday April 24th Member Only Plant Sale, Help unload the trailer and get first choice and Member Only prices. Not a member? Join at the Sale!

April 24, 25, 26; Rhododendron Show and Sale, St. Bernard's Catholic School, Henderson Street, Eureka CA.

May 21, 2015; will be our ever popular and fun in-house Mini-Show...you be the judge, win cash prizes.

June 7, 2015; Member garden tour and picnic.
Put these dates on your calendar now so you won't miss any of these great programs. Watch for the Eureka Chapter Newsletter for more info.

But though an old man, I am but a young gardener.
-Thomas Jefferson, at age 68 (1743-1826)

Nominations for Eureka Chapter Officers and Board Members September 2015 to June 2016

The Eureka Chapter will elect board members in May. The below slate will be up for your vote in addition to any nominations from the floor at the April meeting.

President: Jerry Reynolds

Vice President: Ellie Gayner

Secretary: Gail Ledbetter

Treasurer: Tim Walsh

Programs: Don Wallace

Flower Show: Tom & Mary Marking

Newsletter: June Walsh

Membership: Ellen Gill

In-House Show: Margaret Cole

Past President: Bruce Palmer

At-Large: Nelda Palmer

Diane Larkin

The 43rd Annual Rhododendron Show and Plant Sale

By Mary Marking

With the recent rains, and the temperature warming up, **rhodies** are blooming and the annual Rhododendron show and plant sale is in a few days!!!

Location: Miles Hall, St. Bernard's Elementary School at 115 Henderson Street, Eureka, California.

Open to the public: Saturday April 25th and Sunday April 26th from 10 AM to 3 PM.

You, your friends, relatives, neighbors and the public are encouraged to participate in the show.

All entries will be accepted for display from 5 PM until 8:30 PM on Friday and from 7:30 AM until 9 AM on Saturday. No entries will be accepted after 9 AM. If possible, please bring your entries on Friday night.

Set up will begin at 3:00 PM on Friday the 24th for those of you who are planning to help. This year we again will have the hall all to ourselves. In order to have a great show we need everyone to participate by bring in at least 3 trusses. Can you imagine how wonderful the tables will look? You can also bring your trusses, plants, educational displays, flower arrangements and photos at that time but they will not be accepted for display until the room is ready. Be sure your flowers have plenty of water and the stems are cut long enough to allow the most water to get into the truss. If you haven't signed up to help and have some free time you are more than welcomed to come and help. The more help we have the faster it gets done.

Anyone can enter trusses and plants, Photography, Educational and Flower Arrangements. If you have a special plant that can be dug or is in a pot, bring it in. Also, don't forget there is an **Education Class**. We have had some really interesting displays in the past. The **Photography Exhibit** has been a well-filled section. Be sure the photos are matted and not framed.

Margaret Cole will be happy to receive any and all entries for the **Flower Arrangements**. Make sure to check the rules. We should have the table at the front of the hall simply full of arrangements. To ensure that there is enough space please email (mscole2002@suddenlink.net) or call (707-822-8353) Margaret to reserve your space by the end of the April 23rd Chapter meeting. Remember, that if you don't believe your flowers are "good enough" for judging, bring them anyway. They will look great as examples of the type of rhododendron we have in our area. We need as many we can get.

This is a great time for everyone to participate, bring your family, friends and neighbors.

Tear Down will begin at **3:00 Sunday April 26th**. You can start removing your entries at **2:30 PM**. All entries not removed **will be discarded after 3**. When we are finished cleaning up, participants will be served pizza for their diligent hard work.