AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

Eureka Chapter

The next meeting
Thurs December 3, 6:00 p.m.
Woman's Club
1531 J Street
Eureka, California

Holiday Potluck begins at 6:00
Bring your favorite Potluck dish, plates, utensils, coffee and tea provided. BYOB if you like. Be ready for Adventure and holiday fun.

Eureka Chapter American Rhododendron Society — *Rhododendrons in the Redwoods*

December 2015

JOIN A POT PARTY, IT'S WHAT WE DO IN HUMBOLDT

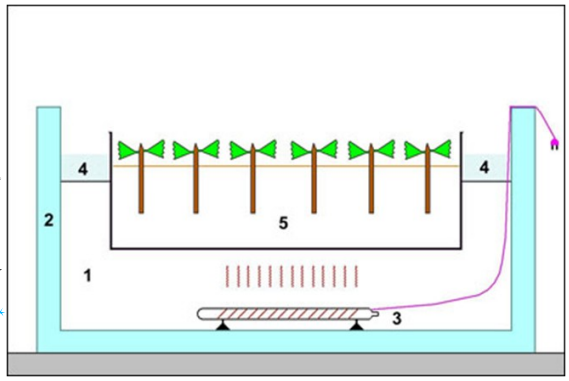
Holiday *Pot*luck
Thursday December 3rd at 6:00 PM
Woman's Club, 1531 J Street, Eureka

The Eureka Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society *meeting and program will be held at the Eureka Woman's Club 1531 J Street in Eureka beginning at 6:00 P.M.* Members and guests should bring their favorite pot-luck Main dish, salad, vegetable, side dish or dessert. The Chapter will provide coffee, tea, juice, plates, napkins, cups and utensils. BYOW (wine) if you wish. The public is welcome.

After the meal we will try a new process for *making more plants.* Chapter members who attended the Convention in Sidney BC this last spring saw a program given by Marc Colombel of France show his ingenious and inexpensive way of rooting cuttings. Don Wallace and Bruce Palmer will help us make mini greenhouses for our cuttings.

What you need to bring:

- **Several 1-liter plastic pop or water bottles**
- **Cuttings from easy to root rhododendrons like maddenii i.e., *crassum*, 'Frangrantismum', 'Else Frye', 'White Lily', *nuttallii,* 'Mi Amor', etc.**
- **Bring a pair of sharp clippers or knife**



The chapter will provide all other supplies for this hands-on workshop.

You will make and stick your cuttings and the chapter will grow them on for you. If the project is successful your new plants will be ready for you to pot on in May or June.

WORD OF THE MONTH – AUXIN
By Bruce Palmer

At the December meeting we are going to try rooting rhododendron cuttings using a unique technique developed by Marc Columbel, a member of ARS in France. It seems appropriate that the word of the month should be **AUXIN** (Greek: *auxein*, to grow or increase). We'll be using an **AUXIN** rooting "hormone", most likely Indole Acetic Acid or Indole Butyric Acid. Indole acetic acid (IAA) is the most common **auxin** occurring naturally in plants. We manufacture other **auxins** such as Indole Butyric Acid (IBA) as a potent rooting hormone and 2, 4 D as an herbicide. IBA and 2,4 D are found in plants but in minute quantities, so they don't play a major part in regulating plant growth. IAA is the primary player; **auxin** and IAA are used interchangeably.

Auxins are classed as plant growth regulators, sometime called plant hormones (Greek *hormein*, to excite). Hormones are typically produced in one location in an organism, then transported to another location where their regulatory action occurs. The term hormone is usually used for animals, not for plants, so in botany we tend to use the term 'plant growth regulators'.

The best known way **auxin** works in plants is that it causes young plant shoots to bend toward the light. Charles Darwin found that if light is shining from above, a young shoot grows straight up, if the light comes from the side, the shoot grows toward it and that if you cut off the tip of the shoot, it does not grow toward the light. He concluded that some substance is produced in the tip of the shoot that is transported downward and causes bending toward the light. We now know that the substance is **auxin,** that it is produced in the tip of the shoot, that it migrates downward and that it concentrates on the shaded side of the shoot. The concentration of **auxin** on the shaded side weakens the cell walls on that side, allowing the pressure of osmosis to expand the cells there, causing the shoot to bend toward the light.

Auxin (IAA) does a number of other things related to regulating plant growth. In a new plant, if it is lying on its side, auxin has opposite effects in the shoot and the root. It promotes upward growth of the shoot and downward growth of the root, what we call geotropism (Greek, geos, earth, and *tropes*, turning) in roots and phototropism (Greek, photos, light, and *tropes*, turning) in shoots. The important effect of **auxin** for our cutting experiment this month is that it promotes the growth of adventitious (Latin, *adventicius*, not properly belonging to) roots on the stems of plants. We apply a rooting hormone (IAA or IBA) to the stem of a cutting that we want to root and hopefully new roots will grow from the stem, giving us our new plant. The process is not instantaneous. It will be a few weeks or months before we know if we got results. In the meantime, we are conducting a great experiment with a new and unique method for producing rhododendron plants from cuttings.

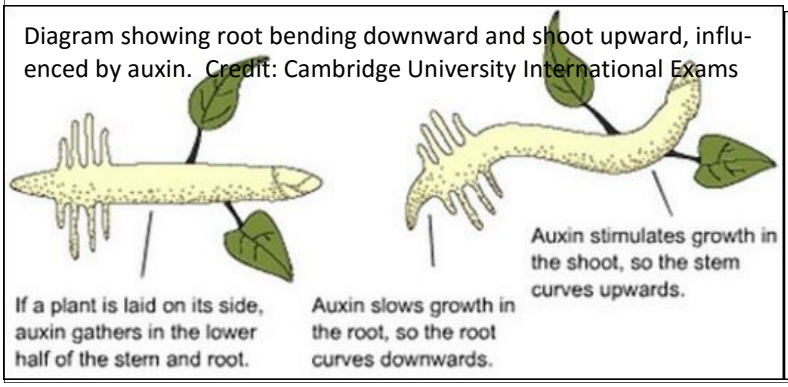
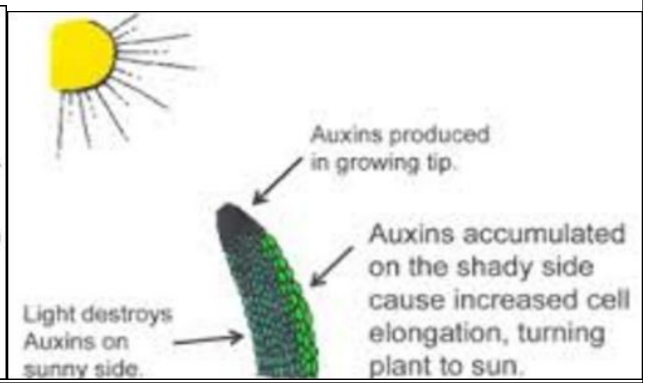


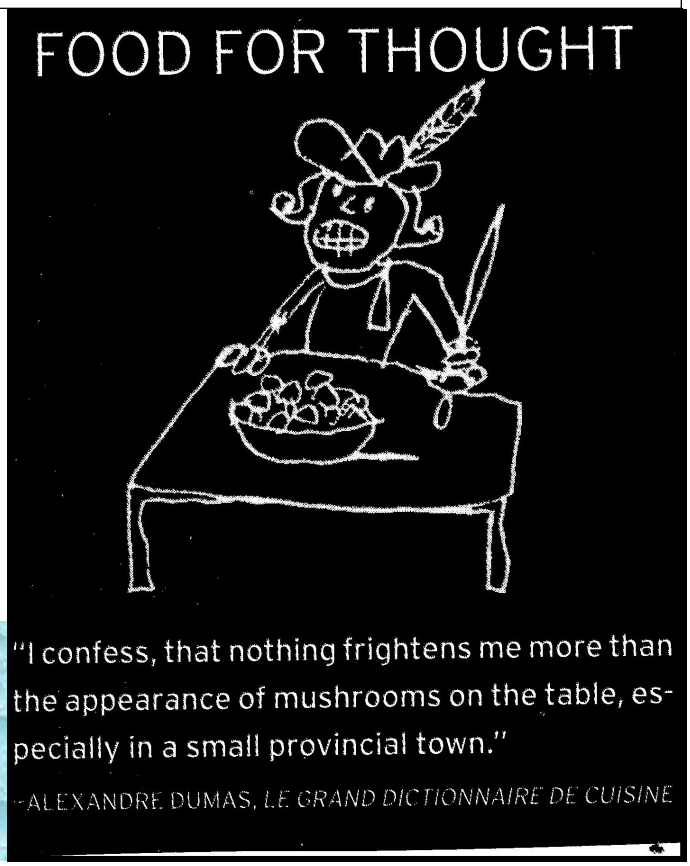
Diagram showing root bending downward and shoot upward, influenced by auxin. Credit: Cambridge University International Exams



Plant of the Month *Rhododendron* 'Kallista', *By Don Wallace*

The huge flowers of *R.* 'Kallista' are arresting and can stop traffic on South Broadway! This hybrid between *R. lindleyi* and *R. nuttallii* was created and named in Australia. It is a unique cultivar as it has larger flowers, with more bell-shaped blossoms to the truss...as many as 10 and sometimes 14! The flowers are white with a yellow throat and HUGE! Each blossom can measure 6" long and 6" in diameter. I remember seeing a photo of several plant hunters standing around drinking wine out of these flowers. The foliage is large and heavily textured, adding to the tropical air. This plant, however, is tender and will not survive temperatures below +20 F. I do know several people in the Seattle area who grow this plant in large containers and move them into a greenhouse for the winter. This plant will like a protected spot near your house, which is useful to add fragrance to your living space. If there is an Arctic Express storm predicted with temperatures below 30 deg F, I would put a small electric space heater under it with a big blue tarp over. Or, another technique that works well is to string Christmas lights through the plant and turn on the lights when the frigid weather is coming. I have saved many flower buds this way. However, the bulbs have to be the old kind that put out a bit of heat…the new LED types will not work as they are not warm.

As the rains come so do the Mushrooms. Alexandre Dumas' cartoon and quote is a good reminder to hunt mushrooms only with knowledgeable Fungi-philes if you plan to eat these natural treasures. Otherwise photograph to your heart's content.



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. Rhodyphos-tel@suddenlink.net

Membership information and applications are also available from Ellen Gill. C/O June Walsh. The 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

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American Rhododendron Society
Rhododendrons in the Redwoods

Future Programs

November, Eat Turkey, Kiss your Family, and be Thankful!

December 3, 2015 Holiday Potluck, **Cuttings Workshop, Don Wallace and Bruce Palmer**

January 28, 2016, Paula Trinoskey, Fall Color in Japan

February 25, 2016, Dennis McKiver, Growing Show Quality Rhododendrons
March 24, 2016, Gisele Schoniger, Soils
April 28, 2016, To be announced
***April 29 to May 1, 2016* Rhododendron Show and Plant Sale**
May 26, 2016 IN-House Mini Show...win BIG BUCKS when you show us your bloomers
June 5, 2015, Member Garden Tour and Potluck 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.

Eureka Chapter Officers and Board Members

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